

Interfaith Peace-Builders

Delegation-Based Education and Advocacy

Welcome Packet

*Tips on Packing, Health, and Culture
to Help Prepare You for the Delegation*



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Section 1: What to Expect as the Delegation Departure Date Approaches

We'll be in touch much more in the future and we just wanted to give you some idea of some of the major things to expect in the future.

- **Deposit** – If you haven't already sent us your delegation deposit, please do this immediately. We need this non-refundable deposit to save your place on the delegation.
- **Airline Logistics** – We'll be working on getting the best group rates for our international travel to Israel/Palestine and will let you know as soon as possible what the price is and specifics are. Please don't book your domestic transportation to DC until we tell you our international flight specifics. We also need a few things from you:
 - **Meals** – please let us know immediately if you would like vegetarian, kosher, or halal meals (or if you have other dietary requirements).
 - **Different Return Dates** – we can sometimes, but not always, arrange for different return dates from the Middle East for those who would like to stay after a delegation. This is based on availability and there is often a charge (usually \$100 - \$200) to do this. Let us know soon if you'd like to do this as soon as possible and we'll try to arrange it for you.
 - **Photocopies of Your Passport** – we like to have copies of your passport in the (unlikely) event that you lose it on the trip. Please send copies or electronic scans to the IFPB office.
- **Email Updates** – We'll send a number (usually 2-4) important updates by email in the months leading up to the delegation. Please read these emails carefully and let us know if you have questions. If you are not reachable by email let us know ASAP.
- **Media & Follow-up Preparation** – Jacob Pace, IFPB's Advocacy Coordinator, will send information via email to begin preparing for media and other follow-up work. It's good to get started on this even before you leave! Look to hear more soon.
- **Last Details** – Finally we'll send orientation location information, emergency contact info and other last minute reminders in a series of emails in the weeks immediately preceding the delegation.

Section 2: What to Pack

THE BASICS

The most important rule of packing for this trip is to **pack light**. As a rule of thumb, lay out everything you want to bring. Then eliminate half of it.

Your ability to travel lightly and quickly is important. Bring no more luggage than you can carry comfortably for a distance. Ideally you should have one small to medium sized suitcase or backpack and a second piece of luggage that you can carry easily with one hand.

1. *Papers, Identification, etc.*

Your most important document throughout the trip is your passport. **Keep it *with you and in a safe place at all times!*** We recommend wearing your passport in a small pouch under your clothing. The loss of a passport can be difficult to deal with and will seriously interrupt several days of your trip. Hence, be extra cautious since the loss of an American passport will result in a serious problem.

Make sure that your passport is good for at least 6 months after your arrival in Israel. If your passport expires less than 6 months after your arrival, Israel will not let you enter the country.

Please also **make two copies of your passport**: one to bring with you on the trip and one to give to Interfaith Peace-Builders. *Please send IFPB your passport photocopy as soon as you get one (email or snail mail is fine).*

Tip #1 Weather

Spring (March & April) in Israel/Palestine is the end of the rainy season. Daytime temperatures can range from moderate (70-80 degrees) to cool and rainy (50 – 60 degrees). At nighttime, lows will generally be between 40 and 50. Sunny days will feel warm and wonderful. Cloudy/rainy days will be chill and damp. So be prepared for a range of temperatures and conditions. Bring a rain jacket and clothes that can be layered for warmth.

Early Summer (May and June) in Israel/Palestine will be hot and sunny. On the coastal plain (Tel Aviv and Haifa) temperatures will range from 80-low 90s. In the West Bank, elevation means that days will be a bit 'cooler:' from high 70s to high 80s. Even on the hottest summer days however, it can cool down and become chilly in the evenings. Rain is rare during this time of year, but not entirely **unheard of in May**.

Late Summer (July & August) in Israel/Palestine will be hot and sunny. Expect days in Israel to range from mid 80s upto 100. The West Bank will be slightly cooler; usually in the 80s or mid 90s. Even on the hottest summer days however, it can cool down and become chilly in the evenings. Rain is almost unheard of at this time of year.

Fall (October & November) weather in Israel/Palestine should be rather mild and comfortable (averages in 70s). Evenings will be cool (mid 40s to low 60s). Bring layers. Late October and November are also the start of the rainy season – so make sure to have rain gear for occasional passing showers.

General note: you can learn a lot more about expected weather on the web. Google "Israel weather by month" and you'll find a variety of resources. Also for our non-US-based friends, all the above temperatures are in Fahrenheit. You can find conversions here: <http://www.digitaldutch.com/unitconverter/> among other places.

Also, plan to bring a 2nd **government issued Picture ID** in case your passport is lost or stolen. A driver's license or state ID would be sufficient.

2. **Money and Currency**

The currency used in Israel and the West Bank is the *Shekel* (or *New Israeli Shekel – NIS*). The exchange rate usually hovers around 1 USD = ~ 3.5 NIS. To get the latest rate, check a local paper or the web here: <http://www.xe.com/ucc/>.

Foreign currency can be exchanged at hotels, banks, airport, and through authorized exchange bureaus upon your arrival. US dollars are also often accepted at tourist stores. It is always a good idea to have some five and ten dollar bills available for tips and dollar purchases.

You will need money for lunches, drinks with meals, gifts and other purchases, and any additional tips you wish to give. All other expenses, (lodging, in-country travel, all meals except lunch, basic tips and gratuities), are covered by IFPB. **Budget \$10-20 per day for lunch and drinks.** Use your own judgment for what you'll need for gifts and extras. While we give a group tip to our guide and driver at the end of the journey, we encourage additional tips if you are pleased with their work.



A 100 NIS bill (left) and 20 NIS bill (right)

How much extra spending money should I bring?

