

Palestine Marathon & Half Marathon – Monday 23 to Saturday 28th March 2020 (Including the Freedom of Movement Palestine Marathon on Friday 27 March)

“Nothing happens until something moves”

Albert Einstein

Thank you for your interest in joining this trip. Please have a careful read through the sections below on the run, the trip, how to join team Amos, essential information and fundraising.

The application process

Please follow these steps to apply for your place:

1/ Fully complete and submit the trip application form.

- Each and every participant needs to complete a form.
- You will be asked to confirm you have read and understood the essential information given below during form completion.

2/ Once you have submitted your booking form you will receive an email from us confirming we have your information. This email will include a link to a code of conduct form which every applicant needs to accept before we can confirm your place on the trip.

3/ Once we have received the details from your form and your acceptance of the code of conduct we will add your name to the list of trip applicants.

4/ We will email you to confirm if you have been awarded a place on the trip within 28 days of your application.

5/ Once your place has been confirmed, we will require you to pay a deposit for the trip. The email we send you to confirm your place will contain a link for you to make this payment.

6/ We may contact you for further clarification in response to the information you give on your application form.

The Run

The Palestine Marathon was first run in 2013 and has grown every year since. Amos has taken a team of runners to take part every year.

The Organiser

The Marathon is organised by the Palestine Olympic Committee (POC).

Why run in Bethlehem?

Amos has been taking people to Palestine for more than 20 years and we have fantastic local partner organisations and friends in and around Bethlehem we would love you to meet. We also love to run! We are fully supportive of the aims for the Palestine Marathon:

In 2017, the Palestine Marathon was approved as an international marathon by the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF), and in 2018, it was recognized by the Association for International Marathons and Distance Races (AIMS). Its route extends over 42.195 kilometres and offers runners different outlooks on Palestinian everyday life. Its course includes a few steep hills and sections that allow for fast running while leading through unique scenery, unlike any other marathon. Starting at the Church of the Nativity, in the centre of Bethlehem's Old City, its route takes runners through the town, two refugee camps (Aida and Dheisheh), and along the apartheid Wall. Because its distance does not cover the required 42 kilometres, runners run two loops to complete a full marathon according to international standards.

The Palestine Marathon has evolved rapidly over the years. In seven years, the total number of participants has increased from 400 to over 8,000. The percentage of female runners has increased from 37 percent to almost 50 percent (which is significant because the denial of free movement is a feature of gender inequality in Palestinian society and hinders efforts to ensure respect for the rights of women), and the number of foreign runners has increased from 220 to 1,700, helping Palestinian efforts to tell their story and raise international awareness of their situation.

The marathon cannot help but show how the Israeli occupation prevents Palestinian freedom of movement, a universally recognized human right. According to Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all people should be able to move around and reside anywhere within their country. By running the marathon, each participant asserts this right and highlights that the freedom of movement of Palestinian women, men, girls, and boys continues to be severely restricted under Israel's prolonged military occupation.

The route and fitness

If you have run a marathon before and are looking for something quite challenging, the Bethlehem Marathon is the one for you. We would encourage those who have not run a marathon before to consider doing the half rather than the full as the route and conditions are not very first-timer friendly. Please indicate which distance you want to run on the online application form.

The marathon route will take you through different views on Palestinian everyday life. The route itself is a technical course with a few steep hills coupled with some fast sections in scenery like no other marathon. The race starts in Manger Square, at the Church of Nativity in the centre of the Old City of Bethlehem and will take the runners through Bethlehem, through Al Aida refugee camp and along the Separation Wall, separating Palestinians from their land and each other and preventing the basic human right to freedom of movement. The course is 21.0975 KM long (the classic half-marathon), which is why the runners doing the full marathon will run two loops.

The loop route means that you run the same stretch four times, which can be psychologically challenging. In some places the roads are dust and stony rather than smooth tarmac. There will be water stations and toilets along the way staffed by encouraging local scouts.

We are looking for those with a good level of fitness and would recommend getting training support from a running club or trainer to prepare.

What should I wear for the run?

The marathon will be inside the city. Bethlehem is a mixed religious city and all runners should do their best to respect local customs and norms. Men should wear shorts and a t-shirt or tank top. For female runners we suggest running leggings (maybe a pair of shorts on top), or loose pants – both below the knee. Wear a loose top – preferably with sleeves. Please note that Amos Trust will provide both men and women with a technical running T Shirt.

What about the weather?

Spring in Palestine is changeable. Past marathons have taken place in conditions from a rainy 12 degrees to a sunny 30-degree scorcher. Basically, you need to be prepared for anything (it won't snow!).

