

FRJC  
The Foundation for Remote Jewish Communities  
*presents*

# SOUTHEAST ASIA

*through Jewish eyes™ 2020*

16 days visiting Singapore, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia & Vietnam

*Escorted by Rabbi Rachel Safman*



Dear Fellow Jewish Traveler,

As leader of the next Jewish Eyes™ tour of Southeast Asia, I want to invite you to join me on a voyage that may redefine your “Jewish world,” as it has mine. For more than ten years before becoming a Conservative rabbi, I lived and worked in Southeast Asia (northern Thailand and Singapore), while serving on the Faculty of Sociology at the National University of Singapore. My research, which focused on the societies of mainland Southeast Asia, gave me an insider’s perspective on life in Thailand, Myanmar (formerly known as Burma), Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Singapore and allowed me to travel extensively throughout the region.

Southeast Asia was my Jewish home for a good portion of my adult life. Indeed, it was after leading progressive Jewish communities in Singapore and Chiang Mai that I decided to enter rabbinical school, and I remain passionate about the region’s Jewish history and Jewish potential.

It is therefore with great enthusiasm that I extend to you an invitation to join me on this, my third Jewish Eyes™ tour, which will take us to Singapore (pictured above), Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. We will visit the only country in the world – apart from Israel – whose first democratically elected head of government was a Jew. We will be walking in the footsteps of the Baghdadi traders who helped open Asia to the West and made significant contributions to the economy and society of the region during the reign of Queen Victoria.

More importantly, our travels will bring us into contact with individuals who remain an integral part of the fabric of Southeast Asian society today: an Israeli environmentalist working to preserve Cambodia’s rainforest, a Jewish lawyer working to ensure the future of Singaporean democracy, and Jewish teachers who are educating Thailand’s young people and reaching out to that country’s most disadvantaged minorities.

If you have any questions, please email me, Rabbi Rachel Safman ([rsafman@bethel-nl.org](mailto:rsafman@bethel-nl.org)) or Lotus Tours, (212) 267-5414 [info@lotustours.us](mailto:info@lotustours.us). If you wish to reserve a spot, please complete the reservation form inside and, along with your deposit, mail it to FRJC (Foundation for Remote Jewish Communities). The tour cost includes a tax-deductible donation to FRJC. *This tour is limited to 24 participants.*

**~ EARLY BIRD OFFER ~**  
**register by Oct 3, 2019 ~ SAVE \$180 p.p.**

# SOUTHEAST ASIA through Jewish eyes™ 2020

## Apr 21, Tue Check-in at Los Angeles

Evening check-in at JFK or LAX at Cathay Pacific.

## Apr 22, Wed Departure to Lotusland

Board your wide-body flight. Cross the International Dateline and lose one day.

## Apr 23, Thu Arrive Singapore

Morning arrival. You'll be met and transferred to the Carlton Hotel (or similar), within close walking distance of the synagogue. Brief afternoon orientation tour including the Cricket Club, Little India with its fragrant spices and joss sticks. Rabbi Safman will discuss her experiences as rabbi of the Jewish Community of Singapore. You'll learn of the first Prime Minister of Singapore, David Marshall, who was also president of the Jewish Community, and meet a special guest at dinner at one of Singapore's most popular vegetarian restaurants.

## Apr 24, Fri Singapore

Visit Parliament House, the world famous marina incl. a boat ride on the river, the exotic gardens where you will see a spectacular variety of orchids and other tropical flora, and Synagogue Chesed El, built by Sir Menasseh Meyer, patriarch of the Community. Services and Dinner at the synagogue.

## Apr 25, Sat Shabbat in Singapore

Services at Magen Aboth. Afternoon walking tour. This evening, dinner in Little India followed by a visit to the spectacular Gardens By the Bay (after dark).

## Apr 26, Sun fly to Yangon

Morning departure for Burma. where you will visit the historic and spectacular Shwedagon Pagoda covered in solid gold, and historic Musmeah Yeshua Synagogue, with its soaring ceiling and beautiful columns. Rabbi Safman will discuss her unique experiences in Southeast Asia and reveal why a remote synagogue in Burma contained more than 120 Torah scrolls. Park Royal Hotel (or similar).