Almost all expenses are covered by the delegation fee. **We recommend that you bring an additional absolute minimum of \$250 to cover necessary expenses (lunches and drinks) and provide a small contingency fund for unexpected expenses.** Many participants want to bring even more to cover items such as laundry, gifts, contributions, and tips. Here is a bit of information about all of these:

- **Lunches & drinks.** Lunches vary in cost from \$3 for a falafel to \$15 for a restaurant meal. All drinks, including bottled water, are an additional charge at most hotels and restaurants. We would suggest that you budget about \$150-200 for lunches and water for the two weeks.
- **Laundry.** You will have opportunity to do laundry at our Jerusalem accommodations for about \$5 per load for wash and \$5 per load for drying.
- **Gifts.** If you plan to buy souvenirs and gifts please budget accordingly. The cost of gifts can range from \$5 for simple jewelry and pottery to as much as you wish to spend.

- **Contributions.** Interfaith Peace-Builders makes a donation to many of the organizations that we meet with. Some delegates like to add their own contribution to ours, so we give you the opportunity to add your anonymous contribution to IFPB's. *Any contributions are completely voluntary.*
- **Tips.** Interfaith Peace-Builders gives a standard tip to the guide, driver, and hotel staff. The guide and driver give us excellent, professional service on the trip. Many delegates want to show their appreciation for their work and to the hotel staff with an additional tip.

How should I bring this money?

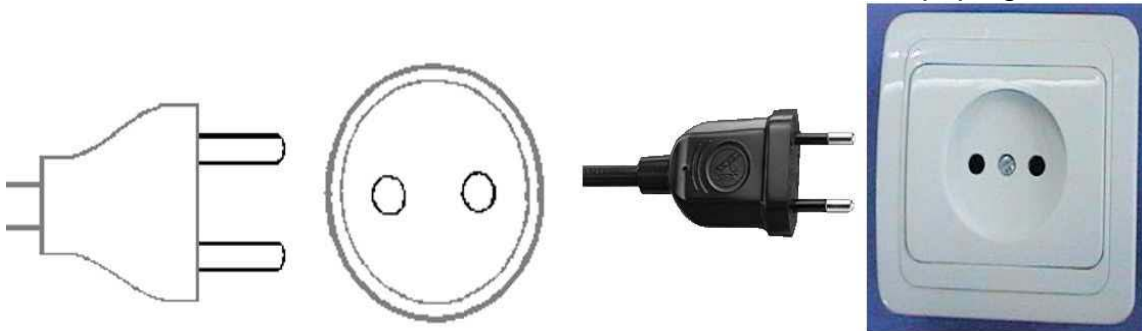
Cash, ATM, or a credit card usually works best. There will be ATM machines near our Jerusalem accommodations. Cashing traveler's checks may be difficult. It's a good idea to bring at least \$25 in small bills (\$5s and \$10s) for unexpected small expenses at airports and during travel.

How will we exchange money?

Throughout Israel/Palestine the most common currency used is the Israeli Shekel. For your time in Israel/Palestine, you will be responsible for exchanging your own money. If you bring cash, it is easy to change your dollars to shekels in Jerusalem. To save hassle and time, leaders will encourage you to exchange most of the money you anticipate needing at the beginning of your time there.

3. Electronics

All electrical outlets in Israel/Palestine are 220 volts. The outlets accept plugs of this type:



This is the type of plug used in all countries of Europe except the UK, Ireland, Cyprus and Malta.

This two-wire plug is ungrounded and has two round prongs. It will mate with any socket that accepts 4.0-4.8 mm round contacts on 19 mm centres. It is commonly used in all countries of Europe except the UK and Ireland. For more information, see: www.worldstandards.eu/electricity.htm#plugs.

4. Clothing

There are some basic principles in order to pack well for Israel and Palestine –comfort and modesty. Here are a few more tips...and make sure to check the general note at the end of the checklist as well...

- ✓ Bring clothes that you can wash-and-wear; underwear and socks that can be handwashed.
- ✓ Comfortable shoes. You will be walking over rugged, rocky ground at times. Flat heels and durable construction are important.
- ✓ Do NOT wear shorts. This applies to both men and women. See sidebar (to right) for other modesty suggestions... → → → →
- ✓ Sandals or slippers to wear when walking to the lavatory, toilet, etc. which may have dusty or wet floors.
- ✓ Sleeping clothes. Long-legged pajamas or sweat suit for men (no "long johns" unless they are sewn to look like outer-wear). Long, modest gown, long-legged pajamas, or dress for women.
- ✓ Layered clothing to adjust to different conditions such as long sleeve shirts, and light jackets or sweatshirts. Even on warm summer days it can cool down significantly in the evenings.
- ✓ Don't bring anything that you would be upset about if it got lost, stolen, confiscated, dirty, broken, etc.
- ✓ Light scarf for women to cover hair when visiting a mosque or synagogue.
- ✓ One pair of nicer clothes for possible religious services and/or other nicer events. What we mean: At least a pair of Khakis (or a skirt) and something nicer than a t-shirt are all that this entails. And really, you only *need* one outfit like this.

Tip #2 Modesty

The definition of modesty varies from one culture to the other. In Palestine men and women tend to dress more modestly than men and women in America and as visitors we should try to err on the side of modesty.

Therefore, both men and women should not wear shorts on the delegation. Men should always cover their chests and stomachs. T-shirts are fine, but tank tops are out of the question.

For women slacks or dresses that cover the ankles are fine. T-shirts or blouses are good, but should not show your collar or shoulders. No tank-tops. Short sleeves are fine in many areas but there will be times when they are not appropriate. Women should also refrain from wearing tight-fitting clothes and should bring loose clothing. Best advice is to be prepared to layer with a light sweater or shawl from time to time when more modesty is wise.

Follow the lead of your leaders & guide!

