

ARCHAEOLOGY'S 2001 Guide to the Sites of Ancient **ISRAEL**



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The cities and archaeological sites listed below are among Israel's richest travel destinations. When visiting, keep in mind that visiting hours are subject to change. Call to confirm before making plans. The National Parks Authority can provide information about many of these sites. Telephone: 011-972-03-613-6654. The Israeli Antiquities Authority can provide information on current excavations. Telephone: 011-972-02-620-4522. Home page: www.israntique.org.il

ISRAEL TIMELINE

NEOLITHIC	8500-4500 B.C.
CHALCOLITHIC	4500-3500 B.C.
EARLY BRONZE AGE	3500-2200 B.C.
MIDDLE BRONZE AGE	2200-1500 B.C.
LATE BRONZE AGE	1500-1200 B.C.
IRON AGE I	1200-1000 B.C.
IRON AGE II	1000-586 B.C.
BABYLONIAN	586-539 B.C.
PERSIAN	539-332 B.C.
HELLENISTIC	332-37 B.C.
ROMAN	37 B.C.-A.D. 324
BYZANTINE	A.D. 324-638
EARLY ISLAMIC	A.D. 638-1099
CRUSADER	A.D. 1099-1291
MAMLUK	A.D. 1291-1516
OTTOMAN	A.D. 1516-1917
MODERN	A.D. 1917-PRESENT

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

Akko: Akko is one of the oldest harbor towns along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Its early history is documented in *Judges* and Egyptian and Mesopotamian records. In the Hellenistic period, Akko was renamed Ptolemais in honor of the Egyptian king Ptolemy I and was visited by the apostle Paul in the first century a.d. Excavations have revealed a mud-brick gate, ramparts, and other defensive structures dating back to the Middle Bronze Age (see Archae-

ology, January/February 1983). Akko regained prominence during the Middle Ages, when it served as the Crusader capital. Remains of the Medieval town consist of the city walls, moat, and sewage system, all preserved below ground. There is an admission fee for access to the ruins. Telephone: 011-972-04-991-1764. Most attractions are open Sunday-Friday from 8:30 to 6:00 summer, 8:30 to 5:00 winter.

Apollonia: Located on the Mediterranean coast, just north of Herzliya, the site was continuously occupied from the Persian through the Crusader periods. The most impressive ruins belong to the Crusader period, including the fortress with its double wall system and moat, all of which is slated for future restoration work. There is no admission fee and no set hours for visits.

Ashkelon: Ashkelon, a major Canaanite and Philistine seaport from 3000 to 604 b.c., is mentioned in *Judges* 14:19 as the place where, in a rage, Samson killed 30 men. Located just north of Gaza, Ashkelon features the world's oldest arched gateway, Canaanite and Crusader ramparts and buildings, and the ruins of the last Philistine occupation, destroyed in 604 b.c. by Nebuchadnezzar. Several warehouses and the largest known ancient dog cemetery are exposed in ruins of the Persian period. A bath house and sewer system remain from the Roman and Byzantine periods (see *Archaeology*, March/April 1997). There is an entrance fee for access to the site, located within a national park. Hours: daily 8-4.

Avdat: Avdat is an impressive Negev settlement founded in the Nabataean period, expanded in the Late Roman and Byzantine periods, and destroyed by Arab invaders in a.d. 636. Still standing on the acropolis are a Byzantine fortress and two churches, a

wine press, and various Nabataean remains. A Byzantine-period bath house is located below the acropolis, off the main road. There is an admission fee for access to the site, payable at the visitors center. Telephone: 011-972-07-658-6391. Hours: April-September 8-5; October-March 8-4.

Banias: Located within the Hula Nature Reserve, Banias features impressive Roman ruins, scenic walks, and dazzling waterfalls. Among the archaeological highlights of Banias are the partially subterranean Roman palace and the Temple of Pan, after whom the city was originally named (Panias). There is an admission fee for entry. Hours: daily 8-5 summer, 8-4 winter.

Baram: The synagogue of Baram, dated to the fourth and fifth centuries a.d., is located in Upper Galilee, 15 minutes from the Sasa Junction. Its magnificent facade, facing Jerusalem, is preserved almost in entirety. Located nearby is a rare kermes oak forest. There is an admission fee to the site. Telephone: 011-972-06-698-9301. Hours: April-September 8-5; October-March 8-4.

