
Travel Guide

Eilat

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Quick view

Eilat – a brief overview

Eilat is a port city and beach resort in southern Israel. It occupies a stretch of the Red Sea coastline just 12 kilometers long. It is sunny pretty much all year round in Eilat, and the water temperature rarely falls below 20 degrees Celsius. The incredibly vibrant underwater world just beyond the shoreline makes Eilat a paradise for divers and snorkelers. Eilat is also a good base for exploring the rugged beauty of the Negev desert and of the rocky landscapes in the surrounding areas. One of the best-known tourist destinations is Timna Park, which is home to 'Solomon's Pillars.'

This rock formation, which was formed by erosion, is a highlight of hiking tours through the spectacular desert landscape of this national park. Eilat is also famous for its nightlife. There are several clubs in the Lagoon area and on the Royal Beach Promenade, but the parties held on Dekel Beach are very popular as well.



Israel

General Information

Country overview

The state of Israel was established as a parliamentary republic when the British Mandate for Palestine ended in 1948. To this day, the intention of the United Nations to divide Palestine into an Israeli and an Arab-Palestinian state is one of the reasons for the continuing conflicts in the Middle East. As a tourism destination, Israel enjoys great popularity, especially its historically significant locations and UNESCO World Heritage Sites, such as Bethlehem and Jerusalem and "party city" Tel Aviv. In Israel, distances are short – from Tel Aviv to Haifa in the north, it's just under 100 kilometers, and inland to Jerusalem only around 70 kilometers. That's why many tourists come to Israel for variety, since they can easily combine a bathing vacation and educational trip with nightlife and business.

On its website (auswaertiges-amt.de) The German Federal Foreign Office provides constantly updated general and country-specific travel information, information about particular risks for travelers as well as travel warnings, in other words, urgent appeals issued by the Foreign Office to refrain wherever possible from traveling to a particular country or region of a country.

Geography

Israel is located on the east coast of the Mediterranean; the country borders Lebanon and Syria in the north, Jordan in the east and Egypt in the southwest. The Palestinian Autonomous Territories are largely located on the West Bank of the River Jordan and the Gaza Strip. The country extends southward through the Negev Desert to Eilat, the vacation resort on the Red Sea; the fertile Plain of Sharon is on the Mediterranean coast.

The mountain region with its fertile valleys in the west and desert areas in the east runs parallel to the coast. Roughly half of the country is steppe or desert terrain.

General knowledge

Key facts

Population: 8.6 million (December 2016)

Capital city (not internationally recognized): Jerusalem

Language

The official languages of the country are Hebrew and Arabic. The commercial language in large areas of the country is English.

Currency

1 Israeli new shekel = 100 agorots. Currency code: NIS, ILS (ISO code). Banknotes to the value of 200, 100, 50 and 20 NIS are in circulation, coins to the value of 10, 5, 2, 1 and ½ NIS and 10 agorots.

Electricity

220 V, 50 Hz., three-pin plugs. If necessary, adapters can be bought locally in hotels and electrical stores.

Public holidays

Below are listed Public Holidays for the January 2019 – December 2020 period.

Note

Only the first and last days of Pesach and Sukkot are national holidays, but there may be some disruption on intermediate dates. Jewish festivals always commence on the evenings before the dates given below.

2019

Pesach (Passah): 20 to 26 April 2019
Yom Ha'atzmaut (Independence Day): 9 May 2019
Schawuot (Whitsun): 9 June 2019
Rosch ha-Schana (Jewish New Year): 30 September and 1 October 2019
Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement): 9 October 2019
Sukkot (Feast of Booths): 14 October 2019
Simchat Torah: 21 October 2019

2020

Pesach (Passah): 19 to 15 April 2020
Yom Ha'atzmaut (Independence Day): 29 April 2020
Schawuot (Whitsun): 29 May 2020
Rosch ha-Schana (Jewish New Year): 19 and 20 September 2020
Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement): 28 September 2020
Sukkot (Feast of Booths): 3 October 2020
Simchat Torah: 10 October 2020

All information subject to change.

