

Jerusalem

القدس

ירושלים



People have been writing about Jerusalem for the better part of its 3000-year history, but still today your first glimpse inside the ancient walled city will leave you speechless. More than beautiful, however, Jerusalem is a spiritual centre, holy to the three great monotheistic faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

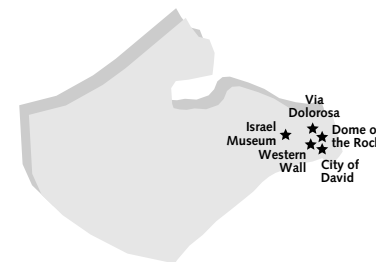
That three religions have assigned so much importance to a solitary city makes Jerusalem one of the most fascinating places you'll ever visit. Within a short walk of each other, you can find Christians quietly praying in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jews dancing by the Western Wall and Muslims prostrate before Al-Aqsa Mosque. Whatever your credence, it's hard not to be swept up in the emotional tide that pulsates through these ancient streets.

Defying warfare and time, Jerusalem's architecture remains in remarkable shape – you could spend days (or weeks) getting lost in its labyrinth of alleys and bustling bazaars. The Old City is surrounded by relics of ancient and modern times. To the south lies the City of David (the original Jebusite city). Predominately Palestinian East Jerusalem is home to consulates, museums and the Garden Tomb (the possible crucifixion site), while West Jerusalem has the Israeli capital building and a patchwork of secular and religious neighbourhoods.

Jerusalem, or Al-Quds as its known in Arabic, has an inevitably powerful effect on its visitors, breeding political activism, religious fanaticism or simply a greater appreciation of the magnificent tide of human history. A quick run through the main tourist sights won't do it justice, so plan on staying a while, and see what it does to you.

HIGHLIGHTS

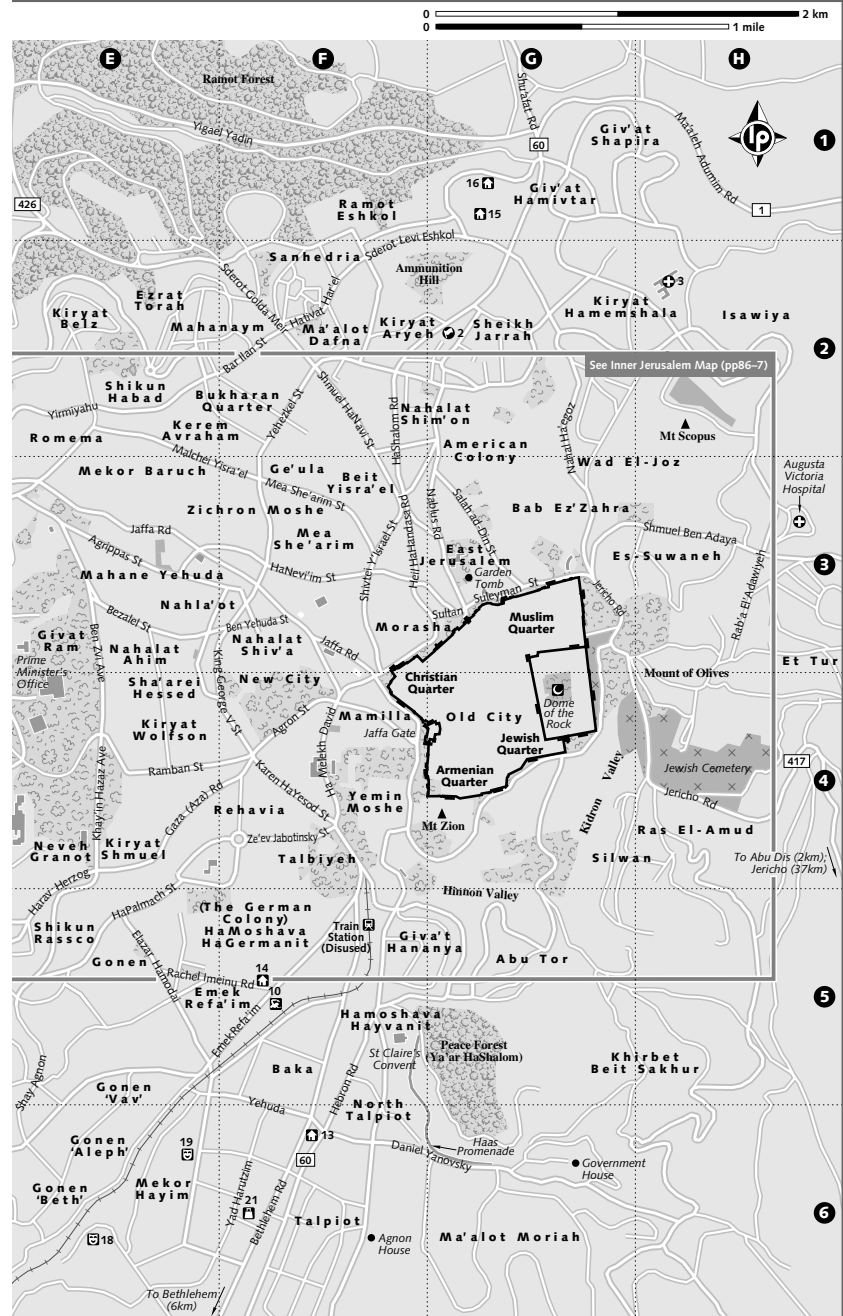
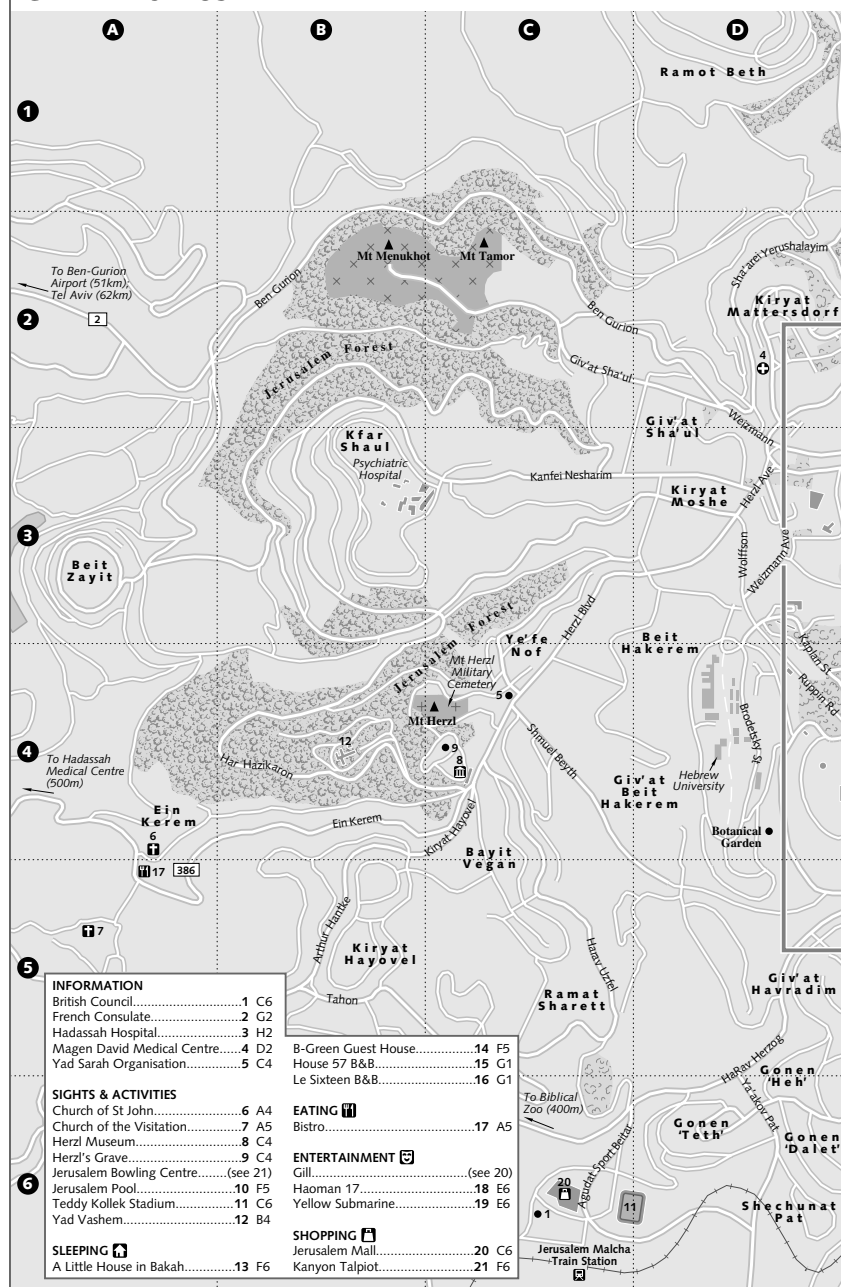
- Walking along the sacred **Via Dolorosa** (p126), long considered the final path of Jesus on his way to Calvary
- Gazing at the architectural magnificence of the **Dome of the Rock** (p95), Jerusalem's most recognisable symbol
- Sauntering through the extensive **Israel Museum** (p119), one of the richest collections of artefacts in the Middle East
- Feeling the spiritual power of the **Western Wall** (p96), Judaism's holiest place
- Making like Indiana Jones and crawling through the water-filled tunnels in the **City of David** (p107)



■ TELEPHONE CODE: 02

■ POPULATION: 693,000

GREATER JERUSALEM



HISTORY

First Temple

The first settlement on the site of Jerusalem was on the Ophel Ridge, immediately to the southeast of the present-day Jewish Quarter. This was a small Jebusite (pre-Israelite tribe) city, mentioned in Egyptian texts of the 20th century BC, which was conquered in 997 BC by the Israelites. They were led by their king, David, who brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem and made the city his capital.

Under Solomon (the son of David) the boundaries of the city were extended north to enclose the spur of land that is now the Haram ash-Sharif/Temple Mount. The construction of the First Temple began in 950 BC. After Solomon's death, some 17 years later, the city became the capital of Judah as the 12 tribes of Israel divided. In 586 BC Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and the city and the Temple were destroyed. The people of Jerusalem were exiled to Babylonia until three years later, when the king of Persia, Cyrus, allowed them to return.

Second Temple

The Second Temple was constructed around 520 BC, and around 445 BC the city walls were rebuilt under the leadership of Nehemiah, Governor of Judah.

The next notable stage in the history of Jerusalem came with Alexander the Great's conquest of the city in 331 BC. On his death in 323, the Seleucids eventually took over until the Maccabean Revolt 30 years later. This launched the Hasmonean dynasty, which re-sanctified the Temple in 164 BC after it had been desecrated by the Seleucids.

Romans

Under the leadership of General Pompey, Jerusalem was conquered by the Romans around 63 BC. Some 25 years later they installed Herod the Great to rule what they called the Kingdom of Judea. Upon the death of Herod, the Romans resumed direct control, installing a procurator to administer the city. Pontius Pilate, best known for ordering the crucifixion of Jesus around AD 30, was the fifth procurator.

Another 36 years later came the First Revolt by the Jews against the Romans, but after four years of conflict, the Roman gen-

eral Titus triumphed. With the Second Temple destroyed and Jerusalem burnt, many Jews became slaves and more fled into exile, marking the start of the Diaspora. Jerusalem continued as the capital but Emperor Hadrian decided to destroy it completely in AD 132 due to the threat of renewed Jewish national aspirations. This provoked the unsuccessful Second Revolt led by Simon Bar Kochba, after which Jews were forbidden to enter Aelia Capitolina, the new city built on the ruins of Jerusalem. Aelia Capitolina is the foundation of today's Old City.

Holy City

In AD 331 Christianity was legalised by Emperor Constantine, founder of the Eastern Roman Empire, and his mother visited the Holy Land searching for Christian holy places. This sparked off the building of basilicas and churches, and the city quickly grew to the size it had been under Herod the Great.

The Byzantine Empire was defeated by the Persians, who conquered Jerusalem in 614. Their rule lasted just 15 years before the Byzantines succeeded in retaking the city. That victory, however, was short-lived, for within another 10 years an Arab army, led by Caliph Omar under the banner of Islam, swept through Palestine. Omar's entry into Jerusalem was to instigate almost 1300 years of Muslim supremacy in what had been first a Jewish city, then a Christian city and now a city of Islam. In 688 the Dome of the Rock was constructed on the site of the destroyed Temple. Under the early Islamic leaders, Jerusalem was a protected centre of pilgrimage for Jews and Christians as well as Muslims, but this came to an end in the 10th century. Under Caliph Hakim, non-Muslims were cruelly persecuted and churches and synagogues were destroyed, finally provoking the Crusades 90 years later.

From Crusaders to Mamluks to Ottomans

The Crusaders took Jerusalem in 1099 from the Fatimids, who had only just regained control from the Seljuks. After almost 90 years the Latin Kingdom was defeated by Saladin (Salah ad-Din) in 1187. This was to be the most effective administration so far. Under Saladin, Muslims and Jews were allowed to resettle in the city. From the 13th to the 16th centuries, the Mamluks con-

structed a number of outstanding buildings dedicated to religious study.

Although a Muslim academic centre, Jerusalem became a relative backwater. In 1517 the Ottoman Turks defeated the Mamluks, adding Palestine to their large empire. Yet although they, too, are remembered for their lack of efficiency in local administration, their initial impact on the city is still much admired today. The impressive Old City walls that you see now were built by their second sultan, Süleyman the Magnificent. After Süleyman, Jerusalem's rulers allowed the city, like the rest of the country, to decline. Buildings and streets were not maintained, and corruption among the authorities was rife.

As a result of the Turkish sultan's 1856 Edict of Toleration for all religions, Jews and Christians were again able to settle in the city. In the 1860s, inspired and largely financed by an English Jew, Sir Moses Montefiore, Jewish settlement outside the city walls began. As Jewish immigration rapidly increased, these settlements developed into what is now the New City.

The Divided City

After WWI, Jerusalem, which had been captured by General Allenby's forces from the Turks, became the administrative capital of the British Mandate. In these times of fervent Arab and Jewish nationalism, the city became a hotbed of political tensions. Jerusalem was always the most sought-after area of the country for both the Arabs and the Jews, and the city was the stage for terrorism and, occasionally, open warfare.

After the British withdrew from Palestine, the UN became responsible for supervising the situation. Its subsequent partition plan was accepted in principle by the Jews, but it was rejected by the Arabs. Jerusalem was to be internationalised, surrounded by independent Arab and Jewish states. In the 1948 Arab-Israeli War the Jordanians took the Old City and East Jerusalem, while the Jews held the New City. Patches of no-man's-land separated them and the new State of Israel declared its part of Jerusalem as its capital.

For 19 years Jerusalem was a divided city, and Mandelbaum Gate became the official crossing point between East Jerusalem and the New City for the few who were permitted to move between them. The Six Day War in

1967 saw the reunification of the whole of Jerusalem, and the Israelis began a massive program of restoration, refurbishment and landscaping.

Controversial Capital

Controversy continues to surround the status of Jerusalem, and most countries maintain their embassies in Tel Aviv. Both Israelis and Palestinians see the city as their own capital and even though the Palestinian Authority (PA) is based in Ramallah, it hopes to one day move to East Jerusalem. Israel is determined to never let that happen and has been playing a cautious game of geopolitics to seal the city off from the Palestinian lands. In the latest move, the Jewish settlement of Ma'ale Adumim, the last barrier between Jerusalem and the West Bank, was incorporated into the city.

CLIMATE

At 809m above sea level, Jerusalem is slightly cooler and drier than Tel Aviv. Summer months are dry as a bone with average daily temperatures between 20°C and 25°C. Winter is surprisingly cool and wet, with rain, the odd snow storm, and temperatures down to 8°C to 10°C.

ORIENTATION

Jerusalem is a relatively small city but navigation can be complicated by the rolling topography and winding roads, not to mention the labyrinth of alleys in the Old City. In the New City, the main artery is Jaffa Rd, which links the bus station, Zion Sq and the Old City. The main areas of shopping and commerce are located on King George V, Ben Yehuda and Ben Hillel Sts. Further east, Hel Handasa Rd runs north (becoming HaShalom Rd) from the Old City towards Ramallah. This road marks the former Green Line that until 1967 divided Israel and Jordan.

The Old City is a world unto itself and even a good sense of direction is of little use when trying to navigate its narrow passages. It's easy to get lost, but just walk one or two minutes in any direction and you eventually reach a familiar landmark or street.

Egged Rte 99 Circular Line, which makes a loop around the city while providing commentary in English, is a good way to orient yourself upon arrival.

Maps

There are several good maps available of Jerusalem and one of the best is the *Jerusalem Visitors Map*, available for free from the tourist information office. One side shows greater Jerusalem while the other has a 1:4,250 map of the Old City.

INFORMATION BOOKSHOPS

Educational Bookshop (Map p110; ☎ 628 3704; 22 Salah ad-Din St; ☎ 8am-8pm) East Jerusalem's best bookshop has an excellent range of books pertaining to the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as a good selection of magazines and Palestinian music CDs.

Moriah Bookshop (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 5267; 40 Misgav Ladach St, Jewish Quarter; ☎ 10am-8pm, except Shabbat) Moriah has the largest selection of books on Judaism in the city; it's also endowed with souvenirs, CDs and books on current events of the Jewish state.

Sefer VeSefel (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 8237; 2 Ya'vets St) This Jerusalem institution houses floor-to-ceiling new and secondhand fiction and nonfiction titles. It's upstairs in an alley linking Jaffa Rd with Mordechai Ben Hillel St.

Steimatzky Jaffa Rd (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 0155; 39 Jaffa Rd); Ben Yehuda St (Map pp114-15; 7 Ben Yehuda St); Central Bus Station (see Map pp86-7); Jerusalem Mall (see Map pp80-1) Chain bookshop with several branches around town.

T'mol (Map pp114-15; ☎ 623 2758; www.tmol-shilshom.co.il; 5 Yoel Salomon St; ☎ 8.30am-midnight Sun-Thu, 8.30am-4pm Fri, 8pm-midnight Sat) Bohemian café and used bookshop; this place often hosts poetry readings or lectures by authors and journalists. Check its website for upcoming events.

CULTURAL CENTRES

Alliance Française (City Centre Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 3156; ccfgray@netvision.net.il; Kikar Safra; ☎ 2-6pm Sun & Thu, 1pm-7.30pm Mon, 11am-6pm Tue-Wed, 10am-1pm Fri; East Jerusalem Map p110; ☎ 628 2451; 21 Salah ad-Din St; ☎ 10am-1pm & 2-6pm Mon-Tue, 2-6pm Wed-Sat) This cultural centre has French language books and newspapers, and free internet.

American Cultural Centre (Map pp120-1; ☎ 627 5777 ext 330; 19 Karen HaYesod; ☎ 10am-4pm Sun-Thu, 10am-1pm Fri) Offering cool respite, this cultural centre has a library and internet access.

JERUSALEM IN...

Two Days

Seeing all the sights of Jerusalem would take a week or more, so on a short visit you'll need to be a little selective. Spend your first day visiting the highlights of the Old City, including the **Temple Mount** (p93), the **Western Wall** (p96), the **Via Dolorosa** (p126) and the **Citadel (Tower of David)** (p97). Don't miss the tour of the **Western Wall Tunnels** (p96), for which you need a pre-booking. When you get hungry, take a break at the historic restaurant **Amigo Emil** (p136) before a shopping trip on David St.

On day two, utilise **Egged Rte 99 Circular Line** (p128) to explore the major sites in West Jerusalem, including **Yad Vashem** (p123), **Mt Herzl** and the **Herzl Museum** (p123), and the **Israel Museum** (p119). Egged No 99 will also give you a peek into East Jerusalem and Mt Scopus. Make some time for **Mahane Yehuda Market** (p116) before an evening around the shops and cafés of Ben Yehuda St and Rivlin St.

Four Days

With a third day, see the sights of the **Kidron Valley** (p106), including the City of David and the Tomb of the Virgin Mary, before moving onto nearby **East Jerusalem** (p109) where you can stop for lunch at the sumptuous **Arabesque** (p139) at the American Colony Hotel. In the afternoon, try to squeeze in the **Museum on the Seam** (p111) and the **Garden Tomb** (p111). Come evening, check out a theatrical performance at one of the city theatres or live-music venues (p140).

Save day four for any sights you've left behind, notably **Mt Zion** (p105), the **Mount of Olives** (p108) or **Mea She'arim** (p112). A nice way to wrap up Jerusalem is to take the **Ramparts Walk** (p93) on the Old City walls, from Jaffa Gate to Lion's Gate.

During your stay make sure you take advantage of some of Jerusalem's unique cultural activities. A highlight is to visit the Western Wall on Friday evening to watch the masses welcome Shabbat. And if you get a chance, don't miss an opportunity to join a local family for a Shabbat dinner, which can be arranged through the Jaffa Gate Tourist Office. Dances at the International Cultural Centre for Youth building (p140) also make for a one-of-a-kind Jerusalem experience.

British Council (Map pp80-1; ☎ 640 3900; www.britishcouncil.org/israel; Agudat Sport Maccabee St; ☎ 2-7pm Mon-Tue & Thu, 11am-4pm Wed, 10am-1pm Fri) Large collection of DVDs, videos and books. Located opposite the Jerusalem Mall. See also Courses, p128.

EMERGENCY

Fire (☎ 102)

First aid (☎ 101)

Police (Map pp86-7; ☎ 100, 539 1360; 107 Jaffa Rd; ☎ 8am-4pm Sun-Thu) This police station has a lost property office.

Tourist police (☎ 100) One station is near the Citadel (Tower of David) in the Old City (see Map pp90-1). The second is in the Russian Compound in the New City (Central Police Station; Map pp114-15). These are the best police stations for tourists to use.

INTERNET ACCESS

If you are hanging around the central bus station, internet terminals (per 30 min 9NIS) are located on the 4th floor.

El Dorado Café (Map p110; ☎ 626 0993; 19 Salah ad-Din St; per hr 15NIS; ☎ 9am-8pm Sat-Thu) Internet café in East Jerusalem.

Freeline (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 1959; 8th station, 51 Aqabat al-Khanqah St; per hr 8NIS; ☎ 10am-midnight)

Internet Café (Map pp114-15; ☎ 622 3377; 31 Jaffa Rd; per hr 12NIS; ☎ 9.30am-4am) Several computers; located near the top of Shlomzion HaMalka.

Mike's Centre (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 2486; www.mikescentre.com; 9th Station, 172 Souq Khan as-Zeit St; per hr 8NIS; ☎ 9am-10pm) In the Old City, this all-in-one tourist stop has internet, international phones and laundry services. Mike also runs tours to the Dead Sea (see p410 for details).

St Raphael@Internet (Map pp90-1; ☎ 626 4645; Greek Orthodox Patriarchate, Jaffa Gate; per hr 15NIS; ☎ 9am-10pm Mon-Sat)

INTERNET RESOURCES

www.gojerusalem.com Useful website with everything from car rental and bus schedules to hotel reviews and festival dates.

www.jerusalem.muni.il Run by the municipality, this website has thorough and up-to-date pages on events and festivals. It also has a list of art exhibits and cultural institutes.

LAUNDRY

In the Old City, try Mike's Centre (see above), which washes 3kg of laundry for 30NIS.

Laundry Place (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 7714; 12 Shamai St; ☎ 8.30am-8pm Sun-Thu, 8.30am-3pm Fri)

WI-FI ACCESS

Most cafés in Jerusalem offer wi-fi access, including the chains such as the Coffee Bean and Café Hillel. Another great place to sit down with a laptop is **T'mol** (p137). There is an outdoor 'hotspot' on Ben Yehuda St (on the benches outside Burger King). Most hotels are also equipped with wi-fi.

LIBRARIES

The American Cultural Centre, Alliance Française and the British Council (see Cultural Centres, opposite) all have small libraries open to the public.

Gerard Behar Centre (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 1139; 11 Bezalel St) Contains a small library and reading room.

MEDIA

The **Jerusalem Post** (www.jpost.com) is an excellent source of local news and events listings. On Friday, the *Post* includes an extensive 'What's On' weekend supplement. The *Jerusalem Time Out*, published monthly, contains listings of restaurants, bars, sights and activities. You can get a copy for free at most upscale hotels.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Dr E Reichenberg (Map pp114-15; ☎ 645 2033 or 050-873-6889; reclinic@yahoo.com; 2 Hillel St) Recommended dentist in the City Centre.

Hadassah Hospital (Map pp80-1; ☎ 684 4111) On Mt Scopus. There's another Hadassah Medical Centre above Ein Kerem (☎ 677 7111).

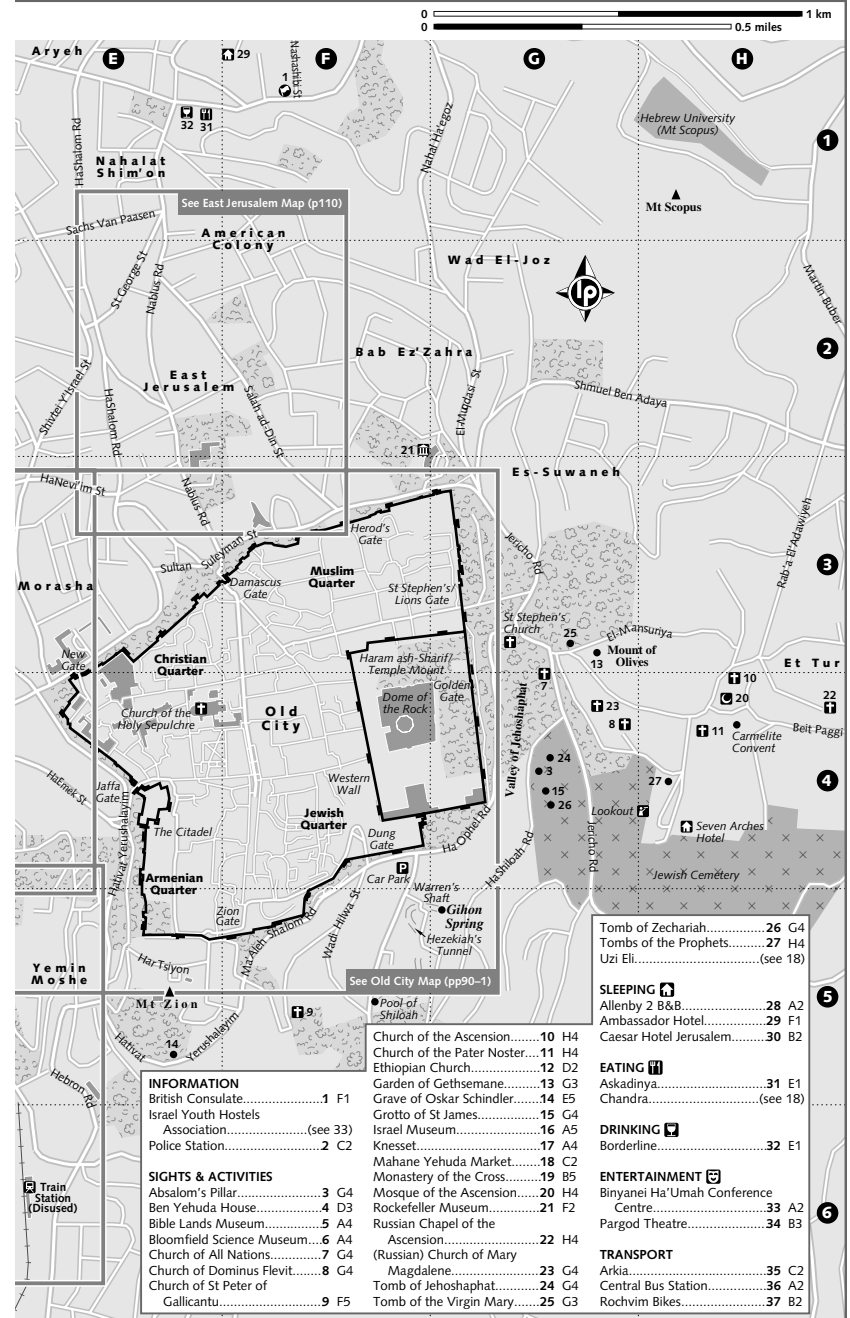
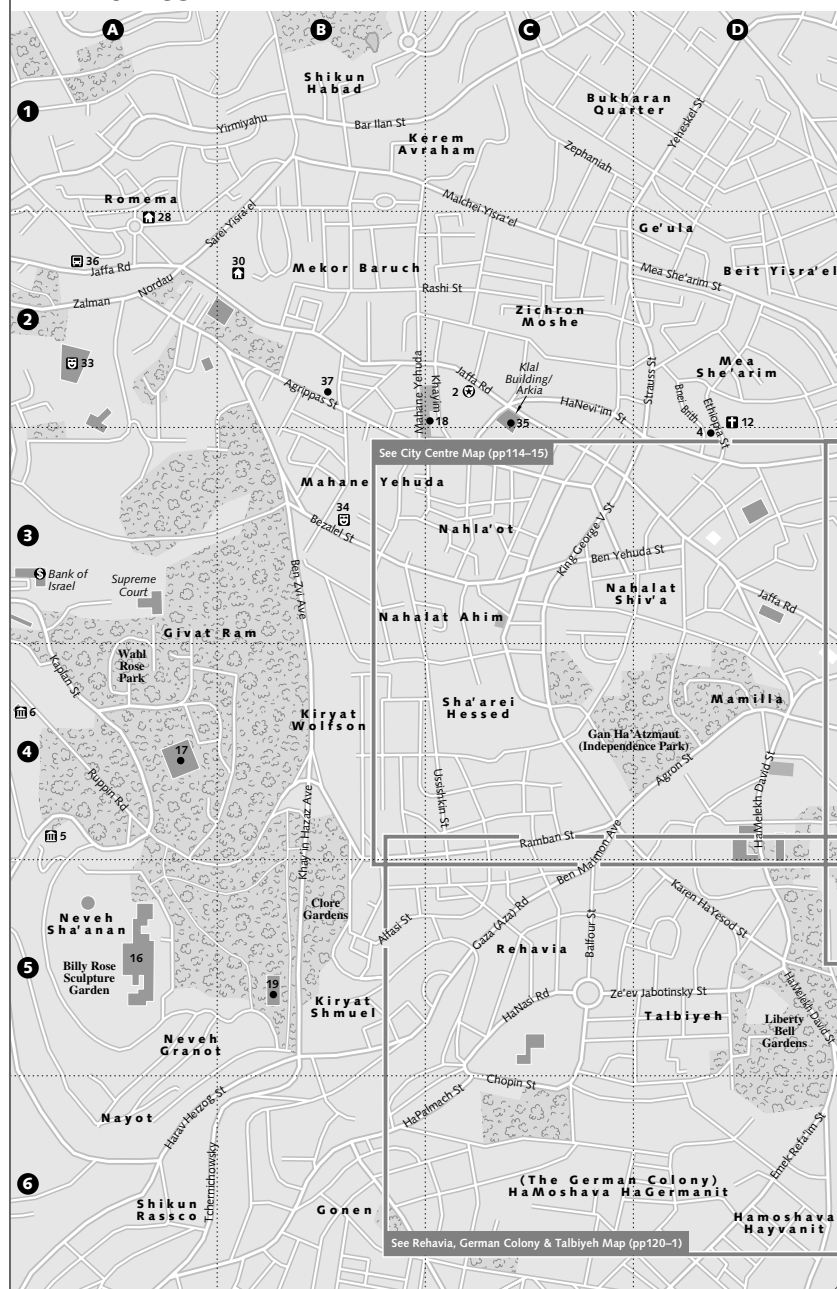
Magen David Medical Centre (Map pp80-1; ☎ 652 3133; 7 Himem Gimel St, Romema; ☎ 24hr) Five minutes' walk from the central bus station.

Orthodox Society (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 1958; Greek Orthodox Patriarchate Rd; ☎ 8am-3pm Mon-Fri, 8am-1pm Sat) In the Old City's Christian Quarter, the Orthodox Society operates a low-cost medical and dental clinic that welcomes travellers.

MONEY

The best deals for changing money are at the private commission-free change offices all over the New City and East Jerusalem. In the Old City you'll find exchange bureaux near Damascus Gate and Jaffa Gate. In the City Centre there are many near Zion Sq. Some moneychangers, especially around Ben Yehuda St, will also change travellers cheques. Note that they close early on Friday

INNER JERUSALEM



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Church of St Peter of Gallicantu.....	9 F5
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Church of the Pater Noster.....	11 H4
Ethiopian Church.....	12 D2
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Grotto of St James.....	15 G4
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and remain closed all day Saturday. Banks with ATMs, such as Mizrahi and Leumi, are found on every block in the City Centre.

American Express (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 0830; 18 Shlomzion HaMalka St) Replaces lost travellers cheques.
Mizrahi Bank (Map pp114-15; cnr Jaffa Rd & Shlomzion HaMalka St) ATM access.

POST

DHL (☎ 557 3850; www.dhl.com)

FedEx (☎ 651 2693; www.fedex.com)

Main post office City Centre (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 4745; main section, 23 Jaffa Rd; ☎ 7am-7pm Sun-Thu, 7am-noon Fri); City Centre branch (Map pp114-15; cnr Bezalel & Shilo Sts); Old City branch (Map pp90-1; Omar ibn al-Khattab Sq) Close to Jaffa Gate; East Jerusalem (Map p110; cnr Salah ad-Din & Sultan Suleyman Sts) The main post office in the City Centre is the place to pick up poste restante.

