



# ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION of SMITH COLLEGE

## *The Middle East in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* *Iran Pre-Symposium Extension* **March 12 to 20, 2009**

### **Preliminary Itinerary** (subject to amendment)

#### **Day 1-2 – Thursday-Friday, March 12-13, 2009**

#### **Gateway City-Dubai**

- Depart the U.S. on the evening of March 12 and arrive in Dubai the evening of March 13.
- Enjoy the amenities of the Emirates Airlines lounge at the Dubai airport for two to three hours before checking in for the continuing flight to Tehran

*(Appropriate in-flight meals)*

#### **Day 2 – Saturday, March 14, 2009**

#### **Dubai-Tehran**

- Arrive in Tehran very early in the morning.
- After passing through immigration and customs, transfer to the first-class Esteghlal Hotel in the heart of the city.
- The rest of the morning is at leisure.
- Enjoy an afternoon city excursion and gather this evening for an orientation and welcome dinner.

*(B, L, D)*

*Esteghlal Hotel*

#### **Day 3 – Sunday, March 15, 2009**

#### **Tehran**

- This morning, explore the Great Bazaar, which controls nearly three-quarters of the country's domestic trade.
- In the afternoon, visit two of Tehran's excellent museums – the Archaeological Museum, which houses one of the most important pre-Islamic and Islamic collections of objects in the Middle East, and the Abgineh Museum of Glass and Ceramics.
- Tonight enjoy a traditional Dervish dinner with poetry recitals and ancient music performances.

*(B, L, R, D)*

*Esteghlal Hotel*

**Day 4 – Monday, March 16, 2009****Tehran-Shiraz**

- This morning, meet with local dignitaries for a discussion of Iran's role in the Middle East today.
- Fly to lyrical Shiraz this afternoon, cradle of the Persian Empire and city of roses, nightingales, love, and at one time, wine. Above all, Shiraz is the land of poetry, home of the great 21<sup>st</sup>-century Persian poets Saadi and Hafiz.
- Check into the five-star Homa Hotel for dinner and overnight.

*(B, L, D)*

*Homa Hotel*

**Day 5 – Tuesday, March 17, 2009****Shiraz-Persepolis-Shiraz**

- Drive to the most impressive archaeological site in Iran, Persepolis. The ancient capital of the Persian Empire, with its wondrous palaces and tombs, was founded by Darius I in 572 BC and destroyed by Alexander the Great in 323 BC.
- Spend the morning exploring the amazing ruins and exquisite relief-work that decorates the stairways.
- Also visit nearby Naghsh-e Rostam, whose four lofty tombs are thought to be those of Darius I, Xerxes, Antaxerxes, and Darius II.
- Return to Shiraz after lunch for visits to the Vakil Mosque and Bazaar.

*(B, L, D)*

*Homa Hotel*

**Day 6 – Wednesday, March 18, 2009****Shiraz-Esfahan**

- This morning, visit the Regent's Mosque, Eram garden, and the tombs of poets Saadi and Hafiz.
- This afternoon fly to Esfahan and transfer to the Abbasi Hotel.
- Enjoy dinner at an old caravansary, which has been transformed in the charming Alam House Hotel

*(B, L, D)*

*Abbasi Hotel*

**Day 7 – Thursday, March 19, 2009****Esfahan**

- At the height of its glory, Esfahan was described as "half the world", and it remains one of the most beautiful cities in Iran. Here is found the greatest concentration of Islamic monuments in Iran, perhaps in the entire Islamic world.
- Explore the Imperial Bazaar, a labyrinth of streets that stretches into the old section of town.
- Also visit Imam or Royal Square, one of the most dramatic central squares of any city in the world. On one side of the square is the Imam Mosque, with its trademark brilliant blue-tile roof and twin turquoise minarets. Across the square in the six-story Ali Qapu Palace, with its original frescos and glazed tile decoration.
- Tonight enjoy a Persian picnic on the waterfront, overlooking 16<sup>th</sup>-century bridges.