****General note about appropriate clothes for the delegation:** This is an area that most delegations have questions about. It's always a challenge to describe this subjective issue, but here's a bit more info here. For 95% of the delegation, you will be more than comfortable **and** respectful of local culture in jeans or khaki pants (for a bit 'nicer' look) or long skirts and a t-shirt, sweater, or long-sleeve blouse.

If this doesn't quite answer your questions and you'd like some visual representations of what people wear on delegations, check out pictures from past delegations here: <http://www.ifpb.org/multimedia/photo/default.html>

5. **Toiletries**

It is best to buy all toiletries in North America. Most are available in Israel and Palestine, but they may be more expensive and it may be difficult to find the time to buy them.

- ✓ Sunscreen, sunglasses, and a *hat*. The sun is very strong, even in winter.
- ✓ Insect repellent.
- ✓ Pepto-Bismol tablets, acidophilus pills, or garlic tablets (for stomach and digestive problems). Your leader will also be carrying a small first aid kit.
- ✓ Small flashlight—electrical outages are possible in the West Bank.
- ✓ Any medicines that you need. (Most will be available over there, but usually at greater cost).
- ✓ A small towel for personal use.
- ✓ A travel alarm or wristwatch with good alarm.
- ✓ Packet of facial tissues or toilet paper. (While most toilets in homes and offices will have a roll of paper, some may not—a packet of tissues can double as toilet paper in these rare cases.)
- ✓ If you plan to bring any electrical items such as electric shavers or hair dryers, you'll need to bring an adapter for 220 V.

6. **Carry-on Bag**

You need to have a small hand-carry or day pack for several reasons:

- Homestays. The delegation will have some (2 – 3 nights) overnight stays in Palestinian and Israeli homes for which the small hand-carry or day pack is preferable. This bag should hold up to 3 days worth of your belongings.
- Security. Suitcases are very conspicuous. Day packs will attract less attention from both soldiers and local Palestinians.
- Convenience. People may need to walk a considerable distance from the bus or taxi to the house.
- Sensitivity. A suitcase with lots of clothes might seem ostentatious and make you seem insensitive to Palestinians' situation.
- Vital Needs. In case your luggage does not make it on the same flight, which occasionally happens, your carry-on bag should be packed to get you through one to two days until it arrives. Additionally you should carry:
 - ✓ Passport (kept on your person)
 - ✓ Toothbrush
 - ✓ Kleenex
 - ✓ Government Issued ID (in addition to your passport)
 - ✓ Change of clothes and underwear
 - ✓ Money
 - ✓ Medications and a photocopy of your prescriptions
 - ✓ Any essential toiletries
 - ✓ Writing materials
 - ✓ The names and phone numbers of your key contacts

Tip #3
Make sure to check the Transportation Security Administration website (www.tsa.gov) for the latest carry-on regulations.

7. Gifts for Homestays

For 2-3 nights on the delegation you'll be staying with local families in their homes.

When you stay in family homes the people appreciate *small* gifts that symbolize friendship and/or respect. Some examples of appropriate gifts are the following:

For children: slinkys, playdough, yo-yos, etc.

For adults: picture calendars that show nature or historic places in US, something unique to your local city/village/state/province, refrigerator magnets, other small mementos, etc.

It's not a gift, but people will also like to see photos of your family that you carry in your wallet.

Do not bring anything too extravagant, expensive, or patriotic. It may cause misunderstanding.

Because several delegation participants will normally stay together with a homestay family, there will be several people on the delegation with potential gifts for each family. Usually, people can pool a few small gifts and use what they have. Therefore, you do not need to get many gifts; as many as 2 or 3 simple, fairly inexpensive things will more than suffice.

8. What NOT to pack!

Please do NOT to bring IFPB materials like this Welcome Packet or the Reading Packet with you on the trip. Also, please do not bring print-outs of things that IFPB has emailed you prior to the trip, especially any information about travel schedule or others traveling with the group. Additionally, we strongly recommend that you not bring books highly critical of Israel with you.

Both of these requests are intended to minimize any potential questioning at Israeli border control. This is an issue for both you as an individual—and for the group as a whole. Please don't jeopardize your entry or that of the group by packing materials like this!

Novels and mainstream books on the Middle East are fine to bring.

9. Internet and Phone Access

Many of the hotels we stay in will have somewhat reliable wireless internet at least in the common areas. While it is becoming more common to have access to wireless at the hotel, you should be prepared for slower connection speeds, more trouble connecting, and more network downtime than many of us in North America are currently used to. Many

people find it useful to bring laptop computers, not only for connecting to the internet but also for writing trip reports.

In Jerusalem there are also two internet cafes only a 5-10 minute walk from our accommodations, in case the hotel's internet is down. You will have the opportunity to use them some evenings. The cost is approximately \$2-3 per hour.

You can make phone calls to North America from our hotel in Jerusalem. You will be billed directly by the hotel for calls made here and will need to pay for the charges you incur at the front desk. Please check with the hotel to see the rate they will charge. Also, if you have international calling cards, they may work from the hotel or public phones.

Skype is also a great option for making international phone calls when and if there is wireless service. This can either be used from computer to computer or from a computer to a phone. Look up Skype to see how to make international calls through your computer.

10. *Travel Insurance*

Interfaith Peace-Builders does not provide travel insurance of any type for this trip. If you feel that you desire extra travel insurance, you will be responsible for getting this yourself. Generally, people ask about two types of coverage: Emergency medical coverage and airline flight insurance (to cover late cancellations). There are a variety of options for travel insurance. You may want to check out Travelocity, Orbitz, AAA and CAA, AARP. There is also a website that allows you to compare a variety of plans: <http://www.insuremytrip.com>

11. *The Itinerary Question*

We're excited you're joining a delegation, you're excited to be making this trip—so how about the full itinerary? This is a common question; here's what we can tell you about how we make the itinerary and how we'll let you know about the progress of our scheduled meetings.

