

**AFRICA MIDDLE EAST**

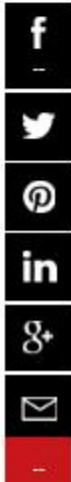
# In Israel, hotel openings and refurbs, new tour itineraries for 2017

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A Terrace Room at the recently opened Bezelel Hotel in Jerusalem.



Last year about 2.9 million tourists visited Israel, a year-over-year increase of about 3.6%, according to the country's Central Bureau of Statistics. And 2017 has started strong, with January arrivals up more than 27%, according to the bureau.

The following are some of the latest in hotels and tours that await visitors this year:

**Hotels**

- Atlas Hotels, a Tel Aviv-based management firm, recently opened the Bezelel Hotel in Jerusalem.

According to a statement from Atlas, six floors were added to a historical building next to the Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design to create the 37-room boutique property.

The Bezalel Hotel "dedicates itself to local design culture" with furniture and decorative pieces "carefully chosen to reflect the special characteristics" of the surrounding Nachlaot neighborhood, according to Atlas.

The guestroom walls feature prints by artists including Larry Abramson, Moshe Gershuni, Hilla Ben Ari and Meydad Eliyahu. The hotel menu sources ingredients from the nearby Mahane Yehuda Market.

"We hope that [the] Bezalel, the younger sister to two already existing Atlas boutique hotels in Jerusalem, will function not only as a main attraction of tours in the area but will stand on its own as a cultural design experience of the highest quality," Danny Lipman and Leslie Adler, managing directors of Atlas Hotels, said in a statement.



A guestroom in the Dan Accadia hotel. It is renovating 140 of its 208 rooms, a project scheduled to be completed before Passover in April.

- Dan Hotels is marking its 70th anniversary this year with renovations at several of its properties.

According to Rafi Baeri, Dan Hotels' vice president of marketing and sales, a major renovation at the 208-room Dan Accadia Hotel is scheduled to be completed in time for Passover in April.

About 140 rooms in the property's main building are being redone; renovations to the hotel's two dining rooms are underway, as well.

The property's Chalet rooms, which are in two separate buildings alongside the pool and gardens, were renovated from 2011 to 2015.

In addition, smaller-scale changes are underway at the Dan Panorama Haifa and Dan Eilat Red Sea Hotel, where gradual renovations of all rooms are in process.

- The Villa Brown Jerusalem is scheduled to open next month.

The 24-room property is a five-minute walk from the Old City sites and occupies a villa built in the 19th century, according to Tel Aviv-based Brown Hotels.

Amenities include a rooftop spa and open-air Jacuzzi and a lobby library featuring design and lifestyle publications in multiple languages.



A rendering of the lobby of the Villa Brown Jerusalem hotel, a 24-room property scheduled to open next month.

## Tours

- Perillo Tours' Learning Journeys brand is offering an Israel — The Holy Land: Art & Archaeology tour as part of its Travel With Professors program.

The 13-night tour, priced at \$3,475 per person, double (land only), is scheduled from May 22 to June 5 and will be led by Ira Spar, a professor of ancient history at

Ramapo College of New Jersey as well as research Assyriologist for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

The itinerary includes the Western Wall of Herod's ancient Temple, the Dead Sea Scrolls, Yad Vashem (the World Holocaust Remembrance Center), the Tel Dan Natural Reserve, the ruins of Caesarea and Nazareth and the ancient town of Capernaum.

- Yalla Tours USA recently launched three small group, Jewish Heritage motorcoach tours.

The nine-night Best of Israel tour, priced from \$2,245 per person in a double room, spends two nights in Tel Aviv, one night in Haifa, two nights in Galilee and four nights in Jerusalem, with six days of escorted touring.

The 11-night Splendors of Israel tour spends three nights in Tel Aviv, one night in Haifa, two nights in Galilee and five nights in Jerusalem, with eight days of escorted touring. It is priced from \$2,695 per person in a double room.

Magical Israel, priced from \$3,295 per person in a double room, is a 14-night tour featuring four nights in Tel Aviv, one night in Haifa, two nights in Galilee, four nights in Jerusalem, one night at the Dead Sea and two nights in Eilat, with 10 days of escorted touring.

The group sizes are about 12 to 14 guests, and the tours are guaranteed to operate with a minimum of two guests.