*(B, L, D)*

*Abbasi Hotel*

**Day 8 – Friday, March 20, 2009****Esfahan-Dubai**

- This morning, meet with local dignitaries, followed by free time.
- This afternoon fly to Dubai for the beginning of the main symposium.

*(B, L, D in-flight)*



# ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION of SMITH COLLEGE

## *The Middle East in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* *Jordan Pre-Symposium Extension* March 13 to 20, 2009

### **Preliminary Itinerary** (subject to amendment)

#### **Day 1-2 – Friday-Saturday, March 13-14, 2009** **Gateway City-Amman, Jordan**

- Depart the U.S. on Friday, arriving in Amman the next day.
- Upon arrival, transfer to the hotel and enjoy the rest of the afternoon and evening at leisure.

*(Appropriate in-flight meals)*

*Four Seasons Hotel*

#### **Day 3 – Sunday, March 15** **Amman**

- Rise for breakfast then attend an orientation meeting.
- Following a brief city tour of Amman, visit ACOR, the American Center for Oriental Research, a private, non-profit academic institution dedicated to promoting research and publication in various fields of Near Eastern studies. ACOR, along with the Jordanian Department of Antiquities, is also involved in the excavation and restoration of several sites.
- Meet with Barbara Porter, the ACOR director, who spent several years working at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and teaching in the Fine Arts Department at New York University.
- This afternoon is at leisure.
- In the evening enjoy a welcome cocktail reception and dinner at the hotel.

*(B, L, R, D)*

*Four Seasons Hotel*

#### **Day 4 – Monday, March 16, 2009** **Jerash-Amman**

- After breakfast, enjoy a guest presentation delivered by a prominent community leader.
- Following lunch at a local restaurant, travel to Jerash, one of the most significant and finest preserved Roman cities in the Near East. Jerash is home to several striking monuments including complete arches, massive temples, two superb theatres, and many lovely mosaics from the Byzantine era.
- Enjoy dinner at one of several specially chosen Amman restaurants this evening.

*(B, L, D)*

*Four Seasons Hotel*

#### **Day 5 – Tuesday, March 17, 2009** **Madaba-Dead Sea**

- After a morning panel discussion with journalists and academics, travel to Bethany Beyond the Jordan, an archaeological site recently identified as the place where John the

Baptist began baptizing and to which Jesus fled after having faced hostile crowds in Jerusalem.

- Continue to the town of Madaba, known as the “City of Mosaics” for the vast number of Byzantine-era mosaics that pepper the town’s churches, monuments, and public structures. Madaba’s primary attraction is an amazingly vivid mosaic floor map depicting the entire region from Lebanon to the Nile Delta and from the Mediterranean to the Eastern Desert. Most striking is the oldest surviving original cartographic depiction of the Holy Land, including a detailed map of Jerusalem.
- After lunch at a charming 19<sup>th</sup>-century-style restaurant, proceed to the lowest point on the surface of the earthy and the world’s second saltiest body of water, the Dead Sea.

(B, L, D)

*Kempinski Hotel*

**Day 6 – Wednesday, March 18, 2009**

**Dead Sea-Kerak-Petra**

- This morning, enjoy an opportunity to float in the curative waters of the Dead Sea.
- You may choose to relax at the hotel, availing yourself of some of the many healing spa treatments involving rich Dead Sea mud and minerals.
- Alternately, you may journey to the town of Kerak to explore the 12<sup>th</sup>-century Crusader castle formerly known as *Crac des Moabites*. From its position on a triangular plateau located over 3,000 feet above sea level and surrounded by valleys on all sides, the Crusaders were able to command the Kings Highway, a vital trade route stretching from Egypt to Damascus.
- Drive to Petra this evening and check into the hotel.

