

SIDEWALK CITIZEN AND THE COOKBOOK CO. COOKS PRESENT...

# A culinary escape to Israel

JERUSALEM, ACRE, HAIFA, TEL AVIV



## For years, we have been inspired by the food of the Mediterranean.

And then Yotam Ottolenghi's cookbooks came along and we have been nothing but obsessed. Cooking our way through his Israeli-inspired recipes, reading about the food-centred culture – we love it. Our pantries are well-stocked with za'atar and preserved lemons, pomegranate molasses, yogurt, pistachios and ras el hanout – various shared platters of fresh, full-flavoured dishes grace our tables. The food is nothing short of a revelation. When Sidewalk Citizen Bakery opened in 2011, offering food from Aviv and Michal's homeland, we were excited. They commented that if we liked the food so much, we should do a culinary tour to the heartland of that style of cooking, and we couldn't have agreed more!

Aviv and Michal were born and grew up in Israel, and moved to Calgary in 2000, so who better to guide us on this trip. They have put together an amazing, enthusiastic, food-focused week in four cities of Israel. Join us!

Gail Norton

**Aviv Fried, Michal Lavi and Sidewalk Citizen have become a beloved institution in Calgary, not only amongst bread-lovers but, food-lovers of all kinds and for their contribution to the cultural community!**

**Aviv Fried** holds a Physics Honours degree and a Masters in Bio-Medical Engineering, but lucky for us, he decided to pursue his passion for artisanal bread baking, specifically sourdoughs. Self-taught at the start, he later trained at King Arthur's Flour in Vermont with Jeffery Hamelman and in Paris with famed sourdough baker, Jean-Luc Poujauran. In 2010 Aviv went on a learning expedition, baking sourdough bread in a small bakery run by Tengboche monastery, the highest Tibetan monastery in Nepal and in the Everest Basecamp. He since staged at Ottolenghi in London and with Chad Robertson at Tartine Bakery in San Francisco. In 2011 Aviv was chosen as one of "Calgary's Top 40 under 40".

The Sidewalk Citizen bakeries feature delicious food that blend tradition with innovation. Aviv and Michal were inspired by activist writer Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, and her idea of walkable cities and community engagement making a healthier community, so they named their business Sidewalk Citizen. They began in 2010 delivering Aviv's bread on a bicycle, then at farmers' markets, donating proceeds to charity. The demand outgrew his bike basket and they opened their first brick and mortar bakery in 2011, and Sidewalk Citizen has since grown to two retail locations.

After working several years as a geologist, **Michal Lavi** quit her job to pursue her passion of opening the bakery and making films. In January 2016, Michal started Tzavta, a beloved monthly cultural dinner salon. Now in its fourth year, the salon has hosted local and international luminaries like Pulitzer prize winner and physicist Michael Landry, (whose group was awarded the 2017 Nobel prize for physics) among others. Michal is an award-winning independent filmmaker. She's written and directed six short films that have screened in over 40 international and national film festivals. Michal is currently working on her first feature film.

**Gail Norton**, co-owner of The Cookbook Co. Cooks, has been part of Calgary's food scene since 1984. A hub for all things culinary, The Cookbook Co. Cooks is a retail store, a cooking school, and a catering company. What better way to explore a culture than through its food, so adding in culinary tours was a natural fit. Since 2003 Gail has lead food and wine tours to Spain, Turkey and California, along with yearly escapes to France and Italy.





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APRIL 19-26, 2020

### OUR ITINERARY FOR THE WEEK...

**SUNDAY, APRIL 19th:** Rendezvous at the Ben-Gurion Airport and together we will go to our hotel, located on one of the most lovely streets in **Jerusalem**. To take the travel kinks out, Aviv will take us on a short, fascinating walking tour of old Jerusalem, enjoying our first of many historic views while soaking in the late afternoon bustle of Alrov Mamilla Avenue. We will enjoy dinner together and give a toast to the week ahead.

**MONDAY, APRIL 20th:** With our local tour guide, we start as all days should – walking and along the way, tasting. We will be guided through the old city with its deep, layered history that inhabits every stone, every wall, every breath. In the afternoon, we visit Jerusalem's most famous market, *Mahane Yehuda*, tour the shops and have dinner in the heart of the action.

**TUESDAY, APRIL 21st:** In the morning we will visit *Yad Vashem*, then to the desert to the *Masada National Park*, a Unesco World heritage site. Nothing can prepare you for the sheer majestic beauty of this site, climbing to a massive plateau overlooking the *Dead Sea*. From there we travel to **Acre**, a beautiful seaside village, where we will spend the night.

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22nd:** The day starts with exploring the unique and unforgettable Acre. With our knowledgeable, local guide we hit the sidewalks and explore the lesser-known routes and neighbourhoods, enjoying their unbeatable hospitality and passion for preparing their food. The food of Acre is nothing short of spectacular. In the late afternoon we will experience a winery tour.