**Travel etiquette**
How to fit in

Shalom, which literally means 'peace,' is used as both 'hello' and 'goodbye.' Although manners are rarely particularly formal, normal courtesies should always be observed. Israelis tend to be open, and they like to talk about their country, religion and politics. Dress is casual, but at holy sites, visitors should not wear shorts or short skirts, and shoulders should be covered.

In synagogues, all men wear a head covering. Businesspeople are expected to dress more smartly. More formal attire may be required for evening meals at high-end restaurants, hotel restaurants and at night clubs. On the Shabbat (Sabbath – Friday evening to Saturday evening), special rules apply in restaurants, hotels and stores. There are generally signs to inform visitors about anything that is

prohibited.

At restaurants, the bill does not usually include a service charge. In such cases, the tip given should be around 10 to 15 percent of the total bill. If the service charge is included in the bill, it will be itemized separately.



Health Gesundheit

Food & Drink

Mains water is normally safe, but may cause mild abdominal upsets. Water sources outside main cities and towns may be contaminated and sterilisation is advisable. Bottled water is the best bet and is available everywhere. Milk may be unpasteurised, so boil before drinking. Meat and fish should be freshly cooked and served hot. Vegetables are typically served cooked. If eating fruit, try to stick to fruit that can be peeled before eating.

Other Risks

Vaccinations against tuberculosis and hepatitis B are sometimes recommended. Malaria is not present in Israel but travellers may want to take some form of mosquito repellent to avoid bites, especially if sleeping outside. Visitors should wear sunscreen and drink plenty of water to avoid heatstroke and sunburn. Rabies is present. If you are bitten, seek medical advice without delay.



Phone calls & Internet Phone calls & Internet

Telephone/Mobile Telephone

Dialing code: +972

Telephones

The dialing code in Israel is 00972. Public telephones are now rare, but there are still some card-operated pay phones. Telephone cards are available from hotels, post offices, convenience stores and newspaper stands. There are city-specific area codes within Israel, such as 02 for Jerusalem, 03 for Tel Aviv, 04 for Haifa and 08 for Eilat.

Mobile Telephone

When making calls with their own mobile phones, travelers sometimes face high roaming charges. Israeli SIM cards can be purchased at convenience stores in cities and at airports. They can be used immediately. Mobile network operators include Orange (orange.co.il) and Israelphones (israelphones.com). For travelers who wish to make regular or long calls abroad, it is a good idea to purchase a calling card from a provider such as Golan (golantelecom.co.il).

Internet

In the cities, free Wi-Fi Internet access is available nearly everywhere. In particular, it is provided in cafes, hotels and at locations frequented by tourists. As a precaution, one should not enter passwords, credit card details or banking credentials when using public, unencrypted networks. It is advisable to use a VPN app or security software to check Wi-Fi hotspots.



Top 10 sights

Top Ten Sights in Eilat

Coral Beach Nature Reserve

This nature reserve is located to the south of Eilat. Although it spans only 1200 meters of the coastline, it is a truly spectacular section. The shallow-water coral reef can be accessed by foot via wooden jetties. The clear water enables visitors to see tropical fish, while buoys mark routes for divers and snorkelers to take through the water. Diving and snorkeling gear can be rented at the park.

Coral Beach	Opening hours vary
Eilat	
Israel	en.parks.org.il/ParksAndReserves/coral-beach/...

Dolphin Reef

With an area encompassing 12,000 square meters of water, this dolphinarium is one of the largest sea enclosures in the world. As well as watching the dolphins, visitors can also snorkel or dive with them. Contact between humans and dolphins only happens if it is initiated by the animals. The dolphins will only come out of curiosity – no bait or training methods are used to attract them.

Southern Beach, POB 104	Opening hours:
Eilat	Sun – Thu: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Israel	Fri, Sat, public holidays: 9:00 am – 4:30 pm
Tel.: +972-8/630 01 11	
	www.dolphinreef.co.il

Underwater Observatory Marine Park

Perfect for visitors who want to immerse themselves in the bustling underwater world without getting wet! The saltwater enclosure in this aquarium is home to turtles, sharks, seahorses, fish and all kinds of crustaceans. The underwater observatory, which is 4.5 meters below sea level, provides an unobstructed view of the colorful coral reef. The museum at the Marine Park informs visitors about the diversity of creatures in the Red Sea.