The Trip

Whilst the trip is centred around participation in the marathon and its surrounding events, you will have the opportunity in the few days before the run, to explore Bethlehem, Jerusalem and the surrounding areas. You will have the chance to see for yourself the situation on the ground and learn directly from those who live in situations of occupation and injustice every day. More importantly, you will have the chance to meet and talk to some of our inspirational local partner organisations and friends and hear about their extraordinary work in creative resistance, advocacy, reconciliation, justice and peace-making.

How much does the trip cost?

£650 per person

What is included in the price?

- Run entrance fee
- Accommodation (based on sharing a twin or double room)
- All meals (there may be one or two lunches (allow around £10 per lunch) during free-time in the itinerary where you will need to buy your own lunch)
- Group transport (including to and from the group accommodation if you are booked on the recommended flights)
- Local tour guides
- Entrance fees & donations to the organisations we visit
- Tips to accommodation, guides and drivers
- Souvenir t-shirt.

What is not included in the price?

- Flights (you need to book your own)
 - We do not arrange group flights for this trip as we have found many participants like to arrange their own flights in order to be flexible around the dates of the trip, their departure airport or airline.
 - If you want to travel with other participants, our recommended flights are shown below. We will put all participants choosing to travel on the recommended flights in touch with each other so they can arrange to meet up at the airport, prior to departure.
 - You will need to indicate if you intend to book onto the recommended flights when you complete the application form.
 - Travel to/from UK airport
 - Personal travel insurance (you need to obtain your own.)
 - Hot drinks (apart from with breakfast at the accommodation), all alcoholic and soft drinks
 - Bottled water.
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What are the recommended flights?

All times local

Outbound

Monday 23 March 2020 – EasyJet EZY2085 Departs Luton 11:45 arrives Tel Aviv 18:40

Return

Saturday 28 March 2020 – EasyJet EZY2086 Departs Tel Aviv 19:35 arrives Luton 23:05

What if I don't want to join the recommended flights?

- We will confirm with you a date, time and location for you to meet the group.
- We cannot help you make any arrangements outside of the group itinerary and you will be responsible for all of your costs prior to joining and after leaving the group. This includes your transport between Tel Aviv airport and the group accommodation unless you arrange to meet the participants taking the recommended flights in the arrivals hall at Tel Aviv.

Will I need to fundraise?

We ask each member of Team Amos to raise £1,000 for our Palestine Justice campaigning. The fundraising target is the same whether you are doing the half or full marathon. We will provide fundraising materials, advice & support to help you with your fundraising.

Can I have a single room?

Yes, at an additional cost of £150 to cover the single supplement charged by the accommodation providers.

Do I need a visa?

- British nationals can visit Israel for up to 3 months without applying for a visa in advance.
- Your passport needs to have an expiry date at least 6 months after the start date of the trip.
- You will be issued with a small printed entry visa by the Israeli Immigration authorities on entry at Tel Aviv. Make sure you keep this in your passport for the duration of the trip. Your passport will not be stamped on entry.
- If you do not have a British passport, you will need to check check the visa arrangements to enter Israel with your passport.

Do I need any inoculations?

No

Why do you ask what stamps I have in my passport?

- There are a few countries that are likely to raise questions from the Israeli Immigration authorities if your passport shows you have visited them. We will contact you if we think the countries you have visited will raise any questions.
- If you have visited Iran you will need to obtain a second passport.

What will the accommodation be like?

- We are planning to stay in the Al Rowwad Guest House in Aida Refugee camp in Bethlehem.
- This is run by Al Rowwad, one of our partner organisations.
- All rooms are en-suite and towels are provided.

Will there be wifi?

Wifi will probably be available in the accommodation.

Mobile phone usage

- Please check the costs of calls, texts and data usage in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories with your mobile phone provider before the trip. Coverage from Israeli providers is available in Bethlehem
- Ensure you know how to avoid unwanted roaming charges by adjusting your phone settings.

What will the food be like?

Plentiful and delicious! Vegetarians are well catered for.

Can I drink the water?

- Though the water in The West Bank and Israel is generally safe, we would strongly recommend that you stick to bottled water to avoid “traveller’s tummy” (especially as you will be running).
- It would be wise to bring some anti-bacterial hand wash for use before and after meals.

What currency do I need to bring? And how much?

- The currency in use in the West Bank is the Israeli Shekel.
- Some places also accept US dollars.
- You should purchase your Shekels before the trip as time is limited once the trip starts.
- You will need enough money to cover one or two lunches during the trip and your own beverages, alcohol and bottled water plus any souvenirs you wish to purchase.
- There are cash machines in Bethlehem but be aware of conversion charges.

Will it be safe?

