



THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM
The Robert H. Smith Faculty
of Agriculture, Food & Environment
Division for External Studies
Rehovot, Israel

The 2nd International Post Graduate Course **RURAL TOURISM: THE ISRAELI EXAMPLE**

UPCOMING -- Dates Pending

Israel is a small nation (about the size of New Jersey) with great geographical diversity – ranging from deserts, caves, and craters, to forests, mountains, beaches, and lakes - - presenting numerous opportunities for outdoor sports and wildlife enjoyment. The modern country is also rich in history with a plethora of museums and archaeological sites – including ancient mines and presses, remains of biblical cities, Greek & Roman ruins, Byzantine mosaics, crusader castles, and Ottoman fortresses. Israel is perhaps most known for being home to three of the world's major religions, with various cultures and lifestyles represented in a population that lives in urban areas as well as rural villages, farms, and kibbutzim.

With such a broad scope of interesting sites and opportunities, it is no surprise that tourism is a major industry in Israel, employing approximately 100,000 people and contributing nearly \$3 billion to the GDP. The government allocates over \$60 million to the Ministry of Tourism, which actively supports rural tourism. One major recent initiative is the promotion of and investment in the cycling tourism industry with plans for a 1200 km Israel Cycling Trail. The Tourism Ministry is also investing in increasing tourism facilities in the Negev (southern desert region). Citing the statistic "that 85 percent of rural tourism in Israel took place in the north or the south of the country," the Ministry is focusing on rural tourism in those regions as a means to help reduce "the economic gap between the periphery and the center of the country" (Negev Tourism to Get Funding Injection, 2009, October 30. *The Jerusalem Post*, Metro, page 10.)

Rural tourism is encouraged and expanding in Israel. Aspects of the agricultural sector are undergoing a transition to attract tourists for stays that range from leisurely, romantic couple get-aways or health spa retreats, to family-friendly environments or stimulating adventures. In many of the agrarian settings, room and board are supplemented with activities designed to draw both the international and local tourist. Vineyards have transformed to boutique wineries, offering tours and brunches. Kibbutzim whose existence relied almost exclusively on farming years ago, have now built guest houses among groves, created museums that honor and teach the history of founders, and offer agricultural demonstrations to visitors. Families living in moshav farming villages take advantage of proximities to tourist sites by hosting guests in cabins built behind their own house, with yards that feature gardens, hammocks, gazebos, and, sometimes, even a small swimming pool. Various rural communities, such as Beduins and Druze, host tourists who learn about their culture while dining on native dishes, surrounded by the native décor.

Israel is rich in examples that are applicable – and even inspiring -- to people in other countries seeking to understand or adapt basic principles of the genre. A broader view of rural tourism takes into account the implications for the community and environment: Tourism provides rural communities with income without the loss of their land to expanding urbanization. A global perspective of this practice is regarded favorably by environmental scientists, who consider rural tourism – in its various forms -- a worthwhile income alternative for consideration by regions facing deforestation due to logging or to accommodate large-scale grazing. Rural tourism protects the rural environment, provides income to those living in rural communities, and presents numerous enjoyable options to tourists.

This trend is explored by **The Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food, and Environment**, located in Rehovot. The **Hospitality, Food Resources and Tourism Management Program** of the Faculty's **Department of Agricultural Economics and Management**, teaches, conducts research on, and advises on issues relating to *Rural Tourism*. Researchers stay current on international trends, as well as significant aspects in designing and marketing these endeavors, as they analyze the factors that influence the industry's success, and the economic impact and value for the society and the environment.

A large number of diverse rural tourism sites are in relatively close geographical proximity to the Faculty campus. This, as well as the experience and expertise of the Faculty's researchers in the **Hospitality, Food Resources and Tourism Management Program**, combine to enrich this course. A well-received previous program here, tailor-made for Tourism majors at a New York institution of higher education, highlights the benefits of this international endeavor: the insights and expertise of Faculty researchers, and on-site exposure to aspects of the tourism industry, enhancing the academic experience at a renowned institution.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The aim of the course is to expose participants to a variety of forms of rural tourism, a range of factors influencing rural tourism, the benefits of these endeavors to the community and environment, and basic principles that should guide the entrepreneur who manages such a venture. The course is intended for college students with a background in environmental science, business, and hospitality and tourism. It is our anticipation that participants will enrich their academic background with the knowledge and experience gained on this course, while simultaneously establishing a network of internationals with a common interest, which may serve as the basis for future cooperation among and between the participants and the researchers of the **Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food & Environment**.

Regular staff members of the Faculty and other experts will conduct the academic program via lectures, presentations, exercises, discussions, and professional field trips.