## Apr 27, Mon Bagan excursion

Rudyard Kipling called Burma "the pearl of Asia" and having been isolated for so many years, it is one of the few untouched, unspoiled destinations in the world today. This morning, fly to Bagan, the cradle of Myanmar culture and known as "the city of 4 million pagodas" incl. famous Khay Min Ga Temple. Return to Yangon in the evening.

## Apr 28, Tue Fly to Northern Thailand

A brief flight brings you to Chiangmai in Thailand's mountainous north. Walk through the 'old town' where monks coexist with internet cafes and sacred temples.



## Apr 29, Wed In Chiangmai

The former seat of the Lanna Kingdom, Chiang Mai's countryside of dense rainforest is interspersed with waterfalls and rice paddies. Visit the hilltribes, and Wat Doi Suthep and San Kamphaeng. You'll meet friends of Rabbi Safman who are involved in conservation efforts that may have global impact.

## Apr 30, Th Fly to Bangkok ~ The King & You

A brief flight brings us to Bangkok. Upon arrival, visit the shimmering Royal Palace, royal court of the kings of Siam and temple of the Emerald Buddha. Lunch at "the backpacker's shul". Then visit the museum of Jim Thompson, who made "Thai silk" a household name. Check-in at the Rembrandt Hotel (or similar).

## May 1, Fri Bangkok ~ Floating Market

One of the iconic and genuine Thai experiences is a visit to the floating market where you'll see anything and everything bought and sold from tiny boats. Afternoon at leisure. Members of the Progressive Community have been invited to join for Services at our hotel. Shabbat Dinner provided by Chabad.

## May 2, Sat Shabbat in Bangkok

Services at Beit Elisheva. Afternoon walking tour. Optional night tour by monorail!

## May 3, Sun Market ~ fly to Cambodia

Chatuchak Market, even if you don't buy anything, is a trip in itself. There are over 15,000 stalls and is only open for a few hours on weekends. Late afternoon flight to Siem Reap, gateway to the archaeological marvels of the Angkor plains. Check in at the Lotus Blanc Resort (or similar).

## May 4, Mon Angkor Wat ~ fly to Vietnam

We'll visit the 3 most fabulous temples: Ta Prohm, left the way explorers first found it with trees growing out of the rocks, Angkor Wat which needs little introduction, and Angkor Thom, crowning achievement of an ancient civilization. Fly to Vietnam. Check-in at Hilton Old Quarter (or similar).

## May 5, Tue Hanoi

Full day tour: Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, the Temple of Literature, the neo-classic Opera House, and other fascinating highlights. This evening, tour the Old Quarter and Hoan Kiem Lake by cyclo, and watch a performance of the water puppets, a Vietnamese art form that originated in the 11<sup>th</sup> century.

## May 6, Wed Halong Bay ~ Farewell

Cruise through this incredible archipelago, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Transfer to a small bamboo row boat or kayak to explore Thien Cung (Heaven) cave on a guided walking tour highlighting the incredible natural artwork inside. At the farewell dinner, Rabbi Safman will summarize the Jewish experience in Southeast Asia.

## May 7, Thu Return Home

Transfer to the airport for your return flight to the USA. In re-crossing the Dateline, you'll arrive this same day. Bon voyage.

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~ Bon voyage. ~

*Cost incl. round-trip group economy airfare from New York or Los Angeles*

**\$7,888\*** p.p. double occ. incl tax & fuel surcharge (subj to change at time of final payment)  
Single supplement: \$1,055 Land only: \$6,228 p.p. double occ. \$1,450 Upgrade to Premium Economy

*~ INCLUDED FEATURES ~*

- round-trip group economy airfare from New York (JFK) or Los Angeles (LAX)
  - all internal transportation in Southeast Asia, per itinerary
- deluxe 4- & 5-star accommodations in air-conditioned rooms with private bath, double occupancy
  - most meals, kosher or vegetarian (special buffet breakfast plus most lunches and dinners)
- exclusive programs with the Jewish Communities of Singapore, Yangon, Bangkok and Hanoi
  - memorable Shabbat in Singapore & Bangkok
  - fascinating cultural events and get-togethers in each city
- sightseeing via chartered air conditioned coach with English-speaking guides incl. all entrance fees
  - sightseeing boats in Singapore, Bangkok and Halong Bay
  - group transfers between airports, hotels and piers by private coach
- all tips to guides, drivers and restaurant staff, all hotel taxes and services charges
- portage of 1 piece of luggage per person • Myanmar & Vietnam visa processing
  - Southeast Asia guides, passport wallet and luggage tags

(not included: Myanmar and Vietnam visa fees; two “on your own” meals; items not on the table d’hote menus of included meals; phone, fax and internet; purchases from hotel mini-bars; laundry and dry cleaning; and items of a purely personal nature).