IFPB policy is not to release the full itinerary before orientation. There are several reasons for this.

We're still finalizing meetings up to the time you leave and in fact, some meetings are best scheduled on relatively short notice; in Israeli and Palestinian culture it doesn't always work very well to plan a meeting and confirm it months in advance. Additionally, the itinerary includes a lot of detail that can be best discussed in person with the leaders and staff at orientation. Finally, we'd like to make sure that only the delegates and leaders have access to our plans before you arrive in Israel. In the past, IFPB and some other organizations have had misunderstandings when itineraries get circulated to others ahead of time.

So, we won't see a full itinerary until orientation weekend in DC. What we will send you about a month before the delegation is a basic itinerary which will give you some idea of where we plan to travel. As always, this and all drafts of the itinerary are subject to change. And to learn more about many organizations that we often meet, you can go here: <http://www.ifpb.org/delegations/whowemeet.html>

We'll talk much more about this at orientation and will give you a full version of the tentative itinerary then. You will have plenty of time to ask questions. Thanks for your patience and understanding.

Section 3: Health Tips

THE BASICS

This handout will review health precautions and treatment for medical emergencies. Health and sanitation is unlikely to be a significant problem on the trip if everyone exercises reasonable caution and common sense. But a lack of caution can seriously affect the trip for everyone, so taking care of yourself is a part of acting responsibly to the group.

The tips included here are offered as advice only. If you have any concern about their accuracy or advisability or you have any medical condition that requires monitoring or medication, consult your physician. *Please let us know if you have special medical needs or concerns about the delegation.*

Tip #1

Hospitality in Palestine means frequent offerings of coffee, tea, and soft drinks, and large portions of food. Accepting what is offered is the polite response. It is best to take coffee and tea and drink a little rather than refuse it outright. You do not have to finish the drink and you are free to decline after the first cup or glass--and declining shows appropriate restraint in a time of austerity.

Sharing is important with food as well. If you are a vegetarian, it is courteous to take a small amount of a meat dish and leave it on your plate, or to explain that you don't eat meat for health reasons. Austerity has made it easier to eat vegetarian. Many more meals, even those offered guests, consist of cheaper vegetable and dairy products.

Meals may be offered in a common bowl with no utensils. You are expected to use bread as your utensil. Even if you find it difficult, it is a sign of your sharing in Palestinian culture (and can be a source of considerable amusement). Try to eat with your right hand, since the left hand is "unclean."

1. Shots.

No vaccinations are required to enter Israel, the West Bank, or Jordan. Hepatitis is rare, but not unknown, since sanitary conditions for food preparation are not always the best. If you are concerned, you might want to ask your doctor if you should have a gamma globulin shot before you go.

As a general precaution before traveling anywhere, it's a good idea to make sure you're up to date on all of the routine vaccines (i.e., ones that are recommended even if you do not travel) that the CDC recommends.

You can learn more about recommended vaccines and immunizations here:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/adult.html>

You can also read the CDC's recommendations for travel to Israel here:

<http://wwwn.cdc.gov/travel/destinationIsrael.aspx>

IFPB does not require any specific vaccinations to travel, but we do encourage you to check with a local doctor who knows you and your health best. Different delegates will have different needs and different comfort levels.

2. Staying Healthy

Taking care of yourself is probably the best protection against getting sick.

Part of this is **getting enough rest**. We hope that you get a reasonable amount of sleep before your trip so you do not get a tired start. The most common afflictions for visitors are mild diarrhea and sunstroke. Also, make sure you bring sunscreen to protect yourself, and drink lots of non-alcoholic beverages during the trip, (especially water). If you have any questions or concerns about your health, please contact your doctor.

3. Special Medical Problems.

If you have any special medical problems or a condition that requires medication, you need to inform IFPB and the trip leaders. It is dangerous for you not to let us know and can adversely affect the other members of the delegation.

4. Effect of Travel and Climate.

The travel and the climate combine to deliver a jolt to your system. Your body will have to adapt to a seven to ten hour time change, depending on your location in North America. Jerusalem and the West Bank average 2,000-3,000 feet in altitude. If your trip is in summer, temperatures can be in the high 90's. These conditions create a strong jet lag effect. You may tire easily, have a foggy brain, feel grumpy and out of sorts, and have mild diarrhea as your system tries to adjust.

While the leaders try to take account of this at the beginning of the trip, time is short and there is much to do. You can make your adjustment as easy as possible by trying to get enough rest, not over-extending yourself, and being aware that you and others may not be feeling or functioning at their best.

5. Fatigue.

You will inevitably feel tired, even exhausted, during the trip. The combination of jet-lag and a very full schedule are contributing factors, and stress and tension due to the emotional and political overload add to it. We don't want people to become sick from over-exhaustion, but we also want to encourage you to attend all meetings. If everyone skips meetings when they feel tired, they will be poorly attended and affect the quality of the trip. Please consult with the leaders before you skip meetings for health reasons.

Tip #2

You can prevent 90% of sickness by following a few simple dietary rules:

- Tap water is generally clean. Use your own judgment, since dehydration may be a greater danger than diarrhea. Bottled water is available in most locations.
- You might wish to avoid raw vegetables in salads. Most meals will offer you cooked and pickled vegetables as well. They are safer.
- Meat should be well-cooked. Fortunately, that is standard practice.
- Milk and cheese are safe if pasteurized. Since some families get milk from their own goats or sheep and make their own cheese, it may not be.
- Yogurt is abundant, safe, and healthy!
- With fruit it is safest to stick with things that can be peeled rather than cut.
- For moderate to severe diarrhea, see a doctor or health worker. It is not wise (without medical advise) to take Lomotil, Paragoric, Kaopectate or other drugs which will allow bacteria and germs to grow in the intestines.