Belvoir (Kokhav HaYarden): Belvoir features preserved and restored military architecture of the Crusader period. The Crusader fortress is complemented by a panoramic view of the Hula Valley and Golan Heights. There is an admission fee for access to the site. Telephone: 011-972-06-658-1766. Hours: April-September 8-5; October-March 8-4.

Beth Guvrin/Maresha: Beth Guvrin is the site of a Roman-Byzantine amphitheater and public baths, a Crusader church and fortifications, and bell-shaped caves once used for quarrying. Only the caves are open to the public. Nearby is Maresha, with Hellenistic and Roman ruins, mostly underground, surrounding an Iron

Age tel. Underground features include columbaria, water reservoirs, and well-preserved olive oil press complexes. There is an admission fee to the national park in which both sites are located. Telephone: 011-972-07-681-1020. Hours: daily 8–4.

Beth Saida: An Iron Age and Roman town, Beth Saida is mentioned in the Gospels as the birthplace of the apostles Peter, Andrew, and Philip. It is also the place where Jesus restored a blind man's sight (Mark 8:22–26) and fed the multitudes (Luke 9:10–17). Ruins at Beth Saida include two houses and a temple from the Roman period and a gateway complex with stelae from the Iron Age. Beth Saida is located in the Park HaYarden, north of the Sea of Galilee. There is no admission fee for entrance into the park, and a visit to the site can easily be complemented by kayaking, canoeing, or tubing on the Jordan River.

Beth Shean: This multiperiod tel towers over a major city of the Roman and Byzantine periods. According to I Samuel 31:10, the Philistines fastened the heads of Saul and his sons to the city walls after killing them at Mount Gilboa. The classical city includes an impressive theater, still used for performances, as well as colonnaded streets with shops, a bath house, a temple, and other monumental structures. An admission fee is charged for entry into the national park in which the site is located. Telephone: 011-972-06-658-7189. Hours: April–September 8–5; October–March 8–4.

Beth Shearim: The site features a particularly impressive Jewish necropolis dating to the Roman period, as well as catacombs, many with carved sarcophagi in situ and inscriptions on the walls. The display of excavated artifacts is rather weak, but it does include a huge block of glass weighing more than eight tons that may represent an unsuccessful attempt to produce raw glass for sale to artisans. There is an admission fee for entry

into the national park in which the site is located. Telephone: 011-972-04-983-1643. Hours: April–September 8–5; October–March 8–4.

Caesarea: Herod the Great built this major port city, which served as the financial center and political capital of Roman Judaea for almost 600 years (see *Archaeology*, March/April 1981). The massive artificial harbor constructed by Herod is now an underwater park for divers. Archaeological highlights of the city include a Roman theater (still used for performances), an aqueduct, baths, and storerooms, as well as several Byzantine and Crusader structures. There is an admission fee for access to the site. Hours: daily 8–4. The Caesarea Museum, located at the nearby Kibbutz Sdot Yam, houses an impressive collection of Roman statuary, Latin inscriptions, coins, glass, and a lamp collection. There is an admission fee for entry. Telephone: 011-972-06-636-4367. Hours: Friday 9–12, Saturday 10–12.

Capernaum: Situated on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee, Capernaum is mentioned frequently in association with the life of Jesus (Matthew 4:13, 18–22; 8:5–13; Luke 7:1–10; John 4:46–53). Excavations have revealed a fourth-century synagogue and a fifth-century octagonal church built atop a first-century house identified as that of St. Peter, as well as a Roman bath and Roman–Byzantine streets. Modest dress is required at Capernaum. There is an admission fee.

Carmel Caves: (Nahal Me'arot): The Carmel Caves, located on the western slope of Mt. Carmel 12 miles south of Haifa, offer a rare opportunity to enjoy three prehistoric caves: el-Wad, Tabun, and Skhul. A modern visitors center brings the caves and artifacts to life. There is an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-04-984-1750. Hours: Saturday–Thursday 8–4, Friday 8–1 (closes one hour later in summer).

'En Gedi: An impressive Jewish settlement (Roman and Byzantine periods) located near the shore of the Dead Sea, 'En Gedi is under excavation by Hebrew University. Its synagogue, with beautiful, complete mosaic floors, has been meticulously restored. One mosaic contains a long inscription in Hebrew and Aramaic cursing those who do not respect the rules of the community, perhaps hinting at the closely guarded secret recipe for a local persimmon perfume. Nearby is Tel Goren, excavated in the early 1960s. For the ambitious hiker, a visit to the Chalcolithic sanctuary is recommended. There is an admission fee for access to the synagogue. Hours: April–September 8–5; October–March 8–4.

