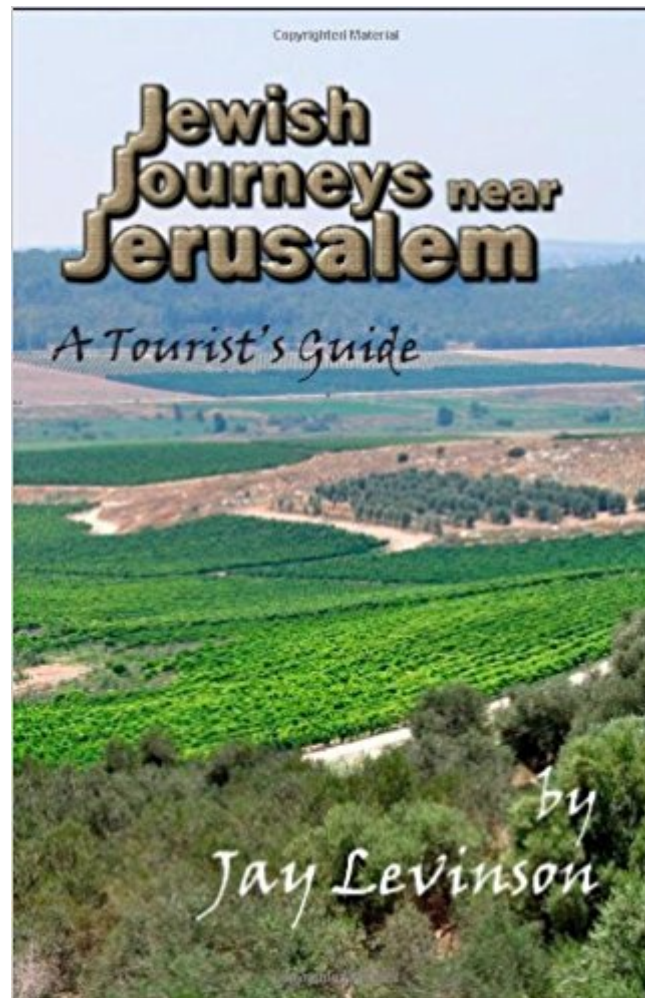




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Jewish Journeys Near Jerusalem: A Tourist's Guide



Synopsis

Jewish Journeys Near Jerusalem provides an introduction to those sites that are convenient to Jerusalem as a travel base. Hours and fees are given—•from the cable car up to Massada to a goat farm in Itamar, from an art museum in Maaleh Adumim to the remnants of ancient Beit Shemsh. The book describes several industrial factories that are not open to the public. These are included to give the reader a better appreciation of life in the area and an understanding of the history of many products seen on supermarket shelves. Since ancient times, Israel has been famous for its wine, and today there are more than two hundred wineries in the country. This volume contains the Kosher Wine Guide, providing fascinating details about many of the wineries near Jerusalem, how they started, and what kinds of wine they produce (visits often with tasting). If you enjoyed Jewish Journeys in Jerusalem, you should certainly like this sequel.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is a companion volume to Jewish Journeys in Jerusalem, and like its predecessor volume writing the book was a fascinating experience. I visited every site mentioned, and did research in libraries and archives. Personnel at the sites were extremely helpful and gave me excellent guides. Not everything to see is historic. Part of the area covered by this book has been "wine country" for centuries. So, I have included a section about modern wineries. (Very often tasting is a wonderful experience. The definition of "Near Jerusalem" is pragmatic. The book covers places to visit where the tourist would logically base himself in Jerusalem. I am sure everyone will find the book interesting.

Jay Levinson, after retiring from the Israel Police, has published many books and articles about his numerous travels. He has written extensively about Jewish sites and history, kosher wine, and various food products. He is well acquainted with the Jerusalem area where he has lived for more than thirty years. He holds a Ph.D. in Near Eastern studies from New York University and is currently an adjunct professor at John Jay College and a frequent contributor to the Jewish Tribune.

Book Review Jewish Journeys near Jerusalem, A Tourist's Guide By Jay Levinson The Key Publishing House, Toronto, Canada, 2013 Submitted by: Judith Nusbaum, Mivtza Nahshon 3, Rishon Letzion, Israel Email: judithnusbaum@gmail.com May 29, 2013 Jay Levinson's latest travel guide for the observant tourist, "Jewish Journeys near Jerusalem", the sequel to "Jewish Journeys in Jerusalem", is a winner! In addition to supplying in depth information about the past and present of the sites included in this guide, here as the previous one, the author has geared the specifics of visiting the sites to the needs of the observant tourists in matters relating to Halacha. Having been a licensed Israeli tour guide since the late 1970s, I am familiar with the sites and can attest to the fact that Jay Levinson's descriptions accurately bring these places to life. The book covers a great deal in its 175 clearly printed pages. It begins with the area of the Dead Sea and offers an interesting commentary on Josephus and his commentaries on Masada. These descriptions and insights are especially important and raise several questions. Information is not limited to history; the present, and logistics are also addressed. For instance, as a helpful hint, it is suggested that if while floating in the Dead Sea the highly concentrated salt water enters your eyes, place your head back past your shoulders to ease the discomfort. Clear, well thought out explanations and descriptions of sites make the history of the area come alive. The 'on the road' explanations from Beitar Illit, Gush Etzion, Herodian and Tekoa are eye openers. A good deal of emphasis is placed on Hebron. Moving east of Jerusalem to Maaleh Adumim new sites, including the Castel Museum are described in detail. To the west of Jerusalem Nebi Samuel, Beit Horon, Modiin are some of the communities and towns to which the reader is introduced. Jay Levinson has the gift of enabling the reader to feel as though he or she is standing in the place being described. When writing about the Israel Path/Trail Jay Levinson is inspiring. The opportunities to bike, hike or drive the mountain paths are so well explained that I found myself anxious to walk the trail again. Because of the structure of the book it is a simple matter, by using the Table of Contents, to find all the places that interest you including, Yad Kennedy, Latrun, Ariel, Beit El, Barkan, Itamar, Ofra, Shilo, and many more. Thoughtfully, information about handicapped access to and within many of the sites is included. This guide also takes you across the Jordan River to Jordan. Information regarding security, crossing the border,

and the sites in Jordan are clearly and carefully explained. And if you are interested in wine the last section of the book offers you an up-to-date and detailed kosher wine guide to wineries in Israel. The history of the wineries and purchasing suggestions are interesting and useful. In short, I found Jay Levinson's, "Jewish Journeys near Jerusalem", outstanding. It is the only tourist guide book I've read that explains the aspects of traveling for the observant tourist in such a clear and interesting manner. I recommend this guide.

No matter how many times I travel to Israel, I find there are always places I haven't seen or places whose significance I was unaware of. Jay Levinson's vast knowledge of the religious, historical, geographical and demographics of Jerusalem and nearby communities make life easy and extremely interesting for a novice tourist, or one who has been to Israel many times (like me 26 times). The author takes tourism in and around Jerusalem to a new level. In addition his shopping tips are informative and saved me money. This is his second book that I have had the pleasure of buying and using when I travel to Jerusalem. I can't wait for his next book. Elliot Miller

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