Study Tour Program

Holy Land Tour Information Pack

Study Tour Objective

The purpose of each study tour is to provide students with an opportunity for innovative learning but also a deepened spiritual journey. Students at all levels of study will be able to combine academic excellence with a personal pilgrimage to Biblical sites that anchor their faith.

The following information is a guide to help you understand what this Study Tour will involve.

Holy Land Tour Highlights

The Holy Land Tour will start and finish in Amman, Jordan. This will not only allow a simpler entry and exit process into Israel but also provide an opportunity to visit the Ancient city of Petra.

Our time will be spent in locations such as Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Tiberius & the Sea of Galilee. A draft itinerary is included in this Info Pack.

What Study Tour’s are available?

In 2014 the following Tours are planned;

- Holy Land Tour  (Israel & Jordan) – 10th Jan – 26th Jan 2014
- Footsteps of Paul (Greece & Turkey) – Sept/Oct 2014 (info available soon)
- Holy Land Tour  (Israel & Jordan) – Oct / Nov 2014 (info available soon)

Cost of Study Tour

The approximate cost per person twin share is $6,999 (not including the standard subject fees). Prices are subject to changed based on minimum numbers and currency fluctuations.
A single supplement of $1,475 is available for those wanting a private room during the tour. Prices for children are available on request. **Pricing is based on minimum passenger numbers and subject to currency fluctuations.**

**Price Incudes:**

- Return economy class airfares from Australia to Amman flying Emirates
- 14 nights 4 star hotel accommodation in twin share rooms (Single supplements and prices for children are available on request)
- Breakfast & dinner daily from dinner on the first day to breakfast on the last
- 2 lunches at local restaurants
- Transport by deluxe air conditioned coach
- All guiding, entrance fees for sites & sightseeing as per the itinerary
- Tips for guide & driver
- Porterage at hotels
- Visas and departure taxes for Israel and Jordan
- $250 Cash Passport (pre-paid cash card) to use towards personal expenses (this is the money you will have paid as a deposit).

**Exclusions:**

- Lunches (except 2 as stated above)
- Drinks with meals
- Personal items – laundry, internet, etc
- Additional gratuities for hotel & restaurant staff
- Travel insurance – 20% group discount is available
- Personal Passport costs

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Who can join the Study Tours?**

The Study Tour program exists to provide our students with a unique learning opportunity. We understand however that many students will want to bring along family members and so we welcome non-students to participate if spaces are available.

**ACOM Students:** Students in any of our Higher Ed awards (Diploma, Assoc. Degree, Bachelor, Grad Cert, Grad Dip & Masters) can chooses the Study Tour as one of their elective subjects assuming it fits their academic program. Students will need to speak to their Learning Support Manager to confirm their Course Plan.

**Prospective Students:** We understand that this Study Tour may be the impetus some prospective students need to start their studies with ACOM. Prospective students need to
have submitted a complete Admission Applications by the 30th September 2013. These can be found at www.acom.edu.au.

When are payments due?

The following schedule for payments must be adhered to;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Payment</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deposit with Study Tour Application (returned to you in the form of Cash Pasport to use for personal expenes)</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>31st July 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full Study Tour Payment (for those not deferring payment using Fee-Help)</td>
<td>$6749</td>
<td>27th September 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject Fee for ACOM students (can be deferred using Fee-Help)</td>
<td>Normal 2014 price</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
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What are the cancellation costs?

If a participant pulls out of the Study Tour the following cancellation costs are incurred.
- Cancellation 90 days or more prior to departure results in loss of deposit
- Cancellation between 45-89 days prior to departure results in $500 cancellation fee
- Cancellation less than 45 days prior to departure results in 50% cancellation fee.

If, under the advice of the Australian Federal Government, ACOM chooses to cancel the tour due to unrest in the region, all money will be refunded to students.

What is covered by Fee-Help?

Eligible students have the option of deferring the cost of the Holy Land Tour and the associated ACOM subject fee using Fee-Help.

Students wishing to utilize Fee-Help for deferring the cost of the Study Tour should speak with their ACOM LSM.

Are there age restrictions?

There are no age restrictions for adults on this tour but please note each participant must be:
- in good health with no mobility issues
- be able to walk over rocky and rugged terrain for moderate periods of time.