'En Hatzeva: Located in the Arava Valley, about 20 miles southwest of the Dead Sea on the road to Eilat, this site is occupied by Iron Age and Roman fortresses. An Edomite shrine with nearby favissa was found outside the fortress. The U-shaped shrine contained several anthropomorphic cult stands and other cultic ceramic vessels, most of which are now on display at the Israel Museum (see Jerusalem). The site is open to the public, free of charge, without set hours.

Gamla: Located within the Gilabon Nature Reserve, this beautifully situated site overlooks the Sea of Galilee. Ancient Gamla was a site of Jewish settlement whose population, according to the historian Josephus Flavius, leaped over a precipice to its death ca. 67 b.c. rather than submit to Roman rule. Excavations at the site have recovered arrowheads and other evidence of Roman attack. The highlights of Gamla are its synagogue, one of the oldest in Israel, the fortification with towers, and olive oil industry installations. There is an admission fee. Significant finds are on display at the Golan Archaeological Museum (see Qasrin).

Ginossar: The Yigal Allon Museum, situated on the banks of the Sea of Galilee, is the location of a 24-foot-

long Early Roman fishing boat discovered in the sea and known as the "Jesus boat." Pilgrims associate the boat with Mark 5:21: "When Jesus had crossed again in the boat to the other side, a great crowd gathered around Him." An admission fee is charged. Telephone: 011-972-06-672-1495; fax 011-972-06-672-2910. Hours: Saturday–Thursday 8:30–5:00, Friday 8:30–1:00 for the general museum, 8:30–4:00 for the boat.

Habonim: This impressive Crusader castle (ancient Cafarlet) is located on the Carmel coast, two miles north of Tel Dor. Recent excavations revealed much of the enclosure walls with rounded towers at its corners and much of the interior with its vaulted cellars. There are no set visiting hours. Follow the signs from the inner coastal road (Road No. 4), north of Dor, to Habonim.

Haifa: There are several archaeological museums in Israel's third largest city. The Reuben and Edith Hecht Museum, located at the University of Haifa on Mount Carmel, features an exquisite collection of objects from all periods of Israel's history, many of them from university excavations. The museum is showing "The Richness of Islamic Caesarea" through June 2001. The range of exhibited items demonstrates the Egyptian influence on material culture in Caesarea in the early eleventh century. The museum charges an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-04-824-0308. Hours: Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday 10–4, Tuesday 10–7, Friday 10–1, Saturday 10–2. The exhibits at the National Maritime Museum include ship models, marine archaeology, and ancient scientific instruments and maps. The museum charges an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-04-853-6622. Hours: Sunday, Monday, and Thursday 10–4, Wednesday 10–7, Friday 10–1, Saturday 10–2. The Moshe Stekelis Museum of Prehistory displays Natufian figurines from the Nahal Oren site on Mount Carmel as well as

finds from the Tabun Cave and other sites. The museum charges an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-04-837-1833. Hours: Sunday–Thursday 8–2, Saturday 10–2. The Haifa Museum of Ancient Art houses finds from Tel Shiqmona, Greco-Roman sculpture, and Coptic art. The museum charges an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-04-852-3255. Hours: Sunday–Thursday and Saturday 10–1, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday 6–9. The Israel Edible Oil Museum documents the history of oil production technology. The museum is located at 2 Tovim St. (past the Railroad Museum, within the Shemen Oil Co. plant). The museum charges an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-04-865-4237. Hours: Sunday–Thursday 9–12.

Hammat Gader: The site, located on the banks of the Yarmuk River, is centered around hot mineral springs available for bathing today as they were in the Roman period. The well-preserved remains of a large-scale Roman bath complex are the site's archaeological highlight. There is an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-06-665-9999.

