



Jewish Journeys 2016

A year of Jerusalem

Vilna, Jerusalem of Lithuania

May 26th – 29th

With Jeremy Leigh

It may seem small but without Lithuania, there is no Ashkenazi story...

Perched on the northern reaches of Europe, with its tiny Baltic coastline, Lithuania seems no more than an adjunct to its larger neighbour Poland or until recently its imperial occupier, Russia. Yet, such images can be deceptive. Lithuania was the last European country to fully embrace Christianity, and at one time, one of the largest European empires, stretching from the Baltic all the way to the Black Sea, including much of what is today Ukraine and Belarus.

And for Jews, it was the setting for one of the richest chapters in Jewish history, the home of the famed Jewish 'tribe', the Litvaks. Never as wealthy as Germany, nor numerically as big as Poland, Jewish Lithuania stood for intensity and dynamism: the greatest centre of Yiddish literature; the birthplace of Jewish Socialism; the epicentre of Jewish Talmudic scholarship, and pioneer of the remarkable Musar movement...

In short, for Jews at least, Vilna was in every sense a capital city - the 'Jerusalem' of Lithuania (Yerushalayim d'Lita). Beyond the quaint and endearing cobbled streets of its old town lie complex layers of Jewish triumph and tragedy. This journey is an opportunity to get caught up in all the intensity of a once great Jerusalem of the diaspora.

Our journey will include the main Jewish sites of Vilna as well as the neighbouring city and pre-war capital of Kovno (Kaunas). Along the way, we will stop in Zezhmir, where one of the last remaining wooden synagogues still stands.

Price will be £525 for double occupancy with a single supplement of £80. The price excludes flights and is based on a minimum of 30 participants. We reserve the right to add a surcharge if there is a significant devaluation of the pound against the destination currency. A non-refundable deposit of £75 per person is payable with your booking form. Final payment will be required by 1st March 2016. To book please contact Debbi Arnold or Kirsty Pegg at Colletts Travel on 020 8202 2233 or kirsty@collettstravel.co.uk