



A Program of the Museum of Jewish Heritage

# Jewish Jewels of the Baltics Lithuania, Latvia & Estonia

September 3 – 14, 2017



*Old Town Vilnius, Lithuania*

## Program Overview

Lithuanian Jews, also called Litvaks, were among the most influential scholars, energetic businessmen, and skilled professionals in Europe prior to WWII. In Lithuania, Jewish secular and religious institutions flourished. With more than 100 synagogues and some of the leading rabbinical schools of Europe, Vilnius was affectionately known as the Jerusalem of Lithuania. The YIVO Institute – the leading academic institution for the study of Yiddish language and literature – was founded in Vilnius, and the Gaon of Vilna was an acknowledged and world-renowned Talmudist and scholar.

In nearby Latvia and Estonia, Jews also played important roles in the economic and intellectual life of their countries. Their Jewish communities flourished – with customs and culture impacted by German, Russian, Polish, and Lithuanian influence and traditions. Over the years, such luminaries as Isaiah Berlin, Rav Kook, Mark Rothko, Louis Kahn, Abba Eban, and Amos Oz emerged from Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian families.

Join scholar-in-residence and expert on Lithuanian Jewry, Professor Sid Leiman. Our trip will begin in the picturesque city of Vilnius and continue through the countryside of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. Among other places, we will visit Trakai, ancient capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; the charming city of Riga, a World Heritage Site; and Tallinn, an architectural wonder. Throughout the journey travelers will enjoy good company, magnificent countryside, and Professor Leiman's fascinating lectures which will provide invaluable context and insights.



We are dedicated to making your experience rich in content and superior in comfort.

This unique travel program combines the expertise and resources of two organizations that cherish the traditions, achievements, and faith of Jewish communities – past and present – around the world. Jewish Heritage Travel and the Museum of Jewish Heritage are delighted to have the opportunity to share this rich, varied, and poignant history and culture with you on these select trips. We look forward to traveling with you.

## Program Details

Land program cost: \$6500, for registration by March 15, 2017. Cost after March 15, 2017: \$6650. (plus \$54 Museum of Jewish Heritage membership fee for non-members)

- Eleven nights accommodations at 5-star deluxe hotels
- Breakfast daily; five lunches and three dinners
- All group transportation via deluxe coach
- All lectures, presentations, guided tours, museum and site entrance fees

*\*Per person, based on double occupancy. Single supplement available at \$1200. Gratuities (\$160).*

*A non-refundable deposit of \$1000 per person will secure your place on the trip. A second non-refundable deposit of \$1,000 per person due on March 1, 2017. The balance is due in full by April 30, 2017.*

## Tentative Daily Itinerary\*

### Sunday, September 3

Arrive in Vilnius, check in to the 5-star, deluxe Hotel Kempinski – superbly located in the City center. Rest and relax. Late afternoon: (optional) walking tour of Cathedral Square and surrounding area.

Evening: Overview by our scholar, Professor Sid Leiman, followed by an opportunity to get to know one another. Orientation and opening dinner at our hotel (included).



*5-star, deluxe Hotel Kempinski.*

### Monday, September 4

City tour of Vilnius, including Old Town (UNESCO World Heritage site) with its main historical attributes: the Cathedral, Gothic Corner, and Dawn Gate – one of the most important religious, historical, and cultural monuments of the city.

Following lunch on our own, we will visit the State Jewish Museum. This small museum displays copies of diaries and handwritten notes about life in the ghetto as well as several special objects from the Great Synagogue that miraculously survived World War II.



*Synagogue in Vilna.*

Evening presentation by Professor Leiman on “Spiritual Resistance in the Vilna Ghetto: The Rabbis Daughter.” Dinner on our own.

### Tuesday, September 5

Depart our hotel for Keidan (also known as Kedainiai), once an important Jewish Shtetl. Here, we will visit the Town synagogue and Museum, tour Old Town and have lunch (included). Following lunch in Keidan, we will drive to Kaunas (also known as Kovno) and visit a Synagogue that was founded in 1871. Before the Holocaust, this radically designed, neo-Baroque, Synagogue was one of more than 35 synagogues and Jewish prayer houses in Kaunas. Though few Jews remain in Kaunas, the synagogue houses a stunning Torah ark and encapsulates the rich and famous history of Jewish Kovno. Before returning to Vilnius, stop at the “Ninth Fort.” Now a museum, it contains collections of historical artifacts related to both Soviet and Nazi atrocities.

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*Trakai – ancient capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.*

### Wednesday, September 6

This morning, we will board our coach and travel to Trakai - ancient capital of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Here, we will tour historic Trakai Castle and visit the Karaites Ethnographic Museum- situated on a street dotted with picturesque wooden cottages. Many of these cottages were built by the Karaites, an ancient sect and offshoot of Judaism, whose descendants arrived in Trakai from the Crimea in the 15th century. Lunch in Trakai (included) before visiting Paneriai Forest (the site commemorated by a memorial to the victims of the Holocaust where over 100,000 victims were executed) before returning to Vilnius.