Hazor: This prominent and heavily excavated Bronze and Iron Age site has several distinct destruction levels that chronicle Hazor's long occupation and frequent sieges. Hazor's precise history is much debated, with archaeological evidence from the site challenging the biblical account (see *Archaeology*, May/June 1998). The city is often mentioned in the Old Testament. Hazor's first king, Yabin, fought at the head of the Canaanite coalition against Israelite forces led by Deborah and Barak (Judges 4–5). Solomon later fortified the city (I Kings 9:15), which was then destroyed by Tiglath-Pileser III of Assyria (II Kings 15:29). Hazor's acropolis and lower city comprise the largest archaeological site in Israel, stretching over some 200 acres. See the ruins of Iron Age fortifications, a gate, and a water system in addition to the Bronze Age palace. There is an

admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-06-693-7290. Hours: daily 8–4. The Hazor Museum is situated on Kibbutz Ayelet Hashahar. Hours: Monday–Thursday 8–5, Friday 8–4.

Jerusalem: The Ethan and Marla Davidson Center, situated at the entrance to the Jerusalem Archaeological Park, is scheduled to open in April 2001. The new center will offer an exhibition of archaeological objects augmented by visual, textual, and audio information. It is located 100 meters south of the Temple Mount complex. One of the highlights of this modern facility is a virtual reality reconstruction of the Herodian Temple Mount as it stood prior to its destruction by Roman troops in the year a.d. 70. The Israel Museum, the largest and most impressive in the state, is presenting a series of exhibitions for 2001. They include "Zodiac: Written in the Stars—Art and Symbolism of the Zodiac" (March–October 2001) that traces the sources of the Zodiac and its place in the history of Western culture. "Sacred Animals of Ancient Egypt" (through August 2001) presents five coffins of mummified animals: two ibises, a cat, a falcon, and a mongoose, reflecting the cults of ancient animals in ancient Egypt. Also new to the museum is "Mortals in the Presence of the Great Gods: Egyptian Statues of Private People in Temples" (opens February 2001). The exhibit presents six statues of private people that were displayed in temples, dating from the late Middle Kingdom, the late New Kingdom, and the Late Period. The museum charges an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-02-670-8811. Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Saturday, and holidays 10–4; Tuesday 4–9; Thursday 10–9; and Friday and holiday eves 10–2. The Rockefeller Museum exhibits important archaeological material unearthed before 1967. The museum is presenting "Image and Artifact: Treasures of the Rockefeller Museum and Aerial Photographs of Ancient Sites," highlighting some of

the museum's most important objects together with large-scale aerial photographs of their excavation sites, creating the atmosphere of an archaeological expedition. There is an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-02-628-2251. Hours: Sunday–Thursday 10–5, Friday and Saturday 10–2. A smaller though very important collection can be found at the Skirball Museum, featuring finds from Tel Gezer, Tel Dan, and Aroer. The Skirball Museum is located at Hebrew Union College. The museum charges an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-02-623-2444. Hours: Sunday–Thursday 10–4, Friday and Saturday 10–2.

Lachish: This prominent Bronze and Iron Age tel, located between the modern city of Qiryat Gat and the sites at Beth Guvrin and Maresha (see Beth Guvrin/Maresha) functioned as the capital of Judah in Iron Age II. The site was destroyed by Sennacherib of Assyria in 701. Evidence from the Old Testament, Assyrian reliefs from Nineveh (presently on display in the British Museum), Assyrian records, and archaeological findings all confirm the circumstances of Lachish's destruction (see *Archaeology*, January/February 1980). Highlights of the site include a partially reconstructed entrance ramp and gate complex, where the famous Lachish Letters were found, an Assyrian siege ramp, and a Judaeian palace-fort. No entrance fee is charged to access the site. There are no set visiting hours.

Mamshit: The remains of a desert town founded in the Nabataean period and expanded in the Late Roman and Byzantine periods are preserved at Mamshit. The town's layout is impressive, with two churches and several other monumental buildings, including stables and a bath house. The site's wall paintings are another highlight. Some of the structures are in ruins. A Bedouin restaurant and camel rides are available at the site. There is an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-07-655-6478.

Hours: April–September 8–5; October–March 8–4.

Masada: Herod the Great built a fortress atop this large plateau. In the first century b.c., Masada was taken over by Jewish zealots during the Jewish Revolt against the Romans. According to the historical account of Josephus Flavius, the zealots at Masada chose suicide rather than life under Roman rule. The Byzantine chapel and Herodian palace, store-rooms, synagogue, cisterns, and fortifications are well-preserved and have recently been restored. The archaeological site atop the mountain can be reached by foot via the Roman ramp on the east side or the snake path on the Dead Sea side, or by cable car on the Dead Sea side. There is an admission fee for access to the site. A new visitors center includes a museum displaying finds from excavations conducted at the site and a multimedia presentation. Telephone: 011-972-07-658-4207. Hours: April–September 8–5; October–March 8–4. A sound and light show also takes place on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 pm; call 011-972-07-995-9333 for details.

