



JCC Maccabi Games 2023 Information Packet





INTRODUCTION

We are thrilled that you are interested in learning more about the JCC Maccabi Games, and the opportunity to represent our community this summer. **From July 5-25, 2023, the JCC Maccabi Games is going to ISRAEL!!!**

As the largest Jewish youth sport event in the world, the JCC Maccabi Games offers the ultimate experience that participants remember for a lifetime. Our teens, coaches, and families form connections and relationships that transcend the week of the Games and the boundaries of geography. JCC Maccabi teens have gone on to compete in the World Maccabiah Games®, the Pan American Maccabi Games®, professional sports, and even the Olympics. The community of alumni includes familiar names like Olympic swimmers Lenny Krayzelburg and Jason Lezak, Survivor's Ethan Zohn, actor Jason Segal, and more.

Join more than 1,000 Jewish teens from across North America and Israel and get ready to feel the spirit of JCC Maccabi as you represent your community on an international stage, connect and party with teammates, participate in community service, and explore Israel with new friends during this once in a lifetime magical experience.

You will receive a SWAG bag with your uniform and delegation gear that you will wear throughout the week and when we march together into the Olympic-style opening ceremony. Picture yourself walking into a stadium in front of thousands of spectators and looking around knowing all the other teens participating are also Jewish.

Whether you bring home the best swag trade, a gold medal, or new lifelong friendships there is no doubt that you will have the time of your life at the 2023 JCC Maccabi Games.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact stacey.feldman@guraljcc.org

We can't wait to have you as part of the Gural delegation!



JCC Maccabi Games in Israel

Sample Itinerary

During this three-week immersive experience, more than 1,000 Jewish teens from across North America, Israel, and the globe, representing 50+ delegations will experience the magic of JCC Maccabi in Israel.

This transformative experience will begin with an 8-day Olympics-style JCC Maccabi Games experience in the Haifa area. JCC Maccabi delegations will then hit the road for an action-packed and fun-filled tour across the country including visits to Israel's most culturally, religiously, and historically significant sites and opportunities to continue to their JCC Maccabi journey with old and new friends as they explore Israel through the lens of sport. Groups will experience similar itineraries but travel via differing routes throughout these days, reuniting as one large group at various points. ALL delegation itineraries will culminate in an ultimate JCC Maccabi Shabbat and final program days in Jerusalem.

We have provided the following sample overview and itinerary to give you a better feel for this experience. The actual program, including activities and order of travel will vary. A confirmed itinerary will be distributed no later than two weeks prior to the start of the program.

8 Day Olympic Style JCC Maccabi Games

Location	Haifa, Israel	Dates	July 5-13, 2023
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Days 1-9 Games Activities	
Day 1	Travel Day
Day 2	Arrivals in Israel Check-in to JCC Maccabi 'Olympic village' accommodations Orientation and welcome event
Day 3	Sports Practices and Trainings JCC Maccabi Kabbalat Shabbat
Day 4	JCC Maccabi Shabbat Experience
Day 5	Sports Competition or practices Opening Ceremony
Day 6-9	Sports Competition continued
	Hang Time: opportunities to participate in a variety of free-time activities with fellow JCC Maccabi teens and to meet with influential Israeli speakers, coaches, and professional athletes.
	<i>Mifgash</i> (encounter) experience with Israeli peers
	JCC Cares community service projects
	Large social and cultural events Closing Party

12 Day JCC Maccabi Israel Tour

Location Across Israel Dates July 14-25, 2023

Northern Israel

From **Rappelling** or **rafting** and **sport activities** to the **Aqua Kef inflatable water park** every teen will get a taste of adventure before exploring Israel's Northern borders. Look out into Lebanon from the summit of **Mt Bental**, a dormant volcano, or hear the heroic tale of superspy Eli Cohen while taking in the view of Syria during a hike of the **Golan Heights**.

