



## Travel Report: Jill & Pete's trip to Israel

May 13-23, 2007

Pete has been collaborating with a graduate student in Israel who suggested that we visit. We put it off for a year but then decided to go, realizing it would be an interesting place to see. My mom happily joined us.

### *itinerary*

night 1: in flight to Israel

nights 2-4: Tel Aviv

nights 5-6: Haifa

nights 7-10: Jerusalem

## Tel Aviv

In Tel Aviv we stayed in an apartment that Pete found online. It turned out to belong to a concert pianist. It was on the top floor and had a nice rooftop patio. →



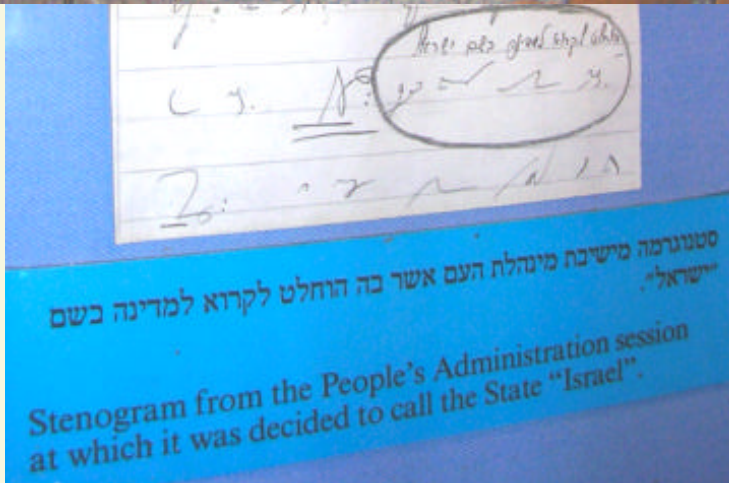
Candy, spices and vegetables at Carmel Market, which we walked to one morning





## Tel Aviv

We visited Independence Hall, where Israel was officially declared a state by David Ben-Gurion in 1948



Lots of bougainvillea was blooming



Graffiti & ads that we couldn't read

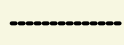


מרכז תרבות לפעוטות לילדים ולמבוגרים





**Tel Aviv**



**Jaffa**



Jaffa, just next to Tel Aviv, is about 4000 years old, one of the oldest port towns in the world. According to the Old Testament, it was founded by Noah's son Japheth. Old Jaffa is a picturesque mix of boats in the harbor, renovated buildings and alleys, and excavation sites within a park setting. Ruins found there are from Roman, Greek, Egyptian and Israelite cultures. We spent a weekday morning exploring this pleasantly un-crowded place.



Alleys are named after the signs of the zodiac





## Haifa

The main attractions in Haifa are the views from the hillsides and the manicured gardens of the Baha'i complex. Here as everywhere it was an adventure trying to navigate to our hotel and elsewhere on the crooked, poorly labeled streets. We always managed to find our way eventually though.



From the window of our room at the Dan Gardens we saw a Smyrna kingfisher! It was as beautiful as this one (I did not take this photo.)





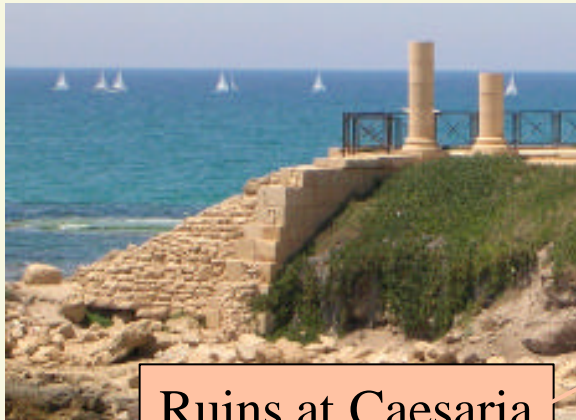
## Haifa

From Haifa we drove in our rental car to see some regional sights.

In Tsfat my mom and I attended a Friday night Shabbat service at a small synagogue full of inspired singing and, at least on the men's side of the partition, dancing.