Megiddo: This multiperiod tel, currently under excavation, was occupied from 4000 to 400 b.c. (see *Archaeology*, November/December 1999). It is located at a key junction of the road leading from the Mediterranean Sea inland to the Jezreel Valley. Megiddo is best known as the site of Armageddon—the final battle between the people of God and their enemies, according to the New Testament (Revelation 16:16). Archaeological remains at the site include the Solomonic gate, the so-called “Solomon's Stables,” Early Bronze Age altars, and an Iron Age underground water system. There is a museum at the site, for which an admission fee is charged. Megiddo is located in a national park. Telephone: 011-972-06-652-2167. Hours: April–September 8–5; October–March 8–4. Home page: www.tau.ac.il/~archpubs/megiddo/index.html.

Monfort: One of the most impressive Crusader castles in the country, Monfort is located in western Galilee. It was built in 1227 by the French Courtenays and destroyed in 1271 by the Mamluk Sultan Baybars. A moderately strenuous hike is necessary to reach the site. There are no specific visiting hours; admission is free.

Nimrod Fortress: This Arabic fortress, dating back to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, offers a dramatic view of Banias and the Hula Valley. The fortifications, complete with towers, gate, and keep, are well preserved. Nimrod fortress is located within a national park. There is an admission fee for access to the site. Hours: daily 8–4.

Qasrin and Golan Archaeological Museum: Located in a national park on the outskirts of Qasrin, the capital of the Golan, is this synagogue site and partially reconstructed Talmudic village. There is an admission fee for access. Hours: daily 8–4. Visit the Golan Archaeological Museum, with artifacts from Qasrin, the Chalcolithic finds from Golan excavations, and the finds from Gamla. The museum charges an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-06-696-1350. Hours: Sunday–Thursday 8–5, Friday 8–3, Saturday 10–4.

Qumran: Located on the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea, this site was the home of the Qumran Essenes, a Jewish apocalyptic sect of the second and first centuries b.c. The site consists of a small compound with communal dining room, scriptorium, and ritual baths. Nearby are the caves where the majority of the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in the 1950s. There is a visitors center at the site, which is located in a national park. An admission fee is charged to enter the site. Telephone: 011-972-02-994-2335. Hours: April–September 8–5; October–March 8–4.

Sepphoris: This Galilean city is traditionally considered the birthplace

of Mary, the mother of Jesus. From the second century a.d., Sepphoris served as the seat of the Sanhedrin, the central legal and spiritual council of the Jewish people. The Mishnah, a collection of Jewish rules that formed the core of the Talmud, was compiled there. Archaeological remains at Sepphoris date from the Hellenistic through the Byzantine periods. Highlights include stunning Roman mosaics in situ, the "Nilometer" and the "Mona Lisa." There is an admission fee for entry into the national park in which Sepphoris is located. Telephone: 011-972-06-656-6272. Hours: daily 8–4.

Sha'ar Hagolan: The Neolithic village of Sha'ar Hagolan (ca. 6000–5500 b.c.) is the largest and most important findspot for prehistoric art and artifacts in Israel. More than 150 figurines have been found at the site. Monumental building complexes, the oldest known in Israel, have also been discovered at Sha'ar Hagolan. Request directions to the site at the Prehistory Museum, Kibbutz Sha'ar Hagolan. Entry to the museum is free of charge. Telephone: 011-972-06-667-7386. Hours: daily 9–12.

Shivta: The impressive remains of this Byzantine desert town include intact churches, streets, public structures, and homes available for viewing. There is no admission fee for access to the site, nor are there set visiting hours.

Tel Arad: The large lower city dates to the Early Bronze Age, the acropolis to the Israelite period. The Early Bronze Age city, complete with domestic structures, temples, streets, and city walls, is excellently preserved. An Israelite temple with a traditional altar is located on the tel. An admission fee is charged for access to the site. Important finds are exhibited in the Arad Museum and Visitors Center, located in the nearby town of Arad. The museum does not charge an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-07-776-2170. Hours: April–Sep-

tember 8–5; October–March 8–4. Other finds from Tel Arad are on display in the Israel Museum (see Jerusalem).