PROGRAM OF STUDIES

- Rural Economic Development
- Environmental Overview
- Recent Trends in Rural Tourism
- Considerations in Designing a Business Plan for a Rural Tourism Venture
- Marketing and Advertising
- Policies, Laws, and Regulations Influencing Rural Tourism
- Problems, Challenges and Creative Solutions
- Transforming an Agrarian Business into a Hospitality Enterprise

- Themes Uniting Room, Meals and Activities
- Interaction and Dual Influence of Rural Tourism on Residents & Businesses
- Politics and the Influence of Groups in Encouraging Rural Tourism

The types of rural tourism covered will include:

- Cultural tourism in rural communities
- Adventure tourism
- Spa retreats
- Hobby and educational getaways
- Gourmet and boutique winery destinations

On completion of the course and fulfillment of its requirements, each participant will receive a certificate, which will be accredited by many universities. Each participant will prepare a final project, which will be reviewed and graded. The project should apply knowledge acquired during the course to a problem in the participant's country of origin. Therefore, it is advisable to bring relevant background material and updated information. Full attendance is required at all lessons. Lessons are comprised of presentations, discussions of assigned reading material, and professional field trips. Sightseeing tours will be held. Computers will be used extensively, and instruction will be given, as needed, to achieve the required level of proficiency.

REQUIREMENTS

Candidates interested in attending this program require:

- An academic background in business, administration, management, tourism, recreation, economics, environmental science, agriculture or a related field from a recognized university.
- Previous academic studies in English or an authorized certificate of English proficiency at a level of at least 89 on the internet-based TOEFL scale or an internationally recognized equivalent. (The language of instruction is English. Therefore, participants whose native tongue isn't English, must furnish proof of proficiency in this language.)
- An official certificate of good health.
- Professional experience in the field.
- Letters of recommendation from the candidate's place of work or study.

THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem was opened in 1925, preceding the establishment of the State of Israel by over two decades. The University was designed to be a world class institution of higher learning and research. Today, the Hebrew University comprises 7 faculties, 15 schools, some 60 research centers, a present student body of about 24,000 and a tenured-track faculty of some 1,500. One third of its enrollment is at the M.Sc. and Ph.D. level.

THE ROBERT H. SMITH FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT, REHOVOT

The Hebrew University's Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment was established in 1942 in Rehovot, at a distance of some 55 km (35 miles) from the main campus of the University in Jerusalem, due to considerations of climate and soil conditions.

Israeli agriculture – from its early years as rock-covered land and desert sand with little fertile soil and water—has been transformed. Today, Israel is world-renowned for the creation of technologies and strategies that enable efficient use of extremely limited

natural resources to attain maximal results. The Faculty's researchers are at the forefront of these innovations and continue to advance agriculture, increasing food production, strengthening the Israeli economy, training future scientists, protecting the environment, and sharing the benefits of Israeli discoveries with other nations.

The Faculty today has a student body of 2,440 students. It is the only institute of higher education in Israel offering university degrees in agriculture, and is also home to the only Schools of Nutritional Sciences and of Veterinary Medicine. The Faculty offers academic programs leading to B.Sc., M.Sc. and Ph.D. degrees in Agriculture, B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in Nutrition, and a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree.

The Faculty's **Division for External Studies** was established in 1986 and organizes local and international study programs, including long-and short-term courses, and tailor-made seminars. Through these academic ventures, graduates from abroad explore a new land and culture while participating in post-graduate programs that utilize the achievements and research of the Faculty, expanding their knowledge in specific fields and creating partnerships for future cooperation.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

The Division for External Studies is conducting this 30-day course. Classes will be held at the Faculty's Rehovot campus, and supplemented with professional field trips around the country. Single bedroom accommodation in a shared apartment will be provided in our fully equipped guesthouse on campus. Meals and supplies for cooking will be provided. Both laundry (on campus) and dry cleaning (in town) are at the participant's expense.

Please note:

- Participants are insured for medical care during their stay in Israel. This does not include preexisting conditions and/or major dental care.
- Personal belongings are not insured, and are the responsibility of each individual.
- Participants who take regular medication are requested to bring enough medicine for the duration of the course.
- Participants who wear glasses are advised to bring a spare pair.
- We recommend that hand luggage (a carry-on bag) include basic toiletries, as well as all medications, and a change of clothes for the first day (in case of a delay in the delivery of checked baggage).

TRANSPORTATION: The participant is responsible for the arrangement of and payment for air transportation. Those accepted to the course should supply flight details to us and receive information on a pre-paid transportation service from the airport to our campus in Rehovot.

COST

The fee per participant is **US \$4,500** which covers tuition, board, lodging and travel in Israel as provided within the program of studies. This fee **does not include travel costs** to and from home countries, or incidental expenses.

A non-refundable application fee of **US \$80** must be submitted with the completed application form, due by **xxxx**. Application materials received **xxx** require an application fee of **\$100**. Full payment for accepted applicants is due by **xxxx**. Payments are to be made in US dollars (\$).

COMMUNICATION

Application forms and questions should be directed to:

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