6. Preventative Measures.

Sanitary conditions vary considerably throughout Israel and Palestine. In Israel, Jordan, and East Jerusalem conditions are generally good. However, in most towns and villages on the West Bank the sewage systems are old and often function poorly. Refugee camps may have very poor sanitary conditions including open sewers, inadequate water supply, no trash pick-up, unpaved roads, and dust covering everything (including you). Meals may not be prepared under the best sanitary conditions, and water used for washing and irrigating may be contaminated. However, if you follow a few precautions it can greatly lessen the chance of illness...

☑ Tip #3

Dehydration is a sudden loss of body fluids from diarrhea and perspiration. It can be very serious. Here are some things to remember:

- *Symptoms:* Extreme weakness and exhaustion without feeling sleepy; some dizziness and nausea; often an unquenchable thirst.
- *Complicating Factors:* For women, menstruation may exacerbate the loss of fluids. Blood pressure medicine, coffee, beer, or other diuretics also contribute to the problem.
- *Treatment:* Bed rest and rehydration is required. Drink water with lemon or orange juice, Gatorade or other clear liquid.
- Since dehydration is a problem endemic to the region, there is easy access to treatment in both Israel and Palestine.
- *Heat prostration:* Severe dehydration and/or serious overexposure to the sun can cause heat prostration. If a person is hot and dizzy but not sweating, it can be an acute medical emergency. Cool them—shade, clothes off, cool water, fanning—and get medical help.

- Drink plenty of water. Bottled water is available in hotels and shops. Tap water is safe in Jordan, Jerusalem, Israel, and usually the West Bank.
- Be sure to wash your hands before every meal. Clean your fingernails regularly.
- It's a good idea to carry a small packet of tissues (that can double as toilet paper on a pinch) in your purse or bag. Bathrooms in offices and homes usually have toilet paper, but not always.
- Colds and flu can be a problem in winter and spring particularly. Bring with you aspirin, cold medicine, or whatever else you normally take. If you begin to feel flush, listen to your body. Consult with the trip leaders if you are feeling ill.
- Non-severe diarrhea: It's common to get non-severe diarrhea when going to Palestine and Israel because of the stress of travel and the change in climate, as well as the change in mineral and bacteria content in the food and water. This is not always preventable, but many people have found that a Pepto-Bismol or yogurt acidophilus tablet before each meal can frequently prevent problems. If you get mild diarrhea, stick to a bland, light diet with lots of clear liquids to replace lost fluid. Rice, bread, yogurt, and crackers are good. Tea is better for you than coffee.

A Note...

In many homes and some offices heavy cigarette smoking remains common. If you have sensitivity to smoke or intolerance for smokers, this will be an issue – but one for which we can usually find solutions. It's becoming less and less common for cigarettes to be smoked during office meetings, but on the street and at private homes it will happen. For those with sensitivity to smoke, it's a good idea to seek out seats near doors or open windows. Rarely, those with sensitivity may need to leave a meeting for a breath of fresh air. Please feel free to do this and to let your delegation leaders know how you're dealing with sometimes smoky environments.

People will offer you a smoke when they take their pack out. If you smoke, offering them a cigarette when you smoke is a good way to return their hospitality. Please be sensitive of other non-smokers on the trip and try to refrain from smoking during meetings even if others Israelis or Palestinians are. (You'll have lots of other opportunities before and after meetings!)

7. Dealing with the Sun.

Because of the latitude, the altitude, and the dryness and clarity of the air, the sun can be powerful and dangerous. You need to treat it with respect and caution, especially if you are not used to a hot, arid climate. Because of the dryness of the climate, you may feel dry and relatively cool even when you are perspiring at a rapid rate. Because of the altitude and latitude, the sun can be strong enough to burn you even in winter when the weather is cool. A few precautions can prevent problems...

- Be sure to use sunscreen, particularly on your face.
- Wear a hat- preferably with a brim- in the summer time to protect against sunstroke.
- Try to drink plenty of liquids in hot weather, even if you don't feel particularly thirsty. If you have diarrhea, drink plenty of liquid to replace your loss.
- When you are on a guided tour, you may not know how long you will be out in the sun. It is safest to use sunscreen and take your hat whenever you go out.

8. Water

The water is potable in Israel and usually safe in Palestinian areas. Many participants prefer purchasing bottled water. We will talk more about water options at orientation.

9. Access to Medical Care.

In Israel and Jerusalem there is ready access to medical care in cities and towns and most standard medicines are available. In the West Bank access to health care—including emergency medical care—may be difficult due to checkpoints and curfews. Both Palestinian and Israeli doctors are well trained and will be able to help you should an emergency occur.

10. Emergency Contact Information

The IFPB staff is available throughout the delegation for emergency and non-emergency calls. In addition, people can call you through the front desk at your hotel (we'll have that

number to you soon). During the trip family members may just need to know how the delegation is doing. They are welcome to call the IFPB office during work hours and our cell phones in the evening and on weekends.

In case of an emergency, the fastest and surest way for a family member to get in touch with you is through the IFPB staff. Because we know where you are at any given time and how to contact you most quickly and efficiently, we ask that you work through the IFPB staff for emergency contact.

Here are the phone numbers you will need:

During the delegation (emergency & non-emergency)

IFPB Office

This is the first number to call. Even during weekends, we will usually forward calls from this number to staff cell phones.

(202) 244-0821 (IFPB office)

(866) 936-1650 (toll free IFPB office number)

office@ifpb.org

IFPB staff

One or more IFPB staff members will also be on call during the delegation. As your delegation date approaches, we will send an email with contact information for this IFPB staff member. You can forward this information to your friends and families.

