



ISRAEL EXCHANGE

With Israel Arts and Science Academy



"Is it possible there is something in your bag about which you don't know?" With these words our exchange to Israel started at Václav Havel Airport Prague. After the five-hour flight with UP EL AL's little Boeing 737, we landed at *Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv, Terminal 3 (the picture below)*. Then we continued by a minibus to



Jerusalem, to Israel Arts and Science Academy (IASA).

We were cordially welcome by our exchange partners there and left our baggage at dormitories. In the evening we even visited *Yehuda market in the western Jerusalem (the photo at the bottom)*. We enjoyed some falafel there which was after the long journey very nice. As we finished it we split to

small groups and explored the whole market. We saw almost everything there – candy fruit markets, pubs, cafés and tea rooms with water pipes called "Nargilah".



On Friday we visited the *Deer Valley* (displayed in the picture on the right) where we enjoyed walking between deer, the view of the “Holy Land” (also in the picture - would you believe this is Holy Land? :D) and also the lunch!



Then we moved to the *Monastery of the Cross*, wherefrom the Jesus Christ’s Cross might come. (The interior of a chapel there and the exterior of the monastery is shown by next two pictures.)



After seeing the Valley and the monastery in the morning, we moved back to IASA. Afterwards we packed some necessary things for the Shabbat, which we spent with our exchange partners.



Eitan took me for example to the *military cemetery (upper picture)* which I regarded as a really impressive

place. The atmosphere is very specific there and also the concept of this military cemetery is quite different to the Czech ones.

From the military cemetery we smoothly got to the *Mt. Herzl*, the site of the national cemetery (*second picture*).



Our Shabbat dinner took place at Eitan's grandparents. This was very pleasant. Eitan's grandpa emigrated from Prague when he was three years old, so we had a lot to talk about.

In the Shabbat morning we went with Markéta, Naomi and her family to Abu Gosh where we bought some humus and falafel in a famous humus place. At noon we returned to Jerusalem to *an abandoned quarter of Lifta* where we enjoyed a picnic. After the meal we explored some of the *old buildings there* (pictures on this page).

We also walked through a *water tunnel* which was about hundred meters long and ended in a small pool. *Markéta is with Eitan in the picture on the next page.*







In the afternoon we moved to En Kerem where we visited the church of St. John Baharim, the Spring of Virgin Mary and the *church of the Visitation* (wherefrom comes the picture above).

In the evening Eitan showed me the centre of the western Jerusalem where we walked through the *Jaffa Street* (the first picture) to the Old city wall, passing City hall, YMCA and central bus station to the *Chords*