**THURSDAY, APRIL 23rd:** We travel to **Haifa** in the morning and visit *Wadi Nisnas*, an Arabic neighbourhood and taste our way through the sites and delights of the neighbourhood with our local guide.

That night we travel to **Tel Aviv** which offers a different view of Israel – bustling, modern and sleek.

**FRIDAY, APRIL 24th:** This morning we will be welcomed into the stunning home of the renowned restaurateur, Avner Laskin, for a cooking class. In his garden, Avnar fires up his outdoor oven to prepare a delicious lunch highlighting his favourite local foods. Truly a feast for the senses.

We return to Tel Aviv and have an afternoon at their stunningly beautiful beach – park yourself on the sand, stroll or hire a scooter to explore the expansive shore. We will dine in one of Tel Aviv's most sought-after restaurants.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 25th:** We will spend the morning at the Tel Aviv Museum of Modern Art or you can beach it. The highlight of the trip last year was our lunch at Manta Ray. It is difficult to say which is better – the food or the setting? We look out at the beautiful Tel Aviv oceanfront while enjoying a leisurely meal – each dish more delicious than the last.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 26th:** Transport to Ben-Gurion Airport.



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### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS...

#### Where do I plan my arrival to?

We pick you up at the Ben-Gurion Airport. It is about an hour-long drive to our hotel in Jerusalem. The drop-offs will be around noon on the last day of the trip.

#### Where are our home bases?

Jerusalem, Acre, and Tel Aviv – each city offers a different and diverse view of Israeli culture. The landscape is breathtaking. The food, spectacular.

#### What does the trip include?

Transportation to and from the airport. Transportation during the week, accommodation, tours and excursions, and most meals. Some meals include complimentary drinks.

#### Does the trip include gratuity?

The cost of the trip does not include gratuity. If your experience has been positive, we would suggest a tip of 8-10% for your guides.

#### What is the weather like?

Usually, late April and early May is the beginning of the summer. In Haifa and Tel Aviv it will be 26°C during the day and 18°C at night with high humidity. Jerusalem is at higher altitude (similar to Calgary) so it is usually cooler and drier. Bring a light, long sleeve shirt. Very unlikely that we will have any rain.

#### What about money?

You can use credit cards everywhere and also get cash from ATMs with Canadian debit cards.

#### What is the booking procedure?

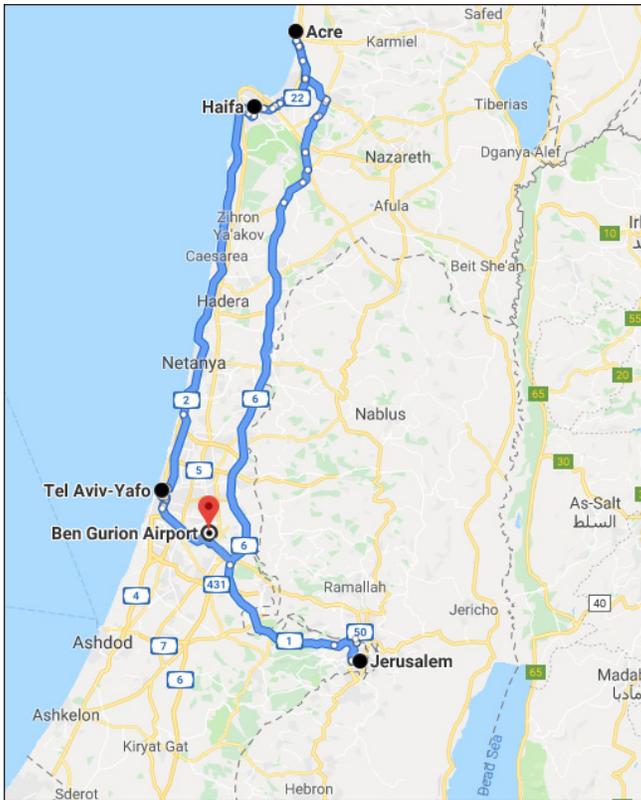
The cost of the trip is \$4000, excluding airfare / \$750 single supplement. We need a deposit of \$1000 to secure your registration. Once the trip is full, the balance is required. The deposit shows that you are committed to the trip and once the remainder is paid, the cancellation policy is in effect. You will be required to sign a standard release form.

#### What is the cancellation policy?

120 days before, 50% refund. No refunds within 120 days before the departure date. You are encouraged to buy trip insurance for those unaccountable life circumstances that do not allow you to follow through with your plans. We will confirm that the trip is a go as soon as our minimum number of registrants have booked.

#### Is it safe?

We won't be going to any places that are dangerous. Everywhere we travel, you will see people carrying out normal lives. You will not feel unsafe, however you will see a large military presence at all times.



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