Section 4: Cultural Tips

THE BASICS

This handout will offer some observations on the cultural norms of Palestinian and Israeli society. The handout focuses on Palestinian society because both the culture and living conditions differ more from North American society than Israel's does. You will be spending only two or three nights with Israeli and Palestinian families, so the suggestions below that apply to interactions with families apply to only a small part of your trip.

Please read over this material carefully; you will have the chance to ask questions and discuss it in orientation.

Be Aware of Your Own Attitudes toward Other Cultures

Despite their best intentions, people traveling to new places often have a tendency to see things through the lens of their own culture. It is important, especially on a trip of this nature, to be sensitive to and respectful of cultural differences. It is easy to offend people inadvertently.

Some North American citizens travel with an unconscious attitude of superiority. This can result in a failure to listen well and with attitudes about having the right answers and an ability to "solve the problems." You will benefit much more from the trip if you are prepared to listen to the problems and solutions presented by Palestinians and Israelis rather than offering your own analysis. Listening carefully and respectfully does not preclude asking critical questions.

Since you will be meeting with both Palestinians and Israelis, you may develop a tendency to identify with one side or the other. This can lead to you unconsciously acting as Palestinian spokesperson to Israelis or vice versa. This is not particularly helpful to Palestinians or Israelis, nor is it the purpose of the trip. In particular, people can develop anger towards Israelis after seeing the conditions on the West Bank. Carrying a Palestinian or Israeli perspective into meetings with people from the other group can diminish your ability to understand the complexities of the situation.

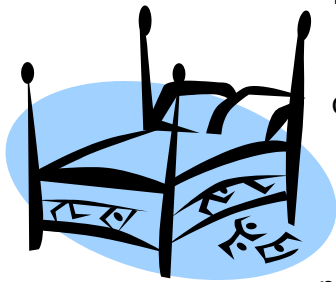
Tip #1

Women's organizations are centrally involved in the struggle for peace in both Palestinian and Israeli society. Many Palestinian women's groups call for full economic and cultural liberation for Palestinian women.

However, if you stay with families in the West Bank, you may encounter traditional families that still practice separation of men and women. We ask that you work within the family norms in these situations, since you are their guests. Challenging the situation can create a chilly atmosphere for you, damage the relationship between our Palestinian partners and the community, and complicate our work. If you feel you might have problems with such a situation, please inform the group leaders so they can plan accordingly.

SOME CULTURAL TIPS AND GUIDELINES

- **Hospitality and Austerity.** Hospitality is a governing principle of Palestinian life. You will be expected to respond graciously to hospitality. The desire to be hospitable is conditioned by the poor economic conditions in most of Palestine. Consequently, restraint is also respected. It is a difficult balance for Palestinians, so don't be surprised if you are confused by the signals you get and the situations you are in. Just use your best judgment.
- **Sleeping.** Our home stays in both Israel and Palestine have a wide variety of accommodations. Sometimes you may have a room to yourself, but it's more common to share a room with another delegate or even family members. Many Palestinian families live and sleep in crowded conditions. You most likely will be sleeping on a mattress on the floor of a living area rather than in a bed and bedroom.



The social customs for sleeping become important in shared quarters. Sleeping clothes must be modest. Long-legged pajamas or sweat suits for men. No long underwear (unless it is without crotch outlines). Long dress, modest nightgown, or long-legged pajamas for

women. Unless married, men and women sleep separately, without exception. If the host family has limited space, even married couples may need to sleep separately.

- **Greetings and goodbyes.** Handshakes are common practice in coming and going. In conservative areas men may not shake hands with women. Just follow the lead of the person you are meeting. If he or she extends a hand, shake it. If not, don't extend yours. Among Palestinians, men embrace and kiss men, and women embrace and kiss women in greeting. If you have struck up a particularly good relation with a host family, it is possible that they will embrace and kiss you when you leave. The embrace and kiss is done on both cheeks. Let your hosts take the initiative and follow their lead.
- **Television.** Some homes have the television turned on for much of the evening, even if guests are present. Depending on the situation, it may be a focus of attention or merely in the background. You may need to adapt to carrying on conversations over the TV and be alert to hints that it is time to stop talking and relax.



☑ Tip #2

Palestinians take promises seriously. Although it is all right in America to say that you will do something in order to be polite, the same cultural context does not apply in Palestine.

Don't say that you will send photographs or write unless you really will do it. Similarly, don't make promises about how active you are going to be when you return to the North America unless you are going to do it and keep them informed about what you are doing.

If Palestinian requests assistance in obtaining a visa to America, it is unhelpful to raise expectations about getting into the U.S. and Canada, or into colleges, or to help with a job, etc. even if you believe you will carry it through.

If you find yourself in such a situation it is better to say, "I wish I could" or "Unfortunately, I don't know if it will be possible."

It is best that you gain what you can from the relationships you make and let them be surprised by what you accomplish.



- **Photography.** While taking photographs is frequently appropriate and desirable, it is a touchy issue for several reasons. For many women and some men being photographed is offensive. Others feel exploited and intruded upon. For people who are politically active, it may be dangerous (and you run the risk of being mistaken for Israeli security). Israeli soldiers have been known to detain, arrest, or shoot at people photographing demonstrations/confrontations with Palestinians.

Photographing Israeli military installations is illegal. Consequently, caution is wise. Ask your leader before you photograph something that you are unsure about.