TOURIST INFORMATION

Alternative Information Centre (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 1159; www.alternativenews.org; 2nd fl, 4 Shlomzion HaMalka St; ☎ 9.30am-8pm) Political group that provides information dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict. There are several books, magazines and DVDs for sale, many created by the staff members at the centre. The centre is also a good point of contact to start from if you want to be in touch with NGOs or volunteer groups working in the country.

Christian Information Centre (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 2692; www.cicts.org; Omar ibn al-Khattab Sq; ☎ 8.30am-noon Mon-Sat) Opposite the entrance to the Citadel; provides information on the city's Christian sites. They also give out handy maps that detail walking tours around the Old City.

Daila (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 5560; 4 Shlomzion HaMalka St; ☎ 4pm-midnight) Daila is another activist centre where you can pick up literature on political events and organisations in Israel.

Jaffa Gate Tourist Office (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 1422; www.tourism.gov.il; Jaffa Gate; ☎ 8.30am-5pm Sun-Thu) Offers free maps and can arrange informal meetings with Christian, Orthodox Jewish and Muslim families.

Jewish Student Information Centre (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 2634, 052-286 7795; www.jeffseidel.com; 5 Beit El St) Committed to providing young Jews with an appreciation of their heritage, this centre organises free walking tours of Jewish sites around the Old City.

TRAVEL AGENCIES

ISSTA HaNevi'im St (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 7257; 31 HaNevi'im St) Organises inexpensive flight tickets; Herbert Samuel St (Map pp114-15; ☎ 621 1888; 4 Herbert Samuel St) Its second branch is near Zion Sq.

Mazada Tours (Map pp114-15; ☎ 623 5777; www.mazada.co.il; Pearl Hotel bldg, 15 Jaffa Rd) Operates tours and buses to Cairo.

DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

Demonstrations and marches are pretty common in Jerusalem and while they are usually peaceful, it's still a good idea to remain vigilant in case things get rowdy. The Mount of Olives has not always been the friendliest area to walk and some female travellers walking there alone have been hassled by locals. If possible, visit the area in pairs. For more general tips on staying safe in Israel and the Palestinian Territories see p387.

SIGHTS

Jerusalem's major sights can be broken down into a few different areas, with the highest concentration in the Old City. The Kidron Valley (which contains the City of David) and Mt Zion are both within walking distance of the Old City, but touring the area involves lots of walking, much of it uphill.

West Jerusalem contains a number of sights, including the Israel Museum, Mt Herzl, Yad Vashem and Ein Kerem, but these are spread out and are best reached by bus or taxi.

East Jerusalem receives fewer visitors, with the exception of those heading for the Rockefeller museum or the Garden Tomb; the area can be reached on foot from the Old City but it's not well connected to West Jerusalem so consider taking a cab to save time.

Because there is so much to see in Jerusalem, it's a good idea to prioritise the sights you want to visit before setting off on the tourist track. Your game plan should also include setting up a few appointments as some of the most popular attractions require pre-booking (such as the Western Wall Tunnels Tour and the Herzl Museum).

Old City

In the late afternoon, with the sight of golden light bleaching the ancient stone buildings, the sound of church bells clanging in the distance, the smell of spices wafting out of the bazaars and a distinct awareness of tension in the air, the **Old City** (Map pp90-1) really is a feast for the senses. Within its mighty walls you can sleep in 700-year-old edifices, haggle over everything from souvenir T-shirts to ancient artefacts and taste the delectable food of the Levant. But far from being merely ancient and spectacular, the Old City is above all a holy place, containing a number of sites sacred to Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

THE JERUSALEM SYNDROME

Each year tens of thousands of tourists descend on Jerusalem to walk in the footsteps of the prophets, and a handful come away from the journey thinking they *are* the prophets. This medically recognised ailment, called the Jerusalem Syndrome, occurs when visitors become overwhelmed by the historical significance of the Holy City and come to the conclusion that they are biblical characters or that the Apocalypse is near.

The ailment was first documented in the 1930s by Jerusalem psychiatrist Dr Heinz Herman, who identified, for example, an English Christian woman who was certain that Christ's Second Coming was imminent and regularly climbed Mt Scopus to welcome Him back to earth with a cup of tea.

In more recent times, there were reports of a Canadian Jew who, claiming to be Samson, decided to prove himself by smashing through the wall of his room to escape. Or there was the elderly American Christian woman who believed she was the Virgin Mary and went to Bethlehem to look for the baby Jesus.

In the most serious case so far, in 1969 an Australian Christian fanatic set fire to Al-Aqsa Mosque, causing considerable damage. He believed that he had to clear the Haram ash-Sharif of non-Christian buildings to prepare for the Messiah's Second Coming.

Doctors estimate that the Jerusalem Syndrome affects between 50 and 200 people per year, and although many have a recorded history of mental aberration, about a quarter of recorded cases have no previous psychiatric record. You can occasionally see these people standing on Ben Yehuda St, dressed in colourful garb or wearing togas, and holding placards that describe soon-to-be-occurring events of an apocalyptic nature.

Most sufferers are taken to the state psychiatric ward, Kfar Shaul, on the outskirts of West Jerusalem. Patients are monitored and then sent home. Doctors explain that the syndrome generally lasts a week and when the patient resumes his or her old self, they become extremely embarrassed, and prefer not to speak of the incident.

Doctors at Kfar Shaul have found it virtually pointless to try to persuade the deluded that they are not who they claim to be. The hospital cites the example of two patients, both claiming to be the Messiah. Put together, each accused the other of being the impostor.

The Western Wall, the Dome of the Rock and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre are a camel's spit from each other. It's also a living city, where families live, work and play – the ancient paving stones bear witness to unknown generations of Jerusalemites.

Most visitors enter through Jaffa Gate, where it's downhill to everything. Roads circle the Old City, so you could take a taxi to any of the gates, including Damascus Gate for the Muslim Quarter and Dung Gate for the Western Wall and Temple Mount.

WALLS & GATES

The walls as they exist today are the legacy of Süleyman the Magnificent, who oversaw their construction between 1537 and 1542. The northern wall, including Damascus Gate, was built first and then extended south, at which point it was delayed by a dispute over whether or not Mt Zion and the Franciscans' monastery should stand inside or outside the wall. To save time and expense the builders decided against looping

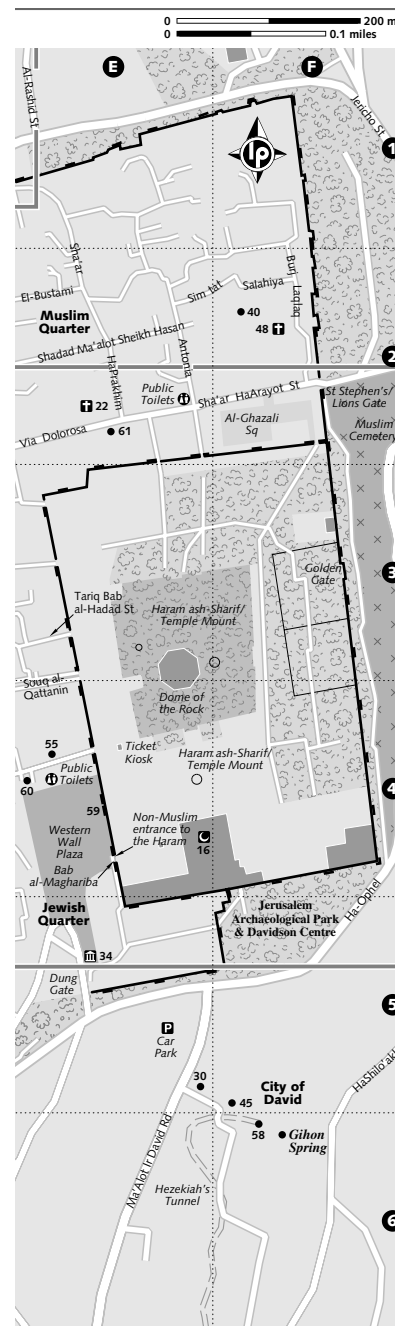
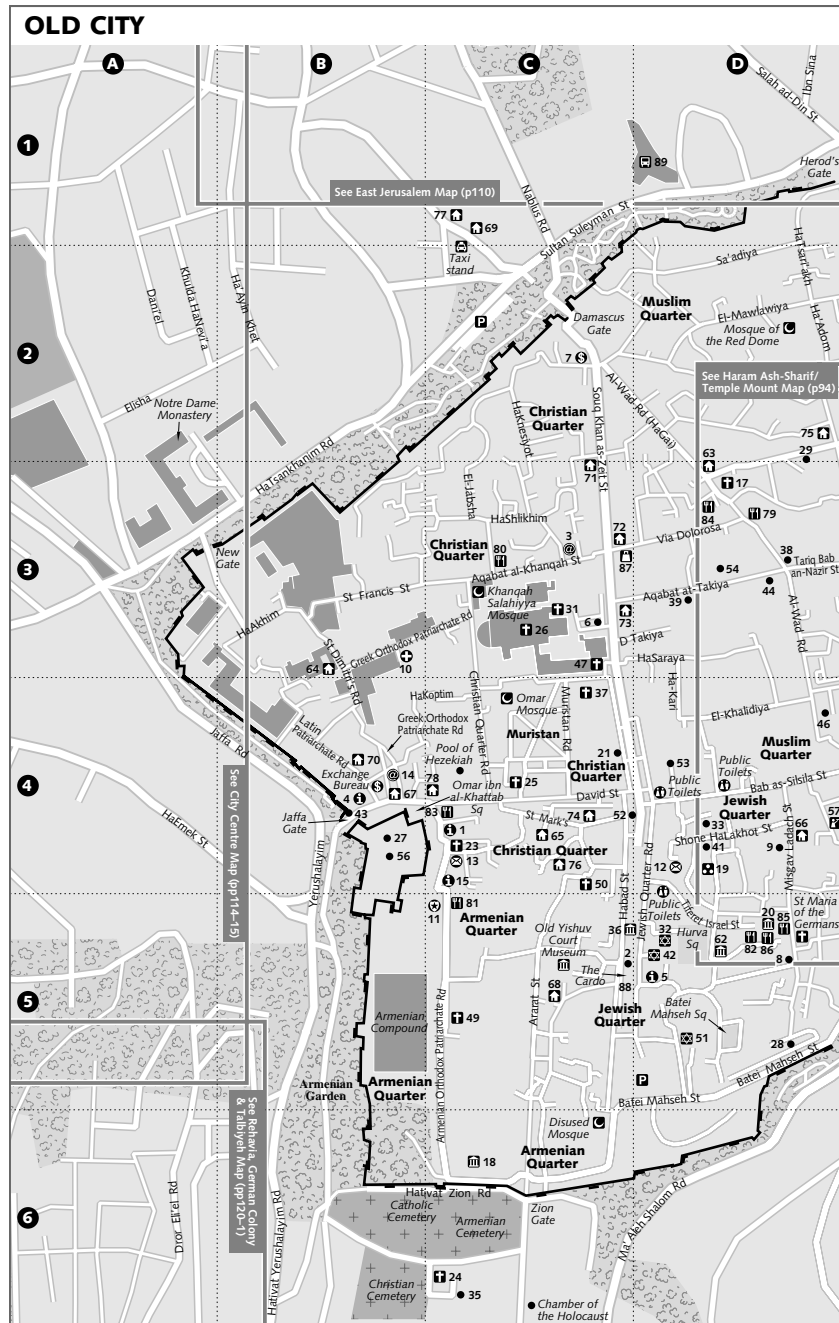
the wall around the monastery, leaving the Franciscans out in the cold. Popular legend has it that when news reached Süleyman of the miserly cost-cutting exercise, he was furious and had the architects beheaded.

There were seven gates in his walls and, in the late 19th century, an eighth was added. All but the Golden Gate on the southern side of the Haram ash-Sharif/Temple Mount are accessible and, time permitting, you should try to make a point of entering or leaving the Old City by each of them.

The following begins with the Damascus Gate and continues clockwise around the wall.

Damascus Gate

The scene in front of **Damascus Gate** (Map pp90-1) is a microcosm of the Palestinian world – vendors heave goods in and out of the Old City, families picnic on the steps and Israeli soldiers tap their truncheons. You'll also spot elderly women from the villages trying to sell herbs and produce; most of



them wear intricately embroidered dresses that are a part of their dowry and identity.

The gate itself dates in its present form from the time of Süleyman the Magnificent, although there had been a gate here long before the arrival of the Turks. This was the main entrance to the city as early as the time of Agrippas, who ruled in the 1st century BC. The gate was considerably enlarged during the reign of the Roman emperor Hadrian. A column erected by Hadrian once stood in the square, leading to the alternative name for the gate: Bab al-Amud (Gate of the Column).

Herod's Gate

It was just 100m east of this gate (Map pp90–1) that the Crusaders breached the city walls on 15 July 1099. The name was derived from a mistaken belief held by 16th- and 17th-century pilgrims that a nearby building was at one time the palace of Herod Antipas. In Hebrew the gate is Sha'ar HaPerahim and in Arabic, Bab al-Zahra (Flower Gate).

St Stephen's Gate (Lions Gate)

This is the gate that gives access to the Mount of Olives and Gethsemane and, from their positions on that biblically famed hillside, Israeli paratroopers fought their way in through this gate on 7 June 1967 to capture the Old City.

Although Süleyman called it Bab al-Ghor (the Jordan Gate), the name never stuck and it became known as **St Stephen's Gate** (Map pp90–1) after the first Christian martyr, who was stoned to death at a spot nearby. The Hebrew name, Sha'ar Ha'Arayot (Lions Gate), is a reference to the two pairs of heraldic lions carved either side of the archway.

Golden Gate

Uncertainty surrounds this sealed entrance to the Haram ash-Sharif/Temple Mount. The Jewish Mishnah mentions the Temple's eastern gate and there are Herodian elements in the present structure. Some believe it to be where the Messiah will enter the city (Ezekiel 44:1–3). The gate (Map pp90–1) was probably sealed by the Muslims in the 7th century to deny access to the Haram ash-Sharif/Temple Mount to non-Muslims. A popular alternative theory is that the Muslims sealed it to prevent the Jewish Messiah from entering the

INFORMATION		Ethiopian Monastery.....	31	C3	SLEEPING	Austrian Hospice.....	63	D3
Christian Information Centre.....	1	C4	Hurva Synagogue.....	32	D5	Casa Nova Pilgrims' Hospice.....	64	B3
David Tours.....	2	C5	Israelite Tower.....	33	D4	Christ Church Guest House.....	(see 23)	
Freeline.....	3	C3	Jerusalem Archaeological Park & Davidson Centre.....	34	E5	Citadel Youth Hostel.....	65	C4
Jaffa Gate Tourist Office.....	4	B4	King David's Tomb.....	35	C6	Dr Bachi's Guesthouse.....	66	D4
Jewish Student Information Centre.....	5	D5	Last Ditch Battle of the Jewish Quarter Museum.....	36	C5	East New Imperial Hotel.....	67	B4
Mike's Centre.....	6	C3	Lutheran Church of the Redeemer.....	37	C4	El Malak.....	68	C5
Moneychanger.....	7	C2	Ottoman-era Sabil.....	38	D3	Faisal Hostel.....	69	C1
Moriah Bookshop.....	8	D5	Palace of the Lady Tunshuq.....	39	D3	Gloria.....	70	B4
Moross Community Centre.....	9	D4	Pool of Bethesda.....	40	F2	Golden Gate Inn.....	71	C3
Orthodox Society.....	10	B3	Rachel Ben-Zvi Centre.....	41	D4	Hashimi Hotel.....	72	C3
Police.....	11	C5	Ramban Synagogue.....	42	D5	Hebron Youth Hostel.....	73	C3
Post Office.....	12	D4	Ramparts Walk Entrance.....	43	B4	Notre Dame de Zion.....	75	D2
Post Office.....	13	C4	Ribat Bayram Jawish.....	44	D3	Old City Youth Hostel.....	76	C4
St Raphael@Internet.....	14	B4	Room of the Last Supper.....	(see 35)		Palm Hostel.....	77	C1
Zion Walking Tours.....	15	C4	Royal Quarter (Area G).....	45	F5	Petra Hostel.....	78	C4
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES		Sabil Suleyman.....	46	D4	EATING	Abu Shukri.....	79	D3
Al-Aqsa Mosque.....	16	E4	St Alexander's Church.....	47	C3	Amigo Emil.....	80	C3
Armenian Church.....	17	D3	St Anne's Church.....	48	F2	Armenian Tavern.....	81	C5
Armenian Museum.....	18	C6	St James' (Jacques') Cathedral.....	49	C5	Bonker's Bagels.....	82	D5
Ben Zakai Synagogue.....	(see 51)		St Mark's Chapel.....	50	C4	Moses Art Café.....	83	C4
Broad Wall.....	19	D4	Sephardic Synagogue.....	51	D5	Pizzeria Basti.....	84	D3
Burnt House.....	20	D5	Stairs to Rooftop Promenade.....	52	C4	Quarter Café.....	85	D5
Butchers' Market.....	21	C4	Stairs to Rooftop Promenade.....	53	D4	Tzaddik's New York Deli.....	86	D5
Chapel of the Flagellation.....	22	E2	Tomb of the Lady Tunshuq.....	54	D3	SHOPPING		
Christ Church.....	23	C4	Tomb of Turkan Khatun.....	55	E4	Aweida Gallery.....	87	C3
Church & Monastery of the Dormition.....	24	C6	Tower of David Museum.....	56	B4	Cardo.....	88	C5
Church of St John the Baptist.....	25	C4	Viewpoint.....	57	D4	TRANSPORT		
Church of the Holy Sepulchre.....	26	C3	Warren's Shaft.....	58	F6	Arab Bus Station.....	89	D1
Citadel.....	27	B4	Western Wall.....	59	E4	Entrance.....		
Discovery Centre.....	28	D5	Western Wall Tunnel Entrance.....	60	E4	Western Wall Tunnel Exit.....		
Ecce Homo Convent of the Sisters of Zion.....	29	D2	Wohl Archaeological Museum.....	62	D5			
Entrance to City of David.....	30	E5						

Haram. The Golden Gate is known as Sha'ar ha-Rahamim (Gate of Mercy) in Hebrew and either Bab al-Rahma or Bab al-Dahriyya (Eternal Gate) in Arabic.

Dung Gate

In Hebrew it's Sha'ar HaAshpot. The popular theory as to how these two unflattering appellations came about is that at one time the area around the **gate** (Map pp90–1) was the local rubbish dump. Its Arabic name is Bab al-Maghariba (Gate of the Moors) because North African immigrants lived nearby in the 16th century.

Presently the smallest of the city's gates, at one time it was even more diminutive. The Jordanians widened it during their tenure in the city in order to allow cars through. You can still make out traces of the original, narrower Ottoman arch.

Zion Gate

This **gate** (Map pp90–1) had to be punched through to give access to the Franciscan

monastery left outside the walls by Süleyman's architects. During the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, Israeli soldiers holding Mt Zion also tried to burst through here in a desperate attempt to relieve the besieged Jewish Quarter. First they tried to dynamite the wall at a spot 100m east of the gate (it still bears the scar), and when that failed they launched an all-out assault, which ended disastrously. A memorial plaque to the fallen is inset within the gate while the bullet-eaten façade gives some indication of how ferocious the fighting must have been.

To the Jews, the gate is Sha'ar Ziyyon, while in Arabic it's Bab Haret al-Yahud (Gate of the Jewish Quarter).

The actual **gate** (Map pp90–1) is the small block through which the doglegged pedestrian tunnel passes (the dogleg was to slow down any charging enemy forces – you'll find the same thing at the Damascus and Zion Gates); the breach in the wall through which the road now passes was

only made in 1898 in order to permit the visiting Kaiser Wilhelm II and his party to ride with full pomp into the city.

Just inside the gate, on the left as you enter, are two graves said to be those of Süleyman's architects, beheaded for leaving the Mt Zion monastery outside the walls.

The Arabic name for the gate is Bab al-Khalil (Gate of the Friend), which refers to the holy city of Hebron (Al-Khalil in Arabic). In Hebrew it is Sha'ar Yafo because this was the start of the old road to the historical port of Jaffa.

New Gate

The **New Gate** (Map pp90–1) is the most modern of all the gates, opened in 1887 by Sultan Abdul Hamid to allow direct access from the newly built pilgrim hospices to the holy sites of the Old City's Christian Quarter. In Hebrew it's ha-Sha'ar He-Chadash, and in Arabic, al-Bab al-Jadid.

RAMPARTS WALK

The **Ramparts Walk** (Map pp90–1; ☎ 627 7550; adult/child 16/8NIS; ☒ 9am–4.30pm Sat–Thu & Sat) is a 1km jaunt along the top of the city wall – from Jaffa Gate north to Lion's Gate, via New, Damascus and Herod's Gates, and Jaffa Gate south to Dung Gate, via Zion Gate. It isn't possible to do a complete circuit of the wall because the Haram ash-Sharif/Temple Mount stretch is closed for security reasons. To begin the walk, head up the stairs just inside Jaffa Gate.

ROOFTOP PROMENADE

For some great views of the Old City, climb the metal stairway on the corner of Habad St and St Mark's Rd or the steep stone stairs in the southwestern corner of the Khan as-Sultan, both of which lead onto the **rooftops** (Map pp90–1) around the David St and Al-Wad markets. Come up during the day for a peek through the ventilation ducts at the bustle below but also make a nighttime visit to appreciate the Old City in its moonlit silhouette.

HARAM ASH-SHARIF/TEMPLE MOUNT

A walk up to the **Temple Mount** (Map pp90–1; ☎ 628 3313; www.noblesanctuary.com, www.templemount.org; admission free; ☒ 7.30–11am & 1.30–2.30pm Sat–Thu) is a time-honoured privilege sanctified by the thousands of pilgrims who have trod be-

fore you. An open plaza of cypress trees and ancient paving stones, the architecture that exists today dates back to the first Muslim conquest, around 1400 years ago, including the unmistakable Dome of the Rock. But the history of the Mount goes back much further, with the first Jewish Temple having been built here a thousand years before Christ. There are few patches of ground as holy, or as disputed, as this one, and as such it's one of the required stops on a visit to the Old City.

The Temple Mount, known to Muslims as the Haram ash-Sharif, has been headlining news events for quite a few millennia. It all started with a large slab of rock protruding from the ridge Mt Moriah. According to Jewish lore, this rock was identified as the foundation stone of the world. The Talmud (see p31 for more information) states that it was here that God gathered the earth that was used to form Adam, and it was here that Adam, Cain, Abel and Noah all performed ritual sacrifices. The most well-known such event occurred when Abraham nearly sacrificed his own son Isaac in a test of faith. (In the 11th hour an angel spared Isaac and replaced him with a ram).

As a holy place, it was here that Solomon built the First Temple. It took seven and a half years to complete but for reasons unknown it stood unused for 13 years. When finally consecrated, Solomon placed the Ark of the Covenant inside and celebrated with a seven-day feast. After weathering a number of raids, the temple was destroyed in 586 BC by Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon. A second temple was erected in 515 BC, and King Herod later improved the site by building a wall around the mount and filling it with rubble, leveling off the enormous plaza we can identify with today. Any civic improvements were for naught, however, as the second temple was destroyed by the Romans in AD 66.

Despite the destruction they had wrought, the Romans too felt a spiritual affinity for the Mount and erected a temple to Zeus, which was later turned into a Christian church.

Fast forward to the mid-7th century in Mecca, where the prophet Mohammed is believed to have announced to his fellow Meccans that in a single night he had travelled to Jerusalem, and led other prophets in prayers at the Temple Mount. This was called the *isra* (night journey), and was followed by the *miraj* (ascension to heaven), where he joined

Allah. Mohammed's *isra* sealed the Temple Mount's importance for Muslims and it is now Islam's third holiest place after Mecca and Medina.

Immediately following the Six Day War, Israeli commander Moshe Dayan handed over the Temple Mount to Jerusalem's Muslim leaders. Their control of the Mount has never gone down well with Jewish extremists and there have been a number of protests and incidents of violence, including failed plots to blow up Muslim holy sites.

For the uninvolved visitor, the Temple Mount is a relaxing contrast to the noise and congestion of the surrounding narrow streets. It's a flat paved area the size of a couple of adjacent football fields, fringed with

some attractive Mamluk buildings and with the Dome of the Rock positioned roughly in the centre. There are nine gates connecting the enclosure to the surrounding narrow streets, but although you can leave the compound by any of them, non-Muslims are only allowed to enter at the Bab al-Maghariba (Gate of the Moors), reached from the Western Wall plaza. Line up early for security checks and bear in mind that the Mount closes on Muslim holidays. It's best to visit early in your trip in case you don't get in on the first try. Modest dress is required.

The self-appointed guides will offer their services and will provide commentary as you walk around the grounds. If you choose

to hire one, negotiate a price before you set off.

Al-Aqsa Mosque

The name Al-Aqsa means 'farthest mosque' and is in reference to the *isra* Mohammed is believed to have made on his way to heaven to join Allah. While the Dome of the Rock serves more as a mausoleum than a mosque, **Al-Aqsa** (Map pp90–1) is a functioning house of worship, accommodating up to 5000 praying supplicants at a time.

Believed by some to be a conversion of a 6th-century Byzantine church, Muslims maintain that Al-Aqsa was built from scratch in the early 8th century by the son of Abd al-Malik, patron of the Dome. Clarification of the issue is complicated because nothing much remains from the original structure, which was twice destroyed by earthquakes in its first 60 years. The present-day mosque is a compendium of restorations, with columns donated, strangely enough, by Benito Mussolini and the elaborately painted ceilings courtesy of Egypt's King Farouk. The intricately carved mihrab (prayer niche indicating the direction of Mecca), however, does date from the time of Saladin, as did an equally magnificent carved wood pulpit that was lost in a 1969 fire started by a deranged Australian Christian.

Dome of the Rock

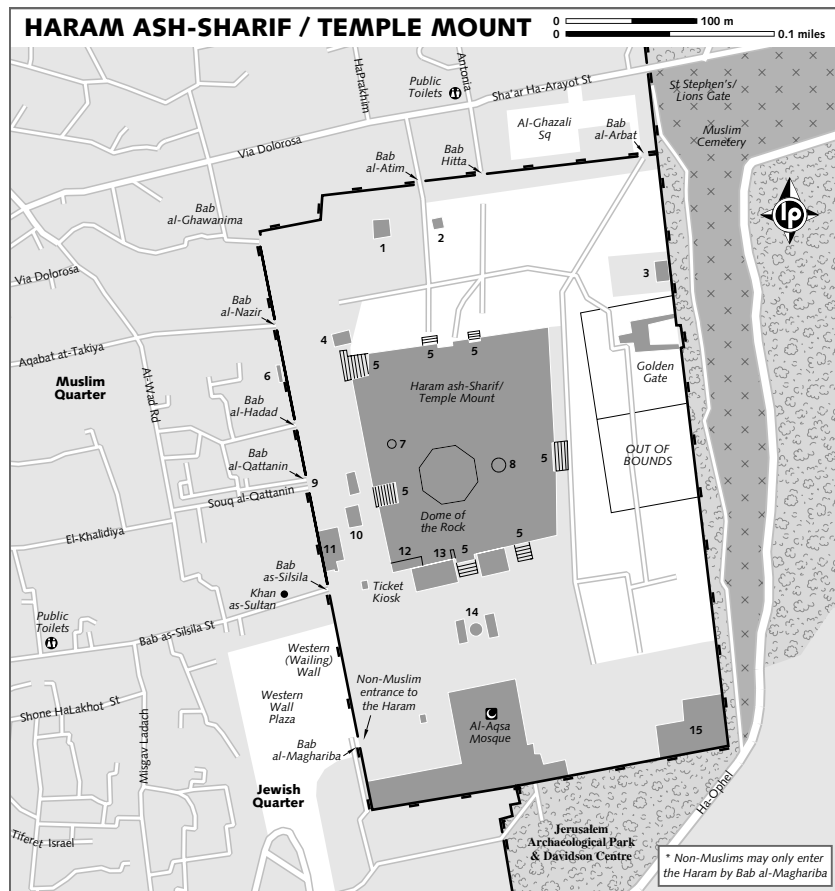
The jewel in the Temple Mount crown is the gold-plated **Dome of the Rock** (Map pp90–1; Qubbat al-Sakhra in Arabic), the enduring

symbol of the city and undoubtedly one of the most photographed buildings on earth. As its name suggests, the dome covers the slab of stone sacred to both the Muslim and Jewish faiths. It was here that Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son and from which, according to Islamic tradition, the Prophet Mohammed launched himself heavenward to take his place alongside Allah. The building was constructed between AD 688 and 691 under the patronage of the Umayyad caliph Abd al-Malik. His motives were shrewd as well as pious – the caliph was concerned that the imposing Christian Church of the Holy Sepulchre was seducing Arab minds.

In asserting the supremacy of Islam, Abd al-Malik had his Byzantine architects take as their model the rotunda of the Holy Sepulchre. But not for the Muslims the dark, gloomy interiors of the Christian structures or the austere stone façades; instead, their mosque was covered, both inside and out, with a bright confection of mosaics and scrolled verses from the Quran, while the crowning dome was covered in solid gold that shone as a beacon for Islam.

A plaque was laid inside honouring al-Malik and giving the date of construction. Two hundred years later the Abbasid caliph al-Mamun altered it to claim credit for himself, neglecting to amend the original date.

During the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent what remained of the original interior mosaics were removed and replaced, while the external mosaics were renewed in 1963. Essentially, however, what you see



- 1 Dome of Süleyman Pasha
- 2 Sabill – Public fountain
- 3 Solomon's Throne
- 4 Sabill of Sheikh Budir
- 5 The Stairs of Scales of Scales
Muslims believe that scales will be hung from the column-supported archway at the top of these stairs on Judgment Day to weigh the souls of the dead.
- 6 Small Wall
A little-visited northern extension of the Western Wall.
- 7 Dome of the Ascension
According to Muslim tradition Mohammed prayed here before his ascent.
- 8 Dome of the Chain
This is the smaller version of the Dome of the Rock, in the exact centre of the Haram. Mystery surrounds the reason for its coping: one theory is that it was the Haram's treasury; its name comes from the legend that Solomon hung a chain from the dome and that he swore falsely while holding it; it was struck by lightning.
- 9 Gate of the Cotton Merchants
This is the most imposing of the Haram's gates. Made a point of departing through here into the Mamluk-era covered market of the Cotton Merchants (Souq al-Qattanin).
- 10 Sabill of Qalbay
Though overshadowed by the more illustrious nearby Sabill, this is one of Jerusalem's most beautiful structures. It was built by Egyptian sultan in 1482 as a charitable act to please Allah, and it features the only carved stone dome outside Cairo.
- 11 Mamluk Arcade
- 12 Dome of Learning
Along with parts of the facade of Al-Aqsa Mosque, this is one of the very few remaining Ayyubid (1169–1250) structures in Jerusalem. Note the very unusual entwined columns flanking the door.
- 13 Summer Pulpit
Built by the Mamluks in the 14th century and renovated by the Ottomans, this was used to deliver outdoor sermons.
- 14 Al-Kar Fountain
One of many ablution fountains on the Haram for the ritual washing before prayer.
- 15 Solomon's Stables
A courtyard vaulted hall under the Haram, constructed by the Crusaders to accommodate their horses. Unfortunately it's closed except by arrangement. This aisle outside of bounds.

today is the building as conceived by Abd al-Malik. The gold dome also disappeared long ago, melted down to pay off some caliph's debts. The present convincing anodised aluminium dome has been financed by Gulf State Arab countries.

Inside, lying central under the 20m-high dome and ringed by a wooden fence, is the rock from which it is said Mohammed began his night journey (his footprint is supposedly visible in one corner). Tradition also has it that this marks the centre of the world. Steps below the rock lead to a cave known as the 'Well of Souls' where the dead are said to meet twice a month to pray. Unfortunately it's unlikely that you'll be able to enter the building. At the time of our visit it was only open to Muslims but some non-Muslim tourists have reported being let inside for a fee.

WESTERN WALL

The builders of the **Western Wall** (Map pp90-1; HaKotel) could never have fathomed that one day their modest creation would become the most important religious shrine for the Jewish people. Indeed, when it was built some 2000 years ago it was merely a retaining wall supporting the outer portion of the Temple Mount, upon which stood the Second Temple. But following the destruction of the temple in AD 70, Jews were sent into exile and the precise location of the temple was lost. Upon their return they purposely avoided the Temple Mount, fearing that they might step on the Holy of Holies, the ancient inner sanctum of the temple barred to all except high priests. Instead they began praying at an exposed outer wall; according to rabbinical texts, the Shechina (divine presence) never deserted the wall and it's regarded as the most holy of all Jewish sites.

The Wall grew as a place of pilgrimage during the Ottoman period and Jews would come to mourn and lament their ancient loss – hence the term the Wailing Wall. At this time, houses were pressed right up to the Wall, leaving just a narrow alley for prayer.

In 1948 the Jews lost access when the whole of the Old City was taken by the Jordanians. Nineteen years later when Israeli paratroopers stormed in during the Six Day War, they fought their way directly to the Wall and the first action on securing the Old City was to bulldoze the neighbour-

ing Arab quarter to create the plaza that exists today.

The area immediately in front of the Wall now operates as a great open-air synagogue. It's divided into two areas, a small southern section for women and a more active, larger northern section for men. Here, the black-garbed Hasidim rock backwards and forwards on their heels, bobbing their heads in prayer, occasionally breaking off to press themselves against the Wall and kiss the stones. To celebrate the arrival of Shabbat there is always a large crowd at sunset on Friday and students from the nearby Yeshiva HaKotel head down there to dance and sing. The Wall is also a popular site for bar mitzvahs, held on the Shabbat or on Monday and Thursday mornings.