Continue to experience the beauty of the Galilee with a **Lake Kinneret dinner cruise**, visit a **kibbutz**, and tour and enjoy free time to explore the ancient and mystical town of **Tzfat**

Tel Aviv

Explore Israel through the lens of sport. Visit **Kfar Maccabiah**, home of the Global Maccabi Movement, to enjoy a fun day of **sport activities** and interactions with leading figures in the Israeli sport world and visit the newly minted **International Jewish Sport Museum**. Be inspired by visits to leading social impact organizations including **Israel Sport Center for the Disabled** or **Peres Center for Peace**.

Walk in the footsteps of the nation's pioneers as groups visit **Independence Hall**, the very site that in 1948 Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben Gurion declared the State's independence. Take in the history of **Machon Ayalon**, a secret underground ammunition facility, before soaking up the beauty and history of the city of **Jaffa** with a stroll through the ancient port and the colorful flea market.

Get active with a **Krav Maga** workshop or **surfing lesson** in the Mediterranean and enjoy free time to relax and refresh at Tel Aviv's world-famous **beach**, peruse **Nahalat Binyamin artisan market** or barter for souvenirs at **Shuk Ha'Carmel**.

Experience the party as **ALL JCC Maccabi groups reunite** and join thousands of other North American Jewish teens for a night of food, entertainment, and fun at the **RootOne Big Tent event**.

Southern Israel

A once in a lifetime experience as **all 1,000 JCC Maccabi athletes** reunite in the desert for an overnight **Bedouin tent experience** and dinner feast. An action filled adventure awaits with opportunities to **camel ride**, float in the **dead sea**, hike and swim under the **waterfalls of Ein Gedi** and experience the magic of scaling the Herodian desert fortress of **Masada** for sunrise.

Jerusalem

For the final four nights of this ultimate Jewish peoplehood program, all delegations will reunite in the city that is the heart and soul of the Jewish people - Jerusalem. **1,000+ teens** and chaperones will stay at **one hotel complex**, celebrating a very special JCC Maccabi Shabbat experience including a transformative and emotional **Kabbalat Shabbat at the Kotel**, before continuing to experience all that Jerusalem has to offer.

Teens will explore thousands of years of Jewish history as they walk the streets of the **Old City** and rooftops of the **Jewish Quarter** and splash through **Hezekiah's underground aqueduct**.

The group will pay their respects at **Yad Vashem** – the World Holocaust Remembrance Center and **Mount Herzl National Cemetery** to honor Israel's founders, leaders, and fallen soldiers.

No trip to Israel's capital city can be complete without experiencing the vibrancy of modern Jerusalem. Teens will have free time to shop and taste their way around **Machane Yehuda market** and enjoy an evening on **Ben Yehuda Street**.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. WHAT ARE THE JCC MACCABI GAMES®?

The JCC Maccabi Games are an Olympic-style international athletic competition for Jewish teens from communities across North America, Israel, and the globe. Since 1982, when the first Games were held in Memphis, TN, more than 150,000 teens and 500,000 more coaches, volunteers and spectators have participated in 85+ host communities across North America. Today, with 3,000 Jewish teens participating annually, the Games are one of the largest Jewish teen events in the world. In 2023, a special set of JCC Maccabi Games will be held outside of North America for only the second time in history!

More than just sport, the Games are played with a focus on “*rachmanus*” or sportsmanship with the intent to foster long-lasting friendships and connection the Jewish people and Israel. Six official JCC Maccabi *Midot* (values) guide the JCC Maccabi program, helping us remember the greater mission of the Games. We emphasize *Tikkun Olam* (repairing the world), *Kavod* (respect), *Rina* (joy), *Ga’ava* (pride), *Lev Tov* (big hearted), and *Amiut Yehudit* (Jewish peoplehood). Throughout the program, each athlete participates in one of fifteen sports competitions, Olympic-style opening and closing ceremonies, exciting large-scale cultural and social events, community service, and creating friendships and memories that will last a lifetime.