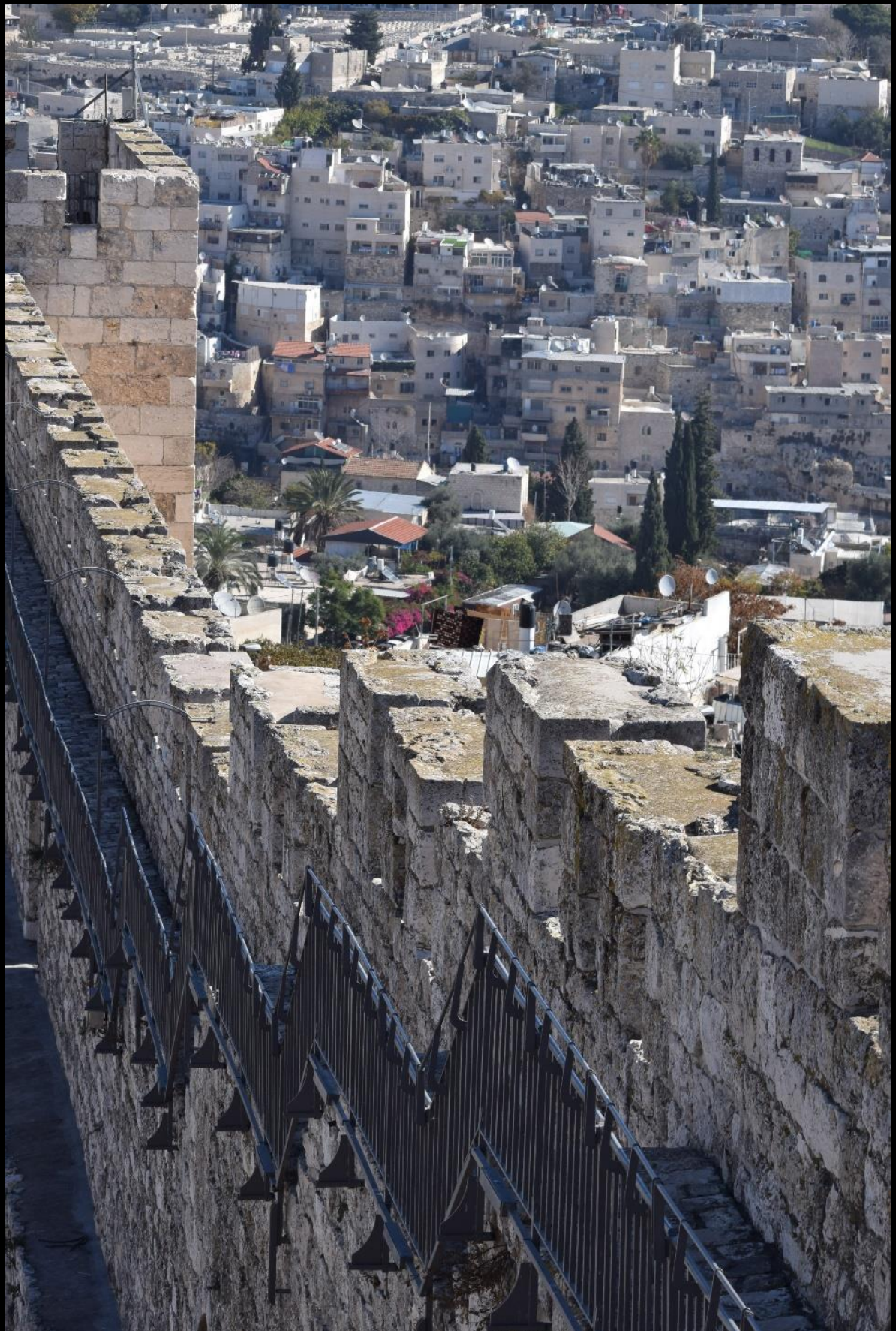
Bridge. I really liked it because of its impressive construction by Santiago Calatrava who used just one pillar to support the whole 360-meter-long curved bridge (illustrated by the second picture).