Notice the different styles of stonework. The huge lower layers are the Herodian stones, identifiable by their carved edges, while the strata above that, which are chiselled slightly differently, date from the time of the construction of Al-Aqsa Mosque. Also visible at close quarters are the wads of paper stuffed into the cracks in the stone wall: it's a belief that prayers inserted into the Wall have a better than average chance of being answered.

On the men's side of the Wall a narrow passage runs under Wilson's Arch, which was once used by priests to enter the Temple. Look down the two illuminated shafts to get an idea of the Wall's original height. Women are not permitted into the room.

The Wall is open to all faiths, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Modest dress is recommended and a kippa is required (paper kippas are available if you don't have one). Be discreet when taking photos, and don't take any photos at all during Shabbat. Up-to-the-minute live shots can be viewed at www.aish.com/wallcam.

Western Wall Tunnels

For a different perspective on the Western Wall, join a tour of the **Western Wall Tunnels** (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 1333; www.thekotel.org; adult/child 25/15NIS; ☎ 8am-6pm Sun-Thu, 8am-12.30pm Fri), a 488m passage that follows the northern extension of the wall. Dug out by archaeologists, the tunnel burrows down to the original street level (nicknamed Market St by tour guides because it was believed to have been a shopping area). The foundation stones here

are enormous – one is a 570-ton monster the size of a small bus. You can only visit the tunnels on a guided tour, which takes about 75 minutes and must be booked in advance. Try to book at least a week ahead of time – these tours are very popular and fill up fast!

Jerusalem Archaeological Park & Davidson Centre

On the southern side of the Western Wall, the recently renovated **Jerusalem Archaeological Park & Davidson Centre** (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 7550; www.archpark.org.il; adult/child 30/16NIS; ☎ 8am-5pm Sun-Thu) is a peek into the history of the Temple Mount and its surrounding areas, displaying the remains of streets, columns, walls and plazas exposed by modern archaeologists. Byzantine and Arab structures are among the ruins, as well as finds from the Herodian period.

As you enter you'll notice on your left the remains of an arch protruding from Herod's wall. This is a Robinson's Arch (named after a 19th-century American explorer), which was once part of a bridge that connected the Temple Mount and the main commercial area.

Towards the back of the complex, you'll find a long, wide staircase that was once the main entry for pilgrims headed to the Temple Mount. Near the bottom of the steps you can spot ancient ritual baths that Jewish pilgrims used to purify themselves before they walked to the temple complex.

The Davidson Visitor's Centre, in an underground vault near the entrance, has a multimedia presentation and virtual tour of the Temple Mount as it looked 2000 years ago.

THE CITADEL (TOWER OF DAVID)

The Jaffa Gate area is dominated by the Crusader Citadel, which includes Herod's Tower and the Tower of David minaret. It's occupied by the highly worthwhile **Tower of David Museum** (Map pp90-1; ☎ 626 5333; www.towerof david.org.il; adult/child/student 30/15/20NIS; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Thu & Sat, 10am-2pm Fri May-Sep, closes one hr early Oct-Apr), which tells the entire history of Jerusalem in a concise and easily digestible format. Revolving art exhibits in the halls and gardens add an especially pleasant angle. There are also good views of the city from the highest ramparts.

One of the highlights is a detailed large-scale model of Jerusalem, made in the late 19th century and discovered almost 100 years later, forgotten in a Geneva warehouse. It's displayed in an underground chamber reached from the central courtyard garden. For blind visitors, there is also a series of relief aluminium models of the city at several stages of its history.

The Citadel started life as the 1st-century palace of Herod the Great. A megalomaniacal builder, Herod furnished his palace with three enormous towers, the largest of which was reputedly modelled on the Pharos of Alexandria, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The chiselled-block remains of one of the lesser towers still serve as the base of the Citadel's main keep. Following Herod's death the palace was used by the Roman procurators as their Jerusalem residence until it was largely destroyed by Jewish rebels in AD 66. The Byzantines, who came along some 250 years later, mistook the mound of ruins for Mt Zion and presumed that this was David's palace – hence the name Tower of David. They constructed a new fortress on the site.

As Jerusalem changed hands, so did possession of the Citadel, passing to the Muslim armies and then to the Crusaders, who added the moat. It took on much of its present form in 1310 under the Mamluk sultan Malik an-Nasir, with Süleyman the Magnificent making further additions between 1531 and 1538. Süleyman is responsible for the gate by which the Citadel is now entered, and it was on the steps here that General Allenby accepted the surrender of the city on 9 December 1917, ending 400 years of rule by the Ottoman Turks.

CHRISTIAN QUARTER

Jerusalem's **Christian Quarter** (Map pp90-1) is an attractive blend of clean streets, souvenir stalls, hospices and religious institutions belonging to 20 different Christian sects. At its centre stands the Holy Sepulchre, and everyone, tourists and pilgrims alike, tends to be drawn towards it.

As you enter from Jaffa Gate, the first two streets to the left – Latin Patriarchate Rd and Greek Catholic Patriarchate Rd – indicate the tone of the neighbourhood, named as they are after the offices there. The roads lead to St Francis St and in this quiet

area around New Gate the local Christian hierarchy resides in comfort.

Heading straight across Omar ibn al-Khattab Sq you'll find a narrow passage that leads down David St, a brash tourist bazaar dedicated to filling up the travellers' suitcases with glow-in-the-dark crucifixes and 'Don't Worry Be Jewish' T-shirts. Everything is overpriced and it's expected that you'll bargain.

Towards the bottom end, David St switches over to food – a row of cavernous vaults on the left with fruit and vegetable stalls inside date from the Second Crusade. David St ends by crashing into a trio of narrow streets which, if followed to the left, converge into Souq Khan as-Zeit St, one of the main thoroughfares of the Muslim Quarter, while to the right they become the Cardo and lead into the Jewish Quarter. The first of the narrow alleys leading to the Muslim Quarter is Souq al-Lahamin, the Butchers' Market.

Church of the Holy Sepulchre

While the Dome of the Rock glistens and the Western Wall wails, the holiest Christian site in the Old City, the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre** (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 2692; ⌚ 4.30am-8pm) passes quietly through the centuries in sombre reflection of the last hours of Jesus. The church, somewhat huddled in the Christian Quarter between otherwise insignificant edifices, is considered by Christians to be the biblical Calvary (Latin for skull), or Golgotha, the place where it is said Jesus was nailed to the cross, died and rose from the dead. For the past 16 centuries Christian pilgrims have arrived at this spot from every corner of the globe, and while it may not look as regal as even the most average church in Europe, their tears, laments and prayers have done much to sanctify it.

The decision to place the church here was made 300 years after the death of Christ by Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine. While on pilgrimage in the Holy City, she took note of Hadrian's pagan temple to Venus and Jupiter (built in AD 135), and believed it had been placed here to thwart early Christians who had worshipped at the site.

Excavations at the site revealed the grave of Joseph of Arimathea, as well as three crosses, leading Helena to declare the site of Calvary. Work on Constantine's church commenced in AD 326 and it was dedicated nine years later. If you are a little confused as

to why Jesus was said to have been crucified in the middle of the city, bear in mind that 2000 years ago this was an empty plot of land outside the former city walls. Shrines and churches were built on the site from the 4th century, occasionally destroyed by invading armies and rebuilt.

When his armies took the city in AD 638, Caliph Omar was invited to pray in the church but he refused, generously noting that if he did his fellow Muslims would have turned it into a mosque. Instead, in 1009 the church was destroyed by the mad Caliph Hakim – which no doubt wouldn't have happened if Omar had prayed there all those years before.

Unable to afford the major repairs necessary, the Jerusalem community had to wait until 1042 when the Byzantine Imperial Treasury provided a subsidy. It wasn't enough to pay for a complete reconstruction of the original church so a large part of the building was abandoned, but an upper gallery was introduced into the rotunda and an apse added to its eastern side as a sort of compensation. This was the church that the Crusaders entered on 15 July 1099 as the new rulers of the city. They made significant alterations and so the church as it exists today is more or less a Crusader structure of Byzantine origins.

A fire in 1808 and an earthquake in 1927 did cause extensive damage; however, due to the rivalry between the different Christian factions who share ownership it took until 1959 for a major repair program to be agreed upon. For this reason the keys to the church have been in the possession of a local Muslim family since the Ottoman period and it's their job to unlock the doors each morning and secure them again at night.

Visitors to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre should dress modestly – the guards are very strict and refuse entry to those with bare legs, shoulders or backs. The main entrance is in the courtyard to the south and can be reached by two points: via Christian Quarter Rd or Dabbaga Rd, running from Souq Khan as-Zeit St past Muristan Rd. Another two possible entry points are via the roof (see the Ethiopian Monastery, p100).

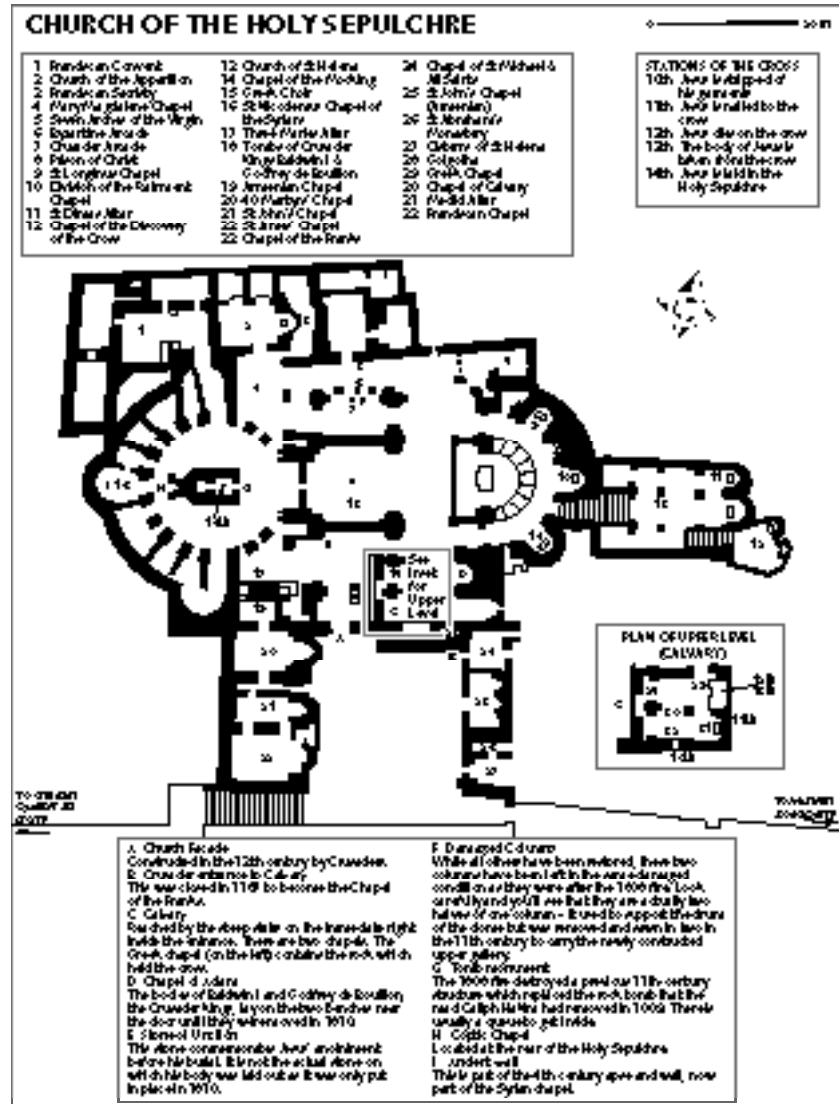
Christ Church

Located just across from the Citadel in the Jaffa Gate area, **Christ Church** (Map pp90-1;

☎ 627 7727; Omar ibn al-Khattab Sq) was the Holy Land's first Protestant church, consecrated in 1849. It was built by the London Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews (known today as CMJ; the Church's Ministry Among the Jews). The society's founders were inspired by the belief that the Jews would be restored to what was then Turkish

Palestine, and that many would acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Messiah before He returned.

In order to present Christianity as something not totally alien to Judaism, Christ Church was built in the Protestant style with several similarities to a synagogue. Jewish symbols, such as Hebrew script and



the Star of David, figure prominently at the altar and in the stained-glass windows.

Later the compound became the first British Consulate in Palestine. It now serves as a Christian hospice and a café. There is also a **museum** featuring old documents and models of the city. Among the more interesting relics are a Syriac New Testament from 1664 and, amazingly, a guidebook of Jerusalem printed in 1595. Below the museum is an ancient cistern that is still in the process of excavation.

St Alexander's Church

On a corner just east of the Holy Sepulchre, **St Alexander's Church** (Map pp90-1; admission free; ☞ 9am-1pm & 3-5pm Mon-Thu) is the home of the Russian mission in exile. The attraction for visitors is a much-altered triumphal arch that once stood in Hadrian's forum, built here in AD 135. Through the arch and to the left at the top of the steps you can see a section of the pavement that was once part of the platform of Hadrian's temple to Aphrodite. Ring the bell to enter.

Ethiopian Monastery

Located on the northwestern corner of the Holy Sepulchre complex, the **Ethiopian Monastery** (Map pp90-1; admission free; ☞ daylight hr) houses a few monks who live among the ruins of a medieval cloister erected by the Crusaders where Constantine's basilica had been previously. The cupola in the middle of this roof section admits light to St Helena's crypt below. Once inside you may find monks and nuns praying or prostrating. Around the walls are paintings of Ethiopian saints, the Holy Family and the Queen of Sheeba during her visit to Jerusalem. It was during this visit that the Queen of Sheeba, together with King Solomon, produced heirs to both royal houses, one of whom (according to Ethiopian legend) brought the Ark of the Covenant to Ethiopia.

To find the monastery, follow the route to the 9th Station of the Cross: up the steps off Souq Khan as-Zeit St, at the point where the street to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre turns to the right, there is a small grey door directly ahead that opens onto a roof of that church. The cluster of huts here has been the Ethiopian Monastery since the Copts forced them out of their former building in one of the many disputes between the various Christian groups.

Access to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is possible via two nearby points. One is through the Ethiopian Chapel and the other way is to go left out of the Ethiopian monastery and through the Copts' entrance.

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer

Dominating the Old City skyline with its tall white tower, the present **Lutheran Church of the Redeemer** (Map pp90-1; ☞ 9am-1pm & 1.30-5pm Mon-Sat) was built in 1898 on the site of the 11th-century church of St Mary la Latine. The closed northern entrance porch is medieval, decorated with the signs of the zodiac and the symbols of the months. The tower is popular for its excellent views over the Old City.

Church of St John the Baptist

The oldest church in Jerusalem, the **Church of St John the Baptist** (Map pp90-1; Christian Quarter Rd, Muristan) is rather hidden by the Christian Quarter homes that surround it. The signposted entrance leads you into the courtyard of a more recent Greek Orthodox monastery where a monk will usually be present to open the church for you. Originally built in the mid-5th century, it was restored after the Persians destroyed it in AD 614. In the 11th century the merchants of Amalfi built a new church, which became the cradle of the Knights Hospitallers, using the walls of the earlier building. The present façade with the two small bell towers is a more recent addition, along with a few other alterations made to ensure the building's stability.

MUSLIM QUARTER

Strolling does not come easy in the **Muslim Quarter** (Map pp90-1) – visiting the sights here is more a matter of dodging, weaving and ducking. You'll need agility as heavily laden carts go trundling past, children zip by with reckless abandon and merchants manhandle you into their shops. Challenging as it may seem, the hustle and bustle of the Muslim Quarter is relieved by the fragrance of the spice shops, the sight of colourful headgear bobbing amid the crowd and the joy of a hot tea taken on the roof of a guesthouse, with the Dome of the Rock dominating every view.

The Muslim Quarter runs from Damascus Gate east and south towards the Temple Mount. Enter the melee at permanently congested Damascus Gate. About 100m in,

the street forks, and there is a busy *lafelaf* stall wedged between the two prongs. Bearing to the left is Al-Wad Rd, lined with vast showrooms of brass items such as coffee pots and trays, in among sweet shops, vegetable stalls and an egg stall. This route leads directly to the Western Wall, along the way crossing the Via Dolorosa.

Bearing to the right at the fork is Souq Khan as-Zeit St, which is even busier than Al-Wad Rd. Its name means 'Market of the Guesthouses and Olive Oil' – you'll find both, plus shops selling fruit, vegetables, sweets, hardware, oriental spices and nuts.

St Anne's Church

Surrounded by trees and rubble from bygone eras, **St Anne's Church** (Map pp90-1; admission 8NIS; ☞ 8am-noon & 2-6pm Mon-Sat Apr-Sep, 8am-noon & 2-5pm Mon-Sat Oct-Mar) looks like a lost archaeological site in the midst of the Old City. Traditional belief holds that this was once the home of Joachim and Anne, the parents of the Virgin Mary, while next to the church are the impressive ruins surrounding the biblical Pool of Bethesda.

Aside from its biblical ties, St Anne's Church is also the finest example of Crusader architecture in Jerusalem. It was built in 1140, at the same time as a small adjacent chapel with a stairway leading down to the pool where Jesus is supposed to have healed a sick man (John 5:1-18). The building is unusually asymmetrical – columns, windows and even steps all vary in size and dimension.

When Jerusalem fell to the armies of Saladin, St Anne's became a Muslim theological school – an inscription still to be seen above the church's entrance testifies to this. Successive rulers allowed the church to fall into decay so that by the 18th century it was roof-deep in refuse. In 1856 the Ottoman Turks presented the church to France in gratitude for its support in the Crimean War against Russia, and it was reclaimed from the garbage heap.

Apart from its architectural beauty, the acoustics in the church are excellent, prompting not a few Christian pilgrims to break out into song (soprano and tenor voices sound particularly good here). You can sing too, but house regulations require that you pare your playlist down to religious songs only.

Ecce Homo Convent of the Sisters of Zion

This **convent** (Map pp90-1; admission free; ☞ 8.30am-noon & 2-5pm Mon-Sat) is named for the Ecce Homo arch that crosses the Via Dolorosa outside. The **arch** (part of which has been enveloped by the wall of the convent) was at one time thought to be the gate of Herod's Antonia Fortress and therefore believed to be the spot that Pontius Pilate took Jesus out and proclaimed, 'Ecce Homo' (Behold, the man!). Researchers now dispute this as the arch is now considered to be a 2nd-century triumphal arch built by the Roman emperor Hadrian.

Inside the convent, and down in the basement, is a cistern with a barrel-vault roof, a likely creation of Hadrian. You can also find here the stone pavement (*lithostratos*) etched with the games played by Roman guards, including the 'Kings Game', the goal of which was to execute a mock king.

Mamluk Buildings

Overshadowed by the splendours of the Haram ash-Sharif/Temple Mount, and clustered outside its northern and western walls, are some excellent examples from the golden age of **Islamic architecture** (see Map pp90-1). This area was developed during the era of the Mamluks (1250-1517), a military dynasty of former slaves ruling out of Egypt. They drove the Crusaders out of Palestine and Syria and followed this up with an equally impressive campaign of construction, consolidating Islam's presence in the Levant with masses of mosques, madrassas (theological schools), hostels, monasteries and mausoleums. Their buildings are typically characterised by the banding of red-and-white stone (a technique known as *ablaq*) and by the elaborate carvings and patterning around windows and in the recessed portals.

All of these features are exhibited in the **Palace of the Lady Tunshuq** (Map pp90-1), built in 1388 and found halfway down Aqabat at-Takiya – 150m east of the Hebron Hostel. The façade is badly eroded; however, the uppermost of the three large doorways still has some beautiful inlaid marblework, while a recessed window is decorated with another Mamluk trademark, the stone 'stalactites' known as *muqarnas*. The palace complex now serves as workshops and an orphanage. Opposite the palace is the **Tomb of the Lady Tunshuq** (1398).

Continue downhill to the junction with Al-Wad Rd, passing on your right, just before the corner, the last notable piece of Mamluk architecture built in Jerusalem, the **Ribat Bayram Jawish** (1540), a one-time pilgrims' hospice. Compare this with the buildings on Tariq Bab an-Nazir St, straight across Al-Wad, which are Jerusalem's earliest Mamluk structures, built in the 1260s before the common use of *ablaq*. This street is named after the gate at the end, which leads through into the Haram ash-Sharif/Temple Mount, but non-Muslims may not enter here.

Some 100m south on Al-Wad Rd is **Tariq Bab al-Hadad St**; it looks uninviting but wander down, through the archway, and enter a street entirely composed of majestic Mamluk structures. Three of the four façades belong to madrassas, dating variously from 1358 to 1440, while the single-storey building is a *ribat*, or hospice, dating from 1293.

Back on Al-Wad Rd, continuing south the road passes the **Souq al-Qattanin** (see below) and then, on the left, a *sabil* (drinking fountain dating from Ottoman times), **Sabil Suleyman**. It terminates in a police checkpoint at the mouth of the tunnel down to the Western Wall plaza. However, the stairs to the left lead up to the busy Bab as-Silsila St and the Bab as-Silsila Gate (which leads to the Temple Mount). Just before the gate is the tiny kiosk-like **Tomb of Turkan Khatun** (1352) with a façade adorned with uncommonly asymmetrical carved geometric designs.

Look out also for the restored **Khan as-Sultan** (Map pp94), which is a 14th-century caravanserai (travellers' inn and stables) at the top end of Bab as-Silsila St. A discreet entrance just up from the large 'Gali' sign leads into a courtyard surrounded by workshops, and from a staircase tucked in the left-hand corner as you enter you can climb up to the Old City rooftops.

Souq al-Qattanin

The recently renovated **Souq al-Qattanin** (Map pp90–1; market of the cotton merchants) was originally a Crusader market improved by the Mamluks in the mid-14th century. Almost 100m long, it has 50 shops on the ground floor with residential quarters above. About halfway down is a gate that leads to the Al-Quds University Jerusalem Studies Centre. If it's open, climb up to the roof for a spectacular view of the

Temple Mount. The market also included two hammams (public baths), which have been closed for years but are one of many city projects planned for renovation.

JEWISH QUARTER

Unlike its more bustling neighbours to the north, the **Jewish Quarter** (Map pp90–1) is decidedly residential, with scrubbed stone, proper rubbish collection and the occasional children's playground. This is due largely to the fact that the area was flattened during the fighting in 1948 and most of the quarter had to be rebuilt from scratch.

While few historic monuments above ground are in evidence, there are a number of interesting archaeological finds below street level, some of which date back to the time of the First Temple (around 1000 to 586 BC). One of the better exhibits is the recently renovated Burnt House.

The Jewish Quarter is the only part of the old city that is fully equipped to accommodate wheelchair users. A designated route for wheelchair users begins at the car park south of Hurva Sq. Call ☎ 628-3415 for details.

The Cardo

Cutting a broad north–south swathe, this is the reconstructed main street of Roman and Byzantine Jerusalem, the **Cardo Maximus** (Map pp90–1). At one time it would have run the whole breadth of the city, up to what's now Damascus Gate, but in its present form it starts just south of David St, the tourist souq, serving as the main entry into the Jewish Quarter from the Muslim and Christian areas.

As depicted on the 6th-century Madaba map of the Old City, a copy of which is displayed here, the Cardo would have been a wide colonnaded avenue flanked by roofed arcades. A part of it to the south has been restored to something like its original appearance, while the rest has been reconstructed as an arcade of expensive gift shops and galleries of Judaica. There are wells to allow visitors to see down to the levels beneath the street where there are strata of a wall from the days of the First Temple and the Second Temple.

Close to the large menorah near the southern end of the Cardo, there is the **Last Ditch Battle of the Jewish Quarter Museum** (Map pp90–1; ☎ 628 8141; admission free; ☎ 10am–3pm Sun–Thu, 9am–

1pm Fri), which documents the 1948 campaign for control over the city.

Broad Wall

Just east of the Cardo and north of Hurva Sq, looking like a derelict lot between blank-faced apartment blocks, is a stretch of crumbling masonry known as the **Broad Wall** (Map pp90–1). This is actually an exposed portion of the remains of a fortified stone wall dating from the time of King Hezekiah (c 701 BC).

Israelite Tower & Rachel Ben-Zvi Centre

Buried beneath a modern apartment block on Shone HaLakhot St and reached by a short flight of steps, the **Israelite Tower** (Map pp90–1; ☎ 628 8141; ☎ by appointment) is a gate tower from the time of the Babylonian siege and destruction of the First Temple (roughly 580 BC).

Across from the Israelite Tower, the **Rachel Ben-Zvi Centre** (Map pp90–1; ☎ 628 6288; admission 20NIS; ☎ 9am–4pm Sun–Thu, 9am–1pm Fri), also on Shone HaLakhot St, exhibits a scale model of Jerusalem in the First Temple period, which shows archaeological findings from the period of King David and his followers. The centre's other exhibits include an audiovisual history of the city from 1000 to 586 BC.

Hurva Square & Synagogues

Hurva Sq (Map pp90–1) is an uncommon patch of open space set in the middle of the Jewish Quarter. Its western side is bordered by the remains of the **Hurva Synagogue**, which was Jerusalem's major synagogue in the late 19th century.

The property for the synagogue was purchased by a group of Jewish immigrants from Poland following their arrival in the Holy Land in the 1700s. In the midst of construction a mob of Arabs burned the synagogue and a new name was bequeathed on what was left, Hurva (the ruin). Lithuanian Jews built a new synagogue here in 1864 and fitted it with 12.8m-high (42ft) high arched windows and an 24.9m-tall (82ft) domed ceiling. During the 1948 war Jewish soldiers used the synagogue as a bunker until it was captured by the Arab Legion of Jordan, who subsequently dynamited the building.

In 2005 city authorities, armed with a budget of US\$6.2 billion, began efforts to

rebuild the synagogue. Work is expected to be completed by 2009.

Adjoining the Hurva Synagogue is the **Ramban Synagogue** (Map pp90–1), its name is an acronym for Rabbi Moshe Ben Nahman. The synagogue was established on this site in the year 1400 in a stable bought from an Arab landlord, but problems were later caused by the construction of a neighbouring mosque (the minaret of which still stands). The upshot was that in 1588 the Jews were banned from worship and the synagogue was converted into a workshop. It was reinstated as a house of worship only in 1967, some 380 years later.

South of Hurva Sq, on HaTupim St, are four **Sephardic synagogues** (Map pp90–1; www.sephardiccouncil.org/tour; ☎ 9.30am–4pm Sun–Thu, 9.30am–noon Fri), two of which date back as far as the 16th century. In accordance with a law of the time stating that synagogues could not be taller than neighbouring buildings, this grouping was sunk deep into the ground – a measure that certainly saved the buildings from destruction during the bombardment of the quarter in 1948. Instead, the synagogues were looted by the Jordanians and then used as sheep pens. They have been restored using the remains of Italian synagogues damaged during WWII and are back in use for morning and evening services.

If you only have time for one, visit the 400-year-old **Ben Zakai Synagogue** (Map pp90–1), which is named after a rabbi who escaped Roman persecution at the time of the Second Temple. Inside, a window high above the floor contains a *shofar* (rams' horn) and a flask of olive oil. The purpose of the *shofar* is to announce the coming of the Messiah and the oil is there to anoint him upon his arrival in the synagogue. Legend has it that a tunnel was once built from the synagogue all the way to the Temple Mount so that the Messiah could easily walk there without the hindrance of street traffic.

Burnt House

One of the more interesting sights of the Jewish Quarter is the **Burnt House** (Map pp90–1; adult/child/student 25/12/20NIS; Tiferet Israel St; ☎ 9am–5pm Sun–Thu, 9am–1pm Fri), located below the Quarter Café. The house, buried under rubble for centuries and only recently excavated, dates back to the Roman period, evidenced by the many Roman coins found

here. Its destruction occurred in AD 66 when the Romans put the city to the torch (hence the name of the house). Aside from the coins, a spear was found here, as well as the skeletal remains of a woman and a stone weight with the name 'Kathros' on it (Kathros was a priestly family living in the city at this time). Piecing together history, the museum has created a well-made multimedia presentation shown in a number of languages, including English.

Wohl Archaeological Museum

Down a narrow alleyway east of Hurva Sq is the impressive **Wohl Archaeological Museum** (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 8141; admission 15NIS; ☞ 9am-5pm Sun-Thu, 9am-1pm Fri), which features a 1st-century home and several Herodian archaeological sites, plus interpretive displays. The museum details the lavish lifestyle enjoyed in the Jewish neighbourhood of Herod's city. Exhibits include frescoes, stucco reliefs, mosaic floors, ornaments, furniture and household objects.

ARMENIAN QUARTER

Somewhat shuttered behind high walls and enormous wooden doors, the **Armenian Quarter** (Map pp90-1) of Jerusalem plods along unnoticed, as it has for centuries. If the very presence of an Armenian Quarter strikes you as a bit odd, consider that Armenia was the first nation to officially embrace Christianity when their king converted in AD 303. They established themselves in Jerusalem sometime in the following century. The Kingdom of Armenia disappeared at the end of the 4th century and Jerusalem was adopted as their spiritual capital. They have had an uninterrupted presence here ever since.

The core of the quarter is actually one big monastic compound. The Armenian presence in Jerusalem was traditionally purely religious but a large secular element arrived earlier this century following Turkish persecution. That persecution escalated in 1915 to an attempted genocide in which over 1.5 million Armenians were killed.

The community today, which numbers about 1500, is still very insular, having its own schools, library, seminary and residential quarters discreetly tucked away behind stone parapets. The gates to this city within a city are closed early each evening.

Armenian Compound

About 1200 Armenians now live in what used to be a large pilgrims' hospice. The **Armenian Compound** (Map pp90-1) became a residential area after 1915 when refugees from the Turkish massacres settled here. The empty, wide courtyards are a rare sight in the Old City. It is usually open to visitors during daylight hours, but it can close without notice, so its best to call ahead (☎ 628 2331) or ask at the entrance to St James' Cathedral to make an appointment for a visit.

St James' (Jacques') Cathedral

The glowing lamps that hang from the ceiling and richly patterned carpets strewn across the floors give **St James' Cathedral** (Map pp90-1; Armenian Orthodox Patriarchate Rd; admission free; ☞ 6.30-7.15am & 2.45-3.30pm Mon-Fri, 2.30-3pm Sat & Sun) a palpable aura of mystery lacking in many other Christian sites of Jerusalem.

It was the Georgians in the 11th century who first constructed a church here in honour of St James, on the site where he was beheaded and became the first martyred disciple. The Armenians, in favour with the ruling Crusaders, took possession of the church in the 12th century and the two parties shared restoration duties. The tiles date from much later, from the 18th century, and they were imported from Turkey.

The cathedral is only open for services; the most impressive are held on Sunday when nine hooded Armenian priests take part. There is quite a bit of toing and froing around the altar area from the numerous helpers and there is impressive choral chanting from a 20-person choir – all in Armenian.

Armenian Museum

Originally a theological seminary (1843), with an attractive courtyard enclosed by arched colonnades on two levels, the building that houses the **Armenian Museum** (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 2331; admission 5NIS; ☞ 10am-4pm Mon-Sat) is a lot more fascinating than most of the exhibits it presents. It's reasonably well stocked and the displays are in English. There is a detailed display of the Armenian genocide that took place in 1915. Look out for the large Armenian globe dating from 1852 in the Paul Bedoukian Hall.

St Mark's Chapel

The venerable **St Mark's Chapel** (Map pp90-1; ☞ 7am-noon & 2-5pm Mon-Sat) is the home of the Syrian Orthodox community in Jerusalem, whose members here number about 200. (There are only about three million worldwide, of whom two million are in Malabar in central India.) The Syrian Orthodox believe the chapel, on Ararat St, occupies the site of the home of St Mark's mother, Mary, where Peter went after he was released from prison by an angel (Acts 12:12). The Virgin Mary is claimed to have been baptised here, and according to their tradition this, not the Cenacle on Mt Zion, is where the Last Supper was eaten. One thing to look out for is the painting on leather of the Virgin and Child attributed to St Luke.

Mt Zion

An eclectic mix of histories, **Mt Zion** (Map pp86-7) contains sites holy to Christianity, Islam and Judaism. The last supper possibly occurred here, as well as the eternal sleep of the Virgin Mary. It is also the site of David's tomb.

Although once encompassing the entire ridge of the upper Old City (including the Citadel), Mt Zion is now defined as the stern hill south of the Old City beyond Zion Gate. The name change came in the 4th century, based on new interpretations of religious texts.

GRAVE OF OSKAR SCHINDLER

Among the ancient sites on Mt Zion is one relatively new site, the **grave of Oskar Schindler** (Map pp86-7; ☞ 8am-5pm Mon-Thu, 8am-1pm Fri), the Austrian industrialist who saved more than 1200 Jews from the gas chambers (and whose story was captured by film-maker Stephen Spielberg). From Zion Gate in the Old City walk directly ahead, downhill, bearing left at the fork to go past the Chamber of the Holocaust, around the bend and head across the road to the entrance of the Christian cemetery in which he's buried. Once inside the cemetery head down the stairs that lead to the lower section. Schindler's grave is not well marked, but it is about four rows from the end of the cemetery, more or less in the middle and to your right. Ask the guard for directions if you really get lost.

KING DAVID'S TOMB

A Crusader structure erected two millennia after his death, the **Tomb of King David** (Map pp90-1; admission free; ☞ 8am-6pm Sun-Thu, 8am-2pm Fri) provides little spectacle. What's more, the authenticity of the site is highly disputable – the likelihood is that David is buried under the hill of the original Mt Zion, east of the City of David. However, this is one of the most revered of the Jewish holy places, and from 1948 to 1967, when the Western Wall was off-limits to Jews in Jordanian-held territory, the tomb was the stand-in main centre of pilgrimage. It still serves as a prayer hall. The sombre room is divided into sides for men and women, both leading to the stone cenotaph draped in velvet. Behind is a small alcove that researchers believe is a synagogue dating back to the 5th century AD. To get to the tomb head south from Zion Gate, bear right at the fork and then left. Modest dress is required.