Highway 90	Opening hours:
Eilat	Every day, 8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Israel	
	www.coralworld.co.il/en/

Hay-Bar Nature Reserve

The visitor center at Yotvata, a date palm oasis, is located about 35 kilometers (21 miles) north of Eilat. The center is the meeting point for guided tours of the Hay-Bar reserve, which still provides a habitat for the kind of desert animals that lived here in biblical times, including wolves, foxes, antelopes and ostriches. It is also possible to visit the reserve without following a guided tour.

Hay-Bar Yotvata Nature Reserve	Opening hours (may vary):
Highway 90 (between Kibbutzim	Sat – Thu: 8:30 am – 5:00 pm
Yotvata and Samar)	Fri: 8:30 am – 4:00 pm
Eilat	Tours: Mornings only

Israel
Tel.: +972-8/637 30 57

en.parks.org.il/sites/English/ParksAndReserv...

Red Canyon

The route through the Red Canyon is one of the most beautiful hiking tours in southern Israel. The vibrant deep red of the sandstone contrasts dramatically with the radiant blue of the sky. The gorge is only half a meter wide at some points – there are handrails embedded into the rock to help visitors clamber through. The winding trail begins right next to the parking lot.

Highway 12 (12 kilometers/7 miles
north of Ein Netafim)
Eilat
Israel

Timna Park

Timna Park, which is about 25 kilometers (15 miles) north of Eilat, is a scenic park featuring spectacular rock formations and the remains of an ancient copper mine. The distinctive landmarks at the park are Solomon's Pillars, a vibrant red 50-meter-high sandstone cliff face with an unusual shape, and the mushroom-shaped rocks, which stand at about six meters and were formed by erosion. Visitors can also see the remains of an Egyptian temple and of an ancient copper mine.

Highway 90 (between Samar and Be'er Ora) Opening hours:
Sat – Thu: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm
Eilat Fri: 8:00 am – 3:00 pm
Israel
Tel.: +972-8/631 67 56 www.parktimna.co.il/DE/

International Birding Research Center (IBRCE)

Eilat is located along one of the most important routes for birds that migrate from Asia and Europe to Africa. Up to one billion birds rest in this area before or after crossing the Sahara. At the IBRCE, visitors can learn more about the lives of migratory birds. Guided tours of birdwatching sites begin at this ornithology center. Prior registration is requested.

Highway 90 (near the Yitzhak Rabin Border Crossing) www.eilatbirds.com/en
Eilat
Israel
Tel.: +972-50/767 12 90

Mosh's Beach

Visitors wanting a relaxed day at the beach should avoid the North Beach. Mosh's Beach, which is on the southern section of Eilat's coastline, is less frequented by tourists. It is popular with local hipsters, and the trendy beach bar serves vegetarian food, fresh cocktails and smoothies.

Highway 90
Eilat
Israel

Eilat City Museum

This small museum of history and archeology provides an overview of the development of the port city and the region. It informs visitors about the importance of the copper mines at Timna and about the flora and fauna in the Red Sea region.

2 Derekh Yotam
Eilat
Israel
Tel.: +972-08/634 07 54

Opening hours:
Mon – Thu: 10:00 am – 8:00 pm
Fri: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
Sat: 12:00 noon – 8:00 pm

info.goisrael.com/en/the-eilat-city-museum-3...

Petra, Jordan

This former capital of the Nabataean Kingdom, which was carved into the red rock, is more than 2000 years old. It is located around 130 kilometers north of Eilat and is probably Jordan's most famous UNESCO World Heritage Site. The site covers a huge area and includes more than 800 structures and sacrificial sites. It is best to follow a guided tour when visiting Petra. Numerous companies in Eilat offer package deals.

