

The logo for "VISIONS israel" features the word "VISIONS" in a large, black, serif font. A blue, stylized, flowing line curves through the letters, starting under the 'V', passing through the 'I', 'O', and 'S', and ending under the 'S'. Below "VISIONS" is the word "israel" in a smaller, black, lowercase, sans-serif font. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located to the right of the word "israel".

VISIONS israel®

Narrated by Israeli-American Violinist/Conductor Itzhak Perlman

WLIW New York's acclaimed *Visions* series makes an aerial pilgrimage to Israel, the world's only Jewish state – home to approximately 7.2 million and the Holy Land of the three main Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Set to ethnic music with informative narration, stunning high definition aerial footage showcases Israel in all its diverse glory, flying over sites where Jewish rebels gave their lives; where Egyptians, Greeks and Romans built outposts to their empires; and where Jesus Christ performed miracles. Witness the magnificence of the country's many holy sites, including the Western Wall, the Temple Mount and Church of the Holy Sepulchre, alongside such modern achievements as the ingenious irrigation system that actually helped make a desert bloom. Narrated by Israeli-American violinist / conductor Itzhak Perlman, the 20th program in WLIW's *Visions* series premieres nationwide June 2008 on PBS (check local listings). The companion website at Visionsof.org/Israel launches May 1 and features video previews, downloads, photos, everyday phrases in Hebrew and Arabic, recipes, resources and more.

Featuring revealing ground footage with both day and night views, **VISIONS OF ISRAEL** begins with a glimpse at the Mediterranean Coast, the first sight most tourists see before landing at Ben Gurion Airport. The helicopter-mounted camera glides from the ancient port city of Jaffa up north to pulsing Tel Aviv, Israel's cultural and financial epicenter, with its modern skyscrapers and bustling beach promenade. On the lush slopes of Mount Carmel, three religions intersect: a Christian Carmelite monastery stands above the Hebrew prophet Elijah's Cave, while the longest hillside garden in the world surrounds the gold-domed Shrine of the Báb and the Bahá'í Faith's world headquarters. A tranquil place for prayer and meditation, The Bahá'í World Centre is a retreat from the lively port city of Haifa below it. Inland, witness the fertile soil of the Hula Valley and the Golan Heights, transformed from malarial swampland to rich farmland thanks to the collective physical efforts of *kibbutzim*, cooperative farming villages throughout the country. Behold the Sea of Galilee (Lake Kinneret), where Jesus is believed to have walked on water, and the ruins of Kumran, famous for one of the most important archeological discoveries of all time: The Dead Sea Scrolls. Unearthed in the caves of these desert cliffs by a young Bedouin boy, the scrolls include well-preserved texts from the Old Testament, written in Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek.

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VISIONS OF ISRAEL travels to lands marked by cycles of creation and destruction, ruled by different cultures throughout their history. First, the ancient port city of Akko, also known as Acre, where Christian Crusaders, including Richard the Lionheart, attempted to retake Jerusalem and the Holy Land from Muslim armies. The enormous Crusader City they constructed over centuries is testament to the depth of their religious devotion. Next, experience Beit She'an, ruled by Alexander the Great, who created a thriving Hellenistic city that was eventually conquered by the Romans and destroyed by a powerful earthquake in 749. Despite such turmoil, the practice of Hebrew ritual lives on to this day.

In the Judean desert, visit the shrine of Nebi Musa, where many Muslims believe the sacred bones of Moses rest, and on the desert's eastern border David's Spring in Ein Gedi National Park, where the future king once sought refuge. The southernmost city of Eilat, nicknamed "the end of the world" by vacationers, is a popular tourist resort and port located at the northern tip of the Red Sea. Beautiful bird species fill the area's skies during their migration to and from Africa, attracting birdwatchers from all over the world. Visitors can almost smell the Dead Sea, one of the saltiest bodies of water in the world and the lowest point on land (1,350 ft. below sea level), as it comes into view. Vibrantly alive with abstract color, the Dead Sea area includes waterfalls and freshwater springs, desert wildlife and tropical foliage, resorts and spas; its waters and mineral-laden mud are used in products ranging from skin care treatments to rich fertilizers. High above the Dead Sea is the 1st Century Jewish fortress at Masada, built by King Herod. The vast desert site of palaces and fortifications is remembered for the tragic mass suicide of nearly 1,000 Jewish people facing enslavement, defenseless in a battle against a 10,000-strong Roman Legion. Today, many members of the Israel Defense Forces – in which service is compulsory for all citizens – swear to the oath, "Masada Will Not Fall Again!"

In the Judean Mountains lies the Golden City on the Hill, renamed Jerusalem, meaning "The Dwelling of Peace," by King David. The Old City is a sanctified place for Jews, Muslims and Christians alike. Sacred locations include the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, where Christians believe Jesus was crucified and laid to rest, and Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount, where Muslims believe Mohammed ascended to heaven. Jews believe the site to be where God spoke to Abraham and where the Ark of the Covenant was sheltered before the destruction of the Great Temple by the Babylonians. The Western Wall, one of the most sacred sites for Jews, is what remains of the Second Temple built by the Israelites and destroyed by the Romans.

In the 19th century a second, new and dynamic Jerusalem was created, as the Old City could not contain its growing population. A modern metropolis, the capital city includes artistic and cultural attractions like the Israel Museum, which houses the Dead Sea Scrolls in the Shrine of the Book, and nearby Yad Vashem, Israel's official memorial to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Walk along the tree-studded walkway of the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations, lined with plaques commemorating non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jewish victims, before entering Yad Vashem's sprawling complex of museums, exhibits, archives, monuments and sculptures – the world's largest repository of Holocaust information.

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In recognition of Israel's independence on May 14, 1948, **VISIONS OF ISRAEL** proudly pays tribute to the collective effort, faith and optimism of the Jewish people who built this remarkable country. Their perseverance, despite a long and often painful history, is the source of national pride. At night on the streets of modern Jerusalem, Haifa and Tel Aviv, music gives voice to the Jewish people's lust for life and hope for the future.

Locations

Tel Aviv
Jaffa
Mount Carmel
Haifa
Banias Falls
Hula Valley
Sea of Galilee
Kumran
Akko
Beit She'an

Nebi Musa
David's Spring
Dead Sea
Caesarea
Masada
Eilat
Old Jerusalem
New Jerusalem
Yad Vashem

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