2. WHERE/WHEN ARE THE GAMES THIS YEAR?

This year the Games will be in Israel from July 5-25, 2023

3. WHAT DOES THE JCC MACCABI GAMES IN ISRAEL EXPERIENCE ENTAIL?

See the sample itinerary above and check out this [JCC Maccabi Promo Video](#)

Highlights of the 3-week immersive experience include:

- A week-long JCC Maccabi Games in Haifa in partnership with Maccabi World Union. (Olympic-style sporting competition, sport practices, opening/closing ceremony, large cultural events, and more.)
- A 12-day tour of Israel’s most culturally, religiously, and historically significant sites
- Exploring Israel through a sports lens, including opportunities to meet with influential Israeli speakers, coaches, and professional athletes
- Participating in volunteer service projects

4. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE JCC MACCABI GAMES?

- Jewish teens ages 14 as of July 5th, 2023, and 17 as of July 25th, 2023, are welcome to compete at the Games in Israel
- All athletes must be Jewish, which is defined as follows: One of the athlete's parents is Jewish and the athlete is being raised Jewish or is a Jew by choice and is being raised Jewish. In the spirit of the Games, if the parent or child does not believe that they are Jewish on a year-round basis, then the child should not participate in JCC Maccabi. In the athlete online registration, there is a declaration that contains the eligibility requirements; both the athlete and his/her parent(s) must sign this declaration.

5. WHAT SPORTS ARE OFFERED?

Sports in Israel	Age	Gender
Baseball	17U	Boys
5v5 Basketball	15U and 17U	Boys
5v5 Basketball	17U	Girls
Flag Football	17U	Boys
Flag Football	17U	Girls
Ice Hockey	17U	Coed
Soccer	15U and 17U	Boys
Soccer	17U	Girls
Swimming	15U and 17U	Boys
Swimming	15U and 17U	Girls
Tennis	15U and 17U	Boys
Tennis	15U and 17U	Girls
Volleyball	17U	Girls

6. WHAT IS THE ATHLETIC COMPETITION LIKE?

The competitive level of the participants will vary. There are teens that are elite athletes and then those that are there for the experience, the level of play is very diverse. Some of the sports will have different divisions based on skill levels. Throughout the week, players can expect to play at least four round-robin games/matches before the play-off portion of the games begins. Gold, silver and bronze medals are awarded to the top three winners in each

competition division. Although it is competitive the JCC Maccabi Games emphasize the 'Rachmanus Rule', which is good sportsmanship and fair play. The experience is about more than just sports. It focuses on an all-around experience including building Jewish connections and friendships, travel, community service, and fun-filled social, cultural and educational experiences.

7. WHAT IS A DELEGATION?

Teens from across North America participate in JCC Maccabi representing their 'local' delegation. Typically, this is the delegation represent their home city/local JCC for example Team Atlanta, Team Philadelphia, Team Toronto etc. However, where there is no JCC forming a delegation in the city where a teen resides, they are invited to join the J-Team delegation (the continental delegation) which is comprised of teens who reside in locations across the US and Canada that also do not have a specific 'local' JCC delegation.

8. WHAT IS A MIXED TEAM?

A mixed team is comprised of athletes from multiple delegations. This is common and happens when a delegation does not have enough athletes to field a full team in any given sport. Where a delegation is unable to field a full team, athletes from two or more delegations will be combined to form a mixed team. A coach will be assigned and prior to the trip, teens will have the opportunity to meet and connect with the coach and each other via zoom/phone calls. Where geographically possible and within reasonable driving distance, optional practices might happen in advance and all teams will have the opportunity to practice together in Israel before competition begins. Being on a mixed team can be a great experience and foster lasting friendships with Jewish teens from a variety of locations across the continent!

