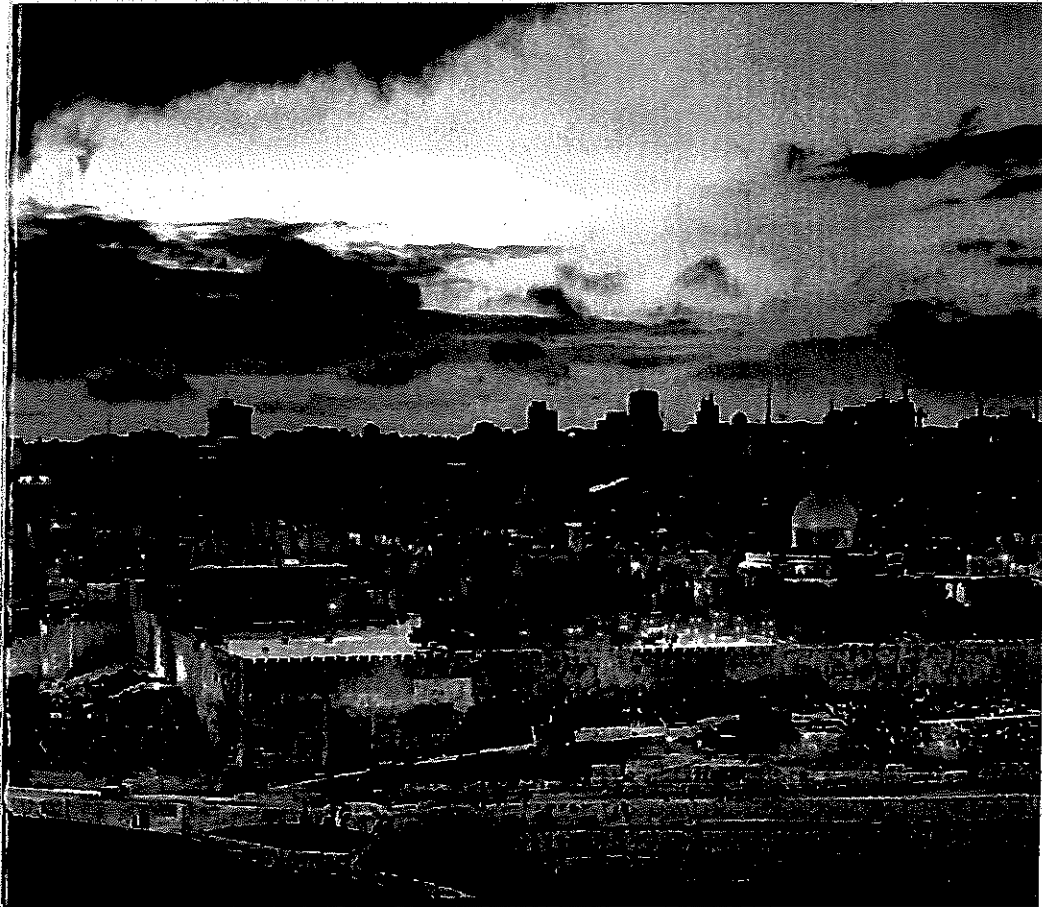


*imagine*  
TOURS & TRAVEL

## Tips for Safe Travel



In The Holy Land

At *Imagine*, your safety is our top priority. We are a second-generation family business with many years of experience in the travel industry. Why is this so important? We know the people, the hotels, the guides, motor coach companies, and the lands you will be visiting. We have experienced each destination firsthand, so we can provide you with the best possible service every time. Before traveling abroad, it's normal to have concerns about your safety. We'd like to ease your mind by addressing some of those questions in this brochure. Thank you for your interest in *Imagine*. We look forward to helping you experience travel the way it was meant to be.

*Rick*

Rick Ricart  
President

***Imagine* Tours & Travel**

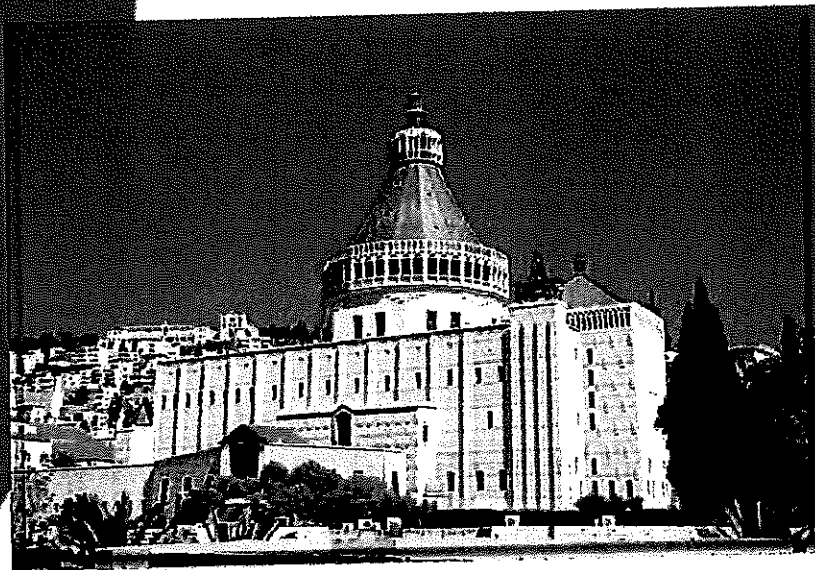
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## What safety precautions does *Imagine* take?

