



Stephen Wise Free Synagogue

**STEPHEN WISE FREE SYNAGOGUE REFUGEE RELIEF: GREECE & BERLIN  
LED BY RABBI AMMIEL HIRSCH, RABBI DIANA FERSKO, AND SYNAGOGUE  
PRESIDENT MICHAEL PATTERSON**

**May 23–June 1, 2017**

To register, contact Rabbi Diana Fersko at [rabbifersko@swfs.org](mailto:rabbifersko@swfs.org) with your credit card information as soon as possible. We will direct you to our personalized trip website, where you will pay in full and provide passport information.

**SUGGESTED PROGRAM**

*(The itinerary will continue to change up to our arrival in Europe.)*

**Day One: Tuesday, May 23, 2017**

**DEPARTURE**

- Depart the U.S.A.

Overnight: Flight

**Day Two: Wednesday, May 24, 2017**

**ARRIVAL IN ATHENS**

- 10:00 a.m. Arrive on DL flight 413, at Athens International Airport.
- Welcome by our representative and assistance with arrival formalities & group transfer.
- 2:00 p.m. Meet with **Lana Zilberman Soloway**, your tour educator at hotel lobby.
- 2:30 p.m. Orientation program at the hotel on the refugee situation in Europe in general and Greece in particular, with representatives of a variety of NGOs ( IsraAid & Nostos) at hotel.
- 4:00 p.m. Visit the **Acropolis**, an ancient citadel located above the city and the most well-known landmark of Greece.
- **Welcome dinner** and orientation to the program by **Rabbi Ammiel Hirsch**, Rabbi Fersko and your tour educator with **Irit Ben Abba**, Israeli Ambassador to Greece.

Overnight: King Georges, Athens

## Day Three: Thursday, May 25, 2017

### ATHENS

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- 9:00 a.m. **Panel discussion** with representatives of a number of NGOs working with refugees in Greece (each NGO will represent its work in the fields of rescue, education and social services).
- Visit to refugee shelters in the city outskirts with **NOSTOS**; Explore social and educational activities , including a meeting with **The HOME Project**, for dedicated shelters and support for refugees.
- Meet with **Greece's Minister of Immigration** for insight into the Greek government's policy towards refugees.
- Lunch on your own, en route.
- *An Inside Look into the Athens Jewish Community*, including a visit to the **Jewish Museum, Beit Shalom Synagogue, Hetz Haim Synagogue**, and meetings at the Jewish Federation in Athens with leadership of the **Greek Jewish community**.
- Return to the hotel.
- Meet with the **American Ambassador to Greece**.
- Dinner on your own.

Overnight: King Georges, Athens

## Day Four: Friday, May 26, 2017

### A DAY IN LESBOS ISLAND (*Pending confirmation*)

- Breakfast at the hotel and check out.
- 8:00 a.m. Transfer to the Athens International Airport
- 10:45 a.m. Flight V7 4114 to **Lesbos Island**.
- 11:45 a.m. Land in Lesbos.
- Field visit to the **island of Lesbos** which has become a focal point of the refugee crisis coming from Turkey into Greece for a visit tot migrant camps, a stop at the **memorial** to those who die crossing the Mediterranean and a visit to the Muslim cemetery.
- 5:15 p.m. Eearly shabbat dinner at a local restaurant.
- Drive to the airport.
- 8:25 p.m. Flight to Thessaloniki on A3 7719
- 9:25 p.m. Land & Thessaloniki & drive to hotel.
- Check into the hotel.

Overnight: Electra, Thessaloniki

## Day Five: Saturday, May 27, 2017

### INTRODUCTION TO THESSALONIKI

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- 9:00 a.m. Introduction to **IsrAid** programs in Greece.
- Meet with the **Mayor of Thessaloniki** for an overview of the political, social and economic challenges of Greece in general, and the refugee challenges in the Thessaloniki area in particular.
- Meet with **Yazidi refugees** and listen to their testimonials about the genocide and their special connection to the Jewish people.
- Art and culture activity with **Syrian refugees** in a **local shelter**.
- 5:00 p.m. Meet with **Mr. Giorgos Toulas**, a prominent Greek journalist for an overview of Greek political concerns in general and migration issues in particular.
- Dinner on your own and evening at leisure.

Overnight: Electra, Thessaloniki

## Day Six: Sunday, May 28, 2017

### THESSALONIKI & VICINITY

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- Visit with the **Jewish community of Thessaloniki**. Explore the historical saga of the Thessaloniki ancient community, especially during the Holocaust and today's reality.
- **Field program** and visit to a **refugee camp** outside the city with NOSTOS & IsrAid.
- **Boxed lunch**, en route.
- Join **food and culture event** with the Jewish community and refugees.
- *Time permitting*: Short tour in the city of Thessaloniki.
- Dinner on your own and evening at leisure.

Overnight: Electra, Thessaloniki

## Day Seven: Monday, May 29, 2017

### INTRODUCTION TO BERLIN

- Breakfast at the hotel and check out.
- Transfer to Thessaloniki International Airport for your
- 11:20 a.m. flight to **Berlin on** FR 1147.
- 12:50 p.m. Arrive in Berlin Schoenefeld airport and transfer to the city.
- 2:30 p.m. *Anti-Semitism in Germany and the Role of AJC and IsrAID Orientation program* with **Deidre Berger**, head of the **American Jewish Committee**.
- Special visit to the **Jewish Museum of Berlin**, accompanied by Yazidi refugees.
- Dinner on your own and evening at leisure.

Overnight: Adlon, Berlin

## Day Eight: Tuesday, May 30, 2017 – Erev Shavuot

### BERLIN

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- 9:00 a.m. *Europe is Changing its Character* Dialogue with **Rabbi Josh Spinner**, Executive VP and CEO of The Ronald S. Lauder Foundation.
- 10:00 a.m. Day programs and activities with IsrAID, AJC and other NGOs in the Syrian refugee camps, shelters, etc. Explore a variety of programs.
- Joint **cultural activity** with Jewish volunteers and refugees.
- **Erev Shavuot celebration** at the **Oranienburger** conservative congregation.
- **Shavuot dinner** with guests from the local Jewish community.

Overnight: Adlon, Berlin

## Day Nine: Wednesday, May 31, 2017 - Shavuot

### BERLIN

- Breakfast at the hotel.
- 9:00 a.m. **Shavuot study session** with Rabbi Ammiel Hirsch & Rabbi Diana Fersko.
- 10:00 a.m. Day activities with IsrAID, AJC and other NGOs in the Yazidi refugee camps and shelters. Explore a variety of programs.
- 4:00 p.m. Political meetings with German leadership regarding refugee issues.
- 5:30 p.m. *Final Thoughts and Feelings* Wrap-up discussion, at hotel.
- 7:00 p.m. **Farewell dinner** at local restaurant.

Overnight: Adlon, Berlin

## Day Ten: Thursday, June 1, 2017 - Shavuot

### RETURN HOME

- Breakfast at the hotel and check out.
- 10:00 a.m. Group transfer to Berlin International Airport.
- 12:55 p.m. Departure flight on DL 222 to JFK, arriving the same day.