9. HOW DOES COMMUNITY SERVICE PLAY A ROLE IN JCC MACCABI?

Community Service is a key component to the JCC Maccabi Games experience. Each set of Games includes a 'JCC Cares' project and every athlete and coach takes time away from their sport schedules to participate. Through hands-on experiences, participants explore the Jewish values of *Tzedakah* and *Tikkun Olam* and give back to the local host community through service-based activities.

10. WHAT IS THE FEE FOR THE JCC MACCABI GAMES?

The all-inclusive fee for the 3-week experience is \$4500* (with RootOne Voucher) **OR** \$7500 (without RootOne Voucher)

****Please note:** This is a highly subsidized trip price made possible thanks to the generosity of several philanthropic donors and RootOne, seeded by a generous gift from The Marcus Foundation and powered by The Jewish Education Project. To be eligible for a RootOne Voucher, athletes may not have previously received a RootOne voucher and will be required to complete approximately 8-10 online education hours. Athletes who do not complete the requirements by May 1st will be required to pay an additional \$3,000.*

11. WHAT DOES THE FEE INCLUDE?

JCC Maccabi is an all-inclusive experience. Program fees include Games registration fees, transportation during the Games, uniform, Gural delegation gear, adult supervision and coaches, practices, meals, social events/team activities, and all other accommodations throughout the program. It includes flights to and from and the 2-week tour following the week of competition.

12. DOES MY TRIP INCLUDE INSURANCE?

JCC Maccabi has partnered with Teen Travel Insurance to provide a low-cost, group travel insurance option specifically designed for teen travel. While travel insurance is optional, we strongly encourage families to purchase travel insurance to protect their investment and plan for the unexpected. The Student Deluxe Plan is about \$121 and the Student Deluxe + Cancel For Any Reason Plan is about \$182.

Registration fees for the JCC Maccabi Games in Israel are non-refundable, due to this program being heavily subsidized and the many recoverable upfront costs that are being covered on behalf of the participants. As such, we strongly advise all families to purchase Travel Insurance from their teen as soon as possible. Travel Insurance adds protection for families in case something unexpected occurs, such as changes to travel, loss of luggage, and/or cancellation of the trip due to unforeseen circumstances (i.e. acts of war, teen injures themselves and is not able to travel prior to trip, teen is injured on trip and needs to leave early). This is the best way to insure your investment in the Israel trip.

Medical Insurance:

JCC Maccabi program fees include basic medical insurance that covers treatment and medication while on the ground in Israel; however, it will not cover any pre-existing medical conditions. This means that the policy covers treatment for issues like a stomach bug, broken limb, or dehydration, without any out-of-pocket expenses or paperwork. The policy does not cover any medical conditions for which a teen is already being treated or for which treatment has been received in the past. This exclusion rule also applies to all psychological care. For this reason, teens are required to come on the program with their own medical insurance policy, which includes coverage for short-term travel abroad. If a teen needs to be treated for a preexisting condition during the program, the parents of the teen will be solely responsible for any associated costs. The Teen Travel Insurance may cover pre-existing conditions, which is why we encourage families to take that out separately.

- [U.S. based participants](#)
- [Canadian participants](#)

The Student Deluxe + "Cancellation for Any Reason" (CFAR) policy must be purchased prior to final payment for all related nonrefundable trip costs and is unavailable for New York residents (see notes in [FAQ](#)). All policies must be issued before your final payment is made. JCC Maccabi

is not licensed or authorized to answer questions regarding your teen's travel insurance policy or options. Our team is happy to answer general questions for our families, but all questions regarding any insurance matters must go directly through the contact form on the Teen Travel Insurance Website or email them directly at info@teentravelinsurance.com.

NOTE: this travel Insurance can only be purchased before your final payment for the program is made.

More information is available, email stacey.feldman@guraljcc.org

13. ARE THERE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE?

Please reach out to stacey.feldman@guraljcc.org should you wish to discuss need based funding.