ROOM OF THE LAST SUPPER

Venerated as the room where Jesus and his disciples had their final meal together, the **Room of the Last Supper** (Map pp90-1; admission free; ☞ 8am-5pm Sun-Thu, 8am-1pm Fri) is considered to be the fourth most holy place in the Christian world. Also known as the Coenaculum (Latin for dining hall), the room is also believed to be the place where the disciples received the Holy Spirit on the Pentacost and started speaking in 'foreign tongues' (Acts 2).

The original building was the site of the first Christian Church but was destroyed twice before being rebuilt in its current form by the Crusaders – to the right of the entrance there is a pair of faded Crusader coats of arms. In the Middle Ages the Franciscans acquired it but were later expelled by the Turks. Today the Last Supper is one of the most familiar icons of Christianity, captured in artwork most famously by Leonardo Di Vinci.

Under the Turks the room became a mosque, and Christians were barred from entering, just as Jews were kept from King David's Tomb, located in the room below. The southern wall still bears the niche hollowed by the Muslims as a mihrab when they converted the chapel into a mosque.

At the time of research, the Vatican was hoping to gain stewardship of the room, and was negotiating with the Israeli government

to take it over in exchange for the historic Jewish synagogue in Toledo, Spain.

The room is reached via a discrete stairway from the courtyard of King David's Tomb. Many visitors mistake the first large room for the real thing but you need to walk across the hall to enter the much smaller chamber beyond, which is where Jesus is believed to share the Last Supper.

CHURCH & MONASTERY OF THE DORMITION

The beautiful **Church & Monastery of the Dormition** (Map pp90-1; ☎ 565 5330; admission free; ☞ 8am-noon & 2-6pm) is one of the area's most popular landmarks and is the traditional site where the Virgin Mary died, or fell into 'eternal sleep'; its Latin name is *Dormitio Sanctae Mariae* (Sleep of Holy Mary). The current church and monastery, owned by the German Benedictine order, was consecrated in 1906. It suffered damage during the battles for the city in 1948 and 1967 when its tower overlooking Jordanian army positions on the Old City ramparts below was occupied by Israeli soldiers.

The church's interior is a bright contrast to many of its older, duller peers nearby. A golden mosaic of Mary with the baby Jesus is set in the upper part of the apse; below are the Prophets of Israel. The chapels around the hall are each dedicated to saints: St Willibald, an English Benedictine who visited the Holy Land in 724; the Three Wise Men; St Joseph, whose chapel is covered with medallions that feature kings of Judah as Jesus' forefathers; and St John the Baptist. The floor is decorated with names of saints and prophets and zodiac symbols.

The crypt features a stone effigy of Mary asleep on her deathbed with Jesus calling his Mother to heaven. The chapels around this statue were donated by various countries. In the apse is the Chapel of the Holy Spirit, with the Holy Spirit shown coming down to the Apostles.

CHURCH OF ST PETER IN GALLICANTU

Almost hidden by the trees and the slope of the hill, the **Church of St Peter of Galllicantu** (Map pp86-7; admission free; ☞ 8am-11.45am & 2-5pm) 'at the Crowning of the Cock' is the traditional site of the denial of Jesus by his disciple Peter (Mark 14:66-72) - 'before the cock crow thou shalt deny me thrice'.

Built on the foundations of previous Byzantine and Crusader churches the modern structure is also believed to stand on the site of the house of the high priest Caiaphas, where Jesus was believed to have been taken after his arrest (Mark 14:53). A cave beneath the church is said to be where Christ was incarcerated. Whatever your beliefs, the view from the balcony of the church across to the City of David, the Arab village of Silwan and the three valleys that shape Jerusalem is reason enough to justify a visit.

The church is reached by turning east as you descend the road leading from Mt Zion down and around to Sultan's Pool. Roman steps lead down from the church garden to the Gihon Spring in the Kidron Valley.

Kidron Valley

Historically the oldest section of Jerusalem, the **Kidron Valley** (Map pp80-1) has archaeological remnants that date back more than 4000 years. This is the site of the legendary City of David, which was actually a city long before David slung any stones. There are also a number of graves and tombs in the area, particularly in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. Steep topography has isolated the valley from the rest of the city (the best access is via the Dung Gate or the Lion's Gate in the Old City), but it's definitely worth trekking down here for a morning of exploration.

VALLEY OF JEHOShAPHAT

The word Jehoshaphat in Hebrew means 'God shall judge', and this narrow furrow of land, located between the Temple Mount and the Mount of Olives, is where it is said that the events of the Day of Judgement are to take place. According to belief, all of humanity will be assembled together on the Mount of Olives, with the Judgement Seat on the Haram opposite. Two bridges will appear, spanning the valley, one made of iron and the other made of paper. According to God's judgement each person will be directed to cross one or the other. But there's no suspense, the Bible gives the ending away: the iron bridge will collapse and those sent across it die, while the paper bridge holds up with the promise of eternal life.

At the southern end of the **Valley of Jehoshaphat** are a series of tombs. The northernmost is the **Tomb of Jehoshaphat** (Map pp86-7), a 1st-century burial cave notable

for the impressive frieze above its entrance. Just in front of the Tomb of Jehoshaphat is **Abalom's Pillar**, the legendary tomb of David's son (II Samuel 18:17). Just beyond Abalom's Pillar is the **Grotto of St James**, where St James is believed to have hidden when Jesus was arrested nearby. It is probably the burial place of the B'nei Heziris a family of Jewish priests. Next to the grotto, carved out of the rock, is the **Tomb of Zechariah**, where Jewish tradition believes the prophet Zechariah is buried (II Chronicles 24:25).

Despite their names, it's doubtful that any biblical-type characters were interred here - the tombs most likely belong to wealthy noblemen of the Second Temple period.

CITY OF DAVID

The oldest part of Jerusalem, the **City of David** (Map pp90-1; ☎ 626 2341; www.cityof david.org.il; admission 23NIS; ☞ 9am-5pm Sun-Thu, 9am-1pm Fri) was the Canaanite settlement captured by King David some 3000 years ago. The excavations are the result of work, still ongoing, that started in 1850. There is much to see here, and quite a bit of walking is involved, so set aside a good part of your morning.

From the Dung Gate, head east (downhill), take the road to the right (just past the car park). The City of David entrance is on the left. At the visitors centre you can watch a 3D movie about the city.

Royal Quarter (Area G)

Area G, also called the **Royal Quarter** (Map pp90-1) was first constructed in the 10th century BC, most likely as a fortification wall for a palace on the ridge. During the First Temple period an aristocrat's home (Achiel's House) was built against the wall but was destroyed along with the temple in 586 BC. Judean and Babylonian arrowheads found at the site are vivid reminders of the bloody battle waged here. Archaeologists have also located here 51 royal seals (in ancient Hebrew script), including one belonging to Gemaryahu Ben Shafan, the scribe of the prophet Jeremiah, who is mentioned in the book of Jeremiah 36:10. The seals were all located in one chamber, indicating that the room served as an ancient office.

Warren's Shaft

The long, sloping **Warren's Shaft** (Map pp90-1) was named after Sir Charles Warren, the

British engineer who re-discovered it in 1867. The tunnel, which runs underneath the City of David to the Spring of Gihon, allowed the Jebusites to obtain water without exposing themselves to danger in times of siege. It's just inside their city's defence wall and is possibly the tunnel that David's soldiers used to enter and capture the city, as mentioned in II Samuel 5. Modern archaeologists, however, tend to doubt this theory, suggesting the invaders used a different tunnel. From Warren's Shaft, you can then proceed down to Hezekiah's Tunnel at the bottom of the hill.

Hezekiah's Tunnel

The highlight of a visit to the City of David complex is **Hezekiah's Tunnel** (Map pp90-1), a 500m-long underground passage of waist-deep water that ends at the Pool of Siloam, where it is said that a blind man was healed after Jesus told him to wash in it. The purpose of the tunnel was to channel water flowing from the Gihon Spring, a temperamental source of water that acts like a siphon, pouring out a large quantity of water for some 30 minutes before drying up for several hours.

Gihon, appropriately, means 'gushing' and the spring is the main reason why the Jebusites settled in the valley rather than taking to the adjacent high ground. There is believed to be enough water to support a population of about 2500 people. The tunnel was constructed in about 700 BC by King Hezekiah to bring the water of the Gihon into the city and store it in the Pool of Siloam. Its purpose was to prevent invaders, in particular the Assyrians, from locating the city's water supply and cutting it off (II Chronicles 32:3).

Although narrow and low in parts, you can wade through it; the water is normally about half a metre to a metre deep. Due to the siphon effect it does occasionally rise, but only by about 15cm to 20cm.

About 20m into the tunnel, the cavern turns sharply to the left, where a chest-high wall blocks another channel that leads to Warren's Shaft (this can be visited near the City of David excavations). Towards the tunnel's end the roof rises. This is because the tunnellers worked from either end and one team slightly misjudged the other's level. They had to lower the floor so that the water would flow. A Hebrew inscription was found in the tunnel, and a copy can be seen in the Israel Museum. Carved by

Hezekiah's engineers, it tells of the tunnel's construction.

You enter the tunnel at the Gihon Spring source on HaShiloah Rd down in the Kidron Valley and just south of the resthouse. Turn left as you get to the foot of the hill from Warren's Shaft. The entire walk takes about 30 minutes; wear shorts, suitable footwear, and bring a torch (flashlight).

Mount of Olives

Offering visitors a big slice of biblical history, along with some of the most spectacular views over Jerusalem, is the **Mount of Olives** (Map pp86-7). According to the Book of Zechariah, this is where God will start to redeem the dead when the Messiah returns on the Day of Judgement. In order to get a good place in the line, Jews have always preferred to be buried here and to date some 150,000 people have been laid to rest on these slopes. Aside from being the world's oldest continually used cemetery, there are many churches commemorating the events that are believed to have led to Jesus' arrest and his ascension to heaven.

Most of the Mount's churches and gardens are open in the morning, closing for at least two hours towards noon and reopening again in the mid-afternoon. However, the real draw and what makes a visit to the Mount of Olives a must is the panoramic view it affords of the Old City.

Up at the top, in front of the Seven Arches Hotel (the cause of much controversy as it was built by the Jordanians over part of the ancient Jewish cemetery) is a promenade for snap-happy visitors. The best light is in the early morning.

You can walk from East Jerusalem over from St Stephen's Gate in the Old City, or otherwise take the bus to avoid what most find to be quite a strenuous walk; Arab bus No 75 runs from the station on Sultan Suleyman St.

CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

The Sanctity aside, perhaps the best reason to visit the **Church of the Ascension** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 8am-5.30pm Mon-Sat) is to walk the flight of steps to the top of the 45m-high tower for some spectacular views across the Judean Desert. The church itself, free to visit, features some notable mosaics, paintings and masonry work. The church is next to Au-

gusta Victoria Hospital, and Arab bus No 75 stops outside.

RUSSIAN CHAPEL OF THE ASCENSION

Marked by a needle-point steeple – the tallest structure on the Mount of Olives – the **Russian Chapel of the Ascension** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 9am-noon Tue & Thu) is built over the spot from which the Russian Orthodox Church claims Jesus made his ascent to heaven. It's hard to find, so look for a narrow alleyway leading off from the main street, in among the shops and cafés.

MOSQUE OF THE ASCENSION

Sometimes confusingly referred to as the Church of the Ascension, the **Mosque of the Ascension** (Map pp86-7; admission 5NIS) is a Muslim-administered building in an odd little octagonal Crusader reconstruction of an earlier Byzantine structure. Saladin authorised two of his followers to acquire the site in 1198 and it has remained in Muslim possession since. Hours are irregular but someone is usually around most mornings to open it up.

Islam recognises Jesus as a prophet. The stone floor bears an imprint said to be the footstep of Jesus. Perhaps the reason for its unconvincing appearance today is that pilgrims in the Byzantine period were permitted to take bits of it away.

CHURCH OF THE PATER NOSTER

Beside the cave in which Jesus is believed to have spoken to his disciples, Queen Helena, the mother of Emperor Constantine of Rome, constructed the **Church of the Pater Noster** (Map pp86-7; admission free; ☎ 8.30-11.45am & 3-4.45pm Mon-Sat). The church, also known as the Church of the Eleona – a bastardisation of the Greek word *elaionas*, meaning 'olive grove', was destroyed by the Persians in 614. The site later became known as the place where Jesus is believed to have taught the Lord's Prayer, a belief that inspired the Crusaders to construct an oratory among the ruins in 1106.

The most interesting things here are the attractive tiled panels on which are inscribed the Lord's Prayer in over 100 languages. They are on a high wall on a bend around 200m before the Seven Arches Hotel.

As you enter the gate, turn left and then right. The tomb is that of Princess de la Tour d'Auvergne, who purchased the property in 1886 and built the neighbouring

Carmelite convent. The actual cave can be reached by going around the cloister to the left, down some stairs and through the first door on the right.

TOMBS OF THE PROPHETS

Slightly to the north and below the viewing promenade are the **Tombs of the Prophets** (Map pp86-7; admission free; ☎ 8am-3pm Sun-Fri), a set of ancient tombs in which are buried the three prophets Haggai, Zachariah and Malachi, who lived in the 5th century BC.

CHURCH OF DOMINUS FLEVIT

Built in the 1950s, the **Church of Dominus Flevit** (Map pp86-7; admission free; ☎ 8.30-5pm) is one of the latest additions to the Mount of Olives. The original church on this site was built by medieval pilgrims who claimed to have found the rock on the Mount of Olives where Jesus had wept for Jerusalem (Luke 19:41) – hence, Dominus Flevit, meaning 'the Lord wept'.

When the present-day tear-shaped church was being built, excavations unearthed a 5th-century monastery, the mosaic floor of which is on display. Also uncovered was a large cemetery dating back to about 1500 BC. The cemetery has since been recovered but some of the tombs are still visible. The view of the Dome of the Rock from the window of the altar is particularly attractive.

(RUSSIAN) CHURCH OF MARY MAGDALENE

Although badly tarnished by the weather, the golden onion domes of the **Church of Mary Magdalene** (Map pp86-7; admission free; ☎ 10am-noon Tue, Thu & Sat) are still one of Jerusalem's most attractive and surprising landmarks. Built in 1888 by Alexander III in memory of his mother, the church is now a convent and has one of the city's best choirs. A section of the Garden of Gethsemane is claimed to be within the church's grounds.

CHURCH OF ALL NATIONS & GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

Glistening golden mosaics mark the façade of the classically styled **Church of All Nations** (Map pp86-7; admission free; ☎ 8.30-11.30am & 2.30-4pm), designed by prolific architect Antonio Barluzzi and dedicated in 1924. The mosaic depicts Jesus assuming the suffering of the world, hence the church's alternative name of the Basilica of the Agony.

Despite the name, not *all* nations are represented, but you can see the seals of the 12 countries that financed the project. The seal of England is in the middle line, nearest to the door, the USA is in the first dome on the right and Canada is one past the USA. The church is the successor to two earlier churches; the first was erected in the 4th century but destroyed by an earthquake in the 740s, and the second was an oratory built over the ruins by the Crusaders but abandoned in 1345 for reasons unknown.

Around the church is the popularly accepted site of **Gethsemane** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 8am-noon & 2-6pm), the garden where Jesus is believed to have been arrested (Mark 14:32-50). The garden has some of the world's oldest olive trees (in Hebrew *gat shmanim* means 'oil press'), three of which have been scientifically dated as being over 2000 years old, making them witnesses to whatever biblical events may have occurred here. The entrance is not from the main road but from the narrow, steeply inclined alleyway that you'll find leading up behind the church.

TOMB OF THE VIRGIN MARY

One of the holiest sites in Christianity, the **Tomb of the Virgin Mary** (Map pp86-7; admission free; ☎ 6am-noon & 2.30-5pm) is a dim and somewhat forlorn place, hung with ancient brass lamps and infused with a millennium of must.

On her death, sometime in the middle of the 1st century, Mary was supposedly interned here by the disciples. A monument was first constructed in the 5th century but was repeatedly destroyed. The current structure dates back to the Crusader period of the 12th century, built on Byzantine foundations. It is now owned by the Greek Orthodox Church, while the Armenians, Syrians and Copts have shares in the altar.

On the main road beside the stairs down to the tomb, the small cupola supported by columns is a memorial to Mujir ad-Din, a 15th-century Muslim judge and historian.

East Jerusalem

Predominately Arab East Jerusalem occupies the land that before 1967 belonged to Jordan. The old border between Israel and Jordan was HaShalom Rd (aka the Bar-Lev Line). East of the line, the major roads running north and south are Nablus Rd and Salah ad-Din St; in this area you'll find the Rockefeller

Museum, the Garden Tomb, the Museum on the Seam and St George's Cathedral, among other sites. During your rambles, make sure to visit the **American Colony Hotel** (Map p110; 23 Nablus Rd), one of the top hotels in Jerusalem and a historic attraction. Legend has it that when the Ottomans finally surrendered the city to British rule, the Turkish governor of

Jerusalem snatched a sheet from one of the beds (it was a hospital at the time) and used it as a flag to surrender. The 'flag' is now in the Imperial War Museum in London.

ROCKEFELLER MUSEUM

Archaeology buffs who could not get their fill at the Israel Museum should also visit

East Jerusalem's **Rockefeller Museum** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 628 2251; www.imj.org.il/eng/branches/rockefeller; Sultan Suleiman St; adult/student 26/16NIS; ☎ 10am-3pm Sun-Thu, 10am-2pm Fri & Sat) The historic, octagonal-shaped building was set up with a gift of US\$2 million donated by the Rockefeller family in 1927, and in its heyday was the leading museum of antiquities in the region. Highlights include the carved beams from Al-Aqsa Mosque, the stone ornamentation recovered from Hisham's Palace (see p305), and the famed 'Lachish Letters' that describe the last days of the Kingdom of Judah (6th century BC).

GARDEN TOMB

The slightly incongruous walled patch of green in the middle of East Jerusalem is the **Garden Tomb** (Map p110; ☎ 627 2745; www.gardentomb.com; admission free; ☎ 2-5.30pm Mon-Sat), a site considered as an alternative to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. While enjoying little support for its claims, it is appreciated by many for its tranquillity and charm. As one Catholic priest is reported to have said, 'If the Garden Tomb is not the true site of the Lord's death and resurrection it should have been'.

Biblical significance was first attached to this location by General Charles Gordon (of Khartoum fame) in 1883. Gordon refused to believe that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre could occupy the site of Golgotha, and on identifying a skull-shaped hill just north of Damascus Gate he began excavations. The suitably ancient tombs he discovered under the mound further strengthened his conviction that this was the true site of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus.

Archaeologists have since scotched the theory by dating the tombs as coming from the 5th century BC. Several cynics suggest that the continued championing of the Garden Tomb has more to do with the fact that it's the only holy site in Jerusalem that the Protestants, its owners, have any stake in.

To get there from Sultan Suleyman St head north along Nablus Rd and turn right at Schick St.

MUSEUM ON THE SEAM

Conflict, prejudice, racism and (occasionally) coexistence are on display at the **Museum on the Seam** (Map p100; ☎ 628 1278; www.coexistence.art.museum; 4 Hel Handasa St; adult/senior/

student 25/10/20NIS; ☎ 9am-5pm Sun-Thu, 9am-2pm Fri, to 1pm Fri in winter), a powerful multimedia exposition that deals with these themes through the use of art and expression.

In the words of the curator, this is not an 'amusing museum'. It does not have a happy ending and it probably raises more questions than it answers. The message is depressingly realistic, but it's designed to provoke thought and discussion, making it very much in step with the politics of the city.

The location for such a museum could not be more appropriate. It sits on the former Green Line that once divided East and West Jerusalem (and the Arab and Jewish armies). It also lies between the ultraorthodox community of Mea She'arim and the secular neighbourhoods of West Jerusalem. Inside, the clash of cultures and religions is played out on TV screens and in artwork in a series of revolving exhibits. But the museum does not target any one group, instead suggesting a collective complicity in prejudice and hate crimes. (They don't charge you for guilt).

The building itself is known to most locals as the Tourjeman Post, and served as a forward military position by the Israeli army in the 1948 and 1967. Still today the façade bears the scars of war. Just outside the door was the Mandelbaum Crossing, the former gate between Jordan and Israel.

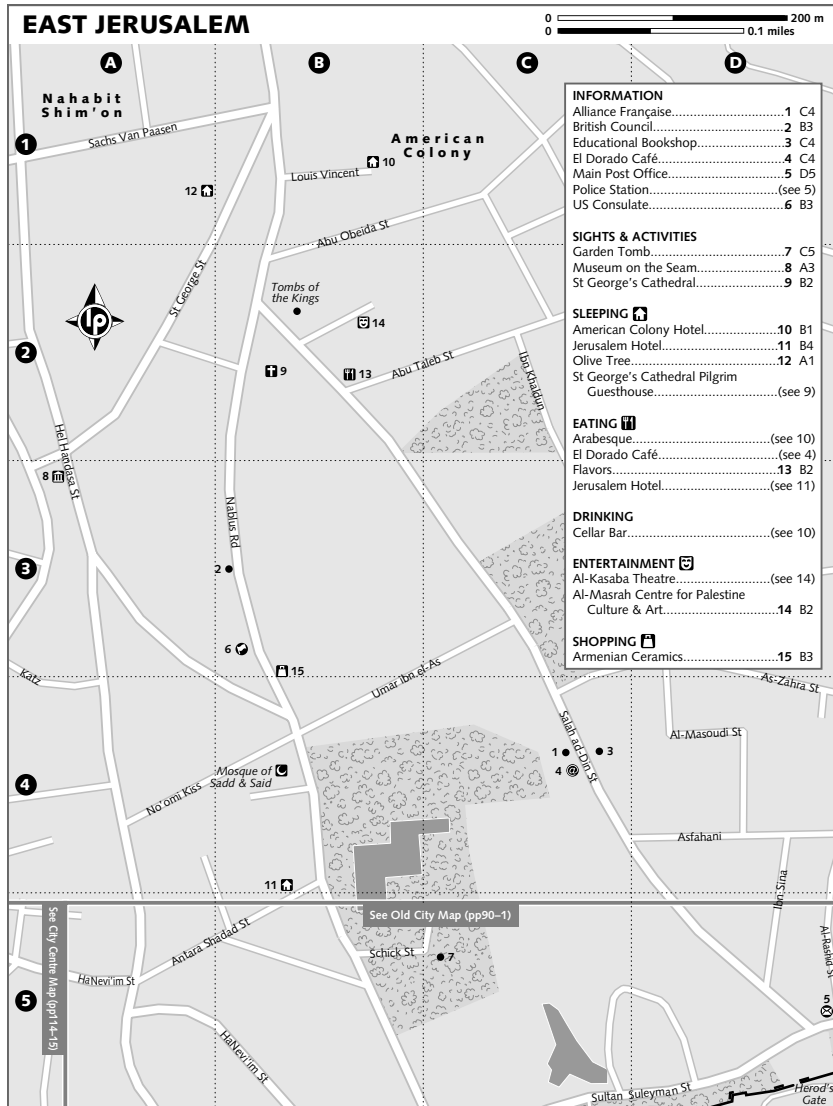
Some of the videos are graphic in their displays of violence and the museum is not suitable for children under 14 (your kids can wait on the rooftop promenade). Visits are usually by guided tour, so it's a good idea to call ahead.

If you enjoy the museum, come back for one of the weekly lectures held on the roof every Thursday at 7pm (July to September). Just as stimulating as the discussion is the cold beer that is provided free of charge.

ST GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL

Named after the patron saint of England, who is traditionally believed to have been martyred in Palestine early in the 4th century, **St George's Cathedral** (Map p110; admission free; ☎ variable) belongs to the Anglican Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East.

Consecrated in 1910, the Turks closed the church and then used the bishop's house as their army headquarters during WWI. After the British took Jerusalem in 1917, the truce was signed here in the bishop's study. The



cathedral has two congregations, Arabic- and English-speaking, and the complex includes a popular guesthouse (see p133) and school.

The church compound is a piece of the British Mandate frozen in time, featuring many symbols of the British presence in Jerusalem, including a font given by Queen Victoria, memorials to British servicemen, a royal coat of arms, an English oak screen and the tower built in memory of King Edward VII. The cathedral is just south of the junction of Salah ad-Din St and Nablus Rd.

City Centre

The City Centre, or the New City as it's sometimes called, is the area northwest of the Old City. Its central axis is Jaffa Rd, running from Zehel Sq to the Mahane Yehuda Market area. To the south of Jaffa Rd is the main shopping and dining area of the city. In Hebrew it's called Nahalat Shiv'a. To the north are the residential suburbs of Mea She'arim. Despite its status as Jerusalem's downtown, the area is pleasantly devoid of traffic and busy thoroughfares, making it easy to get around on foot or bicycle.

NOTRE DAME

Who knows what the Roman Catholic Assumptionist Fathers had in mind when they set about building the **Notre Dame de France Hospice** (Map pp114-15; ☎ 627 9111; www.notredamecenter.org; 3 Paratroopers Rd) in 1884. Whether it's the predominant use of stone or the result of a paranoid defensiveness that comes from having so many different creeds and sects vying for influence in one place, much of the city's religious architecture has a distinct bastion-like appearance. This reaches an apotheosis in the Notre Dame, a hostelry for French pilgrims that takes the form of a vast, imposing fortress that even manages to dominate the Old City walls. Reinforcing the muscular imagery, up on the roofline stands a 5m-high statue of Mary flanked by two crenulated turrets. It's fitting that between 1948 and 1967, when Jerusalem was divided, the south wing of the Notre Dame was used as an IDF bunker and frontier post.

As a result the building suffered heavy battle damage but it underwent major renovation in the 1970s and now Notre Dame operates as a busy international pilgrim centre. It also has an arts centre promoting

traditional local Christian art, as well as a café and library.

RUSSIAN COMPOUND

Between Jaffa Rd and HaNevi'im St and dominated by the green domes of the Church of the Holy Trinity, the **Russian Compound** (Map pp114-15) was acquired by the Russian Orthodox Church in 1860. In addition to the cathedral, facilities were constructed here for the many pilgrims from Russia who visited the Holy Land until WWI. The cathedral (closed to the public) occupies the site where the Assyrians camped in about 700 BC, and in AD 70 Roman legions assembled here during the Jewish Revolt. In front of the cathedral, the 12m-high Herod's Pillar is believed to have been intended for the Second Temple; however, it cracked during chiselling and was abandoned here.

Nicknamed 'Bevingrad' by the Jews during the British Mandate, after the reviled British foreign secretary Ernest Bevin, the compound is home today to the central police station and law courts.

MEA SHE'ARIM

Walk northeast from Zion Sq and you'll soon enter a neighbourhood with squat stone-fronted buildings, balconies strewn with drying laundry, bearded figures in black and long-skirted mums pushing shopping carts and trailed by a gaggle of smartly dressed children. If you have the sense that you've stumbled upon an Eastern European *shtetl* (ghetto) of the 1880s then you are probably standing near the corner of Kikar Shabbat, the central intersection of **Mea She'arim** (Map pp86-7).

A throwback to older times, Mea She'arim was developed by ultraorthodox Eastern European immigrants who modelled their Jerusalem home like the ones they remembered back in Poland, Germany and Hungary. Despite their transition to the Holy Land, residents have maintained the customs, habits and dress of 18th-century Eastern Europe. This includes conservative dress, black fedoras for men and floor-scraping dresses for women. Even in the height of the Middle Eastern summer it's still customary to wear thick padded coats and fur hats.

In a few of the most traditional families, women shave their heads and wear

HARED.COM

In 2000, a group of leading Orthodox rabbis condemned the internet as being '1000 times more dangerous than TV', and banned it from religious homes. But a peek into any Jerusalem cybercafé would indicate that their holy proclamation has gone somewhat unheeded.

Congregating among computer screens of one downtown café, the black-hatted young men view websites that would probably not conform to the strict Halakha laws of Jerusalem's Rabbinate. A young *hared* (ultraorthodox Jewish) man reads up on World Cup scores while in another cubicle a group of teenage *haredim* boys contemplate Shakira's victory in a music video contest. A few seats away another is deeply involved in a chat-room discussion.

Entry into cyberspace by Israel's *hared* community has been frowned upon by concerned parents and local rabbis, but that does not seem to prevent curious ultraorthodox Jews from exploring this un-kosher form of entertainment. But *haredim* Jews are not so Amish-like in their opposition to technology; they permit themselves the use of cars, computers, telephones and other modern devices, so long as these wonders are used for purposes that do not stray from their conservative traditions. The trouble, it seems, is how to monitor how the web and other forms of modern entertainment are used.

One way of dealing with the internet, the religious have found, is through tightly monitored servers like yeshiva.net, an internet service provider that restricts usage to email and kosher websites such as www.koogle.com, a parody of Google that searches Jewish-related websites.

Mobile phones are also problematic because users can browse the web or SMS members of the opposite sex, which could lead to clandestine relationships that threaten the tradition of matchmaking. One local network, MIRS, has cleverly introduced a kosher phone that blocks such usage. The phone carries a stamp signifying its approval of the rabbinical hierarchy.

Controversy over the use of technology is nothing new within *haredim* circles. In the middle of the 19th century ultraorthodox rabbis protested the printing of Jewish newspapers. One hundred years later it was the transistor radio that came under attack. But times change and now the *haredim* print newspapers and deliver sermons over legal and pirate radio frequencies.

Wireless kosher cafés may not be headed towards Mea She'arim anytime soon, but it's clear that even the most religious-minded *hared* can find a place in cyberspace.

wigs covered by a beret. Yiddish is the preferred language on the street as the ultraorthodox believe Hebrew to be a language only fit for religious purposes. Days are often spent in prayer and business is of a secondary pursuit – religious study is frequently financed by fellow ultraorthodox communities abroad.

Families are typically large and this fact has made Mea She'arim one of the fastest-growing neighbourhoods in Jerusalem, as well as contributing to the increasingly religious nature of the city.

As it is a religious neighbourhood, visitors are expected to dress and act in a conservative manner – rules stating as much are posted on banners that hang from buildings. Residents request that visitors not take pictures or speak to children. Do not walk arm in arm or even hand in hand with anyone, and kissing is definitely taboo. Disobeying local customs will lead to verbal or symbolic objections or even stone throwing.

Friday is perhaps the liveliest day to visit as you'll see families heading to and from market in their preparations for Shabbat. Neighbourhood bakeries are open all night on Thursday, baking challah for Shabbat. On Friday nights the streets are awash with people taking a break from their filling Shabbat dinners. Another interesting time to visit is during the days leading up to Passover, when you can find local residents steam-cleaning their dishes on the footpaths.

Mea She'arim is a few minutes' walk from both Damascus Gate and the Jaffa Rd/King George V St junction.

