



WELCOME TO ISRAEL!

Israel – Negev Desert

The Negev Desert occupies 60% of the land surface area of Israel and yet it is the least densely populated. It is a place of awe-inspiring beauty that stretches from Egypt to Jordan and from Jerusalem to the Red Sea. Here the forces of nature have conspired to create unique geological formations in a habitat that is home to an amazing variety of flora and fauna. Over 1,000 different plant species and a variety of animals lay claim to the area adapting themselves to the dry heat and climate. The absence of a thick covering of vegetation and the sparse population, mainly Bedouin, who cling to their nomadic ways, have helped preserve the Negev in its natural condition.

Due to its particularly hot summers and meagre annual rainfall, the Negev is ranked as an 'extreme desert' which presents some of the best desert trekking in the world. We'll leave the civilisation of Eilat and enter a harsh desert environment. Our reward will be a surprising variety of landscapes as we trek through the colourful mountains and valleys of this remote area. We will cross a few wadis, there will be uphill stretches but by the end of our trek we'll feel an extraordinary sense of achievement having trekked approximately 42 km.

Israel facts and figures

- Area: 22,145 sq km (8550 sq miles).
- Population: 7.4 million (official estimate 2011).
- Geography: Israel is on the eastern Mediterranean, bordered by Lebanon and Syria to the north, Jordan to the east and Egypt to the south.
- Government: The state of Israel was founded in 1948. The President of the State of Israelis Shimon Peres who took office in July 2007.
- Language: Hebrew is the official language. Arabic is spoken by around 15 per cent of the population. English is spoken in most places.
- Religion: 77 per cent Jewish, 15 per cent Muslim, with Christian, Druze and other minorities.
- Time: 2 hours ahead of the UK in October and November when this trek is due to take place.
- Electricity: 220 volts AC, 50Hz. Three-pin plugs are standard.
- Telephone: Country code: 972. Outgoing international code: 00. Local telephone directories are in Hebrew, but there is a special English-language version for tourists.

Useful References

www.lonelyplanet.com (country information)

www.travel-guides.com (country information)