28 Wadi Mousa
Jordan

visitpetra.jo/



Shopping in Eilat Shopping in Eilat

Eilat is located within a free-trade zone, which means that no value-added tax is paid on most goods. Nevertheless, the prices are generally rather high, so the chances of finding an absolute bargain are fairly slim.

Everyday goods and souvenirs can be purchased almost everywhere in Eilat. Along the beaches there are rows of small stores. One example is the Eilat Bazaar (on HaToren Street at the North Beach promenade), where there are countless stalls selling jewelry, swimwear and all kinds of odds and ends.

The city center has lots of small shops, such as those on HaTmarim Avenue. There are also numerous larger shopping centers, including Mall HaYam (mallhayam.co.il) on HaPalmakh Street between South Beach and North Beach, and the Ice Mall at the Ice Park (Kampen Street, icemalleilat.co.il), which is a shopping and leisure complex featuring a large ice rink.



Restaurants Restaurants in Eilat

A variety of culinary experiences for a range of different budgets are on offer in Eilat, including falafel stands, steakhouses and gourmet cuisine. Many of the city's restaurants offer international dishes, so don't be surprised if you find Japanese miso soup on the same menu as Spanish crema Catalana – even in the premium restaurants.

Last Refuge / HaMiflat Haaharon

This popular gourmet restaurant near the Underwater Observatory has been one of

the top choices for seafood and specialty fish dishes for many years. The decor features slightly bizarre nautical equipment, and the food is accompanied by a fantastic view over the Red Sea.

Highway 90 Category: Luxurious
Eilat
Israel

Eddie's Hideaway

This exquisite restaurant is something of an institution in Eilat. Eddie Hetz, who was born in the United States, has been passionately cooking up original dishes for his guests since 1979. The comprehensive menu offers fish and meat dishes that are inspired by French, Italian and Asian cuisine.

8 Eilat, on the corner of Haagmonim Street Category: Luxurious
Eilat
Israel

Olla

The winning features of this pleasant restaurant by Ofira Park are its inviting atmosphere and the large selection of kosher meat dishes. There is also a comprehensive range of vegan choices.

7 Tarshish Street Category: Moderate
Eilat
Israel

Mika

This self-service restaurant on the Royal Beach Promenade is one of the city's most popular sushi restaurants. All of the sushi dishes are freshly prepared on-site.

Shvil HaYam 3 Category: Budget
Eilat
Israel

Lalo's

This small, down-to-earth restaurant offers good value for the price. It serves authentic Moroccan home cooking – although it is only open Sunday to Thursday, from midday to 5 pm. The couscous is particularly delicious! All dishes are also available to take away.

7 Hahorev Street Category: Budget
Eilat
Israel



Nightlife Nightlife in Eilat

Eilat is known for being a party destination. Before 11 pm, however, there is very little activity in and outside the clubs. The Royal Beach Promenade is the best

place to start the evening. It offers numerous pubs and bars. Another popular hotspot is the tourist center in downtown Eilat, where there are numerous clubs and discos that are open all night long.

Three Monkeys Pub

At this trendy and well-frequented bar, visitors are greeted by a statue of the famous three wise monkeys, who hear no evil, see no evil and speak no evil. Despite the bar's location on the Royal Beach Promenade, beachwear and flip-flops would be considered as being far too casual.

Derech Pa'amei HaShalom 23
Royal Beach Promenade
Eilat
Israel

Crazy Elephant

This stylish club is one of the largest discos in southern Israel. Its ultra-modern sound and lighting systems are a hit with DJs and visitors from all over the world. It is open Thursday to Saturday until 5 am.

8 HaMasger Street
Eilat
Israel

Soof Brewery / The Brewery Eilat

The Soof Brewery gives its guests an insight into Israel's craft beer scene. Six varieties of beer are brewed here, including a wheat beer that contains basil and coriander. Visitors can watch the brewing process through a large pane of glass from the main bar area. Tapas is served to accompany the beer.