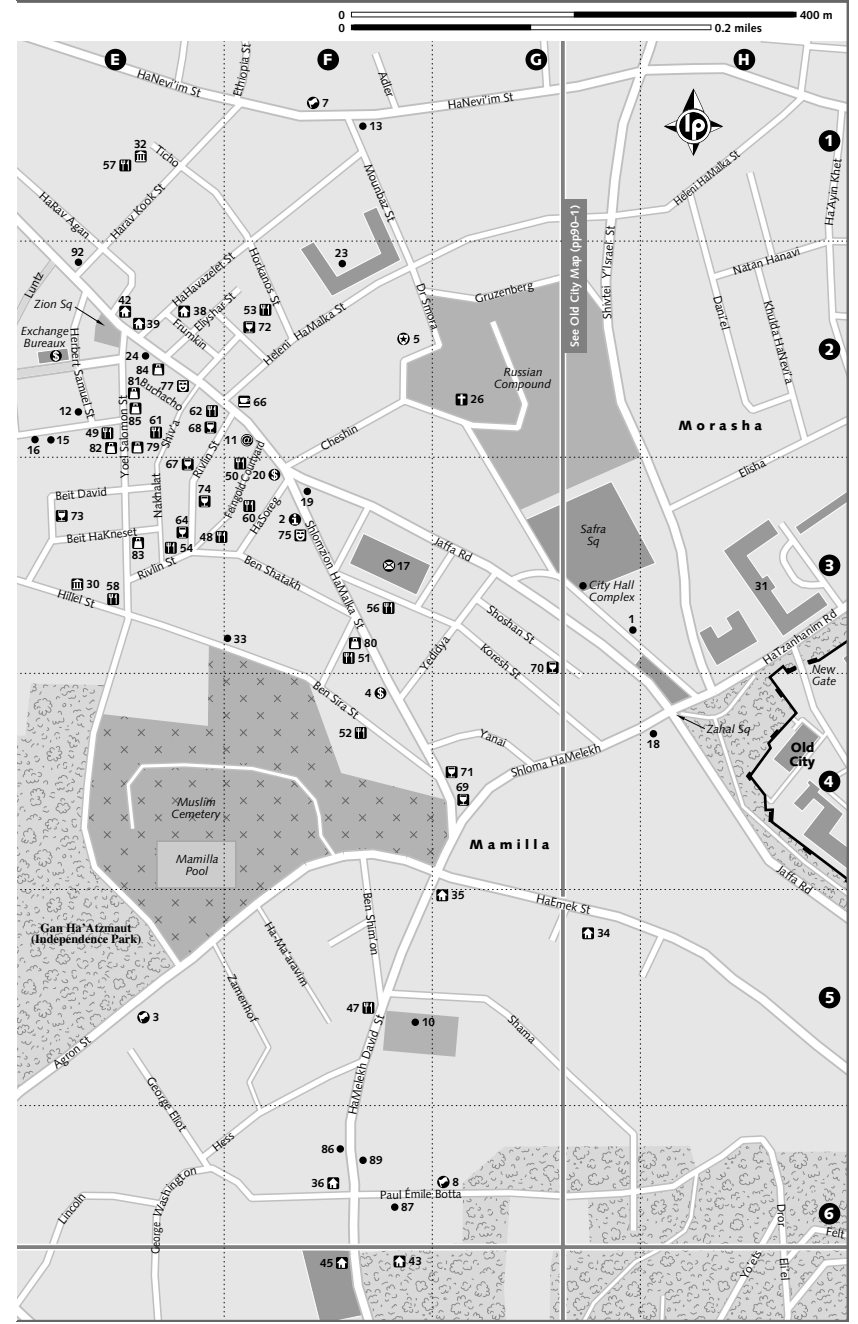
ETHIOPIA ST

Tucked away on narrow, leafy Ethiopia St is the impressive blue-domed **Ethiopian Church** (Map pp86-7; admission free; ☎ 9am-1pm & 2-6pm). Built between 1896 and 1904, the church's entrance gate features the carved Lion of Judah, an emblem believed to have been presented by Solomon to the Queen

CITY CENTRE



See Rehavia, German Colony & Talbiyah Map (pp120-1)



INFORMATION		Wolfson Museum.....(see 28)	Bonita..... 64 E3
Alliance Française..... 1 G3	YMCA.....(see 45)	Café Hillel..... 65 C3	Coffee Bean..... 66 F2
Alternative Information Centre..... 2 F3	SLEEPING ☹	Geysir..... 67 E3	Gong..... 68 E2
American Consulate..... 3 E5	Beit Shmuel Hostel..... 34 G5	Open..... 69 G4	Shoshan..... 70 G3
American Express..... 4 F4	David Citadel..... 35 G5	Sol..... 71 G4	Uganda..... 72 F2
Central Police Station..... 5 F2	Eldan Hotel..... 36 F6	Yankee's Bar..... 73 E3	Zolli's..... 74 E3
Daila.....(see 75)	Holiday 2000 Apartments..... 37 D2	ENTERTAINMENT ☹	
Dr E Riechenberg..... 6 C2	Hotel Habira..... 38 E2	Beit Shmuel.....(see 34)	
Ethiopian Consulate..... 7 F1	Hotel Kaplan..... 39 E2	Daila..... 75 F3	
French Consulate..... 8 G6	Hotel Noga..... 40 B3	Dublin..... 76 D3	
Gerard Behar Centre..... 9 A2	Hotel Palatin..... 41 D1	Mike's Place..... 77 E2	
Hebrew Union College..... 10 F5	Jerusalem Hostel & Guest House..... 42 E2	SHOPPING ☹	
Internet Café..... 11 F2	King David Hotel..... 43 F6	Agfa Photo Shwartz..... 78 D2	
ISSTA..... 12 E2	Lev Jerusalem..... 44 C2	Altogether 8..... 79 E2	
ISSTA..... 13 F1	YMCA Three Arches Hotel..... 45 F6	Arman Darian..... 80 F3	
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Laundry Place..... 16 E2	1868..... 47 F5	Green Vurcel..... 83 E3	
Main Post Office..... 17 F3	Adom..... 48 E3	Kippa Man..... 84 E2	
Mazada Tours..... 18 H4	Babette..... 49 E2	Lametayel..... 85 E2	
Ministry of the Interior..... 19 F3	Barud..... 50 F3	TRANSPORT	
Mizrahi Bank..... 20 F3	Cavalier..... 51 F3	Avis..... 86 F6	
Post Office..... 21 A2	Ceilo..... 52 F4	Budget..... 87 D3	
Sefer VeSefel..... 22 D1	Darna..... 53 F2	Eldan..... 88 D6	
SPNI Jerusalem..... 23 F2	El Gaucho..... 54 E3	El Al.....(see 36)	
Steimatzky..... 24 E2	Focaccio Bar..... 55 D3	Hertz..... 89 F6	
Steimatzky..... 25 D2	Hamarakia..... 56 F3	Memsi..... 90 B3	
T'mol.....(see 61)	Little Jerusalem..... 57 E1	Nesher Service Taxis (for the Airport)..... 91 C2	
SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES	New Deli..... 58 E3	Sherut (Service Taxi) for Tel Aviv..... 92 E2	
Church of the Holy Trinity..... 26 G2	Pinati..... 59 D2		
Giraffe..... 27 D2	Sakura..... 60 F3		
Great Synagogue.....(see 28)	T'mol..... 61 E2		
Heichal Shlomo..... 28 D6	Village Green..... 62 E2		
Heichal Shlomo..... 28 D6	YMCA Three Arches Hotel.....(see 45)		
Kabbalah Centre..... 29 D2	DRINKING ☹☹		
Museum of Italian Jewish Art & Synagogue..... 30 E3	Bolnat..... 63 D2		
Notre Dame de France Hospice..... 31 H3			
Ticho House..... 32 E1			
Time Elevator..... 33 F3			

of Sheba, Ethiopia's queen, when the queen visited Jerusalem. The gate also has inscriptions in Ge'ez, an ancient language of Ethiopia. Visitors are asked to leave their shoes at the door before entering.

Opposite the church is the **Ben Yehuda house** (Map pp86-7) where the great linguist lived and did much of his work on the revival of the Hebrew language. A plaque marking the house was stolen by ultraorthodox Jews, who strongly disapprove of the language's everyday use.

On your left as you leave Ethiopia St and descend HaNevi'im St towards the Old City is the **Ethiopian consulate** (Map pp114-15), with its mosaic-decorated façade.

MAHANE YEHUDA MARKET

All walks of Jerusalem life converge at the bustling **Mahane Yehuda Market** (Map pp86-7; ☹ 8am-sunset Sun-Thu, 9am-2pm Fri), a fascinating spectacle for the first-time visitor and a bar-

gain emporium for city residents. Squeeze past the narrow, carefully guarded entrance and dive into a marketplace crammed with fresh fruit, oils, nuts, vegetables and just about anything else grown or picked from the Israeli soil. Spices abound and the smell of cinnamon, pesto, paprika and black pepper fills the air. There is also plenty of imported coffee and teas, not to mention fresh fish hauled up from the Mediterranean.

The market is fast becoming gentrified and some of the stalls have been converted into bohemian-esque coffeeshops; look for these along Agos and Tuut Sts. The best we found was **Chandra** (☹ 624 4242; 9 Agos St), a tiny Indian place that serves vegetarian thali (25NIS) and lassis (8NIS).

Also look out for the **Uzi Eli** (cnr Agos & Tuut), an organic drink and medicine stall with an enthusiastic owner who will give you a spritz of citron treatment on your face whether you want it or not. His treatments

TRIGGER HAPPY HAREDIM

When the newly formed IDF unit Nahal Haredi asked for its first volunteers in 1999, all of 30 hands shot up. The *haredim* (ultraorthodox Jews) who were asked to join may have been wary at first but the crack unit has since swelled to 800 battle-hardened warriors.

The IDF opened the unit in order to show religious Jews that their sons could serve in the military without sacrificing devotion to the Torah. It went well out of its way to cater to the young recruits' religious needs, allowing time off for prayers and religious lessons. It also built a new, female-free barracks complete with a glatt kosher mess hall. The Ministry of Defense helped out by creating a special department to find and recruit yeshiva (religious or Talmudic school) dropouts.

There was much backlash from high-ranking rabbis, whose verbal assault on the unit prevented many youngsters from joining. In order to make up the numbers, the unit recruited not just *hared* youth, but also religious Zionists. Foreign *haredim* from the USA, the UK and France also joined, making up around 15% of the unit. In their desperation, Nahal Haredi also enlisted members of the outlawed Kach movement (ultra-nationalists), a decision that went awry when the soldiers were caught stoning Palestinians in their cars.

Besides the stone-throwing incidents, there have been other mishaps. In 2005 two unit soldiers were caught planting a fake bomb in the Jerusalem central bus station as a protest about the disengagement from Gaza. Then in 2006 one American-born soldier committed suicide in a mosque in the Jordan Valley – there is speculation that the death might have been a botched attempt to kill praying Muslims.

Despite an obvious lack of discipline, Nahal Haredi has also earned respect in the IDF for its success in securing the Jordan Valley and several missions around Jericho. In 2006 they were among the first units to engage Hezbollah in Lebanon.

are based on Yemenite traditional medicine and methods developed by the 12th-century Spanish doctor Rambam.

The market is at its most bustling best on Thursday and Friday during the pre-Shabbat scramble.

TIME ELEVATOR

If you prefer to have your history delivered to you in a Disney-type format, check out the **Time Elevator** (Map pp114-15; ☹ 625 2228; www.time-elevator-jerusalem.co.il; Beit Agron, 37 Hillel St; admission 48NIS; ☹ 1-5.30pm), a cross between a museum, a theatre and a carnival ride. Once inside the theatre, spectators are jolted around in their seats along with the on-screen action as Chaim Topol (former star of Fiddler on the Roof) leads them through Jerusalem's equally moving history. Rides take place every half-hour and it's especially recommended if you have children.

TICHO HOUSE (BEIT TICHO)

The grand stone edifice surrounded by a lush garden of pine trees and roses, now called the **Ticho House** (Map pp114-15; ☹ 624 5068; 9 HaRav Kook St; www.imj.org.il; admission free; ☹ 10am-5pm Sun, Mon, Wed, Thu, 10am-10pm Tue, 10am-2pm Fri), was originally built in the late 19th century

by an Arab dignitary. It was purchased in 1924 by Dr Abraham Ticho, an Austrian-born ophthalmologist who ran the mansion as an eye clinic, saving hundreds of Palestinian Arabs from blindness. Following his death, his wife Anna donated the building as an art centre and museum, for which it is still used to today.

Among the exhibits are Dr Ticho's study and some documents and letters of interest, in particular those dealing with his work for the Arabs, as well as his collection of Hanukkah (Festival of Lights) lamps. Anna was also an artist and some of her work is on display.

However, the appeal of the museum is secondary to the popularity of its charming ground-floor café, the tables from which spill out onto a terrace overlooking a large, tranquil garden. For details, see p136.

MUSEUM OF ITALIAN JEWISH ART & SYNAGOGUE

This **museum** (Map pp114-15; ☹ 624 1610; admission 15NIS; 27 Hillel St; ☹ 9am-5pm Sun, Tue & Wed, 9am-2pm Mon, 9am-1pm Thu-Fri) contains a rich collection of tapestries, Torah arks and other Judaica brought here from Italy in the 1950s. The entire interior of the building, in fact, originally

comes from an 18th-century synagogue in Conegliano Vento (near Venice), which was transported across the Mediterranean and rebuilt here in Jerusalem. It now serves the needs of Italian Jews in Jerusalem and is the only synagogue outside Italy where the ancient Italian liturgy is performed.

HEICHAL SHLOMO & THE GREAT SYNAGOGUE

The seat of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel is **Heichal Shlomo** (Map pp114-15; ☎ 623 0628; 58 King George V St), a vast complex designed in the 1960s and styled along the lines of Solomon's Temple – Heichal Shlomo literally means 'Solomon's Mansion'. The **Wolfson Museum** (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 7908; admission free; ☞ 9am-3pm Sun-Thu) housed inside the massive building features presentations of religious and traditional Jewish life.

Next door to Heichal Shlomo, and part of the same complex, is the **Great Synagogue** (Map pp114-15). The building has been condemned by many as an extravagant waste of money, but attendance at a Shabbat service here is, nevertheless, recommended.

Mamilla

The most refined piece of real estate outside the Old City is **Mamilla** (Map pp114-15), a lump of land due west of Jaffa Gate that is dominated by the King David Hotel. The area includes parks, gardens, some of the best hotels in the city and rows of affluent homes overlooking the golden walls of the Old City.

Mamilla was developed in the mid-19th century as the first residential neighbourhood outside the Old City walls. Commerce was brisk and expansion went unabated until 1948 when war broke out and a line was drawn between Arabs and Jews. For 19 years the valley between east and west Jerusalem was a sniper-targeted no-man's-land. The unification of the city had Mamilla back in the sights of developers and the area has been given an air of exclusivity.

HaMelekh David St, which runs south from the New City centre down to the railway station, escaped the fighting relatively unscathed and has several important landmarks, including the architecturally noteworthy Hebrew Union College building, the King David Hotel and the YMCA.

YEMIN MOSHE & THE MONTEFIORE WINDMILL

The small **Yemin Moshe neighbourhood** can be identified immediately by its **windmill** (Map pp120-1), actually one of the first structures to be built outside the secure confines of the Old City.

It was part of a scheme developed by Sir Moses Montefiore, an English Jewish philanthropist who visited the Holy Land seven times in the mid-19th century. Hoping to aid the Jews residing in Jerusalem, and seeking to ease overcrowding within the city walls, Montefiore built a block of 24 apartments, a development known as *Mishkenot Sha'ananim* (Tranquil Dwellings). The windmill was built in 1857 to provide the basis for a flour industry. The scheme failed and the Montefiore windmill is now an eccentric landmark serving as a **museum** (Map pp120-1; ☞ 9am-4pm Sun-Thu, 9am-1pm Fri) dedicated to the life and work of Montefiore.

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH

Also known as the Scottish Church, **St Andrew's Church** (Map pp120-1; 1 David Remez St) was built in 1927 to commemorate the capture of the city and the Holy Land by the British in WWI. Based on the design of one Clifford Holliday, the buildings are an intriguing mix of Western and Oriental influences; take note of the exquisite Armenian tiles outside the entrance to the guesthouse and church (these were designed in a workshop on the Via Dolorosa). The floor features an inscription to the memory of Robert the Bruce, who requested that his heart be buried in Jerusalem when he died. Sir James Douglas made an attempt at fulfilling Bruce's wish but en route he was killed in Spain, fighting the Moors. The heart was recovered and returned to Scotland where it's now buried at Melrose.

The German Colony

Lounging in a coffee shop, sipping lattes and reading *Ha'aretz* newspaper seems to be the main daily activity for residents of Jerusalem's **German Colony** (Map pp120-1). The pleasant, tree-lined neighbourhood of Arab villas and European homes was built in the late 19th century and has always carried an air of affluence. It continues to attract a mix of moneyed foreign investors and students looking for a nook in a cof-

fee shop to work on their studies. Evenings (with the exception of Friday) are a pleasant time to stroll here and experience some of the best restaurants in the city.

Rehavia & Talbiyeh

Built in the earlier part of this century by wealthy Christian Arabs (Talbiyeh) and Jewish intellectuals (Rehavia), these are among the city's more fashionable neighbourhoods – although the increase in the number of ultraorthodox Jewish residents is said to be changing that.

The official residences of the prime minister and president are here and many of the impressive properties display nameplates of medical and legal professionals. The northern end of Gaza (Aza) Rd is particularly attractive, and its cafés and restaurants get lots of student traffic. The name of the street has been threatened in the past as right-wing Jewish groups have voiced opposition to a street name so closely linked to Palestine, but despite their objections the name has thus far survived.

At the southern fringe of Rehavia, close to the Presidential Palace, the **LA Mayer Museum for Islamic Art** (Map pp120-1; ☎ 566 1291; www.islamicart.co.il; 2 HaPalmach St; adult/student 20/13NIS; ☞ 10am-3pm Sun-Mon & Wed-Thu, 10am-6pm Tue, 10am-2pm Fri & Sat) showcases art from Islamic cultures from Spain to India. The museum and research centre, completed in 1974, was founded as a way to bridge the cultural divide between Jews and their Arab neighbours. Exhibits include jewellery, carpets, brassware, glasswork and paintings; there are guided tours in English upon request (call ahead).

Talbiyeh, also known as Kommemiyut, has some wonderfully self-indulgent architecture; take a look at 17 Alkalay St, a house called **Beit Jalad** (Map pp120-1), built by an Arab contractor with a fondness for the imagery of *The Thousand and One Nights*.

These neighbourhoods lie south of Ram-ban St and west of Keren HaYesod St.

Talpiot

The main reason to venture down to Talpiot is to walk along the **Haas Promenade** (Map pp80-1), a garden-fringed walkway that offers spectacular views over the Old City. To get here take bus No 8 from Jaffa Rd and get off at the Kiryat Moriah stop.

Givat Ram & Museum Row

The political seat of the Israeli government, along with its accompanying government buildings, is located in the rather forlorn area of **Givat Ram** (Map pp86-7), south of the central bus station. There is no great plaza and roads run haphazardly around the area, seemingly in circles. It's home to the Knesset (the seat of the Israeli parliament) and several museums, and is also the site of the prime minister's office. Across the road is the Bank of Israel headquarters and the Supreme Court building. You can get here from Jaffa Rd on bus No 9, 24 or 28 (to the university).

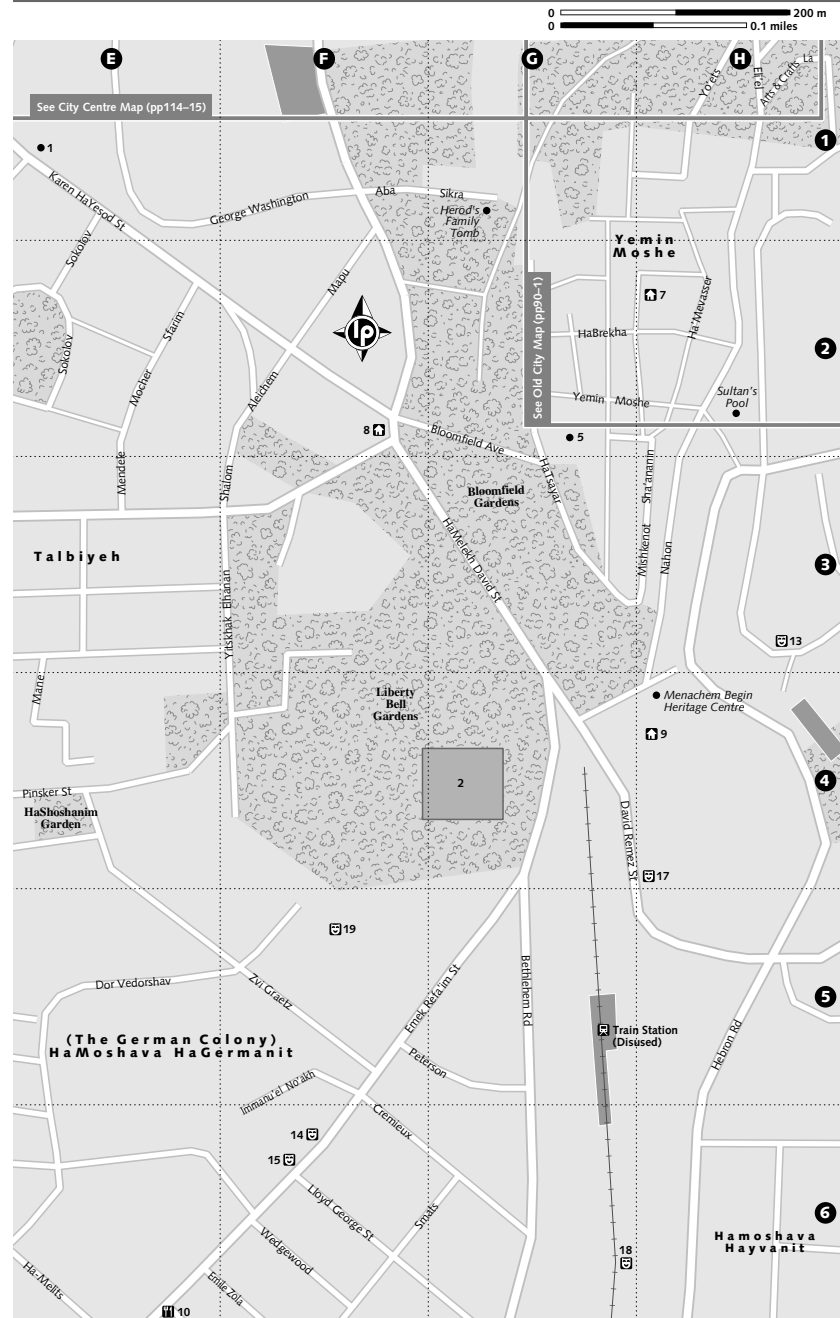
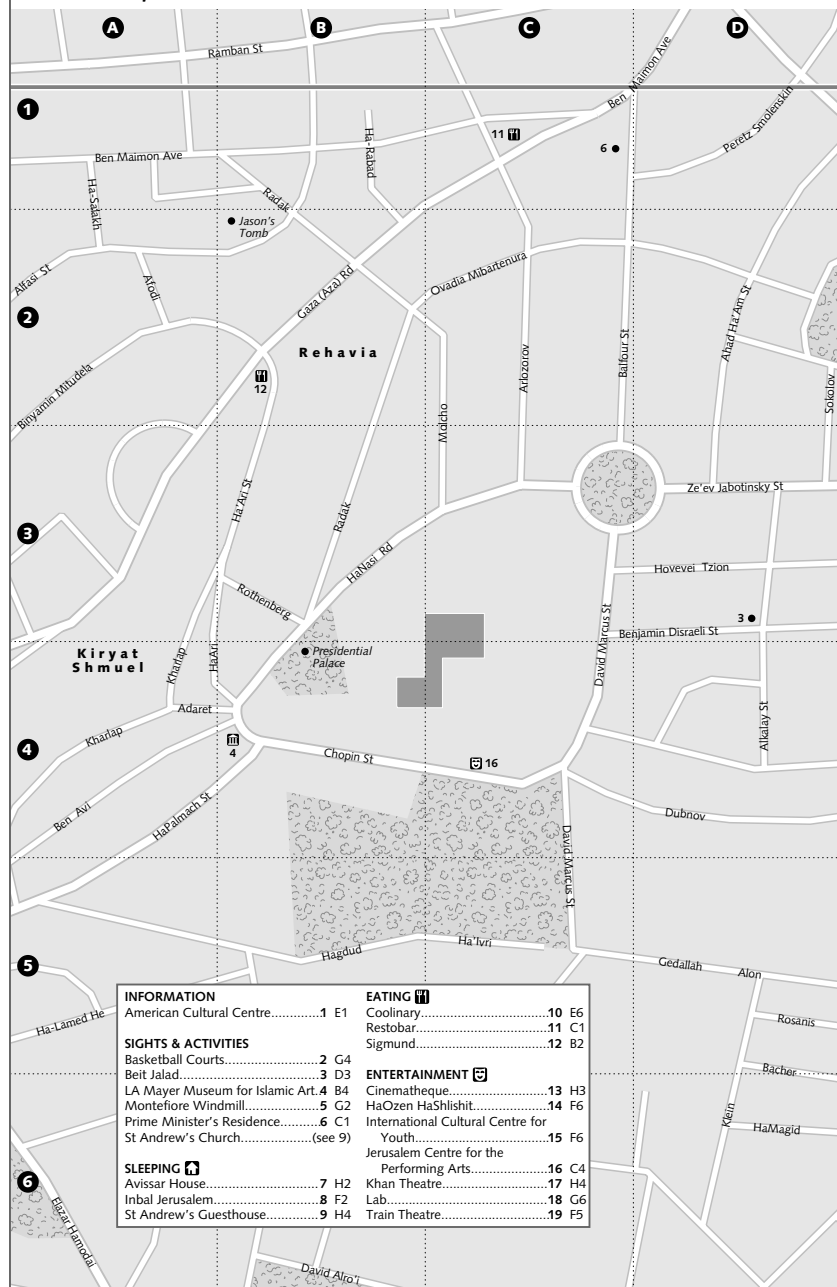
ISRAEL MUSEUM

Consider the **Israel Museum** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 670 8811; www.imj.org.il; adult/child/student 40/20/30NIS; ☞ 10am-4pm Mon, Wed & Sat, 4-9pm Tue, 10am-9pm Thu, 10am-2pm Fri) to be a road map for your travels throughout the country. By visiting early in your stay you'll get a good grounding on the 5000 years of history that you are about to explore. Note that your ticket is also good for seven days to visit the Rockefeller Museum (see p110). Don't forget to pick up a complimentary audio guide from the visitors centre.

Heading out the back of the visitors centre, take your first right to the **Shrine of the Book**, where the Dead Sea Scrolls are kept. The distinctive pot lid-shaped roof is meant to symbolise the pots in which the Dead Sea Scrolls were kept. The scrolls, totalling 800 in all, were found in 1947 and date back to the time of the Bar Kochba Revolt (AD 132-35). They deal with both secular and religious issues and were thought to have been written by an ascetic group of Jews called the Essenes, who inhabited the area for about 300 years. The most important of the Dead Sea Scrolls is the **Great Isaiah Scroll**, the largest and best preserved. It is the only biblical scroll that has survived in its entirety, and takes centre place in the room. The 54 columns of the scroll contain all 66 chapters of Isaiah without an apparent division between what modern scholars regard as First and Second Isaiah. It predates the previously oldest biblical document ever found by about 1000 years.

Close to the Shrine of the Book is a huge 1:50 **scale model of Jerusalem** as it was in AD 66, at the end of the Second Temple era. The model was moved here from the Holy Land

REHAVIA, GERMAN COLONY & TALBIYEH



hotel in 2006. A paved promenade leads from the Shrine of the Book to an **Art Garden** holding sculptures by Moore, Rodin and Picasso.

Inside the main building, the **Judaica wing** includes three complete synagogues brought from various locations and reconstructed. Of the three, the **Vittorio Veneto Synagogue** is the most impressive. It dates from 1700 and was transported from Vittorio Veneto in Italy in 1965. The second part of this exhibition focuses on Jewish ethnography. Foremost among the exhibits are a Jewish bride's outfit from San'a in Yemen, which dates back to the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, a Druze woman's apparel from Galilee dating back to the late 19th century, and richly embroidered Palestinian costumes from Bethlehem of the 1930s. Look out also for costumes from Jewish communities in Ethiopia and Kurdistan.

In the Archaeology Wing look out for the **'House of David' Victory Stele** – a fragmentary monumental inscription from the First Temple period and the only extra-biblical reference to the Davidic dynasty to have come to light so far. Other notable artefacts from this period include a curious ivory pomegranate and an unusual pottery stand decorated with clay musicians, from the late 11th to early 10th century BC. The Roman period is well represented by Jewish **sarcophagi**, **ossuaries** and some impressive **statues** including a bronze bust of Hadrian from the 2nd century AD. Found at Beit She'an, it is considered one of the finest portraits of Hadrian ever discovered.

The highlight of the Arts Wing is the section on **impressionist** and **postimpressionist art**, containing work by Renoir, Pissaro, Gauguin, Matisse and Van Gogh. One of the most arresting displays is a complete **French Salon** from the 18th century (viewed from two entrances leading off from the postimpressionist art gallery). Israeli art is well represented in the **Israeli Art pavilion**, with striking paintings by Reuven Rubin and Yosef Zaritsky, and less conventional work by Igaël Tumarin (see his odd exhibit made of wood, textiles, iron, a stretcher and paint, entitled 'Mita Meshunah – Unnatural Death').

The Youth Wing serves as the **education department** of the museum. Children can enjoy hands-on educational activities such as playing with model houses conveniently positioned at children's eye level. Groups of

schoolchildren are given guided tours and art classes are offered to interested parties.

BIBLE LANDS MUSEUM

This **museum** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 561 1066; www.blmj.org; 25 Granot St, Givat Ram; adult/student/child 28/15/18; ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm Sun-Tue & Thu, 9.30am-9.30pm Wed in summer, 1.30pm-9.30pm Wed in winter, 9.30am-2pm Fri, 11am-3pm Sat) chronologically reveals the history of the Holy Lands with a wealth of well-displayed artefacts and background information.

The museum was founded by Dr Elie Borowski, a Polish-born academic who fought the Nazis in Germany and later moved to Switzerland, where he became known as one of the leading dealers of art from the antiquities. In his fascination for biblical times, Elie had it in mind to establish an institute where people of different faiths could join together and return to the morals and ethics laid out by the Bible. This museum is the result of his work.

Exhibits date from 6000 BC to AD 600 and include some 2000 artefacts ranging from mosaics and other art pieces, seals and bronzes to household items from all over Asia, Europe and Africa. The unusual organisation of artefacts can be a little confusing so take the free guided tour, daily at 10.30am.

KNESSET

Israel's 120 lawmakers convene at the **Knesset** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 675 3333; www.knesset.gov.il; admission free; Ruppin Blvd), a squat building whose bland exterior hardly personifies the rousing atmosphere inside its hallowed halls.

Belonging to the multistorey car park school of architecture, the building was inaugurated in 1966 – previously the parliament had met in an unobtrusive building on King George V St. The present-day Knesset is at least a lot more attractive inside than out and it has a foyer decorated with three tapestries and a mosaic by Marc Chagall.

The building is open to the public on Sunday and Thursday from 8.30am to 2.30pm, when free guided tours are given. Call ahead to sign up for a tour in English and don't forget to bring your passport. You can also see the Knesset in session on Monday or Tuesday from 4pm to 7pm, and Sunday and Thursday from 11am to 7pm. The proceedings are conducted mainly in Hebrew and occasionally in Arabic.

Next to the bus stops opposite the Knesset is a bronze menorah, a gift from British supporters of the State of Israel. It's decorated with panels representing important figures and events in Jewish history.

BLOOMFIELD SCIENCE MUSEUM

Filled with hands-on exhibits that enlighten on everything from atom smashers to the exploration of Mars, the kid-friendly **Bloomfield Science Museum** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 654 4888; www.mada.org.il; Hebrew University, Givat Ram, Ruppin Blvd; adult/child 27/15NIS; ☎ 10am-6pm Mon, Wed & Thu, 10am-8pm Tue, 10am-1pm Fri, 10am-3pm Sat) makes for a good break from Jerusalem's mass of ancient history. Visiting here also gives you a chance to look around the grounds of the Hebrew University campus.

MONASTERY OF THE CROSS

In any other city, the **Monastery of the Cross** (Map pp86-7; Rehavia Valley; admission 10NIS; ☎ 9am-4pm Mon-Fri) would be a major tourist attraction. In Jerusalem it falls through the cracks, partially because of its isolated location in a valley below the Israel Museum. The fortress-like structure was founded in the early 4th century AD by King Bagrat of Georgia to commemorate the tradition that the tree from which Jesus' cross was believed to have been made grew here. Persians laid waste to the building in 614 and Muslims destroyed the replacement in 1009. Construction began again in 1038, although various additions have been made since then, including a Spanish-style rococo tower in the mid-19th century. The Greek Orthodox Church purchased the complex in 1685.

The interior of the church, thankfully devoid of religious overstatement, contains some interesting 17th-century frescoes, a bit of 6th-century mosaic floor in the chapel and a small museum. The frescoes are said to be the finest of their kind in Israel and are noted for their expressive portraits and intense colouring. Note the small, white-bearded fellow in the red robe (at the feet of the two church fathers); this is Shota Rustaveli, the famed Georgian poet who came to this monastery in the 12th century and lived here until his death.

The monastery can be reached by walking through Rehavia along Ramban St, crossing Hanasi Ben Zvi and following the path down the hillside. From the City Centre

take bus No 31 or 32; from Jaffa Gate, take bus No 19. Get off at the first stop on Harav Herzog St and follow the path down.

Har Hazikaron

On the far western fringe of the city, between rows of housing blocks and the Jerusalem forest, quietly sits **Har Hazikaron** (the Mount of Memory; see Map pp80-1). This high ground of wooded slopes and spectacular views includes Mt Herzl, the military cemetery and Yad Vashem, the memorial to victims of the Holocaust. The area is close to Ein Kerem (see p124) so for the sake of convenience, try visiting both areas in one trip.

MT HERZL & THE HERZL MUSEUM

Named after the mild-mannered newspaper reporter turned ultra-Zionist, the cedar- and pine-clad **Mt Herzl** (Map pp80-1) is an important place of remembrance for founding fathers of the state of Israel. The history of the Zionist dream is detailed in the newly renovated **Herzl Museum** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 643 3266; www.herzl.org.il; adult/child 20/15NIS; ☎ 9am-3.30pm Sun-Thu, 9am-12.30pm Fri) a multimedia journey into the life of Theodore Herzl. The tour is by appointment only.

Herzl's story began in Paris, where he was working as a correspondent for a Vienna newspaper. After witnessing violent outbreaks of anti-Semitism in the wake of the 1894 Dreyfus treason trial he dedicated himself to the creation of a Jewish state where Jews would not be subject to such crimes. Three years of campaigning for such a cause culminated in the first World Zionist Congress, held in Basel, Switzerland. He spent the next seven years campaigning until his death in 1904.

Herzl's simple grave, a black marker with his name etched upon it, is on a small knoll west of the museum. Nearby are the graves of several Israeli prime ministers and presidents, including Golda Meir, Yitzhak Rabin, Menachem Begin and Levi Eshkol. A short walk north leads to the military cemetery or you can continue west, down a dirt path that leads to Yad Vashem.

YAD VASHEM

The effects which the Holocaust wrought on the Jewish people still reverberate strongly in the Diaspora and, especially, Israel. It was a tragedy from which grew the modern state of

Israel and its legacy has defined the national psyche for more than half a century. In 1953 the Knesset set forth a plan to memorialise the six million Jews who died at the hands of the Nazis, and honour those who tried to save them. The result was **Yad Vashem** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 644 3565; www.yadvashem.org; admission free; 🕒 9am-5pm Sun-Thu, 9am-2pm Fri), a vast landscaped complex with a visitors centre, a museum and a dozen memorials scattered over 45 acres of the Mount of Remembrance.

