Women's Connection Journey to Incredible Israel March 15-25, 2018

Our Itinerary:

DAY 1 - Thursday

Depart Toronto on El Al's direct evening flight from Toronto to Israel.

DAY 2 - Friday

We will be welcomed at the Tel Aviv airport by our knowledgeable and personable Tour Guide.
We'll begin our visit by heading straight to Jaffa, the picturesque ancient port from which Jonah set sail before being swallowed by the whale, where King Solomon imported the cedars of Lebanon to build the Temple in Jerusalem, and where Peter had his vision at Simon the Tanner's home.
Enjoy a beautiful view of modern Tel Aviv from Jaffa, before driving through the city.
Welcome Dinner & overnight in Tel Aviv.

DAY 3 - Saturday

Drive north across the Sharon Plain to the excavations of the ancient city and port at Caesarea National Park. King Herod built Caesarea in honor of his patron Emperor Augustus in the mid-first century BCE, and Pontius Pilate ruled the country from here.
Peter's story, which we began to explore in Jaffa, continues here when he baptized Cornelius the Centurion in Caesarea. It was from this port that Paul set sail to preach in communities all over the Mediterranean, where he was later imprisoned for two years and appeared before Felix, Festus and King Agrippa. All these events are reflected in the ruins we'll tour, including the Roman theater, the hippodrome and Herod's palace, as well as mosaics and other remains from the centuries when Caesarea was an important Christian center.
Drive to the Carmel Mountain Range, and visit the place where it's believed Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal. This scenic spot also affords a breathtaking view of the Valley of H'ar Megiddo, the Armageddon of Revelation 16:16.
Drive through the Ara Valley to Tel Megiddo, Tour the remains of one of the most intensively inhabited sites in the country with over 25 levels of settlement, spanning some 3,000 years, including walls, gates, palaces and dwellings from the time of King Solomon, King Ahab and the Assyrians. A highlight will be our walk through the water system, one of the great engineering marvels of antiquity.
Cross the Jezreel Valley, sometimes called "the battlefield of the Bible" and now Israel's breadbasket, to Mt. Tabor to hear the account of the prophetess Deborah gathering her forces here in the time of the Judges to battle against Sisera. Jesus came to Tabor with Peter and James, was transfigured before them, and met with Moses and Elijah. After a breathtaking view of the valley below,
visit the beautiful two-level Church of the Transfiguration, then to Nazareth to see the town where Jesus was raised. Enjoy lunch at Nazareth Village, a full-scale reconstruction of life in Nazareth during the time of Jesus.
Continue to the centuries-old Church of St. Gabriel, which houses the village spring – one of the few authentic remains of the time of Jesus to be seen in Nazareth.
Drive across the Galilee Mountains via Cana, the scene of Jesus' first miracle of changing water into wine, and home of Nathanael.
Stop for a breathtaking overview of the Sea of Galilee and the scenes of Jesus' Galilee ministry that we will be visiting over the next few days from the Arbel Cliff.
Overnight in the Sea of Galilee area.

DAY 4 - Sunday

We begin our day at Kibbutz Ginosar to see the magnificent display of the wooden Galilee Boat, dating from the time of Jesus, which was discovered, mired in the mud on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Continue from Ginosar with a boat-ride across the Sea of Galilee, stopping for devotions as the waves lap quietly around the boat, recalling ancient times.
Land near Capernaum to visit the ruins of this village, often called the hometown of Jesus, with its synagogue, church marking the home of Peter, and dwellings from the time of Jesus.
Next, stop at the nearby Chapel of the Primacy of Peter, where Jesus appeared to the Apostles after the resurrection, where we can go right down to the water's edge in beautiful surroundings. Nearby is the site of the miracle of the loaves and fishes at Tabgha, with its famed mosaic depicting the two fishes and the five loaves Jesus multiplied.
Continue north to end our day at the Mount of Beatitudes, the hill where Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount to the multitudes that stood below, with a beautiful view of the Sea of Galilee.
Overnight in the Sea of Galilee area