Tsfat

Sea of Galilee



Ruins at Caesaria



Ruins at Zippori

The Mishnah, precursor to the Talmud, was written here in the 2nd century



Many ancient sites contained mosaics



## Headlines from Friday, May 18

We were 40-100 miles from Gaza during these events. The locals we talked to did not seem worried by the events happening there nor the threat of resumed suicide bombing.

THE JERUSALEM POST

FRIDAY, MAY 18, 2007 • 1 SIVAN 5767

Optican See p.2

MICKEY MOUSE UNITY  
As squeaky-voiced Farfur encourages hatred of Israel, a bloodbath explodes the façade of a united PA  
See Page 14

THE TRUTH ABOUT JERUSALEM  
Why the capital gets such a raw deal from the press  
See Page 15

UP FRONT • SHAVUOT  
The Secular Yeshiva, where God is persona non grata  
BILLBOARD  
Local musicians take center stage at this year's Israel Festival

Shin Bet foils plot to kill Olmert – Page 5 ■ Suspected serial killer caught – Page 6 ■ Is Christian conference un-kosher? – Page 7

**Tanks roll into northern Gaza as air strikes escalate**

• By VAAROV KATZ

The air force continued to hammer away at Hamas targets in the Gaza Strip on Thursday as the IDF made its first foray into northern Gaza, sending tanks and infantry to take over Kassam launch sites.

- Army bids to stop rocket fire
- Artillery deploys along border
- IDF kills 8, including Kassam cell
- Hamas vows revenge

Abbas cancels Gaza visit out of fear of assassination, Page 2

Olmert goes to Sderot, Page 3

At least eight Palestinians died in the Israeli attacks, including a Hamas operative who was killed when the IAF dropped a bomb on a two-story building belonging to Hamas's Executive Force. Forty-five others were wounded in the bombing, which leveled the building and several parts to it. Three people were killed later in the day, when IAF fighters

TEACHERS and pupils comfort each other and register shock after a Kassam rocket struck their school in Sderot on Thursday. No one was hurt in the attack. (Anel Schul/AP)

**Panicked Sderot residents flee while more Kassams rain down**

Mayor besieged by locals pleading for evacuation

• By TOVAB LAZAROFF

Fear, panic and bitterness reached the boiling point in Sderot on Thursday afternoon as the country for three nights. The locals were tuned out as a relief measure after the southern border city was hit by dozens of rockets. A Palestinian Fellowship of Christians and Jews, entered the room for a planned press conference to announce a \$15.6 million donation for Sderot residents.

AN IDF soldier stands atop a tank at a staging area near Kibbutz Nahal Oz on the border with the Gaza Strip on Thursday. (Anel Schul/AP)



## Jerusalem

We stayed in a nice apartment a short walk from the old city.



The apartment downstairs had this sign above the door

Pete's collaborator and his wife had us over for a wonderful meal featuring foods typically eaten on Shavuot (meatless). On another night, we were treated (by a professor) to a feast at a restaurant where traditional local foods were presented show-and-tell style.



## Museums

At the Israel Museum we saw Dead Sea Scrolls on display in this building



Also at this museum was a scale model of Jerusalem as it was in the 1st Century. The bird in this photo is a real hooded crow that flew in for a drink

There was lots of neat stuff at the Israel Museum: Judaica from many cultures, a worldwide art collection and a nice large-scale Zen-inspired sculpture garden.

My mom and I saw the 12 Chagall windows at the Hadassah Medical Center Synagogue



The three of us also went to Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial museum. It was comprehensive and well done, extremely sobering and emotional.



# Jerusalem

## Old City



Dome of the Rock



City wall and a typical alleyway: all buildings in both the old and new cities are made (or fronted with) this local pink-gold limestone

The Old City induces claustrophobia and is impossible not to get lost in. It feels like a multi-level city: we walked on rooftops and seemingly underground passages.

