

Proper Dress for Travel in Israel

There is no place quite like Israel. Israel is home to a diverse population of Jews, Muslims and Christians. Israel is a melting pot of faiths and cultures. Israel is also home to some of the world's most famous holy sites, like the Dome of the Rock and the Wailing Wall. To respect religious and cultural standards, familiarize yourself with local dress codes before traveling.

Parts of Israel are very conservative. A liberal, carefree attitude prevails in much of the country's big cities, like Tel Aviv. In these areas, casual western clothes, like jeans and T-shirts are usually fine. Most Israelis dress casually, even at work, with men often forgoing ties. Casual wear (T-Shirts & Shorts) is allowed when visiting archeological sites (to include Masada). For the beaches and Dead Sea, it is fine to wear a bathing suit while swimming or relaxing.

Synagogues & Holy Days/ Sites = It is recommended to pack modest/conservative clothing and shoes for the Shabbat (Sabbath), Holy Sites and Jewish holy days (i.e. our evening events at the Wailing Wall and Lag-B-Omer). Locals dress nicer for the Shabbat, particularly if they plan on attending synagogue services or a Shabbat dinner. Women should wear long skirts or dresses that cover the knees and men should also wear full-length trousers. Revealing shirts, like tank tops or low cut blouses, should be avoided in favor of loose clothing that does not cling or reveal excess skin.

Head Coverings = At some holy sites in Israel, women, be they Muslim, Jewish or Christian, are required to cover their heads. Travel prepared by packing a light scarf that can be used as a head covering or shoulder drape when visiting temples, mosques and other religious places. At Jewish sites, men may also need to cover their heads, typically accomplished by wearing a kippah (key-pah), a small, brimless cap that rests on the top of the skull.

Other Considerations = Political tensions in Israel are rarely far below the surface. So it is wise to dress in a way that doesn't make you stand out. Avoid wearing American sports jerseys and hats, or items carrying symbols like the stars and stripes.