14. WHAT DOES REGISTRATION ENTAIL?

Registration includes submitting the completed registration, personal contact info, a \$1500 non-refundable deposit paid upon signing up, and agreement to the non-refundable remainder of the payment. Additional registration steps are required including medical forms, online registration with t-shirt and uniform sizes, roommate requests etc. Your delegation head will supply detailed information about those next steps.

15. HOW WILL MY CHILD GET TO AND FROM THE GAMES?

The trip includes roundtrip airfare to Israel. Parents will be responsible for bringing athletes to a designated local airport and ensure teens either meet with a designated group adult chaperone at that location. The delegation head will communicate the logistics plan as it becomes available.

16. ARE THERE ADULT CHAPERONES AT JCC MACCABI?

There is a mandatory ratio of 1:8 adults to teens during the week of JCC Maccabi. This includes a delegation head or coaches. Every athlete is assigned to a coach/chaperone whether they are on a team sport, individual sport, or a mixed team. Head coaches are all over 21 and have passed background checks.

17. WHERE WILL MY TEEN STAY?

In **Israel**, all participants will stay in a combination of hotels, dorms, and hostels.

18. CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT SECURITY AT JCC MACCABI?

Safety and security is a top priority at the JCC Maccabi Games. Background checks are utilized for all adult chaperones involved. Participants, spectators, coaches, volunteers, and staff are required to wear a credential to access any JCC Maccabi facility. We work closely with all levels of law enforcement to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all.

For The JCC Maccabi Games in Israel program, JCC Association of North America in partnership with Maccabi World Union and our tour provider, Authentic Israel, is committed to safety and security of the highest order. Our trip is staffed with licensed, experienced professionals to guarantee strict application of the highest safety standards possible, compliance with law & regulations, and maintaining maximum safety for all participants in the JCC Maccabi Games while in Israel. Safe travel is our guiding consideration, and we take a number of steps to reduce security risks in Israel – including traveling on a private bus, staying at accommodations with security, planning our itineraries to avoid areas of concern, traveling with an armed guard, and registering for monitoring through Israel's Situation Room.

19. OUR FAMILY KEEPS KOSHER AND IS OBSERVANT - WILL MY TEEN'S NEEDS BE MET AT JCC MACCABI?

All food served at the JCC Maccabi Games is kosher and all official programming will be Shabbat observant.

20. CAN I USE MY SON OR DAUGHTER'S SCHOOL OR CAMP MEDICAL FORM FOR JCC MACCABI?

No. Maccabi Central will only accept the JCC Maccabi Medical Form which will be provided during the registration process.

21. WHAT HAPPENS IF THERE IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY?

In the case of a medical emergency, the Delegation Head or coach will act as the participant's guardian, will communicate with the parents and ensure teens receive any treatment necessary. Information such as the parent/guardian's birth date and social security number is sometimes necessary to utilize insurance.

22. CAN PARENTS BE SPECTATORS AT THE JCC MACCABI GAMES?

Yes! Parents, family members, and friends are welcome to attend the Games as spectators. Each spectator is required to register online in advance and purchase a spectator pass (\$40 earlybird/\$60 after May 15). A spectator pass gives access to the opening ceremony and sport events. No one will be admitted to a Games site who is not wearing an approved credential. In the coming weeks, your delegation head will share additional information regarding options for spectators who would like to book accommodation through official JCC Maccabi hotel room blocks, opt-in to a variety of tours and special event for spectators and/or sign up for the official [JCC Maccabi Spectator Experience Family Tour](#) which will be an 8-day tour of Israel that will start after the final sport competition is played and once the athletes transition from their time at the Games in Haifa to their own teen tour schedule.

23. HOW CAN I SIGN UP TO BE PART OF THE GURAL DELEGATION AT THE JCC MACCABI GAMES 2023?

Registration is open NOW! Please contact stacey.feldman@guraljcc.org to secure your spot.