The centrepiece of Yad Vashem (taken from Isaiah 56:5, meaning 'A Memorial and a Name') is a new prism-like **history museum**, dedicated in March 2005 in the presence of leaders from 40 countries, plus UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. Jewish architect Moshe Safdie explains that the triangular design represents the bottom half of a Star of David, because the population of Jews worldwide was cut in half as a result of the Holocaust.

The US\$40 million building is 180m long and contains 10 underground chambers holding photos, art, personal effects, multimedia shows and testimonies by 90 Holocaust survivors. Each chamber is devoted to a different chapter in the history of the Holocaust. Towards the end is the Hall of Names, the physical repository for the Pages of Testimony – forms filled out by friends and family of Holocaust victims; three million have so far been collected. The hole dug out of the floor honours those victims whose names will never be known. As you exit there is a literal 'light at the end of the tunnel' with a view over the Judean Hills.

Closer to the visitors centre is the **Children's Memorial**, also designed by Safdie, and dedicated to the 1.5 million Jewish children who died in the Holocaust. Dug into the bedrock, the sombre underground memorial contains a solitary flame reflected infinitely by hundreds of mirrors. Recorded voices read the names of perished children.

Pathways lead around the other memorials of Yad Vashem; make sure to take a map from the visitors centre to find them all. As you walk along the path, known as the **Avenue of the Righteous**, you see trees dedicated to the Gentiles who risked their own lives to save Jews from the Holocaust, including Oskar Schindler and King Christian X of Denmark. In the **Hall of Remembrance**, an eternal flame burns near a crypt containing ashes of victims brought from the extermination camps.

The floor is inscribed with the names of 22 concentration camps. The southern edge of the complex has the **Cattle Car memorial**, one of the original train cars used to herd Jews from the ghetto to the death camps. Nearby is the **Valley of the Communities**, a 2.5-acre monument carved out of the valley floor. It contains the names of 5000 Jewish communities wiped out by the Nazis.

It takes about three hours to get around Yad Vashem. The visitors centre includes a bookshop and a kosher dairy cafeteria. The only public bus that comes into the car park is Egged No 99 (as part of its city-wide tour), but several buses stop near Mt Herzl, a 10-minute walk, including bus No 13, 18, 20, 23 or 27.

Ein Kerem

When political tensions heat up in the City Centre, residents retreat to **Ein Kerem** (Map pp80-1), a pretty village of Arab-built stone houses surrounded by Lebanese cedars and native pine trees. Apart from its peaceful, pastoral setting, Ein Kerem is home to several important churches related to John the Baptist; it has a clutch of excellent restaurants; and a handful of art studios and the Chagall Windows at Hadassah Hospital are not too far away. It's busiest on weekends when locals descend on the place for brunch.

The history of the town was rather ordinary until the middle of the 6th century, when Christian pilgrims identified it as the likely home of Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist. Inevitably, shrines and churches were built over holy sites. The 1948 Arab-Israeli War caused the local Arab residents to desert the town; their homes were later taken over by immigrants from Morocco and Romania.

To reach the village, take bus No 17 from Jaffa Rd.

CHURCH OF ST JOHN

The blue-and-white interior of the Franciscan-owned **Church of St John** (Map pp80-1; admission free; 🕒 9am-noon & 2.30-5pm Sun-Fri) is reminiscent of European churches – not surprising as it was funded and built by the Spanish monarchy in 1674. The paintings are by Spanish artists and there is a royal coat of arms above the entrance.

Towards the front of the church is the grotto where John came into the world

(Luke 1:5-25, 57-80); a small marble circle under the altar marks the spot.

The church is located on the street to the right of the main road.

CHURCH OF THE VISITATION

The **Church of the Visitation** (Map pp80-1; admission: free; 🕒 8am-11.45 & 2.30-6pm) is built over the traditional home of Zacharias and Elizabeth, across the valley from the Church of St John and uphill from Mary's Spring. The name of the church is in remembrance of Mary's visit to Elizabeth. The moment is captured in Luke: 1:39-49, which states: 'When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit'. The prayer that Mary is said to have uttered ('My soul exalts the world') is from Luke 1:46-56 and is preserved on the walls of the church in 41 languages. Brilliant paintings adorn the walls of the upper church. In the apse, Mary stands in the desert flanked by her devotees and below angels who prepare to crown her with wreaths.

CHAGALL WINDOWS

Often confused with its namesake on Mt Scopus, the Hadassah Medical Centre is the Middle East's largest hospital. However, it's far more well known internationally for its **synagogue** (Map p144; ☎ 641 6333; admission 10NIS; 🕒 8am-1.15pm & 2-3.30pm Sun-Thu) featuring stained-glass windows by Jewish artist Marc Chagall. His 12 colourful abstract panels each depict one of the tribes of Israel, based on Genesis 49 and Deuteronomy 33.

Guided tours are conducted in English, but you'll need to call ahead to confirm

times. Take bus No 19 or 27 and get off at the last stop. You can also reach here by walking up from Ein Kerem. You can also see the windows by navigating the website: go to www.hadassah.org.il/english, click on 'about' and 'art at Hadassah'.

ACTIVITIES

To beat the summer heat, try the **Jerusalem Pool** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 563 2092; 43 Emek Refa'im St; per day 50NIS; 🕒 9am-8pm Sun-Thu, 9am-1pm Fri), located in the heart of the German Colony. This pool is covered in winter. The **YMCA** (Map pp114-15; ☎ 569 2692, 26 HaMelekh David St; per day 50NIS; 🕒 6am-9pm Mon-Thu, 9am-2pm Fri & Sat) located opposite the King David Hotel has a good, if slightly antiquated, pool and fitness centre, including an indoor basketball court.

Giraffe (Map pp114-15; ☎ 1 700 706 005; 10 Luntz St; per day 80NIS; 🕒 6am-1am Sun-Thu, 6am-4pm Fri) is a centrally located fitness centre.

Many of Jerusalem's top-class hotels have fitness centres, spas and pools that are open to the general public, including the Inbal Jerusalem (see p134) and even more luxurious is the pool at the King David Hotel (see p135).

The **Jerusalem Bowling Centre** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 673-2195; Kanyon Talpiot, 18 Yad Harutzim; 🕒 10am-2am Sun-Fri, 11am-2am Sat) is located in Talpiot. Games cost 22NIS between 10am and 6pm and 27NIS from 6pm to 2am. On weekends the price is 30NIS per game. If you play twice, the third game is free.

Basketball games are held at the courts near Liberty Bell Gardens (Map pp120-1). On Friday nights the courts are packed

SATAF NATURE TRAIL

Walkers will enjoy the Sataf nature trail, a two- to four-hour hike in the hills west of Jerusalem. The hike begins from the Sataf Junction (Map p144; the intersection of Rtes 395 and 3965). A bus from Jerusalem's central bus station to Kibbutz Tsava will drop you there.

From the junction, follow the road with the brown sign marked 'Sataf' past the car park for 1.5km until you reach the national park. Sataf, located at 600m above sea level, was one of many Arab villages in the area to be deserted in the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. Two springs and pools are in the village. You are not allowed in the pool but you can climb into the tunnel that feeds the spring (bring a torch). From the village, a marked trail descends to the riverbed below. On the opposite bank you can see the Monastery of St John in the Desert, where John the Baptist is believed to have hidden from Herod the Great. The monastery is usually locked. At the bottom of the valley, the trail crosses the road and ascends a small brook that leads to the Spring of Ein Hindak.

About 100m past the spring is a road that leads to Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital, where you can catch a bus back to Jerusalem or walk down to the village of Ein Kerem (see opposite).

with Arabs from the Old City and East Jerusalem.

For a day out of town, you can enjoy the Judean Hills from the back of a horse. **King David Stables** (Map p144; ☎ 057-747-1681; www.kingdavidstables.com; 45-min ride 90NIS; 🚗 6am-9pm Mon-Thu, 9am-2pm Fri & Sat) offers trail rides (per hour 100NIS), lessons and even yoga on horseback! It is located 16km west of Jerusalem at Moshav Shosh. When you get off the highway, follow the signs to Beit Meir.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

The liberal-minded religious group Shira Hadasha (www.geocities.com/shira_hadasha) welcomes both male and female visitors to its Shabbat services, held Friday at 6.45pm. You must call ahead to let them know you are coming as space is limited. Email your request to Esther Abramowitz (esther@hillel.net.org.il). Services are held in both English and Hebrew.

WALKING TOUR

The ultimate Jerusalem walking tour is, of course, the Via Dolorosa (Way of the Sorrows), the route that Jesus is believed to have

taken as he carried his cross to Calvary. The walk is easily done on your own, but for a somewhat more unique experience join the Franciscan Fathers on Friday as they lead a cross-bearing procession along the route. The walk is held at 3pm October to March or 4pm April to September.

The history of the Via Dolorosa goes back to the days of the Byzantine pilgrims, who trod the path from Gethsemane to Calvary on Holy Thursday, although there were no devotional stops en route.

By the 8th century, pilgrims were performing ritual stops to mark the stations of the cross; the route had also changed considerably and now went from Gethsemane around the outside of the city walls to Caiaphas' house on Mt Zion, then to the Praetorium of Pilate at St Sophia near the Temple, and eventually to the Holy Sepulchre.

In the Middle Ages, with Latin Christianity divided into two camps, the Via Dolorosa was twinned, each of the two claimed routes primarily visiting chapels belonging to either one or the other faction. In the 14th century, the Franciscans devised a walk of devotion that included some of the present-day stations but had as its starting point the Holy Sepulchre. This became the standard route for nearly two centuries but it was eventually modified by the desire of European pilgrims to follow the order of events of the gospels, finishing at the believed site of the Crucifixion rather than beginning there.

If historians had their way, the route would probably begin outside the Citadel, as this was the residence of Pilate when he lived in Jerusalem. Various Bible references to the trial of Jesus taking place on a platform (Matthew 27:19) and in the open (Luke 23:4, John 18:28) support this theory, as the palace is known to have had such a structure. Hence, it's believed that a more probable route for Jesus to have taken would be east along David St, north through the Butchers' Market of today, and then west to Golgotha.

To begin the route known today, head deep into the Muslim Quarter, in the direction of Lions Gate. Before embarking on the walking tour, you might want to visit St Anne's Church (p101) and the Ecce Homo Convent of the Sisters of Zion (p101), both located close to the first station.

The **first station (1)** is actually inside the working Islamic Al-Omariyeh College, whose entrance is the blue door at the top of the ramp on the southern side of the Via Dolorosa, east of the Ecce Homo Arch. Entry is not always permitted so don't be surprised if you are asked to leave. The college offers nothing of official Christian value to see nowadays (but the location does offer a spectacular view of the Haram ash-Sharif/Temple Mount through the barred windows on the upper level).

The **second station (2)**, located across the street from the college in the Franciscan Church of the Condemnation, is where it is believed Jesus received the cross. The **Chapel of Flagellation** (Map pp90-1; admission free; 🕒 8am-noon & 2-6pm Mon-Sat Apr to Sept, 8am-5pm Mon-Sat Oct-Mar) to the right is where he is said to have been flogged. Built in 1929, the design on the domed ceiling incorporates the crown of thorns and the windows of the chapel around the altar show the mob who witnessed the event.

Continue down a short hill until you reach Al-Wad Rd, a bustling street corner where cultures mingle in the form of Israeli police tapping their truncheons, Palestinian children kicking soccer balls, shop merchants moving carts and Christian pilgrims navigating through the crowds.

Turn left on Al-Wad and walk just a few steps to the **third station (3)**, where it is believed Jesus fell for the first time. The station is marked by a small Polish chapel,

adjacent to the entrance of the Armenian Catholic Patriarchate Hospice.

Beyond the hospice, next to the Armenian Church (the wonderfully named Our Lady of the Spasm), the **fourth station (4)** marks the spot where Jesus is said to have faced his mother in the crowd of onlookers.

As Al-Wad Rd continues south towards the Western Wall, the Via Dolorosa breaks off to climb to the west; right on the corner is the **fifth station (5)**, where it is said that the Romans ordered Simon the Cyrene to help Jesus carry the cross. It is marked by signs around a door.

Further along the street, the **sixth station (6)** is marked by a brown wooden door on the left. This is where Veronica is believed to have wiped Jesus' face with a cloth. The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in the Christian Quarter displays what is claimed to be the cloth, which shows the imprint of a face.

A bit further along you'll enter the bustling Souq Khan as-Zeit St, a major market place of restaurants, hostels, sweets stalls and jewellery shops. The **seventh station (7)**, where it is believed Jesus fell for the second time, is a small chapel marked by signs on the wall of the souq. In the 1st century, this was the edge of the city and a gate led out to the countryside, a fact that supports the claim that the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is the genuine location of Jesus' crucifixion, burial and resurrection.

Station eight (8) can be easy to miss. To find it, cut straight across Souq Khan as-Zeit St from the Via Dolorosa and ascend Aqabat al-Khanqah. Opposite an internet café on the left is the stone and Latin cross marking where it is said Jesus told some women to cry for themselves and their children, not for him.

Return the way you came, back to the Souq Khan as-Zeit, and turn right (south, away from Damascus Gate). Head up the stairway on your right and follow the path around to the Coptic Church. The remains of a column in its door mark the **ninth station (9)** where it is believed Jesus fell the third time.

Retrace your steps to the main street and head for the Church of the Holy Sepulchre; the remaining five stations are inside.

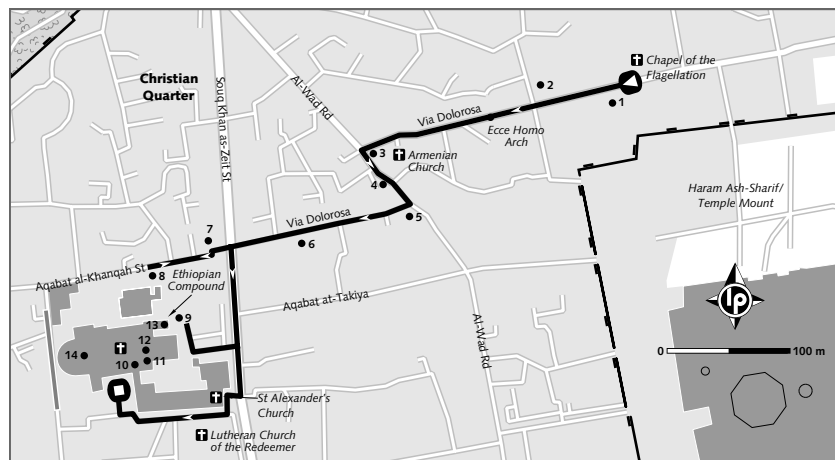
As you enter the church, head up the steep stairway immediately to your right. The chapel at the top is divided into two naves. The right one belongs to the Fran-

WALK FACTS

Start/Finish Via Dolorosa Station One/ Church of the Holy Sepulchre

Distance 600m

Duration around 30 minutes



ciscans, the left to the Greek Orthodox. At the entrance to the Franciscan Chapel is the **10th station (10)**; upper level), where Jesus is said to have been stripped of his clothes.

The **11th station (11)**; upper level), also in the chapel, is where it is said Jesus was nailed to the cross. The **12th station (12)**; upper level), the Greek Orthodox Chapel, is said to be the site of Jesus' crucifixion. The **13th station (13)**; upper level), where the body of Jesus is said to have been taken down and handed to Mary, is located between the 11th and 12th stations.

The **14th station (14)**; upper level) is the Holy Sepulchre, the Tomb of Jesus. Walk down the narrow stairs beyond the Greek Orthodox Chapel to the ground floor and you will see that the Holy Sepulchre is to be found in the centre of the rotunda, which would be on your left if you were entering from outside. The actual tomb is inside the Sepulchre. Candles lit by pilgrims who make a donation dominate the small tomb, with the raised marble slab covering the rock on which it is believed Jesus' body was laid. Around the back of the Holy Sepulchre is the tiny Coptic Chapel where pilgrims kiss the wall of the tomb, encouraged by a priest who expects a donation.

COURSES

British Council (Map p110; ☎ 626 7111; issa.faltas@ps.britishcouncil.org; 31 Nablus Rd, East Jerusalem) Offers Arabic-language courses beginning in September, January and April. Classes meet at the East Jerusalem branch twice weekly for 10 weeks and cost 900NIS. See also Cultural Centres, p85.

Gerard Behar Centre (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 1139; 11 Bezalel St) Morning and evening Hebrew-language classes with ongoing enrolment.

Hebrew Union College (Map pp114-15; ☎ 620 3333; hsaggie@hotmail.com; 13 HaMelekh David St) Three-month courses that meet twice a week in the evenings. A popular option for tourists.

YMCA Ulpan (Map pp114-15; ☎ 569 2692; racheli@simplehebrew.com; 26 HaMelekh David St) Three-month Hebrew-language course for 900NIS.

Judaism

Discovery Centre (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 2355; www.discoveryisrael.com; 70 Misgav Ladach St) Every Sunday morning from 9.30am the Discovery Centre (an arm of Aish international) hosts lectures on Jewish heritage. The US\$20 per person fee includes lunch.

Kabbalah Centre (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 3999; www.kabbalah.co.il; 1 Ben Hillel St) Classes on Jewish mysticism are held regularly but are usually in Hebrew. Call ahead to find out about classes in English.

Folk Dancing

YMCA (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 7111; 26 HaMelekh David St) Informal folk dancing lessons every Monday and Thursday at 8pm.

JERUSALEM FOR CHILDREN

Spare your kids the agony of visiting another treasure of antiquity and let them loose in the excellent **Biblical Zoo** (Map p144; ☎ 675 0111; Zoo Rd; adult/child 40/32NIS; ☎ 9am-6pm Sun-Thu, 9am-4.30pm Fri, 10am-5pm Sat), a 62-acre park in the southwest of the city. The zoo contains animals mentioned in the Bible that have become extinct in Israel, including lions, bears and crocodiles. Another section displays endangered animals from other parts of the world.

Kids also love Jerusalem's **Train Theatre** (Map pp120-1; ☎ 561 8514; www.traintheatre.co.il; Liberty Bell Park; admission 35NIS), which puts on occasional puppet performances

Other obvious attractions for kids are the **Time Elevator** (see p117) and the **Bloomfield Science Museum** (see p123). Kids also enjoy the **Hezekiah's Tunnel** (see p107), where they can make like Indiana Jones and wade through an ancient water channel.

Also try the **Tower of David Museum** (p97), which often has special exhibitions for kids – recently featured was a giant model train set snaking its way around the ruins.

TOURS

A good introduction to the city is **Egged Rte 99 Circular Line** (☎ 530 4704; per person 45NIS). This open-air coach service cruises past 35 of Jerusalem's major sites, providing commentary in eight languages and video clips along the way. The bus makes a loop every two hours, so there is time to stop at two or three sites (for two hours each), including Yad Vashem and the Israel Museum. At some prominent landmarks, the bus stops briefly for everyone to get out and snap a photo. The first bus leaves the central bus station at 9am. You can catch it at Jaffa Gate at 9.34am or at the King David Hotel at 9.38am.

Zion Walking Tours (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 7866, 050 530 5552; Omar Ibn al-Khattab Sq) operates a three-hour Old City walking tour (per person US\$15) at 10am, 11am and 2pm from Sun-

GAY & LESBIAN JERUSALEM

The gay and lesbian scene in Jerusalem is much more subdued compared with that in Tel Aviv. At the time of writing the main evening hangout was **Shoshan** (Map pp114-15; ☎ 623 3366; 4 Shoshan St; ☎ 9.30pm-2am), a small, slick bar at the end of a quiet alley south of Safra Sq. A drag show is held on Monday, dance parties are on Thursday and Friday, while Sunday is lesbian night. During the day, **T'mol** (p137) is a gay-friendly meeting place.

If you want more information on the GLBT community, visit the **Jerusalem Open House** (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 3191; www.gay.org.il/joh; 7 Ben Yehuda St). New visitors are invited to come on Monday and Wednesday evening from 5 to 8pm to learn about community events. The Open House also organises Shabbat services. Contact the **Jerusalem Infoline** (☎ 02-537 3906; ☎ 8pm-10pm Tue) for other information.

day to Thursday (there must be at least four participants).

David Tours (Map pp90-1; ☎ 052 863 8550; www.davidstours.com; 24 Cardo, Jewish Quarter) does a variety of city tours including one of the Temple Mount (adult/student US\$25/23).

SLEEPING

Most budget places are located in the Old City or near Damascus Gate in East Jerusalem. The City Centre only has a couple of budget picks. Jerusalem has some great midrange options, including atmospheric Christian hospices in the Old City and boutique hotels in the City Centre. High-end category picks are found in Mamilla and East Jerusalem.

In terms of location, the Old City hotels offer much in terms of rustic atmosphere and access to Jerusalem's historic places of interest. But it's also 100% pedestrianised, crowded and filled with steps and narrow streets, which can be inconvenient if you have a car or lots of luggage. Choose the City Centre if you want more convenience.

Budget

OLD CITY

Hashimi Hotel (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 4410, 052 257 2121; www.hashimihotel.com; 73 Souq Khan al-Zeit; dm/s/d/stc US\$8/30/35/120; ☎ ☎) Rising out of the chaos that is the Muslim Quarter, the Hashimi has a number of things going for it, not the least of which is the spectacular view from the rooftop restaurant. It's a colourful mishmash of hotel rooms, family suites, dorms and lounge areas, all painted in bright colours and surrounding a sunlit atrium. Rooms are clean, if unspectacular, and there is a variety of services including laundry, a gift shop and a café. Strict

Islamic house rules prevent unmarried couples from sleeping in the same room, which causes it to attract mostly solo travellers.

Old City Youth Hostel (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 8611; www.iyha.org.il; 2 Ararat St; dm 50NIS) Difficult to find and not at all advertised, this place is usually devoid of tourists. Ring the bell and the attendant will slowly creak open the giant door, which leads to a dimly-lit room with high ceilings and a general feeling of vacancy. Despite all this the location is quiet and offers a degree of privacy. To find it, walk south on Armenian Orthodox Patriarchate; left on St James St, left on Ararat St, walk past the Syrian Orthodox Church, and then look for the small sign to the hostel, up a narrow lane to the left.

Hebron Youth Hostel (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 1101; ashraftabasco@hotmail.com; 8 Aqabat at-Takiya St; dm 30NIS, private d with/without bathroom 140/100NIS; ☎) Stone walls, arches and Arab décor make this one of the most attractive guesthouses in the Old City. The narrow staircase leads up to a small reception area, a billiards rooms and clean, cosy guest quarters. But avoid the rooftop additions, which are less pleasant. Lockers are available to store your gear and there is an attached internet café. Hot water is sporadic; it may only come on in the mornings and evenings.

Citadel Youth Hostel (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 5253, 054 580 5085; www.citadelhostel.com; 20 Mark St; dm 40NIS, d with bathroom 190-250NIS, d without bathroom 110-150NIS; ☎) A boutique hotel for backpackers, this 500-year-old building feels rather cavelike with its uncut stone walls and narrow passageways. High marks go to design as each room is lovingly decorated with burgundy-coloured cushions and Arabic wall hangings. It's a quirky place: upstairs rooms have great views but get stiflingly hot in summer

(and cold in winter) while lower rooms are cooler and more spacious but have basic bathrooms. Perks include excellent, helpful management and free wi-fi.

Golden Gate Inn (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 4317; golden.gate442000@yahoo.com; 10 Souq Khan al-Zeit; dm/s/d 30/100/140NIS; 📶) The Golden Gate has the makings of a great guesthouse. It's set inside an atmospheric old home, it's fairly clean, has a large kitchen and rooms come with attached bath, cable TV and air-con. There is a no alcohol policy, but you can smoke a nargileh (water pipe) for 10NIS or sip tea all day for free. Despite these niceties, the vibe here is a little solemn and lacks the communal travellers' air of places nearby.

Petra Hostel (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 6618; www.inisrael.com/petra; Omar Ibn al-Khattab Sq; roof mattresses/dm 30/40NIS, d with/without bathroom 180/150NIS; 📶) Built in the 1820s, this is the oldest hotel in Jerusalem. Some of its illustrious former patrons include General Allenby, Mark Twain and Herman Melville. About 50 years of neglect, however, have left it coming apart at the seams. But it still retains a friendly atmosphere and the bright, welcoming lobby is usually filled with travellers swapping stories or watching movies. In summer you can sleep on a mattress on the roof. Services include laundry and airport shuttle and if you want breakfast its just 14NIS.

El Malak (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 5382, 054 567 8044; 18 El-Malak & 27 Ararat; dm/s/d 50/110/160NIS) One of the more unusual places in the Old City, El Malak is basically a series of rooms set inside a renovated basement under the home of an Armenian granny. Dorms are not great value but the portioned double rooms are OK. There is a real nana touch to the décor, with Armenian wall hangings and antiques. The common area and kitchen are small but well-equipped. Best of all, it manages to stay quite cool when other guesthouses are baking. Otherwise, there are two better rooms available in the house upstairs. Ask for Claire Ghawi.

Casa Nova Pilgrims' Hospice (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 2791, 627 1441; 10 Casa Nova St; s/d, with breakfast US\$37/44) Among the many Christian hospices in the Old City, this one is most geared towards the Christian pilgrim. It's a bare-bones place with simple furnishings, big doors, cavernous hallways and an 11pm curfew. To get there from Jaffa Gate, take the second left onto Greek Patriarche Rd until it becomes

Casa Nova St; the hospice is on the left as you enter a narrow alley. Reception is open from 7am to 11pm.

East New Imperial Hotel (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 2261; www.newimperial.com; Jaffa Gate; s/d/tr US\$35/50/75; 📶) Agatha Christie would have felt very at home in this rambling old hotel. With hallways sporting various bits of junk and antiques, collected over 60 years of the hotel's existence, it has a much lived-in feel. The welcoming staff and quirky nature of the place almost make up for the antiquated facilities. The rooms are cool, dark and dishevelled, with some built on split levels to save space. All have private bath, toilet, fridge and sink. Free internet is a bonus.

Gloria (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 2431; gloria@netvision.net.il; 33 Latin Patriarchate Rd; s/d/tr, with breakfast US\$40/50/60; 📶) A hidden gem of a hotel in the Old City, Gloria offers clean and well-maintained double and triple rooms that cost 20% less than similar hotels in this neighbourhood. All rooms come with desk and phone; there's no TV but with the wonders of Jerusalem's Old City on your doorstep, who needs it? Only a couple have decent views, but you'll probably need to book in advance to secure one of these. It's about 100m uphill from Jaffa Gate.

CITY CENTRE

Jerusalem Hostel & Guesthouse (Map pp114-15; ☎ 623 6092; www.jerusalem-hostel.com; 44 Jaffa Rd, Zion Sq; dm 64NIS, d 230-260NIS; 📶 📶) With a prime location overlooking Zion Sq, this is the hostel of choice for backpackers wanting to stay in the City Centre. Rooms are large and clean and there is a healthy traveller vibe here, with lots of info tacked on the walls and plenty of other guests willing to lend free advice. Besides the rooms, you could also stay in a tent on the roof (s/d 92/128NIS); you get a mattress, linen and share facilities.

Hotel Noga (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 4590, 566 1888; 4 Bezalel St; d US\$40; 📶) A local family rents out a couple of apartments in this building on Bezalel. It's nothing luxurious but you do get a fully equipped kitchen and lots of privacy. There is no sign and no reception so you have to call ahead and meet the landlord to make a payment and get the key.

Hotel Kaplan (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 4591; natrade@netvision.net.il; 1 HaHavazelet St; s US\$40-50, d US\$50-70, tr US\$80; 📶) Kaplan is one of the few budget hotels in the City Centre. Rooms are

basic and the furniture is a little ragged, but you do get a private bathroom and views of Jaffa Rd. The friendly owner offers free internet and use of the small kitchen, but otherwise it's a fairly bland experience and the only reason to put up here is the low price and location.

Zion Square Hotel (Map pp114-15; ☎ 623 2367; 10 Dorot Rishonim St; s/d/tr 200/250/300NIS) Run by a chatterbox granny, this mediocre hotel finds itself in this price category because of its perfect New City location. Right above the Rimon restaurant off Ben Yehuda St, it's just about as central as you can get. Inside, the double rooms are simply furnished, with TV, radio, phone and basic bathroom. While everything functions reasonably well, it's a little neglected. The obvious benefit of the hotel is that you can get drunk at one of the downtown bars and easily stagger back to your room without having to trek halfway across the city.

MAMILLA, YEMIN MOSHE & THE GERMAN COLONY

B-Green Guest House (Map pp80-1; ☎ 566 4220; www.bnb.co.il/green; 4 Rachel Imeinu Rd, German Colony; s/d US\$40/50) Set in a beautiful old home in the German Colony, this little-known guesthouse is highly recommended for those who can appreciate good value and privacy. The fan-cooled rooms are simply furnished and futons are available if you bring in a third guest, which can be done at no extra charge. There is no breakfast, but each unit comes with a kitchenette for self-caterers. Turning off Emek Refa'im, B-Green is the first house on the right after the shwarma restaurant. Note that there is no reception so call ahead before turning up.

EAST JERUSALEM

Faisal Hostel (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 7502; faisalsam@hotmail.com; 4 HaNevi'im St; dm/d 25/80NIS; 📶) Murals of Rafah under siege, posters of Rachel Corrie and declarations of Palestinian solidarity decorate the walls of this longtime backpacker ghetto. It's this activist atmosphere that draws the crowds because the rooms are certainly nothing to write home about – bunk-style dorms and private rooms that are the definition of shabby. Still, it's a remarkably friendly place and the tearoom is a great place to meet other travellers and see Jerusalem through the eyes of Palestin-

ians who run the place. Free internet access too.

Palm Hostel (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 3189; 6 HaNevi'im St; dm/d 25/80NIS; 📶) If the atmosphere at Faisal's is a little more than you can bear, just pop right next door to the Palm, which offers a similar setup, but without the activist artwork. It doesn't get any cheaper than 25NIS per bed and the place is reasonably clean and has a large kitchen, although the atmosphere is a bit staid. The entrance to the Palm is through a fruit stand just off the very filthy HaNevi'im St. There's free internet.

Midrange OLD CITY

Notre Dame de Zion (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 7292; www.sion.org in French; 41 Via Dolorosa; s/d/tr/q, with breakfast US\$40/60/80/90) If staying a few nights in a convent sounds intriguing, book yourself a room in the 180-year-old Notre Dame de Zion, a one-of-a-kind building with its front door on the Via Dolorosa. The stone walls and dim corridors evoke the feeling of a time gone by and the ever-present brown-robed Franciscan monks only add to the effect. Rooms are simply furnished but there is a comfortable lounge, where you can sit back and relax with a cup of coffee and a book. Reception hours are 7am to 10pm.

ourpick Lutheran Guest House (Map pp90-1; ☎ 626 6888; www.luth-guesthouse-jerusalem.com; St Mark's St; dm/s/d, with breakfast US\$9/50/78; 📶) It is uncommon to find a guesthouse in the Old City that combines grace and history as well as comfort, but this place does it as well as any other. Beyond the heavy steel door entrance is a bright, welcoming lobby where cheerful staff will check you in. Once you've deposited your luggage, take a breather in the wonderful upstairs reading room, where you can pull a book off the shelf and enjoy views of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. If you need more sun, try the open-air courtyard and its rose garden. The inner sanctums include a new wing of modern double rooms, each with telephone, lamp and heater. The dorms (reserved for 35 and unders), located in the more atmospheric old wing, are airy and bright, with high ceilings and comfortable mattresses. One of the best features is the medieval kitchen, where young patrons can collaborate on a shared meal. Equally inviting is the dining hall with its arched windows, domed ceilings

and Asian-themed tiling. A breakfast buffet here includes meats, cheeses, fruits, vegetables and yogurt. To get here from Jaffa Gate, walk down David St, then take the first right up a narrow staircase; the guesthouse is about 100m down in the left.

Christ Church Guest House (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 7727; www.itac-israel.org; Omar Ibn al-Khattab Sq; Jaffa Gate; s/d, with breakfast US\$50/80, extra person US\$25) This wonderfully maintained Christian hospice gets high marks for its period atmosphere, prime location and welcoming staff. Simply furnished rooms have stone floors and domed ceilings. There is no TV in the rooms but you can relax in the café or watch a DVD in the lounge. There is a mix of foreign and local staff made up of Christians, Jews and Muslims; all hired as a way to promote cultural unity. You'll also be pleased to know that a portion of your bill goes toward supporting community projects.

Austrian Hospice (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 1466; www.austrianhospice.com; 37 Via Dolorosa; dm/s/d/tr, with breakfast €14/42/66/93) Looking like a prime location to shoot a film about chain-rattling ghosts or Christian Crusaders, this castle-like guesthouse has plenty of atmosphere and is popular with European travellers. The building was opened in 1863 as a pilgrims' hospice and later became the Austrian consulate in Palestine. Though it may be a bit too monastic and creepy for some tastes, others may consider the experience a highlight of their stay in Jerusalem. There is a garden in front and the cloistered exterior is a popular hangout for guests chatting over rounds of beer. Basic rooms include a desk, bedside light and phone. Any problems are taken care of by the staff of young European volunteers. The hospice is on the corner of Al-Wad and Via Dolorosa. Ring the bell to get inside (reception is open 7am to 11pm).

