

**CRIMEA: JEWISH HERITAGE OF THE MYSTERIOUS PENINSULA**

**Key Information:**

*Tour Duration:* 7 days

*Destination(s):* Kiev – Sevastopol – Balaclava – Mangup – Bakhchisaray – Chufut Qale – Eupatoria (Gezlev) – Simferopol – Kiev

*Specialty Categories:* Jewish Ukraine, Cultural Encounters, Extreme

*Tour Customizable:* Optional sightseeing available

*Meals:* Kosher options available upon request at all sites

*Price:* may vary depending on the type/class of accommodation, transportation, meals & spoken languages

*Contacts for inquiries:* <http://www.jukraine.com/contact-us.html> or [jewkraine@gmail.com](mailto:jewkraine@gmail.com)

This 7 days package will let you to immerse into the world of unknown and mysterious Crimean peninsula. Get ready to challenge your stereotypes, as during one week you will climb up the mountains and go into underground tunnels deep under the sea, step into the palace of Crimean Khans and Panoramas of greatest Crimean battles, will learn about war feats of Jewish soldiers and agricultural achievements of Jewish farmers, will see Hebrew letters where you would least expect that, and learn about a phenomenal affair that saved Karaites from extermination during Holocaust. Yet in the beginning of the trip you come to Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, to stroll the streets of that ancient, ever-young city, where "Torah and light emanate from", visit Jewish Podol & Bessarabka, see notorious Baby Yar and elegant mansions of famous Jewish magnates and Maecenas, and more...;

*The treasures of Jewish Ukraine are just around the corner... Welcome to JUkraine!*

**Day 1. WELCOME TO KIEV, THE CAPITAL OF UKRAINE!**

Arrive in Kiev and leave your luggage in the storage room. If you need to refresh, take a shower or change that may be arranged upon request.

This day we invite you to join our Jewish Kiev tour, including visiting of Baby Yar, the steep ravine where over 100 thousand Jews perished during Holocaust and exploring of two major areas where Jews were allowed to settle in late XIX - early XX century:



Jewish Podol ("Flat" Police District) - Discover the area where houses and mansions of Jewish rich merchants and industrial tycoons border with apartment buildings of the neediest strata of Jewish population. Learn a mysterious story of the construction of Podol Synagogue and also see typical prayer houses, and Jewish Bessarabka ("Lybedsky" Police District). Here we discover heritage of Brodsky family (Great Choral "Brodsky" Synagogue, Bessarabsky market, former Merchant's Synagogue); learn about Kiev days of Sholom Aleichem; find out more about the role of Kiev in the shaping of world Zionism (Houses Trumpeldor & Golda Meir) and more...



After lunch we explore some of the key sights of Kiev, including the ancient 'onion-domed' St Sophia Cathedral, its bustling main boulevard Kreschatyk, and the Golden Gates, the only remaining section of ancient Kiev's original fortifications, we head the Lavra cave monastery complex, with its stunning churches and underground tunnels, and also Museums (of Microminiatures, of Treasures and other). Then we visit WWII Memorial complex with its famous "Mother Motherland" statute and unique collection of Soviet Union military equipment, and enjoy magnificent panoramas around it.

Take a train to Sevastopol



## Day 2. SEVASTOPOL & BALACLAVA

Once closed for tourists, *Sevastopol* - the second biggest Crimean city, started welcoming guests shortly after the Soviet Union break up. Located in a unique harbour, it was bound to become a navy base. The history of the city starts with the foundation of a Greek colony *Chersonesus* in 422 BC, and that's where we start our tour after check-in and lunch. Chersonesus is reputed to be the most complete ancient Greek settlement in existence, yet the Jewish presence in the ruins of that legendary city is striking, and you are about to see that.



Aside of being the home to the Russian Black Sea Fleet, Sevastopol steeped in the history thanks to its heroism during the Crimean War and World War II, on both occasions being under siege for almost a year. Our tour will continue with the *Old Town*, the *Defense of Sevastopol Panorama* (a 360-degree painting and montage depicting the siege of Sevastopol, the most impressive presentation of the heroic defense of the city during the Crimean War 1854-1855) and *Sapoune Ridge Memorial Complex* that consists of Diorama showing Sevastopol liberation in 1944. Yet in addition to famous tourist attractions, Sevastopol has another monument, which is less known, but we will see it: the *monument to 500 Jewish soldiers* who were killed during



Crimean War. Sad, but brave silhouette of *Scuttled Ships Monument* which is especially beautiful at the sunset, will remind us of a story, when in the 1854 and 1855 legendary Russian admiral Nakhimov ordered to sink the ships "to protect the entrance from enemy vessels on raid and by this to rescue Sevastopol". The Jewish soldiers did the same, but with own lives.