Evening presentation by Professor Leiman: “The Righteous Convert (Ger Tzedek) of Vilna: Real or Imaginary?” Dinner on our own.

## Traveling with You...

### Scholar in Residence



**Sid Leiman, Ph.D.** is Professor Emeritus of Jewish History and Literature at Brooklyn College, and

teaches at the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Yeshiva University. He has taught at Harvard, Yale, and Oxford, as well as the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Author of *Rabbinic Responses to Modernity* (2007) and *The Canonization of Hebrew Scripture* (1991), he has contributed entries to *Encyclopedia Britannica* and *Encyclopedia Judaica*. Dr. Leiman frequently leads Jewish historical tours to Central and Eastern Europe.

## Traveling with You...

### Trip Leader



**Aryeh Maidenbaum, Ph.D.**, with a strong background in the fields of History, Psychology and Jewish

Studies, has more than 25 years experience in organizing and leading educational tours – including trips focusing on Jewish culture and history. Director of the N.Y. Center for Jungian Studies, Dr. Maidenbaum received his Doctorate from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Former faculty member at N.Y.U., he is a contributing author to *Current Theories of Psychoanalysis*. Among his publications are “The Search for Spirit in Jungian Psychology”; *Lingering Shadows: Jungians, Freudians and Anti-Semitism; and Jung and the Shadow of Anti-Semitism*



Riga, Latvia

### Thursday, September 7

This morning we will visit the Medieval Jewish quarter and ghetto and tour the Tolerance Museum before returning to our hotel in time for lunch on our own. Afternoon free for exploring Vilnius on our own and/or shopping.

Evening: Special guest lecture by Dovid Katz, PhD. An American-born, Vilnius-based scholar, author and cultural historian of Lithuanian Jewry, Dr. Katz is the author of many articles on Yiddish that have been published in encyclopedias (including YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe).

### Friday, September 8

Morning departure for Riga, with a stop en-route at the Baroque Rundale Palace for a private guided tour. One of the most outstanding monuments of Baroque and Rococo architecture in Latvia, it was built as a summer residence for Ernst Johann Biron, Duke of Courland and a favorite of the Russian Empress Anna Ioannovna. Lunch at Rundale Palace (included).

Upon arrival in Riga, check in to the deluxe Grand Palace Hotel with time to rest and relax before a festive Shabbat dinner (included) at our hotel.

### Saturday, September 9

Morning free to relax or attend Services at Peitav Shul. The only Synagogue to be spared during the Nazi occupation, this unique gem is one of a few ceremonial buildings constructed in the manner of Art Nouveau. Ancient Egyptian motifs – stylized palm-branches and lotus flowers – decorate the building. A must see.



Peitav Shul

Afternoon: (Optional) walking tour of historic Old Riga- an area designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site- with its many wooden buildings and art nouveau architecture. Evening free: dinner on our own.

## Trip Guide



**Lucy Rapoport** has guided and accompanied many previous Jewish heritage tours – all to great acclaim.

Born and schooled in England before moving to Italy as a young adult, Lucy is fluent in Italian, German, French, and Spanish and has been a tour manager for more than 20 years. Specializing in Europe, Lucy has accompanied previous Jewish groups to such places as Lithuania, Krakow, Prague, Berlin, Croatia, Spain, Northern and Southern Italy, and Sicily. With Lucy's attention to detail, knowledge of history, and considerable expertise in guiding groups, participants will be well served on this trip.



### **Sunday, September 10**

Depart hotel for visit to Riga's Jewish Community Center and Museum for a private guided tour. Following lunch on our own in Old Town, we will visit the Zanis Lipke Museum and the Rumbula Forest. Dinner on our own.

### **Monday, September 11**

Depart Riga for Tallinn, Capital of and largest city in Estonia. Along the way, we will stop in the sunny, seaside town of Pärnu for lunch (included) at Villa Ammende before arrival in Tallinn and check in to the deluxe, boutique Hotel Telegraaf with ample time to rest. Evening: presentation by Professor Leiman, "Lifeboat Ethics: A Jewish Perspective," followed by dinner on our own.

### **Tuesday, September 12**

We will begin today with a visit to Tallinn's new Jewish Community Center and architecturally fascinating Synagogue. Lunch (included) followed by a private guided tour of the spectacular Kumu Museum, with a tour encompassing the building's architecture and its permanent collection of Estonian art. In 2008, the museum received the European Museum of the Year Award – considered one of the most prestigious in Europe. Evening free: Dinner on our own.