Dr Bachi's Guesthouse (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 6668; www.geocities.com/rooms4rental; 11 Misgav Ladach St; d US\$90; 🚽) For travellers wanting to spend time in the Jewish Quarter – among its yeshivot (Talmudic schools), cafés and museums, not to mention the Western Wall, this is one of the few options. Dr Bachi, a local ear doctor, can rent out one of two guest rooms inside her beautiful home, perfectly located on the tier overlooking the Western Wall. Dr Bachi keeps herself busy and is gone for most of the day, but this is definitely a situation of cohabitation, as you'll be sharing with her

the kosher kitchen, dining room and living room. The home is about 100m north of the Moriah bookshop (look closely for No 11). It can be hard to spot so call ahead.

CITY CENTRE

Hotel Habira (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 5754; www.hotel-habira.co.il; 4 HaHavazlet St; s/d/tr/q, with breakfast US\$50/60/70/80) Just off Zion Sq, this small hotel sports 35 well-appointed rooms with phone, TV, clean carpets and attached bath. It's reached via a steep staircase or an elevator, making it one of the few budget places that can accommodate the mobility-impaired. There's no lounge to speak of, but the dining hall is large, bright and usually empty after breakfast. The morning meal is a standard Israeli breakfast of eggs, cheese, salads, yogurt and vegetables.

Hotel Palatin (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 9323; www.hotel-palatin.co.il; 4 Agrippas St; s/d, with breakfast US\$75/80; 🚽) Located near the hub of Jerusalem's shopping and café district, the 29-room Hotel Palatin is a great option if you are looking for something that offers flair, convenience and a personal touch. Rooms contain velvety red carpets, a small desk, TV and twin beds pushed together. There are classy touches to the place, thanks to tasteful displays of art and little niceties like fresh flowers on the tables. It also benefits from great management and the kind of personal service you get from a family-run operation. Price includes breakfast and wi-fi.

Holiday 2000 Apartments (Map pp114-15; ☎ 050 268 3008; www.holiday2000.net; 2 HaHistadrut St; s/d, with breakfast US\$69/89; 🚽) These well-appointed, fully equipped studio apartments are perfect for travellers who want a central location and a little room to spread out. Amenities include TV, free wi-fi, free use of the washer and dryer and a kitchenette with fridge. There is no reception so you just need to ring the bell downstairs.

MAMILLA, YEMIN MOSHE & THE GERMAN COLONY

Beit Shmuel Hostel (Map pp114-15; ☎ 620 3455; www.beitshmuel.com; 6 Shamm'a St; s/d/tr/q, with breakfast US\$47/69/88/107; 🚽) Part hotel, part community centre and part social hall, Beit Shmuel can get pretty busy. Standard rooms are no-frills affairs that feel like college dorms (ask for one facing the Old City). Rooms in the newer wing are bland, Swedish-style layouts, with

plain white décor and hard surfaces (these cost about US\$30 more than the standard rooms). The scene is somewhat enlivened by the central courtyard, which contains a garden of palm trees and bougainvillea.

Avisar House (Map pp120-1; ☎ 625 5447; www.jeru-avisar-house.co.il; 12 Hame-vasser St, Yemin Moshe; s US\$65-120, d US\$77-140; 🚽) This place is not so much a hotel or even a B&B, but rather a set of private apartments for rent on a short-term basis. Fully equipped kitchens, nicely decorated rooms, comfortable lounges and unbeatable views of the Old City walls make this place a primo choice in Jerusalem. The neighbourhood is pedestrian only, designed entirely with Jerusalem stone and prettily embellished with trees and wildflowers. The location, however, about 80m downhill from the windmill, may not suit everyone. If you have trouble climbing steps then pass on this one. The management imposes a minimum three-night stay and prices fluctuate by season.

St Andrew's Guesthouse (Map pp120-1; ☎ 673 1711; www.scotsguesthouse.com; 1 David Remez St; s/d/tr/ste, with breakfast US\$55/80/100/110; 🚽) If you'd like to play the role of British Mandate bureaucrat – puffing on a pipe in an oversized chair by the fireplace – St Andrew's may be the place for you. Set on a hill overlooking the Old City, with leafy gardens and an imposing stone façade, it even feels like a bit of Scotland transported to the Middle East. The antique atmosphere can also be found in the colonial-style Scots Coffee Shop. Furnished and decorated with wicker chairs, fresh flowers and a piano, this is a perfect place to try out a number of delicious menu options, including an excellent brownie and ice cream concoction. The rooms upstairs, less pretentious than the lobby, are plainly furnished with desk, phone, heater and fan. Some rooms include balconies and those that don't still have access to a large sun deck.

YMCA Three Arches Hotel (Map pp114-15; ☎ 569 2692; www.ymca3arch.co.il; 26 HaMelekh David St; s/d/tr, with breakfast US\$75/95/110; 🚽) This is one YMCA that will shatter any images you have of a grim inner-city shelter for transients. As a centre for learning, sport and culture, and an important landmark, it's one of the most respected places in town. It's also good value considering its prestigious neighbours in highbrow Mamilla. The

hotel's 56 rooms are simple in their design, and include TV, phone and bedside light.

EAST JERUSALEM

St George's Cathedral Pilgrim Guesthouse (Map p110; ☎ 628 3302; sgohostel@bezeqint.net; 20 Nablus Rd; s/d/tr, with breakfast US\$50/80/105) Located on the property of a 110-year-old Anglican Church, this delightful cloistered building offers tranquility unmatched in East Jerusalem. Rooms are simply furnished with phone, cable TV, fan and twin beds, but it's the lovely garden of rose bushes and citrus trees that sets the place apart. If the stoic atmosphere has put you in a pensive mood, repair to the reading room, where you can kick back with a book amid comfortable antique furnishings. Otherwise, make like the English and head down to the basement where the Jerusalem Stone Bar serves up beer and whisky until midnight.

Jerusalem Hotel (Map p110; ☎ 628 3282; www.jrs.hotel.com; 4 Antara Shahad St; s/d, with breakfast US\$85/120; 🚽) With stone-clad walls, antique furnishings and personal service, this place is a combination heritage and boutique hotel. The Saadeh family, who have owned and run the place since 1960, have made painstaking restorations to the stained glass, brass chandeliers, murals, hand woven rugs and furnishings. Each of the 14 rooms is spacious and comes with TV and internet hook-up. There is no air-con, but thick walls keep the building cool even in the height of summer. In the morning, Mrs Saadeh prepares an excellent buffet breakfast in the vine-trestled garden patio. You can also book a tour from here to the West Bank from Abu Hassan Alternative Tours (see p410).

ROMEMA & MEKOR BARUCH

Allenby 2 B&B (Map pp86-7; ☎ 052 257 8493, 534 4113; www.bnb.co.il/allenby; Allenby Sq 2, Romema; s US\$25-60, d US\$35-80; 🚽) One of the most popular B&Bs in Jerusalem, Allenby 2 combines a warm atmosphere with excellent service. With nine rooms it's one of the larger B&Bs in the city, a good thing if you enjoy getting to know other travellers. The building itself has a quiet charm and it's very close to the central bus station, making it convenient for both the City Centre and outlying areas. Rooms are private and there are a couple of studios that have separate entrances. One reason for Allenby's success is the careful attention by owner Danny Flax, a mine of

information and a keen cyclist who can offer great advice on offbeat trips. If it's full Danny will arrange for you to stay elsewhere.

Caesar Hotel Jerusalem (Map pp86-7; ☎ 500 5656; 208 Jaffa Rd; s/d/tr, with breakfast US\$70/85/110; 🏠 📶 🚶) Central and efficient, the 150-room Caesar makes a logical choice for travellers wanting a no-hassle hotel with a central location. One attraction is the rooftop swimming pool (summer only), from where you get views of the Mount of Olives in the distance. A dining hall provides a daily buffet breakfast of kosher foods. The hotel is not actually on Jaffa Rd, but behind the Mevo Jerusalem Hotel, affording it a quieter location away from the main drag.

RAMAT ESHKOL

This northern suburb has a couple of good B&Bs. It is connected by bus and convenient if you have your own car.

Le Sixteen B&B (Map pp80-1; ☎ 532 8008; www.bnb.co.il/le16/index.htm; 16 Midbar Sinai St, Giv'at Hamivtar; s US\$35-40, d US\$55-60; 🏠 📶) A bougainvillea- and jasmine-filled garden, free wi-fi and one of the best French breakfasts this side of Paris awaits the traveller in this tried and true B&B. Proprietors Marie-Helene and Ari Danan have set up four guestrooms in their suburban home, located 3km north of the Old City, not far from Ammunition Hill. Bright rooms are tastefully decorated and include a small kitchenette.

House 57 B&B (Map pp80-1; ☎ 581 9944; www.house57.co.il; 57 Sinai Desert Rd; s/d US\$40/60; 🏠 📶) House 57 offers a variety of rooms accessed through a private entrance that includes a small kitchen area (used by all guests). There is one studio with its own kitchenette. Breakfast, served in the leafy backyard by owners Ilana and Dan Tamir, includes yogurt, cheese, cornflakes, eggs, seasonal fruit, hummus and tahini. A friendly German shepherd named Mike may join you during meals.

SOUTH JERUSALEM

A Little House in Bakah (Map pp80-1; ☎ 673 7944; www.o-niv.com/bakah; 80 Hebron Rd & 1 Yehuda Rd; s/d/tr US\$59/79/89; 🏠 📶) A friendly boutique hotel with spacious rooms, an excellent café, high ceilings and a retro spin back to the 1920s, this is a good pick in this price range. All rooms have carpeted floors, soft pillows, TV, desk and twin or queen-sized beds. The main drawback is the city fringe location.

It's located 2.5km south of the Old City; take bus No 7 from the central bus station or No 30 from Zahal Sq.

Top End CITY CENTRE

Lev Jerusalem (Map pp114-15; ☎ 530 0333; www.lev.yerushalayim.com; 18 King George V St; s/d US\$102/128; 🏠 📶) Located in the heart of town, this all-suite hotel is a good family option, with spacious rooms and easy access to restaurants, shopping and transport. For an added fee you can get a room with a kitchenette. Rates include breakfast.

MAMILLA, YEMIN MOSHE & THE GERMAN COLONY

Eldan Hotel (Map pp114-15; ☎ 567 9777; www.eldan.co.il; 24 HaMelekh David St; s/d, with breakfast US\$120/130; 🏠 📶) Although lacking in style, this spotless business hotel offers convenience and comfort in the midst of a posh neighbourhood. All 76 rooms have TV, radio, safe, phone, mini bar and desk. The lobby has free wi-fi internet access and there is a mobile phone rental service at the front desk. Ask about deals; when we visited they had a stay three nights and the fourth night is free option.

Inbal Jerusalem (Map pp120-1; ☎ 675 6777; www.inbal-hotel.co.il; 3 Jabotinsky St, Rehavia; s US\$220-260, d US\$240-360, ste US\$480-1400; 🏠 📶 🚶) The King David and American Colony may have bigger names, but some VIPs swear by the Inbal Jerusalem. With five-star everything, a beautiful layout and a parkside location, there is little to complain about. Almost Scandinavian in its simplicity, the Inbal offers a quiet charm through its interior design of Jerusalem stone, sharp lighting and the occasional vase of yellow roses. Rooms are likewise smartly decorated and come in various categories depending on view and size. Amenities include a fitness centre, massage treatment, sauna and Jacuzzi. For meals, indulge in the Israeli breakfast and an evening barbecue, put on most nights of the week.

our pick David Citadel (Map pp114-15; ☎ 621 1111; www.thedavidcitadel.com; 7 HaMelekh David St; s/d, with breakfast US\$230/270, deluxe s/d US\$304/348, alcove deluxe US\$347/366, jr ste US\$608; 🏠 📶 🚶) As the nearby King David Hotel becomes a little bit too archaic, this hotel has taken over as the first choice for visiting dignitaries and heads of state. The services are consistently

five star – with a goose down comforter on your bed, a stack of shiny apples on the dresser and Ahava beauty products in the bathroom, the David Citadel doesn't miss a beat. Throw in a great location in Mamilla and top-notch amenities like a shopping arcade, a fitness centre and a heated pool, and you'll have every wish catered for. The hotel also has three restaurants with menus that change nightly.

King David Hotel (Map pp114-15; ☎ 620 8888; www.danhotels.com; 23 HaMelekh David St; s US\$230-500, d US\$300-520; 🏠 📶 🚶) Since its opening in the 1930s, this has been the standard bearer for all other luxury hotels to compete against. The extraordinary lobby is furnished with velvet couches, gold drapery and marble-top tables. The wood panelling, brass fittings and high ceilings add to the European charm. Meals are taken in a grand ballroom down the hall, or out on the back patio that overlooks a lawn and pool. The rooms are well appointed but some of the standard rooms are awfully small (ask for a deluxe).

EAST JERUSALEM

Ambassador Hotel (Map pp86-7; ☎ 541 2222; www.jerusalemambassador.com; Nablus Rd, Sheikh Jarah; s/d/tr US\$100/120/130; 🏠 📶) Perched on a hill overlooking East Jerusalem, this popular hotel has 120 rooms, all with king-sized beds, a mini bar and satellite TV. Guests rave about the food; the Ambassador has three kitchens serving French, Italian and Middle Eastern cuisines. The main dining hall is modelled along Bedouin lines, complete with red cushions, wall hangings and low tables crowded with *sheesha* (water pipes). Other amenities include a business centre, gym and wi-fi. The hotel is about 800m past the American Colony Hotel.

Olive Tree (Map p110; ☎ 541 0411; www.royal-plaza.co.il; 23 St George St, Sheikh Jarah; s/d/ste US\$100/140/185; 🏠 📶) Designed to resemble an old caravan-serai, with stone archways, enormous wood-pannelled doors, mosaics and faux ruins, the Olive Tree has made some attempt to blend in to the neighbourhood. You get great value here too, with service almost on par with the David Citadel, but at half the price. Well-maintained rooms come with safe, mini bar, coffee maker, slippers, robe and four towels (instead of the usual two). The lobby has free wi-fi. Downsides are the absence of a swimming pool or fitness centre (although you do

get free vouchers to use the fitness centre at the Hebrew University).

American Colony Hotel (Map p110; ☎ 627 9777; www.amcol.co.il; 23 Nablus Rd, Sheikh Jarah; s US\$175-230, d US\$230-290, ste US\$340-700; 🏠 📶 🚶) More than any other hotel in the city, the American Colony does its best to whisk you back through time to Jerusalem c 1900, with its period architecture, elegant furnishings and colonial air. A walk through the hallowed halls of this grand edifice is a history lesson in itself, with photos and clippings about the hotel and its former guests, the likes of whom include Winston Churchill, Jimmy Carter, Ingrid Bergman, Bob Dylan, John Steinbeck and Mikhail Gorbachev. The rooms themselves are elegant – those who opt for the junior suites are treated to domed ceilings, arched windows, cushions, alcoves and wrought-iron frame beds. Rooms in the newer block lack traditional décor, but are no less luxurious. After a filling meal, repair to the Cellar Bar where you can eavesdrop on conversations between journalists and diplomats.

EATING

Jerusalem is home to an array of restaurants in all categories – from your basic hole-in-the-wall shwarma joint all the way up to sushi bars and *haute cuisine* taken in the leafy gardens of a historic home. Befitting Jerusalem's religious nature, a significant percentage of Jerusalem restaurants are kosher, so when everything shuts down for Shabbat, head to Abu Ghosh (p145).

Old City

Most Old City restaurants stick to kebabs, shwarma and other Middle Eastern fare. But what they lack in diversity is often made up for by quaint atmosphere and great views. Finding a meal after dark can be challenging as the Old City shuts down when the crowds go home.

RESTAURANTS

Armenian Tavern (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 3854; 79 Armenian Patriarchate Rd; meat dishes 35-45NIS; 🍷 11am-10.30pm Tue-Sun) Walk down the steps into this basement restaurant and relax in an old-world atmosphere, with Armenian pottery hung on stone walls and a gently splashing fountain. The strongly flavoured meat dishes are excellent, including *khaghoghhi derev*, a spiced minced-meat mixture bundled in

vine leaves. Other specialities include Armenian pizza and *soojuk* (spicy sausages).

Amigo Emil (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 8090; Al Khanqa St, Christian Quarter; dishes 35NIS; ☎ 10am-9.30pm) A 400-year-old building and former workshop, Amigo Emil has been chiselled down to the bare stone foundations and decorated with pictures of old Jerusalem. There are some nice appetisers, including a *mezze* of goat cheese, tabbouleh, aubergine and hummus. A Jerusalem plate (35NIS) gets you all of these. The house speciality is *musakhan*, a dish of spiced chicken and onions stuffed into Bedouin bread (35NIS), or if you prefer red meat, try the *qidreh* (lamb with rice and chickpeas).

CAFÉS & QUICK EATS

Tzaddik's New York Deli (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 2148; 2 Tiferet Israel St; meals 25-30NIS; ☎ 8am-6pm Sun-Thu, 8am-2pm Fri) It's not quite Katz's Deli of East Village fame, but Tzaddik's does offer a few good deli treats, including kosher hot dogs, corned beef sandwiches, burgers and Dr Brown sodas.

Moses Art Café (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 0975; Omar ibn al-Khattab Sq; ☎ 7.30am-11pm) Informal Lebanese place that serves lamb chops, steaks, kebabs, hummus and homemade lemonade. The friendly owner Moses is always up for engaging political debate.

Pizzeria Basti (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 4067; 70 Via Dolorosa; ☎ 7.30am-9pm) A restaurant has been on this spot for 100 years and the ancient display of photos is a testament to its longevity. The menu offers a choice of 20 kinds of pizza, plus steaks, kebabs and burgers. It's located opposite the Third Station of the Cross, making it a convenient place to break for lunch as you wander the Old City.

Abu Shukri (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 1538; 63 Al-Wad Rd; ☎ 7am-6pm) For a good, slap-up hummus platter, head down to this well-known restaurant in the Muslim Quarter. You can find Jews, Christians and Muslims huddled over their hummus, proving that the crushed chickpea can indeed break down religious, ethnic and ideological boundaries. It's located near the 5th Station of the Cross.

Other recommendations:

Bonker's Bagels (Map pp90-1; ☎ 627 2590; 2 Tiferet Israel St; ☎ 8.30am-9.15pm Sun-Thu, 8am-3.30pm Fri) Sells fresh bagels and cream cheese for around 12NIS.

Quarter Café (Map pp90-1; ☎ 628 7770; Tiferet Israel St; ☎ 9am-7pm Sun-Thu, 9am-3pm Fri) Coffee, cakes and light meals with views of the Western Wall.

City Centre

The City Centre is jam-packed with restaurants and cafés. There are a half-dozen places on Yoel Solomon St that cater to the tourist market but scattered around the area are lots of places frequented by locals.

RESTAURANTS

Village Green (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 3065; 33 Jaffa Rd; dishes 21-25NIS; ☎ 9am-10pm Sun-Thu, 9am-3pm Fri; ♿) A vegetarian's delight, this kosher restaurant offers homemade dishes made from the freshest ingredients. Choose from vegetable soups, quiches, veggie burgers, pizza, blintzes, savoury pies and lasagne, all served with home-baked bread. It's all self-service and meals are sold by weight. If you still have room for dessert try one of the freshly baked pies.

Little Jerusalem (The Ticho House; Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 4186; Ticho House Museum, 9 Harav Kook St; meals 30-60NIS; ☎ 9am-11pm Sun-Thu, 9am-3pm Fri, 9pm-midnight Sat) The peaceful patio overlooking a grove of pine trees is the perfect place to enjoy a quiet dinner or late Israeli breakfast. For a starter try the delicious onion soup served in a bread bowl (20NIS) and for a main course we recommend the baked salmon with vegetables and potato (72NIS). On Tuesday at 8.30pm, the restaurant hosts a wine and cheese evening (75NIS) with live jazz music. Chamber music aficionados can hear a concert here on Friday at 11am (for an additional fee), while Jewish traditional music is played on Saturday evening. Advance bookings are essential.

Ceilo (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 1132; 18 Ben Sira St; dishes 45-80NIS; ☎ 1-4pm & 6.30-11.30pm Sat-Thu) Chef and owner Adi grew up on the Italian food made in his mother's kitchen and has dedicated himself to bringing Jerusalemites pure Italian cuisine. It's not kosher and for once there are no fusion recipes. What it does offer is great food served in a cosy space painted in various hues of yellow. The palm hearts in cream sauce is a nice starter, while trout in lemon and crêpes is a popular main dish. Adi also has some creatively designed fruit desserts.

Cavalier (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 2945; 1 Ben Sira St; dishes 60-90NIS; ☎ noon-3.30pm & 6.30-11.30pm) Tinkling glasses, wine bottles poking out of the walls and evocative black-and-white photos on cream walls set the mood for this French and Mediterranean restaurant. Among the starters, try the lamb ribs with green beans

or the *moussa* (drum fish). The attached high society bar is a classy place to cap your meal with a drink or two.

El Gaucho (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 2227; 22 Rivlin St; ☎ noon-11pm Sun-Thu, noon-5pm Fri) Set inside a stone building, this delicious-smelling steakhouse imports everything from Argentina, including the beef, charcoal and all the decorations. If you starve yourself for a couple of days you could try the house speciality, a 1kg steak (249NIS) or the El Gaucho platter (*salchicha*, sausage chorizo and three *empanadas*). If you really can't handle all this meat, scan the menu for pasta and fish dishes; there are even a few vegetarian options.

Focaccio Bar (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 6428; 4 Rabbi Akiva St; ☎ 10am-3am) Find a seat on the sunny patio and order a plate of focaccia, baked fresh in the *taboun* (outdoor oven). A variety of toppings are available and portions are large and reasonably priced; try the Bulgarian cheese and olive spread (29NIS). The menu also includes a nice 350g entrecôte steak, deep-fried calamari and fried mushroom dishes. It's a hip place and one of the few restaurants to stay open late.

Adom (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 6242; 31 Jaffa Rd, Fiengold Courtyard; ☎ noon-midnight) The name of this French restaurant means 'red', which the choice of lighting. It might also indicate the usual beverage selection as the cabernet flows pretty freely. While it's not mandatory, you could possibly cobble together a rouge-themed dinner, starting with beef carpaccio, shrimp and crab in cream sauce and raspberry sorbet. It's hidden off Rivlin St in the Fiengold Courtyard.

Barud (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 9081; 31 Jaffa Rd, Fiengold Courtyard; ☎ 12.30-1am) 'Barud!' is a word that Israelis call out when an explosion is to be denoted, kind of like 'Timber!' Middle East-style. The name belies the dazzling Sephardic cooking. Meatballs with eggplant is a speciality, as well as *pastalikos*, a pastry with pine nuts, minced meat and onion. The unique décor was created by owner Daniella Lerer, who has tacked up her extensive collection of corkscrews and other paraphernalia on the wall. Daniella is also very proud of her fruit-based moonshine, which is surprisingly good. Live jazz is played here most nights.

Sakura (Map pp114-15; ☎ 623 5464; 31 Jaffa Rd, Fiengold Courtyard; ☎ noon-12.30am) Chef Tzairi learned the art of sushi in Japan and brought his skills back to Jerusalem, setting

up shop in this three-room nook between Jaffa Rd and Rivlin St. It's a pioneer among Asian restaurants in Israel and still considered among the best. There are discounts after 10.30pm – you can get a half-platter of sushi with sake for 26NIS. The udon noodles and tempura are also both excellent.

Darna (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 5406; 3 Horkanos St; dishes 80-150NIS; ☎ noon-3.30pm & 6-10pm Sun-Thu, 8am-10pm Fri) A narrow passageway off leafy Horkanos St leads into this charming slice of Casablanca, where patrons nestle inside small alcoves decorated with imported Moroccan furnishings, tiles and artwork. There is a warm atmosphere here (darna darcom means, 'My home is your home') and the service is impeccable. Among excellent menu options is the *pastilla fassia* (50NIS), a flaky pastry stuffed with Cornish hen, almonds and cinnamon. If you've come with a friend, try as a main course the *mechoui* (310NIS), a marinated lamb shoulder roasted on a spit. Reservations are required.

CAFÉS

T'mol (Map pp114-15; ☎ 623 2758; 5 Yoel Solomon St; ☎ 8.30am-midnight Sun-Thu, except Shabbat) This bohemian café has its own literary subculture and popular following. Regulars here tend to be poets, writers and journalists who come not only for the excellent soups and sandwiches but also to swap stories and listen to impromptu acoustic concerts. If you get bored staring at your food you can pluck a book off a shelf. This is also a good place ask the staff about cultural events in town.

Coffee Bean (Map pp114-15; 32 Jaffa Rd; ☎ 7am-midnight) Convenient chain coffee shop. Popular with laptop users who enjoy free wi-fi.

Café Hillel (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 7775; 8 Hillel St; ☎ 8am-midnight Sun-Thu, except Shabbat) An old Jerusalem stand-by, serving enormous salads, frothy cups of coffee, snacks and sandwiches. It has several locations, although this is the original and still the favourite.

QUICK EATS

Babette (Map pp114-15; 16 Shamai St; waffles 8-17NIS; ☎ noon-2.30am Sun-Thu, 11am-4pm Fri, 8pm-2.30am Sat) Waffles and coffee are the specialities of this popular student hangout, which is just big enough to fit half a dozen standing patrons.

New Deli (Map pp114-15; ☎ 1 700 700 788; 33 Hillel St; sandwiches 21-32NIS; ☎ noon-3am except Shabbat) Convenient and reasonably priced, New

Deli serves up hot sandwiches and refreshing salads that are great if you are on the go. They also deliver.

Pinati (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 4540; 13 King George V St; ☎ 9am-7pm Sun-Thu, 9am-4pm Fri) The old photos of loyal customers that cover the walls are a testament to the longevity of this popular hummus joint. Even today it's something of a magnet for customers young and old, and almost impossible to get inside during the lunchtime rush.

Hamarakia (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 7797; 4 Koresh St; soups 24NIS; ☎ 7pm-1am) The furniture doesn't match, the dreadlocked patrons linger for hours at a time and there is crap lying all over the place – if this is stirring visions of your university apartment then you'll probably have some idea of what it's like to spend an evening at Hamarakia. The name of the place (Soup Pot) pretty much sums up the menu – you have your choice of about five different soups. There is seating inside or out in the backyard. Live music (jazz jams and acoustic grunge) is sometimes played here.

Mamilla, Yemin Moshe & The German Colony

The high-rent district of Mamilla is home to a handful of posh restaurants. Jerusalem's 'restaurant row' is in the German Colony along Emek Refa'im St. It's fun to just head down here and stroll the street until something catches your fancy.

RESTAURANTS

1868 (Map pp114-15; ☎ 622 2312; 10 HaMelekh David St; ☎ noon-midnight) This French-Italian gourmet restaurant is housed in one of the oldest buildings in West Jerusalem, built (obviously) in 1868. Despite its age, owner Guy Ben-Simon has worked painstakingly to renovate the interior without losing the classic Jerusalem look and feel. There is an extensive wine collection and starters are little works of art – try the braised endive, flavoured with vinegar, walnuts and croutons. As a meat kosher restaurant, beef, lamb and fish dominate the main-course options. If money is no object, order the nine-course tasting menu (US\$100), which has the chef personally visiting your table to manage the whole affair. Classical and jazz music concerts are sometimes held here, but you'll need to call ahead to ask about times.

Coolinary (Map pp120-1; ☎ 566 2671; 31 Emek Refa'im St; dishes 50-90NIS; ☎ 11.30am-midnight) The latest addition to Jerusalem's restaurant row, Coolinary is a gourmet's delight with one of the best names in town. The three energetic Jerusalemites who opened the place went with a romantic, Spanish-influenced interior of dark wood and candles. One whole wall is taken up with wine bottles that are reached with a sliding library ladder; the wine list is five pages long so ask your server to assist in choosing one. Ingredients and recipes from around the globe contribute to the menu – you have a choice of roast beef in a tortilla, stir-frys, ravioli or a 350g steak marinated in vodka. Goose liver in wild berry sauce is a house speciality. Desserts are also excellent – fried ice cream in caramel sauce: need we say more?

YMCA Three Arches (Map pp114-15; ☎ 569 2692; 26 HaMelekh David St; mains 35-85NIS; ☎ 10am-11pm) The Y's high-quality, non-kosher kitchen serves up excellent Mediterranean dishes including smoked salmon, fried avocado, aubergine gratin, mixed seafood, grilled chicken and sautéed garlic shrimp, all served in a leafy courtyard amid fountains and flowers. The Sunday brunch is highly recommended.

Aza Road

Fast becoming a popular hangout for hipsters, students and artists, unassuming Aza Rd has seen a recent proliferation of cheap eateries, trendy cafés and delectable dessert shops.

Sigmund (Map pp120-1; ☎ 563 9212; 29 Gaza (Aza) Rd; ☎ noon-midnight except Shabbat) At the corner of Ha'Ari and Aza Sts, this Freudian kiosk doles out coffee and tasty crêpes (20–30NIS) to throngs of students and intellectual-types. The décor is worth checking out if you are anywhere nearby.

Restobar (Map pp120-1; ☎ 566 5126; 1 Ben Maimon Ave; mains 25-50NIS; ☎ 8am-2am except Shabbat) Not quite sure if they had just created a restaurant or a bar, the owners adopted an apropos name. Restobar consists of an oval bar with six beers on tap. You can occasionally hear live jazz and blues and a DJ spins records on Thursdays. Towards the back is the restaurant section, which resembles a living room, complete with fireplace and bookshelves. The menu is mainly salads, omelette breakfasts and meat-based lunches.

East Jerusalem

East Jerusalem restaurants come in two varieties; the first is the sort of restaurant built under Jordanian rule and still stuck in that age, and the second is a high-end place that targets tourists and the expats who live and work in the area.

RESTAURANTS

Flavors (Map p110; ☎ 627 4626; 42 Salah ad-Din St; ☎ 9am-8pm) A breath of fresh air in East Jerusalem, Flavors is an affordable deli-café run by the affable Najati Tahhan. It's a very clean place and there's a little nook upstairs for more privacy. You can watch BBC on the TV overhead, tap away at your laptop (they have wi-fi) or just mingle with the local regulars. A half-dozen sandwiches are available, plus pepper steak and a nice chicken teriyaki platter.

Askadinya (Map pp86-7; ☎ 532 4590; 11 Shimon Hazdik St; ☎ noon-midnight) Recognising that all the restaurants of East Jerusalem served Asian fare, Munther Khouri, the original owner of Askadinya, elected to give local residents a change of pace, opening an Italian restaurant inside this elegant 120-year-old home. Soft lighting permeates throughout the three rooms, bouncing off arched ceilings and stone walls decorated with black-and-white photos of old Jerusalem. The house speciality is the Askadinya platter (57NIS), an appetiser for two with seafood, roca cheese and vegetables. You can wash your meal down with a wine from South Africa, Spain or Italy.

Jerusalem Hotel (Map p110; ☎ 628 3282; 4 Antara Shahad St; ☎ noon-11pm) The Jerusalem Hotel has a fine attached restaurant in an open courtyard, pleasantly set under grape trellises and cooled by fans. The grill menu features *yalla yalla* chicken (56NIS), a house special of chicken stuffed with mushrooms and vegetables. Arabic music and dancing is organised here on Fridays (call to make a reservation) and a Lebanese buffet (US\$16) is spread out on Saturday nights.

Arabesque (Map p110; ☎ 627 9777; 23 Nablus Rd; ☎ 9am-10pm) Located inside the prestigious American Colony Hotel, the Arabesque attracts both hotel guests and tourists looking for a quality dining experience. The room is decorated with Oriental rugs and antique furnishings that reflect a subdued atmosphere. The menu is meat-based, with tempting lamb chops and steaks. Don't

miss the Saturday buffet, a seafood and meat bonanza, with enticing delicacies such as ostrich soup, steamed mussels, Bedouin chicken and Lebanese desserts.

CAFÉS

El Dorado Café (Map p110; ☎ 532 4590; 19 Salah ad-Din St; ☎ 9am-8pm) This locally popular café and sweets shop serves excellent lattes, espressos and milkshakes, plus candy imported from Syria. The brothers that run the shop, Ahd and Amro, can give the lowdown on East Jerusalem, providing tips on the newest restaurants and points of interest.

Ein Kerem

Bistro (Map pp80-1; ☎ 643 0865; Ein Kerem; ☎ 10am-midnight Sat-Thu, 9am-noon Fri) This family-run restaurant is popular with locals and visitors alike. They serve food all day but it's at its best in the morning when you can try a set breakfast that includes an omelette, freshly baked bread, five types of dip and juice (46NIS). Lunch and dinner is a fusion of French and Italian dishes with a soupçon of Sephardic (try the excellent *kuba* soup). It's located in the centre of the village at the main intersection.

DRINKING

Jerusalem's City Centre is well set up for pub crawling, with a number of bars clustered in close proximity, especially on Rivlin and Yoel Solomon Sts. They tend to be crowded with American teenagers on summer study breaks, but there are a few local places among them. East Jerusalem bars tend to be inside hotels, while the Old City is as dry as the Negev.

City Centre

Gong (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 0818; 33 Jaffa Rd; ☎ 7pm-2am) Stunning Japanese-influenced place with black lacquered furniture, blood-red lighting and blaring hip-hop sounds. It's mostly a bar but they also serve excellent appetisers like sushi and chicken wings, as well as main dishes: try the excellent stuffed beef with shitaki mushrooms.

Yankee's Bar (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 6488; 12 Yoel Solomon St; ☎ 4pm-9.30am) This beer bar puts on a variety of events: Monday is all-you-can-drink beer night (49NIS), jam sessions are held on Wednesday, outdoor concerts are held on Saturday and a DJ is in-house on

Sunday. It's down a narrow alley off Yoel Solomon St.