DAY 5 - Monday

Ascend the Golan Heights today, the biblical Bashan and ancestral home of the half-tribe of Manassah and in Jesus' day, part of the territory of Herod Philip. Stop for an overview of Gamla, also known as "Massada of the north" where you'll hear a heroic story of the few against the many, as the raptors that are protected here soar

overhead in these magnificent natural surroundings.
Visit Tel Dan, one of the most important biblical mounds in the country. Here archaeologists discovered an inscription with the words "House of David," and you can see a gateway from the time of Abraham, as well as the High Place of Jeroboam and the Israelite gate.

Continue to Caesarea Philippi, now known as Banias. Open your Bible among the ruins of pagan temples to consider the words Jesus spoke here: "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" (Matt. 16:13). As at Dan, you'll also enjoy the natural beauty of Banias nestled on the flourishing banks of one the Jordan's main tributaries.

Overnight in the Sea of Galilee area

DAY 6 - Tuesday

Today we're heading up to Jerusalem! But before we leave the Sea of Galilee area, we'll begin the day with an inspiring visit to Yardenit, the baptismal site located at the Jordan River on the southern tip of the Sea of Galilee.
Driving south along the Jordan Valley our next stop will be the ancient city of Beit She'an. On the walls of this once-powerful city that controlled the gateway to the land of Israel the Philistines hung the bodies of Saul and his three sons, whom they had defeated in battle on nearby Mount Gilboa. You can climb to the top of the huge mound of biblical antiquities, and see many magnificent remnants of this city that was the capital of the Decapolis cities where the Gospels say the fame of Jesus spread during his public ministry.
Stop for picnic lunch and a swim at Sachne Park. Continue down the Jordan Valley, seeing Jericho, and the Mountains of Ammon and Moab in Jordan, as we ascend through the Judean Desert to the Holy City.
Before heading to our hotel in Jerusalem, we'll stop for our first dramatic view of the Holy City from Mount Scopus, and open our Bibles to read "Our feet are standing in your gates, O Jerusalem (Psalm 122:2) and others of the Psalms of Ascent.
Overnight in Jerusalem

DAY 7 - Wednesday

We will start the day with a drive to Bethlehem, stopping at the Shepherd's Fields on the way, and then on to the Church of the Nativity to see the grotto where the Savior was born
Continue to the Israel Museum, home to the most important archaeological discovery of the 20th century – the Dead Sea Scrolls. An impressive model of Jerusalem in 69 CE sets the stage before entering the special shrine that contains the Scrolls. Driving by the Knesset, we view Israel's legislature and see the magnificent bronze menorah with its carvings depicting the biblical history of Israel and Zechariah's immortal words "Not by might, nor by power but by My Spirit..." (4:6).
The remainder of the afternoon is spent at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial with its astounding new historical museum, Hall of Remembrance, Children's' Memorial and other moving sites. Overnight in Jerusalem

DAY 8 - Thursday

Today we head east out of Jerusalem through the Judean Desert to visit Qumran, where the famed Dead Sea Scrolls were found. Modern scholarship places a community of Essenes at this site, and it is possible that John the Baptist spent some time with the community here.
Drive along the shore of the Dead Sea, to the oasis at Ein Gedi, where David hid from King Saul.
In the afternoon, take the cable-car to the top of Masada, scene of the epic stand by Jewish rebels at the end of the great revolt against Rome nearly 2,000 years ago. The new museum at the visitor's center reveals the secrets of the daily life of the rebels, the story of the excavations, and how the site became one of Israel's most important symbols.
Enjoy a healthful and relaxing dip in the Dead Sea, the lowest, saltiest body of water on earth, before returning to Jerusalem.

