

Cycling in Israel



www.goisrael.com

Welcome to Israel, a land of history, faith, sights, smells and sounds. From the green mountains of the Galilee to the desert plains of the Negev, Israel is rapidly becoming a leading destination for cyclists from around the world. Most of the historical, archeological and religious sights around the country are accessible along back roads, and cyclists are seen everywhere. As cyclists, we know that the best way to get a feeling for a new place is on a bike. Traveling at just the right speed, you can move fast enough to get from one place to another in the course of a day, and slow enough to meet the people and discover the hidden corners that go unnoticed from the car window. In one day of cycling, you have the opportunity to see dozens of archeological sights, stopping in villages for a break or snack along the way. You have the time to meet the local people and to take on the challenge that brings you to your next destination. Tel Aviv and Jerusalem are excellent for urban cycling, combining sightseeing while traveling by a green mode of transport and getting a true feeling of the city's atmosphere. Hotels catering to cyclists and tour agencies specializing in bike tours will be happy to host you and show you the country. Whether your preference is road, off-road, downhill or long distance cycling, Israel has something for you. For details on suggested itineraries, see the Ministry of Tourism website, www.goisrael.com.



Heritage Tours of the Holy Land: Follow the Stories of the Bible on Your Own Two Wheels

The story of Jesus has a strong connection to the Galilee and the hills of Jerusalem. Small roads pass through places such as Nazareth, Capernaum and Mt. Tabor, running through the same valleys and hills that Jesus and his disciples walked at the time of the Roman Empire. Some of the forts still stand, and churches mark historical Christian along the way. Many villages that remain in the same location mentioned in the Bible are too numerous to visit if traveling by car or bus. Pedal around the Sea of Galilee, climb up to Kfar Cana or explore the busy markets of Acre or Jerusalem. Travel at a speed that allows you to absorb the meaning of a pilgrimage on a week-long tour between Acre and the Kinneret (the Sea of Galilee), a tour of the Jerusalem Hills, or day tours of other points of interest.

Nearly every hill, back road, field or village is connected to the history of the Jewish people. You can cycle through the story of Abraham, the Twelve Tribes, Bar Kochva, the Maccabis, and many more. Explore the diverse ways of life in the modern Zionist enterprise outside the well-known city centers. Almost any route taken through the country can become a tour of Jewish heritage. A day ride of Mt. Carmel, a journey in the footsteps of the children of Israel in the desert or an archeological tour of ancient synagogues are some of the many options for those who wish to combine cycling and a visit to the homeland.

Follow the story of the children of Israel on their long journey from Kadesh Barne'a to Mt. Zion. Many of the places mentioned in the Bible can be located today. Some are ruins from ancient times, some are rebuilt settlements in approximately the same location, and some have been lived in since biblical times. Travel between these sites with an open Bible in hand, and feel through your own feet the physical and spiritual passage from the desert to Jerusalem.

Subjects of General Interest:

Archeology

The land of Israel has been populated from the dawn of mankind. Empires over the past 4,000 years left behind their cities, forts and temples. Roman aqueducts, crusader ports, villages from the Hellenistic era, alongside ancient olive oil presses blend together to create a fascinating location for archeology enthusiasts. Follow crusader archeology in the Galilee, search for the ruins of the ancient biblical villages, forts and cities around Jerusalem. Explore the historic merchant towns of the spice route in the Negev or bike between the temples from the pre-Joshua era.

Wine has been found in Israel ever since man discovered the drink of the gods. Commercial and boutique wineries, vineyards and wine-tasting centers are found in abundance throughout the country, at more than one hundred different locations. Cycle and enjoy the wide selection of fine wines that Israel offers. Homemade goat cheese, honey and olive oil can be added to turn your visit into a culinary bike ride of the land of milk and honey. The two main wine regions are around Jerusalem and the Judean plains, or in the Golan and Galilee. We recommend a week's tour in one, or both, of these areas.

Agriculture

Israel is recognized worldwide as a leading center of the science of agriculture, desert agriculture in particular. Enjoy cycling past the fields and groves while learning about the unique methods of Israeli farming. Farms and small communities in the south



are an excellent setting for cycling, offering warm hospitality together with blooming orchards and flower beds and ingenious techniques of resource management.

Art

Art and cultural centers in Israel are easily accessible by bike. Avoid traffic and cruise by the public art on display throughout the cities. Different styles of architecture can also be found along bike routes in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and Haifa.

Adventure Tours:

Off-road Cycling, Camping and Extreme Sports

Off-road cycling ranging from a day to a week is a great way to escape the ordinary, routine life. The Jerusalem hills and the Judean plains offer a wide selection of off-road trails. Mt. Carmel and the Galilee have dozens of trails that run through hills and valleys between villages and archeological ruins. The Negev is also a wonderful location for off-road cycling, which takes you through dry riverbeds, hidden desert springs, craters and dunes. Spend a day in the black and red rocks around Eilat. Both camping and conventional forms of lodging are available.

Downhill and technical riding have also become common pastimes in recent years in Israel. Several operators offer day tours of extreme cycling, providing professional bikes and guides. Get your thrills racing down the slopes of the Galilee or along the cliffs of the Ramon Crater. Urban riding and competitions can supply the adrenaline rush we all need from time to time.



Tour Operators, Rentals and Further Information

Associations and Information.

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| The Israeli Cycling Federation: | www.ofanaim.org.il |
| Bike Israel | www.bikeisrael.com |
| Groopy | www.groopy.co.il |
| Yoav-Yehuda Tourism Association | www.touryoav.org.il |



Tour Operators.

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| Walkways Adventure Tours | www.walk-ways.com |
| Drachim Ba Golan | www.Biketrip.co.il |
| Ofek | www.ofek-il.com |
| Ofanaor | www.ofanaor.co.il |
| Israel Pedals | www.israelpedals.com |
| Ez Harim Extreme Sports | www.ezharim.co.il |
| Baruch Frank | www.baruchfrank.com |
| Rolling | Tel: 08-6551620 |
| Matzok | www.matzok.co.il |
| Gidon Bliach | Tel: 0528-351933 |
| Be'eri Cycling Club | www.la-madavesh.co.il |
| Yotam BaMidbar | Tel: 0524-260726 |
| Gal Galil | www.galgalil.com |

For more information, including Israel Government Tourist offices abroad, contact:

Israel Ministry of Tourism

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Rentals

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| Ran o Fun | www.ranofun.co.il |
| O-Fun | www.o-fun.co.il |
| Rock and Road | www.rocknroad.co.il |
| Rockman | Tel: 02-5344452 |
| Ofan-bateva | www.ofan-bateva.bweb.co.il |

Cyclist Lodging

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| Hoo-Ha (Kfar Tabor) | www.hooaha.co.il |
| Tour Ofan (Poria) | Tel: 0508-652517 |
| iBike (Mitzpe Ramon) | www.ibike.co.il |

Look for bicycle itineraries on
www.goisrael.com.



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