- **Homosexuality.** Being openly gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered is outside the cultural norms of many segments of Palestinian, and religious Israeli, society. But that does not mean that people on the delegation have to hide their sexual orientation. Most people you meet are aware that U.S. and Canadian culture have different norms and don't expect us to adhere to theirs. We would advise you not to raise questions about sexual orientation yourself before getting to know someone. If the topic arises in conversation, use your best judgment in discussing issues further.
- **Relations with members of different sexes.** Cross-cultural gender relations can be misunderstood. Being alone with a member of the opposite sex, whether you or s/he are married or single, can raise questions. Going out in public alone with a mixed group who are not family members can also sometimes raise questions. Something perhaps common in your culture – like a pat on the shoulder to show empathy or connection – could be inappropriate. Please exercise caution and be sensitive to the cultural differences in gender relations.
- **About Changing Hosts.** Since you will be staying only one night with a family, this situation is very unlikely to arise. But you should be aware that people might invite you to stay with them while you are staying with another family. Except under extraordinary circumstances, you should politely refuse—while appreciating the offers. If you move, you are likely to insult or hurt your hosts. This could complicate future organizational work significantly; a lot of connections and a lot of background work go into finding host families.

☑ **Tip #3**

It's best not to speak Hebrew with Palestinians even if someone uses it with you, especially if it is conversation on the street. They are probably not practicing their language skills. They may assume that you are Israeli or are testing you.

Collaboration is a serious problem in any national struggle, so using Hebrew may cast suspicion on Palestinians who are with you. When children shout "shalom" at you, smile and say "hello" or "marhaba" rather than responding with "shalom."

If you are Jewish and normally wear a kippah, it is preferable to cover it with a cap or scarf in Palestinian areas. Our hosts and guides are glad to meet and work with Jews. But there are many eyes and ears watching in the street who may misinterpret the situation. Strangers passing by may not know that you are friendly, or may mistake you for a settler.

A Note...

While most hotels, restaurants, offices and houses in the area have western-style toilets, some offices and homes have only **squat toilets**. True to its name, a squat toilet is a traditional toilet which has two platforms on which to put your feet while squatting. There is also a small tap and a hose on the wall; use this hose to 'flush' the toilet and clean yourself. Muslims normally wash themselves rather than using toilet paper after using the restroom.

How to use the squat toilet: place your feet on the platforms, squat down and try to adjust yourself over the hole. The most important point to remember is to pull your pants or skirt out of the way, so as not to wet them. Though challenging for most foreigners to use, this style of toilet is actually quite hygienic. If you want even more "how to" advice, check out this link: <http://www.wikihow.com/Use-a-Squat-Toilet>



Eastern Toilet

Bathrooms may or may not have toilet paper; so you may need to provide your own. Look for a basket by the side of the toilet in Palestinian homes and offices. If you find one, put your used toilet paper in it rather than into the toilet. (The sewage systems in most Palestinian towns are in very poor condition.)

- ***On Not Knowing the Language.*** Palestinians make every effort to make sure that capable English translation is available for you. Our guide will be able to translate in meetings. With home stays, despite the best-laid plans, there may be times when adequate translation is not available. At those times you may be able to struggle with a combination of minimum language skills and sign language, to write quietly in your journal, or merely to observe. If someone with minimal English indicates a desire to try to talk with you, you can solidify your place in the community and family by trying your best, exercising great patience, and (if appropriate) laughing at your successes and failures.

Many times pronunciation of Arabic and Hebrew names is difficult for those not familiar with the languages. It can be time-consuming, awkward, and even embarrassing to have several members of a delegation ask a guide, host, speaker or contact to pronounce his/her name repeatedly and to spell it repeatedly. If you ask the trip leader or guide to write down the names in English transliteration before or after the meeting, it saves time and potential annoyance and frustration. Discuss and arrange this before meetings.

Section 5: Observing, Reporting, and Recording

THE BASICS

Recording your observations and experiences is extremely important. These notes and pictures will be the key to digesting your experiences when you return home. They are invaluable in making effective presentations and reports to groups, and in writing articles for newspapers and magazines. Your first-hand observations will enable you to speak more effectively to your friends, religious and community groups, and the press.

It carries great weight to be able to say, "I've seen with my own eyes the effects of the occupation on both Palestinians and Israelis. Here's what's happening...."

SOME BASIC POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

Take lots of notes. As a general rule, it's not good to rely on unaided memory. "If in doubt, write it out." If you find it distracting to take notes during meetings, then plan on writing down notes immediately after the meeting.

- Decide on a **format** for recording your observations: date; time; place; who was there; what you observed; what people said.
- **Be specific**, both in what you ask and what you record. Remember that the most useful information we can bring back is the kind of accurate, precise, specific information that would be acceptable to a journalist or a newspaper editor.

PERSONAL RECORDING EQUIPMENT

Your Personal Journal

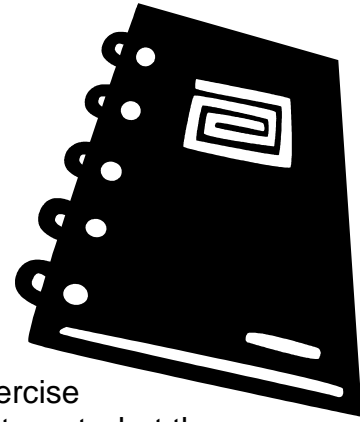
In addition to notes on meetings, it's good to keep a journal about your perceptions and feeling, either in the same notebook or in a separate one.

- Keep it up to date. Write in it every day.
- Decide on a meaningful format. Number each page. Perhaps put your daily journal and observations at the front (being sure to put down dates, facts) and an index at the back.