DAY 9 – Friday

Welcome the day with one of the most magnificent views in the world: ancient Jerusalem as seen from the top of the Mount of Olives. Take the "Palm Sunday Walk" down the Mount of Olives in the footsteps of Jesus. On the way, stop at Dominus Flevit Church (The Lord Wept), marking the site of Jesus' weeping
over the city (Luke 19: 37-42). At the Garden of Gethsemane at the base of the mountain, you can spend time pondering and praying about the time Jesus spent here with his disciples before his arrest.
We enter the Old City via Lion's Gate, also known as St. Stephen's Gate to the Pools of Bethesda, where Jesus healed a paralytic (John 5: 2-9). Christian groups love to raise their voices in song at the adjacent Church of St. Anne. Walking up through the Old City streets, your next stop can be the
Sisters of Zion Convent, built over the Praetorium, where Jesus was judged by Pontius Pilate and took up the cross, marked by the Ecce Homo ("Here is the Man" - John 19:5) Arch over the street. This site marks the beginning of the Via Dolorosa, the Way of Sorrows, which tradition says Jesus went with the cross to Calvary. Today,

it passes through the colorful Old City markets to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. This is the site venerated by the Roman Catholic and the Orthodox world as the place of crucifixion, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.
The day will end with a visit to the Garden Tomb. Located 500 meters to the north of Damascus Gate, this ancient cemetery discovered approximately 130 years ago by the British General Charles Gordon has become a moving site in which to recall the crucifixion and burial of Jesus. We will spend time in these peaceful garden surroundings in prayer, song, fellowship and communion. Overnight in Jerusalem.

Day 10 - Saturday

Start the day with a visit to Mt. Zion and its many sites, among them: King David's Tomb and the Room of the Last Supper.
Enter the Old City via Zion Gate and stroll through the alleyways of the Jewish Quarter, overflowing with historic sites and archaeological treasures. Stop at the Western Wall, the last remnant of the Herodian Temple Mount destroyed by the Romans nearly 2,000 years ago.
Explore the Southern Wall Archaeological Park located around the southwestern corner of Temple Mount. Here you can stand on the very street that Jesus would have walked 2,000 years ago and view other archaeological remains that shed light on other New Testament events.
Walk up the Southern Steps, the western flight of stairs leading to the main entrances of the Temple Mount. Some suggest that the fifteen long steps may have been one of the locations where pilgrims sang the fifteen Psalms of Ascent (120-34) as they went up to worship.
Continue to the most ancient part of Jerusalem: the City of David. This area has been excavated more than any other place in Jerusalem in the past 120 years and boasts some of the most important discoveries in biblical archaeology to date.
Afternoon at your leisure.
Dinner tonight will be a Farewell Dinner at a local Middle Eastern Restaurant, after which we will head to the airport for our early morning flight home to Toronto. (Arrival Sunday morning)

It is strongly recommended that you purchase Travel Insurance!

****INSURANCE RATES (Manulife):**

MEDICAL ONLY (UP TO AGE 59)
$47.00
Anyone over 60 must complete a medical questionnaire

ALL INCLUSIVE PACKAGE INSURANCE
Insured value of $**3941 prior to departure**
Up to age 59- $372.60
60-64- $453.60
65-69 - $540.00
70-74 - $723.60
75-79 - $929.88

Insured value of **$4075 prior to departure**
Up to age 59 - $378.00
60-64year - $460.08
65-69 - $547.56
70-74 - $732.24
75-79 - $941.76

NON-MEDICAL PACKAGE INSURANCE
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Up to age 59 - $312.12
60-64 - $353.16
65-69 - $394.20
70-74 - $442.80
75-79 - $663.12

Insured value of **$4075 prior to departure**
Up to age 59 - $317.52
60-64 - $359.64
65-69 - $401.76
70-74 - $451.44
75-79 - $676.08

PREMIUM PACKAGE INSURANCE*
Ins Value of **$3941 prior to departure** $453.60
Ins Value of **$4075 prior to departure** $465.48
*(*Rate is regardless of age, but can only be for persons up to age 69 years of age)*
***All Rates valid as of May 12, 2017*

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