(B, L, D)

**Day 7 – Thursday, March 19, 2009**

**Petra**

- Spend the entire day exploring the magnificent rose-red ruins of Petra. This extensive UNESCO World Heritage site was the capital of the Nabatean Kingdom until the kingdom was incorporated into the Roman Empire. The site was eventually forgotten by outsiders, known only to the Bedouin who lived among its stones and temples, until it was rediscovered by Swiss explorer Johann Burckhardt in 1812.
- This evening, weather permitting, enjoy a special tented dinner among the ruins of Little Petra, an impeccably preserved miniature version of Petra that lies hidden within the rocks of Wadi Mousa, the dry riverbed that is also home to Petra.

(B, L, D)

**Day 8 – Friday, March 20, 2009**

**Petra-Amman-Dubai**

- Drive back to Amman in time to catch an afternoon flight to Dubai.

(B, L)



# ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION of SMITH COLLEGE

## *The Middle East in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* *Egypt Post-Symposium Extension* **April 3 to 8, 2009**

### **Preliminary Itinerary** (subject to amendment)

#### **Day 1 – Friday, April 3, 2009**

**Oman-Cairo**

- Depart from Muscat for Cairo this morning, arriving in Cairo in the early afternoon.
- After immigration and customs, transfer to the first-class Four Seasons Hotel.
- This evening, gather for an orientation and dinner.

*(B in-flight, L, D)*

*Four Seasons Nile Plaza*

#### **Day 2 – Saturday, April 4, 2009**

**Cairo**

- Explore the massive Great Pyramids and the enigmatic Sphinx.
- Visit the fascinating Cheops Solar Boat Museum.
- After lunch, enjoy a special afternoon lecture by local expert, Dr. Zahi Hawass, the Secretary General of the Department of Antiquities.
- Tonight, dine with a local dignitary.

*(B, L, D)*

*Four Seasons Nile Plaza*

#### **Day 3 – Sunday, April 5, 2009**

**Cairo-Luxor**

- Enjoy a private opening of the Egyptian National Museum, which houses more than 100,000 relics and artifacts from almost every period of ancient Egyptian history, including the golden treasures of Tutankhamen.
- After a private breakfast, take a charter flight to Luxor and visit the Valley of the Queens on the West Bank.
- Visit the temple of Queen Hatshepsut, the queen who declared herself king, and whose remains were identified in June 2007.
- Continue with a visit to the valley of the nobles.
- Tonight, dine and stay at the historic Old Winter Palace Hotel.

*(B, L, D)*

*Old Winter Palace Hotel*

#### **Day 4 – Monday, April 6, 2009**

**Luxor**

- Take an optional early-morning hot air balloon ride over the East and West Banks of the Nile.

- Tour the temple of Karnak, admiring the 134 giant columns of Ramses II's magnificent hypostyle hall, soaring obelisks and the enormous temple dedicated to Amun, the god of the moon.
- Continue to the West Bank to the necropolis of Thebes.
- Visit the Valley of the Kings with its stunning painted royal tombs and long corridors leading into deep burial chambers.
- Explore a variety of tombs, including one which is normally closed to the public.
- At Medinet Habu receive a special introduction to the temple by an archeologist working at the site.
- Tonight dine under the stars at a special gala dinner at the temple of Luxor.

(B, L, D)

*Old Winter Palace Hotel*

**Day 5 – Tuesday, April 7, 2009**

**Luxor-Cairo**

- Return to Cairo on a charter flight.
- Upon arrival in Cairo, tour Islamic Cairo, visiting the 14<sup>th</sup>-century Sultan Hassan mosque and Ibn Tulun, the oldest surviving mosque in Egypt.
- Enjoy a lunch of local specialties in the bustling Khan el-Khalili bazaar, followed by time to explore the bazaar's maze of shops.
- Return to the hotel with time to pack and enjoy dinner independently.

(B, L)

*Four Seasons Nile Plaza*

**Day 6 – Wednesday, April 8, 2009**

**Cairo-Gateway City**

- Transfer to the airport this morning for flights back to the U.S.



# ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION of SMITH COLLEGE

## *The Middle East in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* *Israel Post-Symposium Extension* **April 3 to 7, 2009**

### **Preliminary Itinerary** (subject to amendment)

#### **Day 1 – Friday, April 3, 2009**

**Jerusalem, Israel**

- Board a flight to Amman, Jordan, this morning.
- Upon arriving in Amman, board a bus and drive across the Allenby Bridge, over the Jordan River to Israel.
- After clearing immigration and customs, drive through the Mountains of Judea, stopping atop the Mount of Olives for a spectacular first view of Jerusalem.
- Continue to the historic King David Hotel.
- This evening, as the tranquility of the Jewish Sabbath descends upon the city, enjoy a special Shabbat dinner including an explanation of the significance and history of the weekly rituals.

(B, L, D)

*King David Hotel*

#### **Day 2 – Saturday, April 4, 2009**

**Jerusalem**

- Rise for breakfast, then attend a lecture addressing American involvement in the Middle East by Michael Oren, senior fellow at the Shalem Center and winner of the National Jewish Book and History Book of the Year awards for his acclaimed *New York Times* bestseller, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East*.
- Afterwards, visit the Christian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, walking along the Via Dolorosa passing the Stations of the Cross to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. This is the holiest site in the Christian world, considered by most Christian denominations to have been constructed on the site of Jesus' crucifixion, burial, and resurrection.
- After lunch at the historic American Colony Hotel, participate in a panel discussion with Rabbi Donniel Hartmet, director of the Shalom Hartman Institute; David Horowitz, editor of the daily *Jerusalem Post*; Isabelle Kushner, a Jerusalem-based *New York Times* correspondent; Professors Shlomo Avineri and Reuven Hazan of the Hebrew University; and Aharon Barak, former president of the Israeli Supreme Court.
- Enjoy dinner at one of several specially chosen Jerusalem restaurants this evening.

(B, L, D)

*King David Hotel*

**Day 3 – Sunday, April 5, 2009****Jerusalem**

- After breakfast, meet with Holocaust scholar Dr. Rachel Korazim for a lecture about the memory of the Holocaust and the quest for global unity.
- Then take a guided visit through the recently renovated Yad Vashem complex, the Jewish National Memorial to the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust, including the new Historical Museum and the haunting Children’s Memorial.
- After lunch at a local restaurant, visit the Israel Museum, home to extensive archaeology, Judaica and contemporary art collections. It also holds the Shrine of the Book, an architecturally stunning building containing the 2,000 year-old Dead Sea Scrolls, including the only surviving biblical documents transcribed before the year 100.
- Conclude the afternoon with a visit to the newly restored Second Temple Period Model of Jerusalem.
- Enjoy dinner at one of several specially chosen Jerusalem restaurants this evening.

*(B, L, D)*

*King David Hotel*

**Day 4 – Monday, April 6, 2009****Jerusalem**

- Participate in a panel discussion exploring multiple perspectives of Israeli-Palestinian relations in Jerusalem with Gershon Baskin, Israeli CEO and founder of the Israeli Palestine Center for Research and Information; Hanna Seniora, Palestinian publisher and analyst; Rabbi Menahem Fruman of the Tekoa Settlement; Professor Galia Golan of the Hebrew University; and Daniel Seidemann, founder of Ir Amim, a non-partisan organization engaged in Israeli-Palestinian relations within the city of Jerusalem.
- Afterward, examine the geopolitics of Jerusalem by traveling through the city, exploring some of the politically and diplomatically complicated construction that has taken place in recent years, including the new “Security Fence”.
- Enjoy an in-depth seminar on the ramifications of the current developments.
- Meet with members of the Israeli Knesset (parliament) and, after lunch, take a walking tour through the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem.
- Enjoy a stunning view of the Temple Mount and a guided visit through the Davidson Archaeological Park and Southern Wall Excavations and to the holiest site in the Jewish world, the Kotel (Wailing Wall).
- This evening, enjoy a farewell reception and dinner at the hotel with entertainment.

*(B, L, R, D)*

*King David Hotel*

**Day 5 – Tuesday, April 7, 2009****Jerusalem-Gateway City**

- Transfer to Ben Gurion International Airport for the flight home.

*(B, appropriate in-flight meals)*