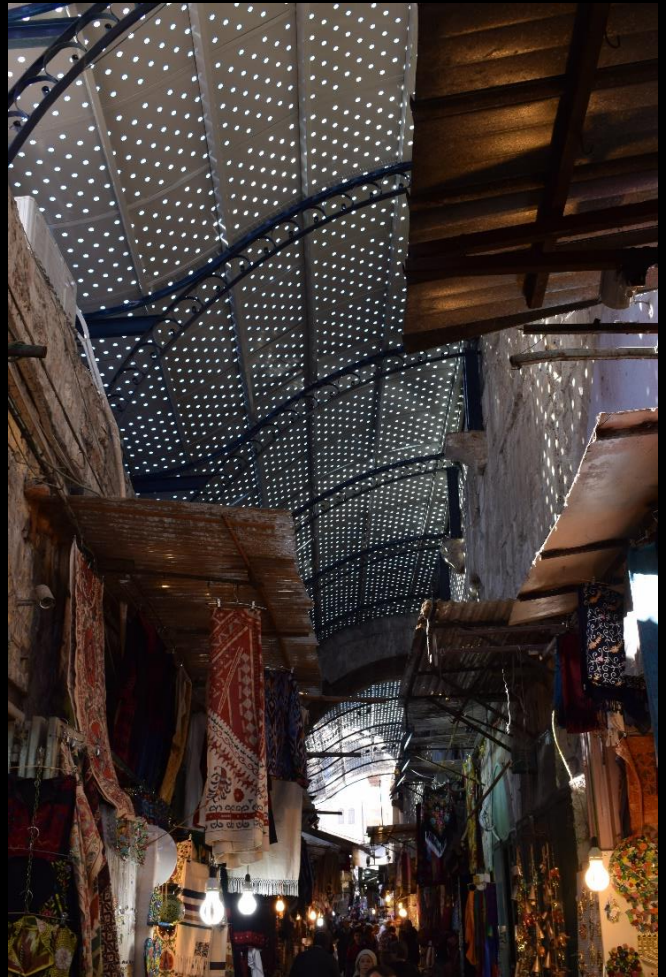


On Sunday we met in the morning at IASA lobby. Our Israeli partners had to go to school and we went to visit the Old City with our teachers.

First, we walked around the *city wall* (picture on the right) and through the narrow streets of the Old City till the lunch which took place at “Lina” restaurant.

Pictures on the next page portray the Olive Mountain with a large cemetery and the narrow streets of the Old city with lot of different types of ceilings.





The afternoon we spent by inspecting the *Church of the Holy Sepulchre* (the exterior as well as the interior on the photos), visiting the shops discussing the prices or just walking around...

In the evening we all met in a catholic church in the western Jerusalem, where we celebrated the Holy Mass and talked about catholic Christians in Jerusalem.

At night the Israeli students took us to one café they like to chat in.





For Monday there was a trip planned to city of Acre so we had to meet at 6:40 in the morning. A little bit funny was after about twenty minutes waiting we realised that our bus got somehow lost. Actually it was somewhere by the Dead Sea...

After about an hour our bus finally arrived without any mistakes right next to the IASA so at ten o'clock we were standing on the *massive city wall in Acre (first picture on this site)*.



From the city wall we moved to the crusader fortress built in the 12th century by Knights Templars.

We got some audio guides and walked through the *old chambers* (one of them – *The Hall of Pillars* – on the picture).



After sightseeing the fortress we visited the exterior of a mosque (wherefrom the picture, where we can see Bětko with Avishai stroking a cat, comes). Then we moved to an Arabian restaurant for some hummus for lunch. After we finished the lunch we continued through the Templars tunnel from the city centre to the coast (picture at the bottom).



