

# Ayelet Tours, Ltd.

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**Rabbi Stephanie Bernstein  
Temple Rodef Shalom  
Jewish Heritage Tour of the Baltics  
October 22 – November 4, 2015**



**Day 1, Thursday, October 22, 2015:**  
We depart from the United States on our overnight flight to Riga.

**Day 2, Friday, October 23, 2015:** Upon arrival we meet our local representative and transfer to our hotel. We then enjoy a panoramic tour of the city including the Old Town, the Castle of Riga, the Dome Cathedral, Swedish Gate, and St. Peter's Church. Tonight we enjoy Shabbat dinner together. Overnight Riga, Latvia.

**Day 3, Saturday, October 24, 2015:** Breakfast. Shabbat services at the Peitav Synagogue, built in 1905 and Riga's sole surviving synagogue. Lunch on own. This afternoon we see the Freedom Monument honoring soldiers killed during the 1918 - 1920 Latvian War of Independence and Riga's Art Nouveau district. Return to our hotel. Evening is at leisure. Overnight Riga, Latvia.

**Day 4, Sunday, October 25, 2015:** Breakfast. Enjoy a walking tour of Riga's Old Jewish Quarter. We visit the Memorial of the Burnt Synagogue destroyed by the Nazis in 1941. Visit the Jewish community museum "Jews in Latvia", the Jewish cemetery, and the Jewish memorials in Rumbula and Bikerkieki. We continue to Salaspils to visit the memorial site of the concentration camp. Return to Riga where the Jewish presence dates back to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Overnight Riga, Latvia.

**Day 5, Monday, October 26, 2015:** Breakfast. We depart for Kaunas, Lithuania's second largest city and at one time its temporary capital. Upon arrival, we tour the small Jewish suburb and ghetto in Slobodka. Dinner together this evening with a member of the Kaunas Jewish community. Overnight Kaunas, Lithuania.

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**Day 6, Tuesday, October 27, 2015:** Breakfast. This morning we continue to Zamenhoff and Mapu Streets. Drive by the home of Leah Goldberg, one of Israel's well known pre-state authors. Visit the Ohel Yakov Synagogue and Jewish Cemetery before visiting the Children's Memorial and the Holocaust Museum. Enjoy lunch on own followed by a visit to the Chiune Sugihara Memorial dedicated to a Japanese diplomat who saved thousands of Jews during WWII by issuing illegal visas. Return to the hotel. Dinner on own. Overnight Kaunas, Lithuania.

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**Day 7, Wednesday, October 28, 2015:** Breakfast. We depart Kaunas this morning on our way to Vilnius. Along the way we stop in Zvezdariai to hear the story of a unique Jewish community, and visit the surviving wooden synagogue. Upon arrival in Vilnius we take a tour of the city, including the Gediminas Castle, where we enjoy panoramic views of major landmarks including the Cathedral and the Presidential Palace. Overnight Vilnius, Lithuania.

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**Day 8, Thursday, October 29, 2015:** Breakfast. We enjoy a Jewish Heritage tour of Vilnius, beginning with a walking tour of the medieval Jewish Quarter. As we walk along the lanes and courtyards, we stop to learn about the Great Vilna Synagogue and the Gaon of Vilna. Visit the small and large ghettos where more than 40,000 Jews lived and the Jewish Museum. We meet with a member of the Vilnius Jewish community. In the afternoon we visit the Jewish Cemetery of Vilnius to learn more about the many important Jews buried here. We also view the "Cheap Houses" built by Baron Hirsch as affordable housing for Jews in the area. Overnight Vilnius, Lithuania.

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**Day 9, Friday, October 30, 2015:** Breakfast. We depart Vilnius on our way to Minsk. If time allows, we will travel a short distance to the Khatyn complex, a memorial to victims of World War II. This afternoon we enjoy a city tour of Minsk, including Independence Square with the Government Building and Victory Square's Eternal Flame, commemorating the heroes of World War II, the "Yama" Monument and Pravednikov Lane. Meet with the Minsk Jewish community for Shabbat services and dinner. Overnight Minsk, Bela Russia.

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**Day 10, Saturday, October 31, 2015:** Breakfast. We enjoy the day at leisure in Minsk. Overnight Minsk, Bela Russia.

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**Day 11, Sunday, November 1, 2015:** Breakfast. We travel to Vitebsk to tour the Chagall House Museum to view the works and home of the famous artist. We continue with a visit to the Art Center of Mark Chagall established in 1992, it constantly exhibits graphic works by Marc Chagall (lithographs, wood cuts, etchings, and aquatints). The art center's collection consists of the series of illustrations to Nikolay Gogol's poem "Dead Souls" (1923-1925), the series of color lithographs from the Bible series, made in 1956 and 1960, the cycle of color lithographs "The 12 Tribes of Israel" (1960) and other works by Marc Chagall. We then return to Minsk and visit the surviving synagogue. Overnight Minsk, Bela Russia.



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**Day 12, Monday, November 2, 2015:** Breakfast. We depart for a day excursion to Mir. Here we visit the Yeshiva that existed between 1617 – 1939, the Holocaust Memorial, and the 16<sup>th</sup> century castle where the Jewish ghetto was located. At the castle, there is a special exposition dedicated to the Jewish Ghetto here. Continue to Slonim to view the 17<sup>th</sup> century synagogue, the Jewish housing and cemetery. Return to Minsk for dinner (on own). Overnight Minsk, Bela Russia.

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**Day 13, Tuesday, November 3, 2015:** Breakfast. We enjoy a full day tour of Pinsk, including the sites where Chaim Weitzman and Golda Meir used to work and study. We Visit the synagogue and meet with members of Pinsk’s Jewish community this afternoon. Return to Minsk for a farewell dinner together. Overnight Minsk, Bela Russia.

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**Day 14, Wednesday, November 4, 2015:** Breakfast. Morning at leisure for last minute shopping. We transfer to the airport at 3:00PM for our flight home.

## **The Memories Last Forever!**

*\*Itinerary subject to change*

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