Just inside Damascus Gate: a small, relatively open bit of the extensive street markets in the Old City



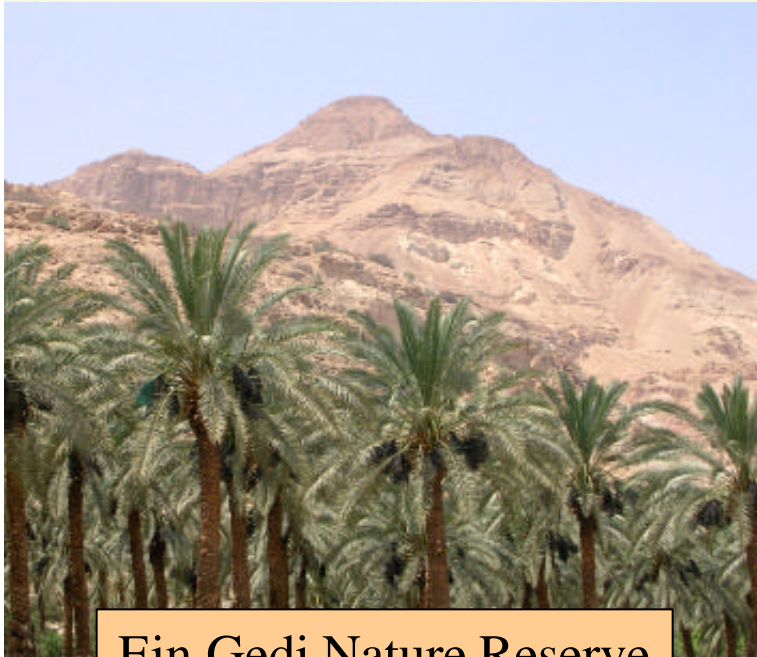
Western Wall on Shavuot night (May 22 this year). Tables and chairs are set up. People will come here all night long to pray and study. All over the city and country observant Jews stay up all night on this holiday, studying various subjects.



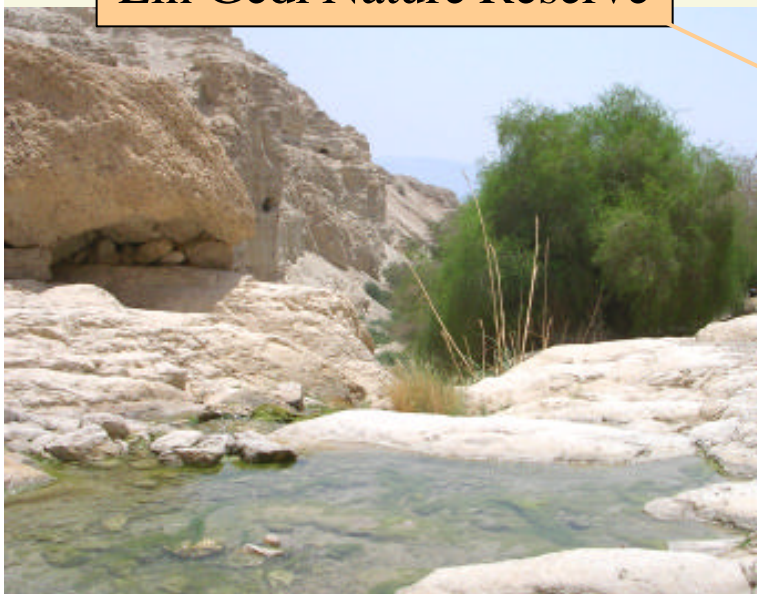


**Jerusalem**

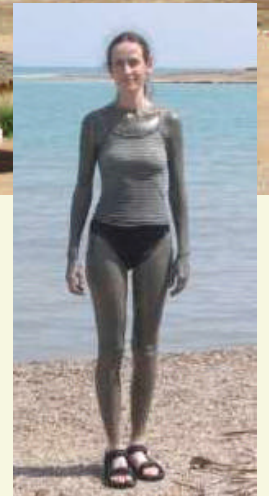
Dead Sea



Ein Gedi Nature Reserve



Mineral Beach



We took a day trip to the Dead Sea. There was no problem driving on the highway (red dotted line) through the

West Bank. Just a couple security checkpoints. It was hot at Ein Gedi but scenic and worth the visit. At Mineral Beach, a small private resort, we spent the most relaxing couple hours of our vacation, floating in the water, playing with Dead Sea mud, and lounging in the oxygen and bromine rich air.





palm dove

Tristram's grackle



hooded crow

*and for the  
last slide...*

## **Animals!**



lizardy things



Not pictured: stray cats that were *everywhere* in the cities

ibexes foraging in a date palm plantation



hyraxes at Ein Gedi  
( they're about cat sized)