Tel Aviv/Jaffa: The principal archaeological site in the area surrounding Israel's largest metropolis is Tel Qasile, a Philistine tel with a number of well-preserved temples. A museum is located on the grounds of the Eretz Israel Museum. The Eretz Israel Museum is now featuring an exhibition entitled "Bare Bones: Ancient Artifacts from Animal Bones" (through 2001) that features an all-inclusive exhibition on an oft-neglected artifact type. "Christianity on the Coins of Eretz Israel" (until June 2001) traces the story of Christianity in Israel from a unique perspective very few people are aware of—coins, reflecting the development of Christianity from a small and persecuted cult into one of the world's most important and influential religions. The museum also houses impressive exhibits on ancient technology, including ceramic, numismatic, glass, and olive oil. An admission fee is charged. Telephone: 011-972-03-641-5244-8. Hours: Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday 9–2, Tuesday and Thursday 9–7, Friday and Saturday 10–1. The ancient seaport town of Jaffa is adjacent to the southern border of Tel Aviv. In addition to the visible ruins from the earlier excavations and the Archaeological Museum, visitors can now see the new Tel Aviv University excavations and walk the boardwalk along the soon-to-be-restored seawall of the Crusader town. The museum charges a nominal admission fee. Hours: Sunday, Monday, and Wednesday–Friday 9–1, Tuesday 4–7, Saturday 10–2.

Tel Dan: This major Middle Bronze Age and Iron Age tel is located within a lovely nature preserve. See the Middle Bronze Age mud-brick arched gate, the Iron Age high palace, and the Iron Age gate complex, where an important Aramaic inscription con-

firms the existence of the House of David was found. There is an admission fee for access to the site. Telephone: 011-972-06-695-1579. Hours: April–September 8–5; October–March 8–4.

Tel Dor: Iron Age and Persian-period ruins are visible at this highly significant tel located on the Carmel coast near one of the finest bathing beaches in all of Israel. There is no admission fee for access to the site. The Nahsholim Museum, housed in an old glass factory on Kibbutz Nahsholim, focuses on regional and underwater archaeology. The museum charges an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-06-639-0950. Hours: daily 9–1. Home page: www.qal.berkeley.edu/~teldor/.

Tel Gezer: This multiperiod site is situated on the border of the coastal plain and foothills, at a pass leading up to Jerusalem. Tel Gezer, along with Megiddo and Hazor, served as one of King Solomon's royal administrative centers. It is worth visiting the Canaanite high palace, the Solomonic gate complex, the entrance to the water system, and the massive fortification tower. No admission fee is charged to enter Tel Gezer. There are no specified visiting hours, no signs, and no amenities.

Tel Miqne/Ekron: Visit the remains of one of the five capital cities of the Philistines (see Archaeology, January/February 1998). Access to the Iron Age tel is difficult, but the Revadim Archaeological Museum, located at nearby Kibbutz Revadim, between Jerusalem and Ashkelon, is well worth the trip. The museum charges an admission fee. Hours: Sunday–Friday 10–3, Saturday 11–3.

Tel Sheva: Tel Sheva is thought to be the site of biblical Beersheba. The Iron Age site, with storerooms, fortifications, and a water system, is well preserved. There is an admission fee for entry into the national park in which the site is located. Telephone: 011-

972-07-646-7286. Hours: daily 8–4.

Tiberias: See the tombs of Rabbi Akiba and several other well known Talmudic rabbis. Visit the synagogue with the famous zodiac mosaic at Hammat Tiberias. The Byzantine church on Mt. Berenice provides a panoramic view of Tiberias and the Sea of Galilee. There is an admission

fee for access to the synagogue. Telephone: 011-972-06-672-5287. Hours: Sunday–Thursday 8–5, Friday and Saturday 8–4.

Yehiam: This fortress, used during the Crusader period and destroyed by Baybars in 1265, commands a stunning view of western Galilee. Located 20 minutes east of Nahariya, the

fortress was rebuilt in the nineteenth century and used for protection by the local Jewish inhabitants during the 1948 War of Independence. The best time to visit is during the annual Renaissance Fair during the festival of Sukkot. There is an admission fee. Telephone: 011-972-04-985-6004. Hours: April–September 8–5; October–March 8–4.

This guide was created by Samuel Wolff of the Israel Antiquities Authority.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION
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