☑ Tip #1: Suggestions for recording information and asking questions

- Focus on recording stories more than statistics. You can get statistics from articles and the internet (and the statistics that people throw out in meetings are frequently inaccurate). The stories are what make your experience different. You can say what **this** person experienced at **this** time. You can say what the impact of seeing **this** particular situation is on you.
- For example, don't ask, "Have you had a hard time recently?" Instead, ask, "What actually happened?"
- Be specific; better not to record, "We went to a village and I saw a lot of suffering. It was awful." Instead, record, "A is a mother of 5. She lives in Halhoul, a town near Hebron. I spoke to her on Jan. 5. On the previous day an army patrol had come to her house looking for her oldest son, B. When they entered the house, they overturned furniture, broke two lamps, smashed the coffee table. When she tried to protest, they threw her to the floor, injuring her right arm, and threatened to arrest her and her other children if B did not turn himself in."

- Be cautious taking notes in streets. It may attract undesirable attention from either Israeli soldiers or Palestinians.



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Audio recorders

- Using a tape or mp3 recorder with Palestinians Israelis is usually okay—but subject to their comfort level. You need to ask permission and exercise restraint and sensitivity. Some Palestinians will not want what they on tape. They may be more likely to speak freely if the session is not being recorded. Tape recorders may be subject to question by border security.
- If you are in the company of other members of the group, make sure that they agree to your tape recording a session.
- If you want to use a tape recorder, ask your guide (beforehand if possible) and get the permission of **everyone** present. You may need to have your guide ask this for you.

Cameras

- Photography is acceptable and safe in many, but not all, situations. In a particular situation the group leaders, a guide, or other people may ask you to refrain from taking pictures.
- If you are with a guide or host, ask his/her permission to photograph. There are numerous reasons that it might be unsafe unwise to photograph.
- If you are photographing a particular person, ask permission first.
- If you are photographing with Israeli soldiers in view, be careful. Photography of military installations is prohibited. Soldiers be upset if they see you photographing them, especially if they are dealing with a Palestinian or with an incident. They have been known to shoot at photographers in demonstrations. They are more likely to come over and question you and perhaps try to seize your camera.

☑ **Tip #2**

- Try to take photos that will tell a story, so that you can use them when you go home.
- Close-up shots of faces are especially good.
- Think what media you want for the pictures... Color slide film is best for slide shows, black and white for newspapers, digital cameras for internet. Color snapshots are good if you can scan them into a computer, otherwise only for a family album or sending back to people in Palestine and Israel. (Color slides can be converted into snapshots.)

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- Be cautious taking photographs in the streets. Being spotted by soldiers taking photographs can jeopardize Palestinians walking with you.
 - With care and permission, photos of the effects of the occupation are good: a family standing in front of its bulldozed house; people who have been hurt, etc.
- If the delegation has experienced photographers who are willing

to take and reproduce photos for everyone, they can ask them to take pictures for the whole group. (Not only will you get better pictures, but one person photographing in tense situations is less disruptive and annoying than several snapping away.)

- Do not offer to send photos to people unless you are prepared to follow through on the commitment.

Video Cameras

- *Please let us know if you plan to take a video camera.*

IFPB SUPPORT FOR DELEGATION WORK

IFPB views the work of recording and conveying each delegation's experiences as one of the most important aspects of our delegation program. We will attempt to support and enrich your efforts in several important ways. You'll hear much more about this in the future, but we wanted to introduce some of what we'll be doing here.

- **Trip Reports** – Each delegation will send back 3-6 trip reports, or text and photo updates from your delegation, to contacts in the US. We invite delegation participants to contribute to these reports as they wish, by writing, editing, taking or sending photos. We also strongly encourage all delegates to include email addresses for your friends and family on a delegation update email list – this is a great way to keep your friends and family up to date on your delegation experiences (and let them know how you're doing). We will **not add** any of your contacts to our permanent lists—so people will only get updates as long as you personally are on the delegation. To see examples of past delegation trip reports, check here on our website: <http://www.ifpbdel.org/reports.html>
- **Group Processing Time** – A major component of each delegation will be facilitated group time (usually at the end of most days, after dinner). The purpose of this time is to share experiences, reactions, and emotions with other delegation participants and leaders. This is an important part of making sense of the delegation, finding support from others having similar experiences, and beginning to think about how to apply experiences from the delegation when you return home.
- **Support for Follow-Up Work** – Some of the many possibilities for post-delegation education and advocacy on Israel/Palestine involve media, legislative, and speaking outreach in your home community. IFPB has an extensive program to support your efforts in these endeavors. As the delegation approaches, we'll begin sending you information to learn more and participate in media and other work. We don't force anyone to participate, but we do feel this is an important part of why we're all going on delegations—to bring the experience home. We'll be in touch soon, especially with information on outreach to media.

Section 6: Fundraising and Collecting Donations

THE BASICS

If you are planning on doing any fundraising please let us know and we will send you the ***Interfaith Peace-Builders Fundraising Packet*** filled with fundraising tips, do's and don'ts, worksheets, and fundraising letters written by former delegates.

For more information on fundraising and scholarships, visit our financial aid page:
<http://www.ifpb.org/delegations/financialaid>

Contributions that donors make for your individual direct trip expenses – whether they make the check out to you or to Interfaith Peace-Builders are not tax-deductible. Under IRS regulations, contributions for the benefit of an individual are not deductible by the donor, even if they are given to a tax-exempt entity (e.g., Interfaith Peace-Builders).

Contributions are only deductible when the charity (IFPB in this case) has 'full control and discretion' over their use. This has some important ramifications for how donors can make charitable contributions to IFPB that help support our educational mission to educate on the Middle East. The easiest way to do this is to make a contribution to IFPB's Scholarship Fund.

Please contact IFPB for more details if you plan to do fundraising.



Building **PEACE** through Personal Experience

*Begun as a program of the Fellowship of Reconciliation in 2000, **Interfaith Peace-Builders'** (IFPB) mission is to give US citizens the opportunity to see and understand the Israeli-Palestinian conflict firsthand and to empower these citizens to educate their local communities and advocate for better US foreign policy when they return to the US.*

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