### **Wednesday, September 13**

Morning walking tour of Old Town, including Town Hall Square; Toompea Castle; Dominican Monastery, and Alexander Nevsky Cathedral - a magnificent example of a Russian Revival cupola cathedral. Along the way, a guided tour of the Nigliste Museum, with its collection of medieval and early modern ecclesiastical art. (The best-known work in the museum is the painting "Danse Macabre" from the workshop of Bernt Notke, a master from Lübeck). Break for lunch on our own.

Afternoon: Free for last minute shopping or exploring Tallin on our own. Closing meeting, followed by farewell closing dinner (included).

### **Thursday, September 14**

Depart for U.S.

*\*Please Note: daily schedule may be modified subject to weather, unanticipated changes at sites on the itinerary...and/or group energy.*



## Accommodations

### The Kempinski Hotel Cathedral Square

The Kempinski Hotel Cathedral Square is a truly distinctive hotel located on Cathedral Square, featuring breathtaking views over the UNESCO-listed Old Town. Major tourist attractions, such as the Presidential Palace and the main shopping street, Gedimino Boulevard (home to many designer boutiques), in addition to galleries, are all within walking distance.



### The Grand Palace

The Grand Palace Riga was originally built in 1877 as the Central Bank of Latvia and was converted into a boutique 5-star hotel in 2000. It now offers a setting that encompasses luxury, warmth, and comfort. Voted as Latvia's Leading Hotel, the Grand Palace Hotel is located in the heart of the sightseeing district of Riga Old Town.



### Hotel Telegraaf

Hotel Telegraaf is an elegant 19th-century building with a stunning façade perfectly placed in the heart of Tallinn's historical Old Town. Formerly a telephone exchange, it has been masterfully converted to a boutique hotel provide the highest standards of accommodations and cuisine.

## Registration Information

### Participation

Limited to 30 participants, the program will entail considerable walking, including uneven terrain. Participants need to be in active, good health, able to keep up with the group, ready to travel and experience group and cultural differences with grace. If you have any questions, or need help with your travel plans, please call the Jewish Heritage Travel Office at 845.256.0197.

### Insurance

Participants are urged to purchase travel insurance for losses necessitated by having to cancel participation due to health issues. For your convenience, insurance forms will be sent upon registration, or consult your own insurance agent. Please contact The Jewish Heritage Travel office at 845.256.0197 for more information.

### Cancellations

Refunds and Insurance: Cancellations received up to 120 days prior to departure: full refund less non-refundable deposits, per person; 119-90 days prior to departure: 50% refund per person after non-refundable deposits. No refunds after this date.

### Changes

All rights are reserved by the Program Directors to make faculty substitutions and/or to modify the itinerary (including hotels) as needed.



Jewish Heritage Travel

A Program of the Museum of Jewish Heritage

### How to register

#### Mail

Fill out this registration form and mail with your check or credit card information to:

Jewish Heritage  
Travel Program  
27 North Chestnut Street  
New Paltz, NY 12561

#### Fax

Fill out this registration form and mail with your check or credit card information and fax to:

**845.256.0196**

#### Telephone

Call our office  
**845.256.0197**  
Monday-Friday, 10am-5pm

#### Disclaimer of Responsibility

By registering for this program, participant specifically waives any and all claims of action against the Museum of Jewish Heritage, and the Jewish Heritage Travel office and their respective staffs for damages, loss, injury, accident or death incurred by any person in connection with this tour. The Museum of Jewish Heritage, and the Jewish HeritageTravel office and their respective staffs assume no responsibility or liability in connection with the service of any train, vessel, carriage, aircraft or other conveyance which may be used wholly or in part in the performance of their duty to the passengers. Neither will the Museum of Jewish Heritage, and the Jewish Heritage Travel office or their staffs be responsible for any injury, death, loss, accident, delay or irregularity through neglect or default of any company or person engaged in carrying out the purposes for which tickets, vouchers, or coupons are issued. No responsibility is accepted for losses or expenses due to sickness, weather, strikes, wars and other causes. In the event it becomes necessary or advisable for any reason whatsoever to alter the itinerary or arrangements, such alterations may be made without penalty. All rights reserved to require any participant to withdraw from the tour at his/her own expense when such an action is determined by the tour staff to be in the best interest of the participant's health and safety, and that of the group in general.

## Registration For:

Trip title/country

Dates of travel

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name

Address

City

State

Zip

Email address

Phone number

Cell phone number

### PARTICIPANT NAMES:

### ACCOMMODATIONS

I would like a single room ( for single room supplement please see trip details)

I'll share a room with:

Please share any special information we should know to enhance your experience.

### FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

I will make my own flight arrangements .  I need assistance and will call (845-256-0197).

### DEPOSIT

Enclosed is a check made payable to Jewish Heritage Travel in the amount of : \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Please charge \$\_\_\_\_\_ to my:  Master Card  Visa  American Express

card holder's name

card number

exp. date: mo/yr

validation code

Signature

Please send your nonrefundable deposit for \$1000 per participant by mail or fax (see details at left)