**To Join:** a deposit of \$900 p.p. payable to FRJC and \$900 p.p. payable to Lotus Tours, is due on application; a 2<sup>nd</sup> deposit of \$1,100 is due Oct 21 ; balance is due Jan 21. Insurance and additional information will be sent with your confirmation. Mail to: Lotus Tours, 136-18 39<sup>th</sup> Ave, Suite 1102, Flushing, NY 11354. Phone: (212) 267-5414

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**SOUTHEAST ASIA through Jewish Eyes™ ~ April 21-May 7, 2020**      **RESERVATION FORM** *(please print)*

*Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ spaces on this program for:*

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ *(copy of passport must be attached)*

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ *(copy of passport must be attached)*

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (eve) \_\_\_\_\_ (mobile) \_\_\_\_\_

I/We will join the group flight:  Los Angeles     New York     I/We will arrange our own flights

I/We enclose \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$900 p.p. deposit payable to **FRJC** plus \$900 p.p. payable to **Lotus Tours.**)

The 2<sup>nd</sup> deposit and balance will be invoiced.

## About Rabbi Rachel Safman

Rabbi Rachel Safman is the spiritual leader of Congregation Beth El in New London, Connecticut. A graduate of the Ziegler School of Rabbinical Studies, Rabbi Safman was synagogue president of Singapore 2006-8, assistant professor of sociology at the National University of Singapore, and one-time lay leader of several kehillot in Southeast Asia including Thailand. Rabbi Safman is committed to extending Jewish resources to remote and under-served constituencies around the world, a philosophy shared by the Foundation for Remote Jewish Communities (FRJC) founded by Rabbi Marvin Tokayer, a 501(c)3 not-for-profit public charity dedicated to preserving and promoting the endangered Jewish communities on the periphery of the Diaspora.



### Terms & Conditions

**Air transportation** via scheduled IATA airlines, on round-trip economy-class group fare basis.

**Accommodations** including all hotel taxes and service charges, double occupancy basis.

**Meals are special buffet breakfast at the hotels, plus kosher or vegetarian lunches and dinners - on table d'hote group menu basis.**

**Sightseeing and special events** via chartered air-conditioned coach with English-speaking guides, including all entrance fees.

**Group transfers between airports and hotels, via chartered air-conditioned coach with local guide to meet and assist.**

**Cancellations and refunds:** the deposit is non-refundable; for cancellations received between 180 and 90 days before departure, an additional \$1,100 charge will apply; within 90 days, the land portion is not refundable; within 60 days, there may be a penalty on the air portion, as well. **Cancellation insurance is highly recommended.**

**Responsibility:** The Foundation for Remote Jewish Communities, Ltd. (FRJC), Lotus Tours, Ltd., Pacific Delight Travel LLC and/or associated companies (the Organizers) give notice that all tickets issued by them and all arrangements for transport, accommodations and meals, are made by them as agents for the tour participant upon the express condition that they shall not be held liable for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may be occasioned by reason of any defect of any vehicle or through the acts of any company or person engaged in conveying the passengers herewith, or of any hotel/ship proprietor or employees. Itineraries and fares may be affected by changes in air services of the various countries. The right is reserved to withdraw any feature announced in this program and to make such alterations in the itinerary as may be found desirable for the convenience and proper carrying out of the tour. The right is reserved to decline, accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. Guest speakers are subject to professional commitments. The Organizers accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delays or changes in schedules, sickness, weather, strikes, war, quarantine or other causes. All fares shown are for check payment, based on tariffs and exchanges rates in effect at time of printing and subject to change. The carriers are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not on their r [4/19]

### FRJC

P O Box 1355

Manhasset, NY 11030

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