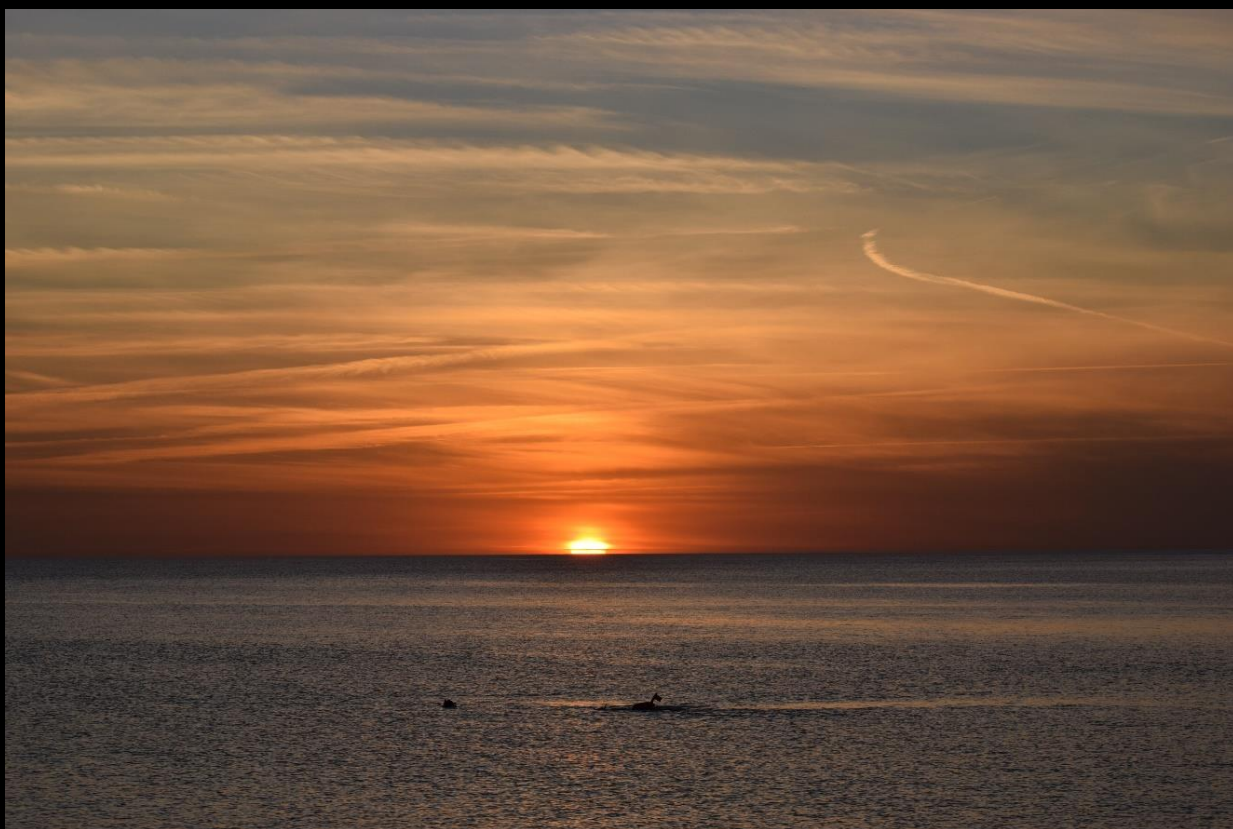


From Acre we moved by coach southwards passing Haifa and got off on a nice wild beach. We took a short walk along it (*the photo above*) for about 4 km.





The timing was just perfect in consideration of the sunset which was exactly at the end of our walk along the coast.



On Tuesday we met in the morning for a so called "City Rally" meaning we divided to some mixed "international" ☺ groups and walked around the city visiting some important places (like Muslim cemetery, Ethiopian church, *The Great synagogue (next two pictures)*, YMCA etc.



At noon we said goodbye to the Israeli students (who had to return to school) and continued to the *Gethsemane garden* (picture on the right) and subsequently to the Olive Mountain.



View of the Dome of the Rock from the foothills of the Olive Mountain.



Pictures of the Jewish cemetery and of a view through a window of the Dominus Flevit church.



On the top of the mountain a brilliant view opened to us (Dome of the Rock, Temple Mount and the western Jerusalem in the background).



After some sightseeing on the Olive Mountain we went back to the Old City where we did stroll on our own. We visited the rooftops wherefrom we saw *The Western Wall* (as well as on Sunday) – *above*.

On Wednesday it was the only rainy day of the week. However it did not matter because we visited *the Holocaust museum - Yad Va'Shem* (pictures from the exterior of the entrance building as well as from the interior – next page).







The rainy weather even strengthened the atmosphere of the whole place. I personally really liked the design of the whole area.

On the picture at the bottom we can see the Memorial of the Transports, which is one of many memorials in Yad Va'Shem.



Thursday was unhappily our last day in Israel. We moved with the Israeli to Tel Aviv-Jaffo, where we did some sightseeing. At noon we split to groups where each of us got twenty Shekels and a task to buy something for lunch. Eventually we met after a while to go to the beach together where we could enjoy our meals.

We had a great time there eating some falafel with a view of the Mediterranean sea.





We enjoyed about an hour and half on the beach chatting together or walking along the coast. Afterwards we had to go to our coach and move to the airport where we said each others goodbyes for about a half year.

Then we jumped after some security checks on our plane to Prague full of great experience and looking forward to the second part of the exchange in Prague on April 2018.