- 1) We partner with full-time offices throughout the Middle East, staffed by local people who know the area well because they live and work there.
- 2) The bus you will ride is from a private bus company (not public transportation).
  - These are tourist motor coaches, not the public buses which locals use and are occasionally targeted.
  - Only our passengers and staff are allowed to board our buses.
  - All of our buses stay in contact with our office and the bus company via cell phone.

## The situation in the Middle East, especially Israel and Palestine, looks so worrisome on TV. Why is that?

- 1) TV is a microscope; true perspective is lost.
  - Everything seems big. Everything seems close.
- 2) Journalists must justify their jobs.
  - There are almost as many journalists in the Jerusalem area as in Washington, D.C.
  - Each journalist must justify an expensive overseas assignment.
  - Each journalist is trying to make a name by presenting the most dramatic version of a news story.
- 3) These factors produce the "Sabra Syndrome."
  - The smallest story is reported by network news.
  - Similar stories in the US are rarely reported on network news.
  - The media decides what will be big news.

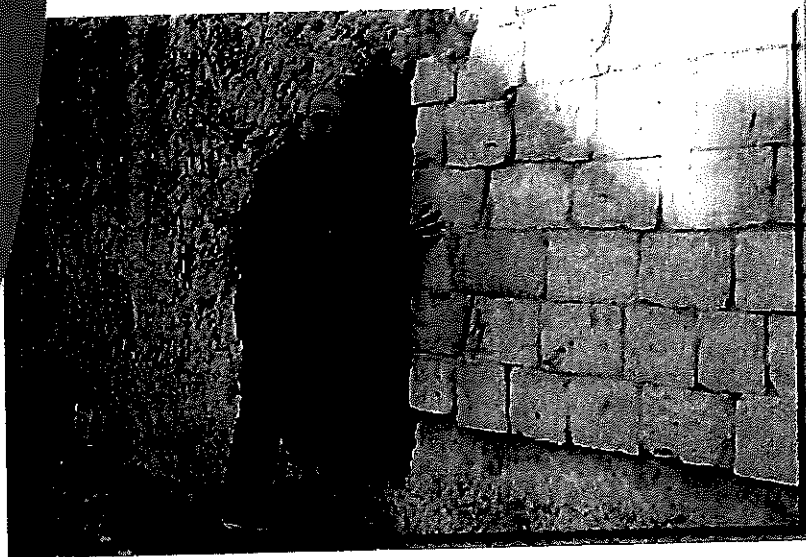
For example, when five people die in Jerusalem, the media makes it front page news; however when 88,000 US citizens die in alcohol related accidents each year, the media hardly notices.

## Can you put the risk of traveling into perspective?

Risk is something we live with every day. Just because something is familiar doesn't mean there is no risk involved. Here are some examples:

Each year...

- One out of every 19,000 Americans dies in an auto accident.
- One out of every 20,000 Americans drowns.
- One out of every 68,000 Americans chokes to death on food.
- One out of every 75,000 Americans dies while riding a bicycle.
- One out of every 4.5 million Americans dies in a terrorist attack (in US and overseas).



## How can *imagine* ease your mind?

- 1) Security on planes bound for the Middle East is much more strict than security on domestic flights within the US.
- 2) Security within Israel and Palestine is much more strict than within the US.
- 3) The crime rate in Israel and Palestine is much lower than the typical US city, including your hometown! (In one year, LA County had more than 2,000 violent deaths while Israel had less than 58.)
- 4) It is a small place, just 50 miles wide and 150 miles long. It is easy for our office to keep a watchful eye on situations in various regions of Israel and Palestine.
- 5) Since our first Holy Land trip more than 40 years ago, we have not had a major incident.
- 6) To our knowledge, no Christian Pilgrim from the US has been killed in Israel while on tour during the last 40 years.