- The safety and wellbeing of our groups is always Amos Trust’s number one priority.
- Amos has been taking groups to the Holy Land for more than 20 years and we have deep friendships and high levels of trust with our local guides and partners.
- The trip will be hosted by our partner, Holy Land Trust.
- We will be welcomed with incredible hospitality which is both a beautiful cultural norm and a response to how we choose to locate and shape our visits.
- Should there be a major deterioration in the local or regional security situation we will take careful guidance from our local partners and the [UK FCO travel advice](#) before proceeding with the trip.

Are there cultural norms or expectations I should be aware of?

- We will be staying in a fairly conservative Arab society so you should generally dress modestly.
- Women should avoid strappy or low cut tops and short skirts/shorts; men should stick to long trousers or shorts that come down well past the knees.
- We will be visiting local families and groups as well as churches, mosques and synagogues.
- Some of the religious places will insist on shoulders and knees being covered.
- If it is required for heads to be covered, suitable coverings are normally offered by the places of worship concerned.
- Alcohol is available in the hotel and in many restaurants and cafes.
- Whilst it is fine to drink in these environments, it is not acceptable to drink outside of the places serving alcohol or to excess.

Shall I bring gifts?

Do not bring gifts. The reasoning for this is that it isn't fair if some get and some don't. We've seen gifts given to some but not all provoke bullying and minor violence among children.

Climate Justice and flights

- We are keenly aware of the dilemma of campaigning for climate justice whilst flying groups of supporters around the world to visit our partners.
 - Our [environmental impact statement](#) outlines our considered response to this dilemma and confirms our commitment to donate 5% of the total amount that Amos Trust spends on flights each year to our climate justice work in Nicaragua. This meets the bulk of our offsetting costs over the course of a year.
 - [Myclimate.org](#) calculates the carbon cost of return flights from London Luton for this trip to be 1.4t of CO2 per person for the approx. 7,200km round trip. The offset cost for this is approximately £30.
 - The confirmation email you receive when you have submitted your booking form will contain a link to a payment page for you to make a donation towards the carbon offsetting costs of your flights.
 - A £15 donation would match Amos Trust's 5% donation.
 - A £30 donation would fully offset the carbon for your flights.
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Consent for photography/filming

Amos Trust is a creative organisation and we love telling stories. One of the ways we do this is through photography and film. There may be a designated Amos photographer and/or filmmaker on your trip to help us 'tell the story', so that we can share it with other Amos supporters and new audiences across Amos' print and digital media, including print publications (such as our 'Words of Hope' newspaper), websites, e-marketing, posters, banners, advertising, film, and social media channels.

By confirming that you have read and understood the essential information for this trip:

- You consent to Amos Trust using photographs and/or video recordings, including images of you, to promote our work.
- You understand that images on websites can be viewed throughout the world and not just in the United Kingdom and that some overseas countries may not provide the same level of protection to the rights of individuals as EU/UK legislation provides.
- You understand that some images or recordings may be kept permanently once they are published and be kept as an archive of Amos Trust.

Your rights

If you feel uncomfortable being photographed or filmed while on your trip, please inform the photographer and/or filmmaker and they will happily stop photographing/filming you. If you prefer, simply ask your trip leader to ask the photographer and/or filmmaker on your behalf.

You can ask Amos Trust to stop using any images that you appear in at any time, in which case it will not be used in future publications but may continue to appear in publications already in circulation.

Payments

The due dates for making payments for the trip are as follows:

- Deposit of £250 per person – due on receipt of an email confirming your place (your confirmation will include a link to make this payment).
- Balance of £350 per person – due by 31 January 2020
- Single supplement of £150 (if applicable) – due by 31 January 2020

Please make sure that your payments reach us on or before the due dates. We will send you email reminders beforehand with links to make payments online with a credit or debit card.

You can also pay by cheque (Payable to Amos Trust and posted to the address below) or phone the office (0207 5882638) during working hours to make a payment over the phone with a credit or debit card.

Cancellation

Cancellation by Amos Trust

If Amos Trust cancels the trip we will issue a full refund of all monies paid by team members.

Cancellation by participant

If you need to cancel your place on the trip after your place has been confirmed, please let us know as soon as possible, Amos Trust will refund all money you have paid less any costs we have incurred that cannot be reclaimed (we will give you a breakdown of these).

Fundraising information

- Each runner will be asked to raise £1,000.
 - Our community fundraiser, Katie Hagley, will help you with this.
 - The money raised by Team Amos will go to our Palestine Justice campaigning and partnerships. We campaign for equal rights for all who call the holy land home by delivering creative advocacy as well as partnering with five local organisations in Palestine, three in Bethlehem and two in Gaza.
 - You can read about Amos's work in Palestine [here](#).
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