Sol (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 6938; 15 Shlomzion Ha-Malka St; ☎ 7pm-late) Sol is a Manhattan-style bar masquerading as a tapas restaurant (or vice versa). Try veggie, cheese, calamari or shrimp tapas at reasonable prices. There is always a vibrant atmosphere, but it's best on Monday when you can hear live jazz.

Open (Map pp114-15; ☎ 622 2622; 17 Shlomzion Ha-Malka St; ☎ 5pm-late) This place has uber-cool interior décor, complete with fish swimming in the walls and a moody bar that changes colours like a chameleon. It attracts a 20s and 30s singles crowd and has either a DJ or live music most nights. They also have a kitchen serving up excellent meat and seafood dishes.

Uganda (Map pp114-15; ☎ 623 6087; 4 Aristobulus St; ☎ noon-3am Sun-Thu, noon-5pm & 9pm-3am Fri, 8pm-3am Sat) Comic-book junkies, caffeine junkies and plain old junkies mix and mingle in the cramped confines of Uganda, a mixed-use bar-café-shop off Jaffa Rd. Dedicated to everything that is alternative, it's named after the alternative nation offered by the British to Herzl. The walls are lined with old comic books (all for sale) while a surly bartender stands by waiting to take your order (juice, coffee, tea, wine, beer, or something harder perhaps?). Comfy chairs, a relaxed vibe and good music go down well with the locals.

Other options:

Bolinat (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 9733; 6 Dorot Rishonim St; ☎ 9am-3am Sun-Fri, 11am-3am Sat) In the late afternoon the patio in front of Bolinat is jam-packed with young Jerusalemites sunning themselves and downing pints of beer. Meals are also served.

Bonita (Map pp114-15; ☎ 054 591 6678; 16 Rivlin St; ☎ 8.30pm-6am Sat-Thu) Latin-inspired salsa-teca with meringue, salsa and cumbia. Salsa and tango lessons available.

Geyser (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 9733; 16 Rivlin St; ☎ 8am-2am Sun-Thu, 11am-5am Fri, 7pm-3am Sat) On Friday afternoons this friendly bar hosts a DJ spinning reggae records.

Zolli's (Map pp114-15; ☎ 054 812 4200; 5 Rivlin St; ☎ 4.30pm-late) Popular sports bar offering 12 types of draft beer, 15 flavours of tobacco for the nargileh and 50 types of whiskey.

East Jerusalem

Cellar Bar (Map p110; ☎ 627 9777; 23 Nablus Rd; ☎ noon-1am) Tucked inside the historic American Colony Hotel, this vaulted basement bar is an intimate nook dating to the late 19th century.

It's popular with journalists taking a break from covering one war or another.

Borderline (Map pp86-7; ☎ 532 4590; 13 Shimon Hazadik St; ☎ 6pm-2am) The name of this place comes from its location close to the former Green Line that divided Israel from Jordan prior to 1967. It's not so tense these days, with a pleasant garden and rustic indoor bar of Jerusalem stone. The clientele is a pleasant mix of Palestinian businessmen and foreign aid workers based in the neighbourhood.

ENTERTAINMENT Nightclubs

Haoman 17 (Map pp80-1; ☎ 678 1658; 17 Haoman St, Talpiot; cover charge 50-80NIS; ☎ 11pm-late Thu & Fri) With its warehouse location, booming sound system and great lighting, Haoman 17 is one of the ultimate clubbing venues. International DJs often spin records here. When you get down to Haoman St, it's opposite the Anjril Grill, under the Philips sign.

Yellow Submarine (Map pp80-1; ☎ 570 4646; www.yellowsubmarine.co.il; 13 HaRechavim St, Talpiot; ☎ 11pm-late Thu & Fri) Usually a venue for live music, the Yellow Submarine also hosts DJs and dance parties. It's best to call first to see what is on as you may need to order tickets for some shows.

Dance Parties

International Cultural Centre for Youth (ICCY; Map pp120-1; ☎ 566 4144; 12 Emek Refa'im St) The ICCY building hosts folk dancing on Tuesdays (25NIS) from 6pm to midnight. It's not a performance; its local families coming to dance and you can join in. Thursday is an all-ages boogie dance party, where the DJ spins everything from 'Superfly' to the theme from *Pee Wee's Big Adventure*. Participants form conga lines, tangos, the hora and any other possible dance formation. While it sounds a little bizarre, it's actually good fun and one cultural event not to be missed. There are dances most other nights of the week but you might want to call ahead to ask the guy who organises the dances what's on (☎ 052 860 8084).

Cinemas

Cinematheque (Map pp120-1; ☎ 606 0800; 11 Hebron Rd) The newly renovated Cinematheque features quality foreign films and classics. This is also the home of the respectable Jerusalem Film Festival.

HaOzen HaShlshit (The Third Ear; Map pp120-1; ☎ 563 3093; 8 Emek Refa'im St) A hangout for the German Colony alternative crowd, 'the Ozen' is located off a leafy courtyard in an underground room. It rents DVDs and has a small theatre.

Gil (Map pp80-1; ☎ 678 8448; Jerusalem Mall) Screens Hollywood flicks.

Theatre & Classical Music

Jerusalem has a rich tradition of theatre and music. You can check what's on by reading the Friday edition of the *Jerusalem Post*, the *Time Out Jerusalem* (available at most upscale hotels) or the monthly tourist bulletin published by the Ministry of Tourism. You can book advance tickets through **Kla'im** (Map pp114-15; ☎ 622 2333; 12 Shamai St).

Classical performances are sometimes held at the **YMCA** (Map pp114-15; ☎ 569 2692; 26 HaMelekh David St) and at **Beit Shmuel** (Map pp114-15; ☎ 620 3435; www.beitshmuel.com; 6 Shema St), part of Hebrew Union College (Saturday morning).

The **Jerusalem Centre for the Performing Arts** (Map pp120-1; ☎ 561 7167; www.jerusalem-theatre.co.il; 20 David Marcus St) includes a concert hall, theatres and a café. Its **Sherover Theatre** (admission 170NIS) has simultaneous English-language translation headsets available for certain performances. Comedy, music and dance performances are held here and it's home to the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. Free concerts are held here on Monday at 5pm from October to June.

Khan Theatre (Map pp120-1; ☎ 671 8281; www.khan.co.il; 2 David Remez Sq; adult/student 150/120NIS) sometimes stages some English-language performances.

Binyanei Ha'Umah Conference Centre (Map pp86-7; ☎ 622 2481) is the residence of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

Al-Masrah Centre for Palestine Culture & Art and **Al-Kasaba Theatre** (Map p110; ☎ 628 0957; www.pnt-pal.org; Al-Masrah Centre; Abu Obeida St), off Salah ad-Din St in East Jerusalem, stage plays, musicals, operettas and folk dancing in Arabic, often with an English synopsis.

Live Music

Mike's Place (Map pp114-15; ☎ 052 267 0965; 37 Jaffa Rd; ☎ 4pm-5am) Nightly live music, pool tables and a 4pm to 9pm happy hour make this one of the most popular nightspots in town.

Dublin (Map pp114-15; ☎ 622 3612; 4 Shamai St; ☎ 5pm-3am) Live English and Hebrew music

on Monday and live Irish music Tuesday. It's best to call ahead to reserve a table on these nights. Dublin serves Guinness on tap (half-pint 24NIS) and has some hearty pub grub, including fish and chips, wraps and empanadas.

Lab (Map pp120-1; ☎ 673 4116; adult/student 65/40NIS; 28 Hebron Rd; ☎ 10pm-3am Mon-Sat) Crafted out of a disused railway warehouse, this innovative bar and theatre hosts young artists, musicians and dancers mainly interested in alternative and experimental arts, hence the name. Call ahead for upcoming events.

Pargod Theatre (Map pp86-7; ☎ 625 8819; 94 Bezalel St) A good place to hear jazz; jam sessions take place every Friday from 2.30pm to 5.30pm.

Daila (Map pp114-15; ☎ 624 5560; 4 Shlomzion Ha-Malka St; ☎ 4pm-midnight) Activist centre that hosts live-music performances most nights. Some performances are free, others cost a 20NIS entry fee.

Sport

The 20,000-seat Teddy Kollek Stadium is home to **Beitar Jerusalem** (www.beitar-jerusalem.org in Hebrew) and Ha'poel Jerusalem football clubs. Beitar is known for having the most dedicated fans in the country, prone to burning things down when a match does not go their way (or even when it does go their way). Ha'poel matches are rather more laid-back. You can buy tickets on the day of the game and the stadium is close to the Jerusalem Mall; take bus No 31 from King George V St or bus No 6 from the central bus station.

SHOPPING Camping Gear

Lametayel (Map pp114-15; ☎ 623 3338; 5 Yoel Solomon St) Sells quality camping supplies, outdoor gear, maps and travel guidebooks.

Crafts & Souvenirs

A crafts fair is held every Friday at midday at the International Cultural Centre for Youth (see opposite) in the German Colony. It's a good place to pick up high-quality artwork directly from the artists who produce them.

David St in the Old City (Map pp90-1) is a great place to shop for t-shirts, nargileh, chess boards, handicrafts and all manner of tat. It's not a good place to shop for Judaica

JERUSALEM, SHABBAT & YOU

An hour before sunset you can hear the drone of a horn bellowing over the Jerusalem hills. This signifies the start of Shabbat and with it comes a pronounced spiritual vibe that permeates the streets. All across the city you can see Jerusalemites dressed in their Shabbat best, drawn to the Western Wall or carrying backpacks full of food as they head to the home of a friend or relative for the customary Friday-night dinner.

Put on the best clothes you've got and follow the crowds down to the Western Wall to marvel at the singing, dancing and prayer that ignites this magical place. Try to make arrangements beforehand to join a Shabbat dinner with a local family. If you don't know anyone, the Tourist Office near Jaffa Gate or the Jewish Student Information Centre (see p88) might be able to set you up with a host family for the night. Later in the evening, much to the chagrin of religious Jews, the downtown bars will be open for business.

While the City Centre and the Jewish Quarter of the Old City are closed on Saturday, this is just another day for Jerusalem's Arab population, and most of the sights are open in the Old City, Mt Zion, the Mount of Olives and East Jerusalem. You could also join a free three-hour walking tour (☎ 531 4600), departing every Saturday at 10am from Safra Sq.

While the Egged buses are off the road, the Arab bus network and service taxis are still operating from the Damascus Gate area, and Shabbat is as good a time as any to head for Bethlehem or Jericho. It's also possible to reach Hebron, Ramallah or Nablus, but check the security situation before you go.

You might also try beating Shabbat by taking a bus down to the Dead Sea on Friday before the shutdown and staying somewhere overnight like Ein Gedi or Masada – the parks and reserves are all open seven days a week. You can return later in the day when the buses start running again. Even better, sign up for the all-inclusive trip to Masada–Ein Gedi–Qumran–Jericho offered by many of the Old City hostels. These depart at either 3am or 7am Saturday morning, depending on availability.

You could always elect for a day trip to Tel Aviv, where there's the beach and usually a fair number of eating places and watering holes open to satisfy the cravings of the non-observant. Sheruts (service taxis) still run on Shabbat and they depart from near Zion Sq.

as most items are poorly made knock-offs. Keep the mantra 'buyer beware' embedded in your head.

In the City Centre, there are plenty of souvenir shops on Ben Yehuda St (Map pp114–15). If you are looking for a good kippa (yarmulke), or want one specially made, try **Kippa Man** (Map pp114–15; ☎ 622 1255; 37 Jaffa Rd).

Armenian Pottery

Arman Darian (Map pp114–15; ☎ 054 470 2582; www.darianart.com; 12 Shlomzion HaMalka St) Perhaps the most well-known ceramicist in Israel, Arman has installed his Armenian ceramic designs in many public buildings, including one floor of the Empire State Building.

Armenian Ceramics (Map p110; ☎ 628 2826; www.armenianceramics.com; 14 Nablus Rd) This studio and shop has been in business since 1922. Tiles are hand-painted and you can have items designed to your taste. It's opposite the US consulate in East Jerusalem.

Judaica & Fine Art

Jerusalem is the best place in the country to shop for Judaica. In the Old City, browse the shops in the **Cardo** (Map pp90–1), which has some reliable outlets. There is an Arts & Crafts Lane (Hebrew: Hutzot Hayotzer) just outside and downhill from Jaffa Gate. The products here are mainly Judaica and of excellent quality. It's open daily except Shabbat.

Some of the best Judaica and fine art shops are right along Yoel Solomon St in the City Centre. Examples include the following.

Altogether 8 (Map pp114–15; ☎ 624 7250; 11 Yoel Solomon St) A cooperative of ceramicists who come from all over Israel.

Daniel Azoulay (Map pp114–15; ☎ 992 4202; 5 Yoel Solomon St) Creates hand-painted porcelain and beautiful *ketubas* (Jewish wedding contracts).

Gabrieli (Map pp114–15; ☎ 623 3938; www.gabrililubin.co.il; 6 Yoel Solomon St) Prayer shawls or other hand-woven products.

Green Vurcel (Map pp114–15; ☎ 622 1620; www.greenvurcel.co.il; 27 Yoel Solomon St) Deals with beautiful silver Judaica, including candlesticks, Seder plates and menorahs.

Antiques

Aweidah Gallery (Map pp90–1; ☎ 628 4417; www.aweidah-gallery.com; 4 Via Dolorosa) looks like a museum but is actually a gallery that sells bona fide artefacts that date back hundreds, if not thousands of years. It's all legal and you get a certificate that allows you to take it out of the country.

Photography

Agfa Photo Schwartz (Map pp114–15; ☎ 625 1405; 11 Mordechai Ben Hillel St, Allenby) Sells photo equipment; as a free service they will charge the battery for your digital camera if you've lost the charger.

Shopping Malls & Streets

The **Jerusalem Mall** (Malcha; Map pp80–1; ☎ 679 1333; ☎ 9.30am–10pm Sun–Thu, 9am–3pm Fri, dusk–11pm Sat) contains a supermarket, movie theatre, fast-food joints and retail outlets. It is attractively designed with arched skylights, but it's a bit far out of town to be of much use to the casual traveller.

Ben Yehuda St (Map pp114–15) is Jerusalem's tourist-friendly pedestrian boulevard, crammed with souvenir shops and cafés. **Emek Refa'im St** (Map pp120–1) in the German Colony is another pleasant shopping area, specialising in Judaica and jewellery. **King George V St** (Map pp114–15) has a number of clothing and fashion shops.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

Jerusalem's Atarot Airport (Map p144) is used mainly by international charter flights. When demand is high, domestic carriers Arkia and Israir will connect Jerusalem with Eilat and Haifa.

AIRLINE OFFICES

Arkia (Map pp86–7; ☎ 621 8444; fax 623 5758; 4th fl, Klal Bldg/Arkia, 42 Agrippas St)

El Al (Map pp114–15; ☎ 977 1111; fax 677 0255; 12 Hillel St)

Bus

From the sparkling **Egged central bus station** (Map pp86–7; ☎ 694 8888; Jaffa Rd), buses connect to all major cities and towns around Israel. Buses travel to Tel Aviv (No 405, 17.70NIS,

one hour, every 15 minutes); to Haifa (No 940 or 947, 39NIS, 2½ hours, every 15 minutes); Tiberias (No 962, 42NIS, 2½ hours, hourly); and Be'er Sheva (No 446 or 470, 32NIS, 90 minutes, twice hourly); and to Eilat (No 444, 65NIS, 4½ hours, six daily). For day trips to the Dead Sea, including Ein Gedi (No 421, 444 or 486, 32NIS, two hours, five daily) or Masada (No 444 or 486, 39NIS, 2½ hours, five daily), be sure to leave on the first service of the day (8.45am) or you'll be pressed to get back the same day. There is also service to Rachel's Tomb (No 163, 3.80NIS, 25 minutes, every two hours) near Bethlehem.

For destinations in the southern portion of the West Bank such as Bethlehem (3NIS) and Hebron (10NIS), use the Arab bus station in East Jerusalem, located on Sultan Suleyman St.

If you are headed into northern areas of the West Bank such as Ramallah (5NIS), use the old Arab bus station on Nablus Rd, opposite the Jerusalem Hotel. If there are no direct buses to Nablus you can take a bus to the Qalandia checkpoint and change. At the time of writing there were no buses from Jerusalem to Jericho, although you can get a bus to Abu Dis, past the Mount of Olives. For information on buses to Egypt, see p403.

Car

Note, most Jerusalem-based rental-car agencies forbid you to take their cars into the Palestinian Territories; check the agency's policy.

Avis (Map pp114–15; ☎ 624 9001; 22 HaMelekh David St)

Budget (Map pp114–15; ☎ 624 8991; 23 HaMelekh David St)

Eldan (Map pp114–15; ☎ 625 2151; 24 HaMelekh David St)

Green Peace (☎ 582 2179; www.greenpeace.co.il; Shu'fat, East Jerusalem) Will deliver the car to you wherever you are in Jerusalem.

Hertz (Map pp114–15; ☎ 623 1351; 19 HaMelekh David St)

Sherut (Service Taxi)

Sheruts (service taxis; also called shared taxis) are much faster than buses, depart more frequently and cost only a few shekels more; they're also the only way to travel during Shabbat. Service taxis for Tel Aviv (20NIS per person on weekdays, 30NIS on Friday and Saturday) depart from the corner of Harav Kook St and Jaffa Rd.

Service taxis for all destinations on the West Bank and Gaza depart from the ranks opposite Damascus Gate in East Jerusalem.

Train

Jerusalem's new **railway station** (Map pp80-1; ☎ 577 4000) is located in the southwest of the city, near the Jerusalem Mall. Trains to Tel Aviv's Arlosoroff station (adult/child 19/17NIS) depart hourly between 6.10am and 9.10pm Sunday to Thursday. The last train on Friday is at 3pm. A combo train/bus ticket saves a few shekels. The station is reached on bus No 6 from Jaffa Rd or the central bus station. Ring ☎ *5770 (note the asterisk on your phone) for more details.

GETTING AROUND To/From the Airport

Ben-Gurion airport is 51km west of Jerusalem, on the road to Tel Aviv. Bus No 947 departs from the central bus station for Ben-Gurion airport (20NIS, 40 minutes; twice hourly) from 6.30am to 8.30pm Sunday to Thursday, 6am to 4.30pm Friday, and 8.20pm to 10pm Saturday. A shuttle bus from the arrivals hall travels to the Airport City Commercial Complex, where you catch the bus to the Jerusalem. Alternatively, **Nesher service taxis** (Map pp114-15; ☎ 625 3233, 1 599 500 205) picks up booked passengers from their accommodation 24 hours a day (45NIS). The service also travels from the airport to Jerusalem – don't

believe unscrupulous taxi drivers who tell you its no longer running.

Bicycle

The hills of Jerusalem make biking a little tough going, but if you need a bike try **Rochvim Bikes** (Map pp86-7; ☎ 623 2598; 88 Agrippas St) which rents bikes for 35NIS per day. The store, on the corner of Mani St, is a unique collaboration between local Palestinian and Jewish biking enthusiasts.

Bus

Jerusalem is laced with a very good network of city bus routes (5.50NIS per ride). If you need to transfer ask for a ticket *Ma'avar* (6.40NIS). A pass for 10 rides costs 44NIS while a one-month pass is 216NIS. Pick up a colour-coded route map (in Hebrew) from the Jaffa Gate tourist office. Or for the latest route information, call ☎ *2800.

Taxi

Plan on spending 20NIS to 25NIS for trips anywhere within the central area of town. Always ask to use the meter. To order a taxi, call Hapalmach taxi (☎ 679 2333)

AROUND JERUSALEM

There are a number of sites near Jerusalem that you can visit on a half-day or full-day trip. With a day off most travellers head

for the Dead Sea (see p311) or Bethlehem (p290), but there are also lesser-known sights worth your time. The highlights include the Sorek Stalagmite Cave and the bell caves at Beit Guvrin, and a winery or two between them.

ABU GHOSH

אבו גוש אבו غوش

☎ 02 / pop 5500

Shaded by trees and lorded over by a grand old church, the picturesque town of Abu Ghosh (13km from Jerusalem and off the main highway to Tel Aviv) makes for a pleasant half-day trip from Jerusalem. It's known in the Bible as Kiriath-Jearim (Town of Forests), where the Ark of the Covenant was said to have been located for 20 years until David moved it to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 13:5-8). Nowadays it's equally known as the hummus capital of Israel.

There are two interesting churches here. The first, **Our Lady of the Ark of the Covenant** (Notre Dame de l'Arche; admission free; ☎ 8-11.30am & 3.30-6pm), was built in 1924 and is a local landmark, with its statue of St Mary carrying the baby Jesus. It belongs to the French Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition, and they believe that it stands on the site of Abinadab's house where the Ark was kept (1 Samuel 7:1). The

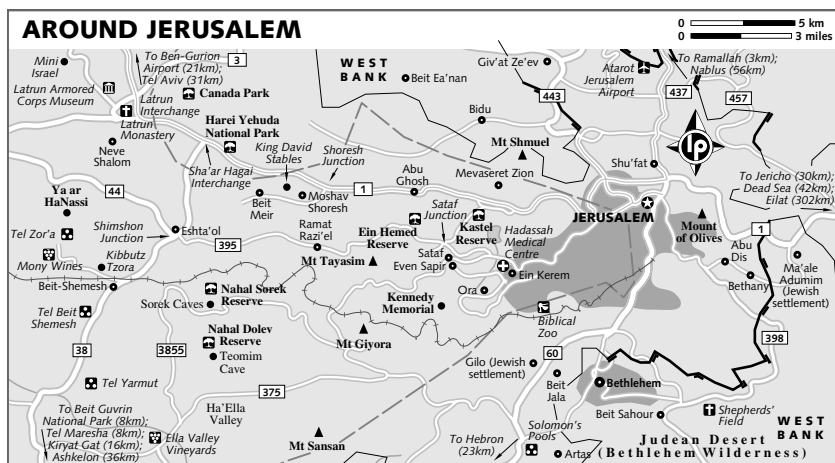
church is built on the same site as a larger Byzantine church, and you can see its mosaic floor inside and out. The church is located at from the top of the hill overlooking the village and facing Jerusalem.

The **Crusader Church and Monastery** (admission free; ☎ 8.30-11am & 2.30-5.30pm) is one of the country's best-preserved and most attractive Crusader remains. It was built about 1142 and destroyed in 1187. It is believed that the monastery stands on the remains of a Roman castle. A stone from it is displayed in the church and bears an inscription of the 10th Legion, a renowned Roman unit stationed in Jerusalem in the 1st century. The complex is next door to the mosque, so look for the minaret in the valley.

Eating

Abu Shukhri (☎ 533-4963; ☎ 8am-8pm) The original Abu Shukhri is on the left as you walk into the village. Here you can indulge in what is said to be the best hummus in Israel (not the first time you'll hear this claim). The place across the street hijacked the name but if you ask, both claim to be the original.

Caravan (☎ 534 2744; ☎ 8am-8pm) A step up from the hummus joints of Abu Ghosh, Caravan offers a choice of tasty meats or



THE LOTTERY TICKET THAT SAVED ABU GHOSH

After living the first 21 years of his life in Abu Ghosh, young Jawdat Ibrahim looked around him and realised his prospects for work, for a future, were dim at best. So like many others his age Jawdat packed his bags and set off for America in 1990. While his fellow immigrants laboured for minimum wage, Jawdat achieved the American Dream with a stroke of luck – winning the Illinois state lottery and returning home US\$22 million richer.

Jawdat saw his windfall as a chance to make something happen in Abu Ghosh, until then a rather impoverished village lacking infrastructure or jobs. Dropping his own cash into a community development project, he paved the streets and helped entrepreneurs to set up shops and restaurants. Seeking out a niche market, the 'new Abu Ghosh' billed itself as the hummus capital of Israel and people from all over the country flocked here to sample the restaurants.

Besides helping the local economy, Jawdat is also a well-known peace advocate and has done much to support reconciliation between Arabs and Jews. Abu Ghosh is one of the few places in Israel where you can see Arabs and Jews socialising, living and working together, usually talking animatedly over bowlfuls of hummus.

Jawdat has created a scholarship fund for both Arabs and Jews, he has hosted forums of discussion between the two parties and his restaurant is still a popular place for Jewish and Arab politicians to meet for lunch. In 2002, during the height of the second intifada, he saw football as a way of bringing Arabs and Jews together. He bought a big-screen TV and took out ads in the Jewish and Arab press, inviting everyone to come to his restaurants to watch the World Cup.

Even if hummus and football can't bring peace to the Middle East, Jawdat Ibrahim has proven that this combination can make the future of Abu Ghosh just a little bit brighter. And US\$22 million doesn't hurt either.

kebabs stuffed in vine leaves. Desserts are also good and you can't beat the views across the valley towards Jerusalem. It's located halfway between the two churches.

SOREK CAVES

מערות שורק مغارة سوريق
One of Israel's most spectacular natural wonders, the **Sorek Caves** (☎ 02-991 1117; admission 23NIS; 🕒 8am-5pm Sat-Thu, 8am-3pm Fri) were only found by accident in 1967 when a local quarry crew blasted away some rock to reveal this underground cavern. Also known as Avshalom (Absalom's) caves, they contain stalactites, stalagmites and rock pillars in every form and shape. Some have been given creative names, including Ayatollah Khomeini, sombrero and Moses. Tours are held throughout the day (except Friday) and a short film describes the how the caves were formed. Because of the fragile nature of the caves, photography is only allowed one day per week (Friday). The caves are located some 20km west of Jerusalem along the road from Ein Kerem.

LATRUN לטרון اللطرون
☎ 08

Most travellers blow right by Latrun on their way between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. In the past this area, located at the foot of the Judean Hills, had not been so easy to cross. A battlefield for millennia, Latrun has been witness to the armies of just about everyone from the Maccabees to the IDF. The side of the highway is still littered with the shells of old army trucks left over since the war in 1948. While still relatively unknown, Latrun offers a few unusual sights, including a tank museum, a theme park and a Trappist monastery.

Latrun Armored Corps Museum

With its history of warfare, it's not surprising to learn that the **Latrun Armored Corps Museum** (☎ 925-5268; adult/child 30/20NIS; 🕒 8.30am-4.30pm Sat-Thu, 8.30am-12.30pm Fri) is one of the largest of its kind in the world. The main building was originally built by the British as a fortress to safeguard the road to Jerusalem. It now holds a museum of history from ancient times to modern, and a theatre screening an introductory video. Surrounding the museum are 160 types of armoured vehicles, including the mighty Merkava tank.

Latrun Monastery

Founded in 1890 by the French Trappist Order of monks as a contemplative monastery, Latrun Monastery is now widely renowned for its wine, and its lovely location, architecture and gardens.

The wine-making started in around 1899. The monks reclaimed and cultivated the land and planted olive groves, grain and vegetables as well as vineyards. In WWI the monks were expelled by the Turks, but they were able to return, and in 1926 the present monastery was constructed.

There is an on-site **shop** (☎ 925 5180; 🕒 8.30am-11.30am & 2.30-4.30pm Mon-Sat) selling the wine, spirits and olive oil produced here.

Mini Israel

Latrun's newest attraction, **Mini Israel** (☎ 921 4121; www.minisrael.co.il; admission 56NIS, audio guide 15NIS; 🕒 10am-6pm Nov-Mar, 10am-8pm Apr-Oct), is designed to make you feel like Gulliver in the Land of Lilliputs. A theme park of sorts, Mini Israel shrinks 350 of Israel's famed attractions down to scale-model size. The creators have undertaken the task with painstaking detail, going so far as to make the 'mini residents' bob back and forth as they pray at the Western Wall. As you walk around you can hear the different languages of the country being spoken. It can be a useful way to start a trip – to be used as a giant road map of the country you are about to explore. If you have kids put it on the 'must-see' list.

Neve Shalom – Wahat al-Salam (NSWAS)

This unique model community has a mixed population of Jews and Arabs that have forged a future together. The town, founded in 1972, has around 50 families that work together in community projects not unlike a kibbutz. It so impressed Roger Waters that he chose to play a concert here in 2006. Visitors are taken on a tour of the village and ongoing projects, such as a humanitarian aid program and a school for peace. Volunteers are also welcome to lend their skills in exchange for housing. See www.nswas.org for details.

To reach Neve Shalom turn off at the Latrun exit and head south to the Nachson/Neve Shalom turnoff. Neve Shalom is 4km down the road

Wine Route

There are several excellent boutique wineries to visit in the Judean Hills and it's possible to visit a few on a day trip. After sampling the wine at the Latrun Monastery (above) head south on to Rte 38 at the Sha'ar Hagai interchange, noting the scenic change to rolling farmland.

A few kilometres from the interchange a sign directs you to **Kibbutz Tzora** (☎ 02-990 8261; www.tzorawines.com; 🕒 10am-5pm Sun-Thu, 10am-2pm Fri, 10am-6pm Sat), which has a winery producing a white wine and a dry red. The shop sells the wine, plus fresh fruit, cheese, vegetables, olive oil, honey, bread and deli meats. It's a great place to stock up on provisions for a picnic later in the day. Tours are by appointment only and cost 20NIS per person. If you'd like to spend the night, the kibbutz has a small **B&B** (☎ 02-990 8562; bbtzora@tzora.co.il; s/d US\$57/76; 🕒 🛏) in basic self-contained units.

Up the road from Kibbutz Tzora is **Mony Wines** (☎ 02-991 6629; monywines@walla.co.il; 🕒 8am-6pm) founded by the Artul family, Arab-Christians who have leased the land from the neighbouring Deir Raffat Catholic Monastery. The wine cellars here were carved out 125 years ago by the church clergy. One cellar holds the ageing wine barrels while the other contains a giant table used for celebrations. A small shop sells Mony's kosher cabernet sauvignon, merlot and chardonnay wines, plus olive oil and cheese. The adjacent church can be visited on Saturdays from 10am to 3pm; check out the ceiling on the interior, on which the word 'peace' has been written in 340 languages.

Heading south again on Rte 38, turn east on Rte 375 until you reach the **Ella Valley Vineyards** (☎ 02-999 4876; www.ellavalley.com; 🕒 8.30am-4.30pm Sun-Thu, 8.30-12.30 Fri), one of the largest in the area. It's also one of the newest wineries in Israel and employs both hi-tech and traditional technologies in the fermenting process. The winery is close to Kibbutz Nativ HaLamed-Heh.

Although wine is making headlines these days, the Ella Valley's place in history was secured long ago as the battlefield where it is believed David slew the Philistine giant Goliath. Past the Rte 38 and Rte 383 junction (Ha'Ella Junction) the highway crosses a dry stream, possibly where David picked up the 'five smooth stones' as described in I Samuel 17. Then out in the field, according

DIG THIS TEL

It won't take long in Israel before you start wondering what the hell is a tel. A tel (eg Tel Aviv, Tel Jericho and Tel Maresha to name a few) is a mound of earth that was created by successive civilisations always building on top of a ruined city. After one city was destroyed, another type of people came along, built on the ruins and lived there until someone else came and put them out of business. The process repeats itself a few times until (voilà) the ruins form into a low hill.

Because of its soft earth and wealth of history, Tel Maresha is chock-full of bits and pieces from history. Every summer amateur archaeologists descend on the place and carefully scoop up the earth, often uncovering shards of pottery, coins, oil lamps and other items discarded by our ancient ancestors.

Tourists are often brought along as a source of cheap labour. If this sounds appealing, contact **Archaeological Seminars** (☎ 02-586-2011; www.archesem.com), which charges around US\$25 per person for a three-hour dig and seminar.

to the Bible, 'David left the line of battle and ran to meet the Philistine. Putting his hand in his bag, he took out a stone and slung it and struck the Philistine on the forehead.'

There is really nothing to mark the spot but you can stop your car, wander into the field, and let your imagination conjure up the battle.

Beit Guvrin & Tel Maresha

בית גוברין תל מרשה
بيت جبرين تل مریشه
The **Beit Guvrin Caves & Tel Maresha** (☎ 08-681 1020; adult/student 25/12NIS; 🕒 8am-4pm) are an archaeological site, natural wonder and feat of human ingenuity all rolled into one. Around this sweltering national park are some 4000 hollows and chambers that create a Swiss cheese landscape. Some of the caves are natural, the result of water eroding the soft limestone surface. Others, however, are thought to be the result of quarrying by the Phoenicians, builders of Ashkelon's port between the 7th and 4th centuries BC. During the Byzantine period the caves were used by monks and hermits

and some of the walls are still discernibly marked with crosses. St John the Baptist is said to have been one of the pious graffitists.

At neighbouring Tel Maresha, excavations have uncovered remains from a 3rd-century synagogue and various Greek and Crusader artefacts, all of which are now on display at Jerusalem's Rockefeller Museum (see p110). Some Byzantine mosaics also found here are now in the Israel Museum (see p119) in Jerusalem. Among the finds that haven't been carted away are the ruins of the 12th-century Crusader Church of St Anna (or Sandhanna).

The easiest caves to explore are those west of Tel Maresha – you can see tracks leading from the road. Check each interest-

ing hole in the ground that you see. Some of the caves have elaborate staircases with banisters leading down below ground level. The rows of hundreds of small niches suggest that they were created for raising small domesticated doves to be used in the worship of Aphrodite by the Sidonian colony between the 3rd and 1st centuries BC.

The park is fairly large and the sights are spread out. Really the only practical way to visit is by private car. To get there, take Rte 38 south until it hits Rte 35. Take Rte 35 west for 2km until you see the entrance to the park. If you are determined to go it alone, take the 8am bus from Kiryat Gat to Kibbutz Get Guvrin and ask the driver to let you out at the national park. A bus returns to Kiryat Gat from here at 5pm.