2 HaOrgim Street
Eilat
Israel

What's Up Observatory

Nightlife with a twist! The darkness of the desert – slightly outside the city – makes this the perfect place for stargazing. Tour guide Ethan Schwartz has a highly engaging way of teaching visitors about astronomy.

Near Be'er Ora
Eilat
Israel

Wow! Vegas Show

This Las Vegas-style show features acrobatics, music and ornate costumes and set designs – a glamor-filled evening is guaranteed. Tickets and further information are available from: wow@isrotel.co.il.

Isrotel Theater im Isrotel Royal Beach
Eilat
North Beach

Eilat
Israel



Calendar of events Calendar of events

Red Sea Classical Music Festival

This festival has been held every spring since 2011. Orchestras and soloists from Israel and all over the world are invited to the three-day event, where they perform classical compositions from several different centuries.

February 2019

www.eilat-festival.co.il/en/program/

Location: Dan Hotel Eilat

Winter Jazz Festival

Owing to the huge success of the Red Sea Jazz Festival, which is held in August, the winter edition of the jazz festival was launched in 2011. Like the summer festival, the winter version features performances by jazz musicians from all over the world.

February 2019

www.touristisrael.com/red-sea-winter-jazz-fe...

Location: Eilat Harbor

Eilat Birds Festival

Every spring, millions of migratory birds fly over Israel on their way back to Europe. To mark this impressive natural spectacle, Israel's ornithologists organize the Birds Festival, which includes lectures from experts and trips to observe the birds.

March 17-24, 2019

Location: Isrotel Agamim Hotel

Red Sea Jazz Festival

Every year in August, the harbor area becomes a huge outdoor stage for three days. The Jam Sessions, which start at 11 pm on Dekel Beach, draw especially large crowds.

August 2019

en.redseajazz.co.il/

Location: Eilat Harbor

Chanukah (Festival of Lights)

On each evening of this festival, one more candle is lit on the *hanukkiyah* – a candelabrum with nine branches. Traditional dishes such as potato pancakes (latkes) and doughnuts (sufganiyot) are served. Traditional games are also played, such as spinning the dreidel (a spinning top).

22 - 30 December, 2019

Location: All across the city



Hotels

Hotels in Eilat

Eilat is not a very large city, and it occupies only around 12 kilometers (7 miles) of coastline. Nevertheless, with beds for over 12,000 guests, it is very well-equipped to welcome visitors. After all, Eilat has a reputation as the Red Sea's party capital. The more exclusive hotels are mostly found on the North Beach, and the more basic accommodation is located near the Red Canyon Shopping Center. Visitors who want to spend most of their time diving or snorkeling are advised to find accommodation to the south of the city center, near the coral reef.

Queen of Sheba Eilat

This well-known luxury hotel has 14 floors. The theme of its interior design is the biblical account of the Queen of Sheba's visit to King Solomon. The decor in the rooms is elegant and luxurious, although they are not quite as opulent as the reception rooms and the spa.

8 Antib Road
Eilat
Israel

Category: Luxurious

Dan Eilat Hotel

This luxurious holiday complex at the North Beach offers all of the amenities of a resort. It has pools and leisure activities for adults and children, as well as a choice of restaurants. It is also in a great location on the North Beach.

North Beach
Eilat
Israel

Category: Luxurious

Soleil Boutique Hotel

This respectable mid-range hotel is located at the edge of Ofira Park, between Rimonim Beach and the Lagoon area. Its 73 rooms are bright, spacious and welcoming. Guests have access to the hotel's pool and spa.

12 Tarshish Street
Eilat
Israel

Category: Moderate

Orchid Reef Hotel

This beach hotel is located slightly south of Eilat, in the Coral Beach Nature Reserve. It offers a range of additional services, including an outdoor pool, bicycle hire, and a refrigerator in every room. The hotel is within easy walking distance of several diving schools.

P. O. Box 651
Eilat
Israel

Category: Moderate

Rich Eilat Suites

This popular city center hotel is located near the Musical Fountain in Gan Binyamin Park. The furnishings are functional and attractive.

1 Sderot HaTmarim
Eilat
Israel

Category: Budget