Overnight in Sevastopol

## Day 3 BALACLAVA - MANGUP



This day we will visit *BalACLAVA*, set in a picturesque valley a few miles away. This beautiful area has been described in myths and sagas, including the legendary Ulysses, and Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poem "Charge of the Light Brigade", depicting the infamous defeat of British cavalry during the Crimean War. The valley is now covered in neat rows of vines and in the middle is a white stone memorial to the infamous Charge, and also we may see there the *Genoese Fortress aka Cembalo*, that dates back to 14<sup>th</sup> century. Yet maybe the most unique BalACLAVA attraction is *Submarine Secret Base* or "*Object 825 GTS*" - underground

plant for submarines' repairing and equipping. Hollowed out in a rock and covered by 56m of reinforced concrete, submarine Base represented combined underground water channel with a dry dock, repairing workshops, torpedoes and other weapon stores. To enter the open sea there was an exit in the North side of the mountain. In a case of direct nuclear attack the object could resist a direct hit till 100 kilotons power - thick waterproof doors could be closed and the plant was able to exist autonomously for 3 years, consisting 3000 people - the whole population of BalACLAVA! And last, but not the least is that today BalACLAVA is most popular place for the yachting,



and not only among Ukrainians.

After lunch at one of exquisite fish restaurants we head to *Mangup-Kale*, the most outstanding of all the Crimean "cave towns", greatly impressed travelers through many centuries, whose history goes back to 6th-7th century! There we admire the view of Mangup citadel and... see the remnants of ancient Mikva, recently discovered by archeologists.

Overnight in Sevastopol

DAY 4. BAKHCHISARAI – CHUFUT QALE



Today get ready to enter the place, where once only chosen were allowed to step into – Hansaray (Khan's Palace) of Crimean Khans, located in Bakhchisarai. The palace interior brings us back to the 16th century and as we explore its mosque, a harem, a cemetery, living quarters and gardens, we may visualize the lifestyle of the entire succession of Crimean Khans. And do not forget, it is here that the famous “Bakhchisarai Fountain” or “Fountain of Tears” is located. The fountain is known as the embodiment of love of one of the last Crimean Khans, Qırım Giray Khan for his young wife, whose grief after her early death was so deep that even rock would weep. Come here with your significant ones, here a sad story



about Khan's fatal love, hold your hand and live happily ever after!



After lunch we continue to explore the Jewish heritage of Crimea peninsula, as our next destination is a mountain cave-town Chufut Qale or “Jewish Fortress” (from Turkish çufut/çifit - Jew, qale/kale - fortress). Chufut Qale was historically a center for the Crimean Karaite community, and yet today we may see the ruins of medieval Kenassas and



mikvas, hear thrilling legends connected to this place, go deep down to the underground well that once could save the lives of the Fortress dwellers and see the unique cemetery “Vale of Jehoshaphat”; the earliest found tomb there is dated 1203, while many others are of unusual design, densely covered with Hebrew letters!

Overnight in Sevastopol

DAY 5. EUPATORIA (GEZLEV)

After breakfast the bus ride brings us to Eupatoria or “Gezlev” as it was called by Crimean Tatars and their Jewish



neighbors. Today Eupatoria is the spiritual center of the Karaites of the Crimea, and possesses the finest Karaite Kenassa of the Crimea; to it is annexed a library containing many valuable books and manuscripts on Karaite history and theology. Besides the Karaite community, we attend a Rabinite synagogue, built there in 1841. Eupatoria is also called “the Little Jerusalem”, and our tour



will covers all the historical attractions of the old city: Juma mosque, Jami, Turkish baths of the XVI century, Armenian Church, St. Nicholas Church, Dervish Tekke (Dervish monastery) and five ancient gates of Gezlev.

After lunch we continue with other numerous Eupatoria sightseeing, including Dolphinarium, the ruins of ancient



Kerkinitida, mud baths, monuments and parks. Those who wish may choose to replace the afternoon sightseeing with swimming and sunbathing at golden beaches Eupatoria, famous for their healing qualities.



Overnight in Eupatoria.



#### DAY 6. SIMFEROPOL

In the morning we leave Eupatoria to arrive to Simferopol, the capital of Crimean Autonomy. Founded in 1784, until the 1917 Revolution Simferopol was the chief town of the province of Tavriya (Taurida). Krimchaks (Crimean Jews) from other localities in the Crimea and Ashkenazi Jews from the regions of the Pale of Settlement began to settle there soon after its foundation. Here we will unveil another myth that Jews has never been farmers. In the early 1920s a movement for Jewish agricultural settlement in the region began, and Simferopol was a place from where the Jewish farm settlers dispersed over Crimea. Nine Jewish settlements with 324 families were organized in the environs of the city, concentrated in two Jewish rural councils.



And by mid-30s Several kolkhozes housed about 50% of the Jews of the area. Visit the museum with vast exhibits dedicated to early days of colonization, learn about the activity of Agro-Joint in those difficult for Soviet Jews days, between Revolution and Holocaust and take a ride to some former agricultural colonies, that once were located around Simferopol.



After lunch we board the train that brings us back to Kiev

#### DAY 7. FAREWELL

Depending on your departure time and place you may whether enjoy some more Kiev sights, including last minute souvenir shopping at Andrew's descent, the famous street of handcraft artists, or drive straight to Borispil airport where you can connect with your onward flight.



*This tour is over, yet we are eagerly looking forward to your next visit, as JUkraine has yet a lot more exciting and thrilling adventures for you!*

*To obtain more details with regard to the itinerary above, send us the inquiry*

*Via website:* <http://www.jukraine.com/contact-us.html>

*Via email:* [jewkraine@gmail.com](mailto:jewkraine@gmail.com)

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