

# JERUSALEM - THE CITY OF GOLD



Some call it 'The City of Gold', some the 'Holy City' and millions of religious visitors come here to pay homage to the remnants of the city's very long and complicated history. Jerusalem is a true spectacle, especially when one considers its almost divine status for Christians, Muslims and Jews alike. The city is divided into several districts, each 'belonging' to a different religion. However, one part of the city is a true tourist gem; the Old City has been on the list of UNESCO World Heritage since 1982.

It has been a sacred site since the Roman times, when a temple dedicated to Venus was built here. Throughout the history, many other churches have been built. The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is a very important one for several churches. Allegedly it was here where Jesus Christ was crucified and his body washed after it was taken off the cross.

The Dome of the Rock is one of the other majestic attractions of Jerusalem. It is located above the Wailing Wall on the old Temple Mount. Before entering, all visitors need to rid themselves of their material possessions, and leave the shoes, purses, cameras, even money and passport behind. The Wailing Wall, or the Western Wall, is the most sacred spot for Jews. It dates back 2, 000 years and is the only surviving remnant of the Biblical Temple. It was built by Herod the Great. After the Romans destructed the temple in 70 A.D., the only remaining wall became the Jews' place of lament.

Another very precious aspect of the Old City are its surrounding walls. The 4 km circuit is accessed by eight gates which are all quite spectacular. Walking through the Old City is a deeply spiritual experience; one can breathe in the history and absorb the wondrous atmosphere. Many tourists linger to come here for reasons of safety, however the situation has much improved and nowadays, Jerusalem is a safe place. Though just like any other major city, pickpockets are always waiting for their opportunity.

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