Children under 10 are not permitted on the tour. Applications can be made for children 10 years and over to be included on this tour as part of a family unit but ACOM reserves the right to deny this request if they feel the overall student experience will be compromised. This will be determined on a case by case basis.

All participants must have comprehensive travel insurance.
What are the academic requirements of this Study Tour?

The Study Tour is the centre piece to the subject B7395 / B9695 Biblical Backgrounds.

The subject will involve;
- Pre-reading & assessments (including some pre-departure due dates)
- Reflection journals
- Academic work

Subject Information Books will be available closer to the Study Tour.

Who is leading the Tour?

ACOM Staff member Edwina Blair will lead this Tour in conjunction with experienced and accredited Local Guides. Our guides will lead us each day through the various sites we will visit and share with us their wealth of local and historical knowledge. Edwina, who is also a Minister within NSW Churches of Christ, will lead times of worship, reflection and discussion and ensure the Tour is spiritually significant for all our participants.

Should I be concerned about my safety in the Middle East?

There are often reports in the media about unrest in the Middle East. Our Tour Operators and Travel Agent are constantly monitoring the situation and will be informed if security fears are heightened. All Study Tour participants are encouraged to register for Travel Warnings on the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) website and register their travel plans on the Smart Traveller website.

There are many Australian groups constantly travelling in the Middle East without incident. Obviously ACOM will be doing everything we can to ensure the safety of our participants.

Who is organising all our Travel needs?

We are using a trusted organisation called Mission Travel. They are a full service travel agent who specialise in mission trips and study tours. Mission Travel is owned and operating by Christians and our ACOM Tour leader has worked with them extensively before.

Mission Travel can be contacted through their website www.missiontravel.com.au

Can I travel to other places before or after the Study Tour?

Our group has a significant discount on our flights to Jordan and therefore the entire team must arrive in together after leaving from either Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane or Perth.
This group discount therefore prohibits any travel prior to the commencement of the Study Tour.

There is however the opportunity for participants to stay in the Middle East or travel onto other locations after the Tour has finished. This can be organised on an individual basis with Mission Travel. This will incur a $150 fee on top of any extra flight and travel costs and this extra portion of your trip can not be added to any Fee-Help debt. For more information please contact Mission Travel and inform them that you are part of the “ACOM Study Tour” group.

**Why are we arriving and departing from Jordan rather than Israel?**

Israel has a high level of security and therefore entry and exit into the country can be unpredictable. The advice we have been given is that entry into Israel is easier via land from Jordan.

Be prepared for passport stamps to be required on what is called a “loose leaf” page rather than in your passport itself. An Israeli stamp in your passport can cause problems when you try to enter other countries in the future. Your Tour Leader will direct you thorough this process at each border crossing.

**Can I have a room to myself?**

The standard booking will be twin share and participants have the opportunity to nominate a person they would like to share with on the application form. If no one is nominated then ACOM staff will match participants by gender and age.

A “single supplement” can be paid to ensure a private room for the entire tour. The price for this is approximatley $1475 on top of the standard tour price. This can not be covered by Fee-Help.

**Do I need Travel Insurance?**

Travel insurance is mandatory for the Study Tour. We highly recommend you purchase the highest level of cover possible. Participants can arrange their own cover (evidence of this will be required prior to departure) or you can elect to be included in the discounted group Travel Insurance deal arranged for us by Mission Travel. More information will be included in the Application Form.

**What important Passport information do I need to know?**

All participants much have at least 6 months left on their passport (must not expire before August 2014). If participants have non-Australian Passports then please contact us immediately as Visa’s can be difficult to obtain for certain nationalities.

**What do I need to do now?**
1. Ensure the Holy Land Tour fits into your Course Plan
2. Complete the attached Application Form and send in with your deposit to secure your place on the Tour
3. Arrange annual leave for the dates given
4. Ensure your Passport will not expire within 6 months of our travel date

For any queries or to indicate your interest please email us at info@acom.edu.au or call 1800 672 692

Spaces are strictly limited and only a completed Application Form with deposits can guarantee you place on this tour. **Applications close on 31st July 2013**