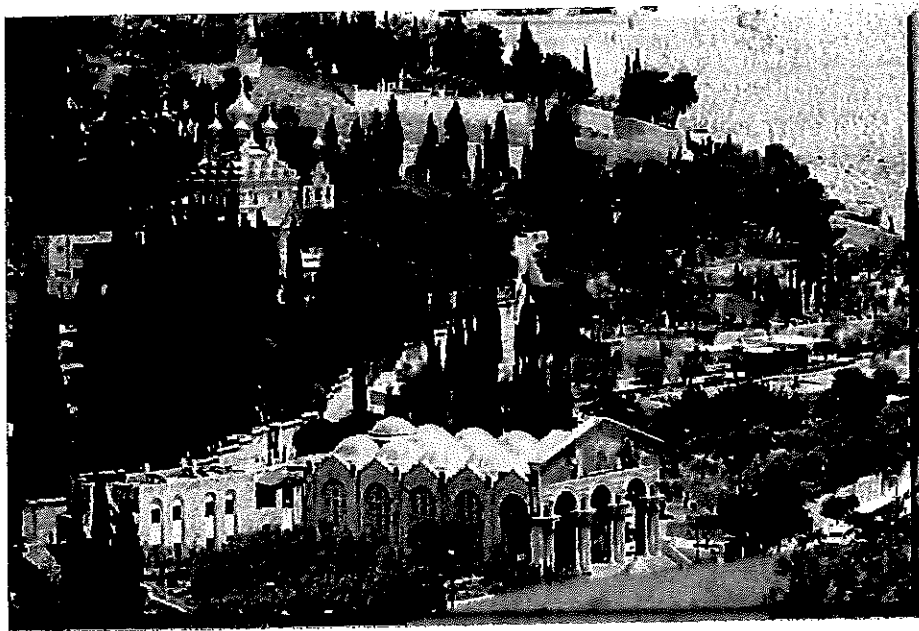


### What is my chance of being involved in an act of terrorism?

Your chance of being involved in an act of terrorism (in the US or overseas) is very low, just 1 in 10,408,947. Meanwhile, in 2013, the FBI estimated there was one murder every 17 minutes in the US. There are risks everywhere in life. Things we assume are safe often carry the most risk. Your chances of being killed in a car accident are 1 in 19,000 while your chances of being killed by an act of terrorism are less than 1 in 4.5 million.

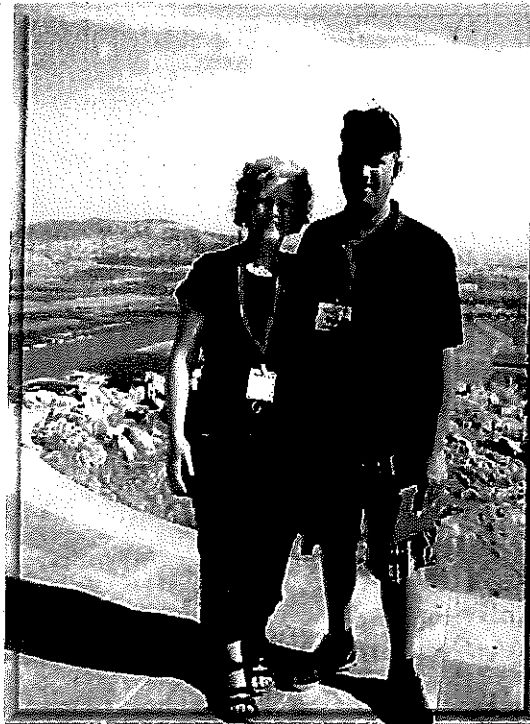
### Will I be safe on this trip?

No one can totally guarantee safety; not your church, community, or our government. However, we can say that you will be as safe on your journey to the Land of the Bible as on a similar length trip to New York or Washington D.C.



**Doesn't the State Department have a special advisory in effect for travelers to the Middle East?**

Yes, and a similar advisory or warning has been in effect for the last 15 years or so. During that time, more than 100,000 travelers have enjoyed our Holy Land programs. Our office in the US monitors the State Department's advisories and uses our decades of first-hand experience, as well as our on-site staff, to inform our day-to-day decision making.



**What safety precautions does the airline take?**

When boarding a plane for the Middle East, travelers are questioned about who packed their luggage and whether they actually own the bag. Sometimes they are asked about the purpose of the trip, who they are traveling with and who they know in the Middle East. The questioners are trained to look for tale-tell signs of nervousness and untrue statements. They are very good at their job and take it very seriously! In addition, luggage is X-rayed before being placed onboard the plane, and every bag must have a passenger on board the plane or the plane will not depart. These procedures are updated often.

## Where exactly will we be going in the West Bank?

Gaza is not even an option at this time. Hebron can be visited only by taxi, not presently by tourist buses. We will only go to certain areas such as Bethlehem, Jericho and Samaria. Just like most towns, there are places where you would not ever go and



other places you would avoid after dark. The West Bank is the same. Most areas are just fine, but other areas we will never enter. Still others, we will avoid during certain time periods.

Bethlehem is in the West Bank and remains on tourist itineraries and welcomes visitors. If we have your group traveling on a Palestinian bus, usually there is no need to get off and change buses.

Jericho is also in the West Bank. For the most part, groups are able to stop at Jericho and visit the ancient Tel without difficulty. We have many groups visiting Jericho and Samaria without any concerns.

## You must decide for yourself the risks versus rewards of travel.

Many of the events you hear or read about in the news occur in Gaza and remote areas of the West Bank. With the exception of Bethlehem and Jericho, the majority of tourists in the Holy Land rarely visit the West Bank or Gaza. Please keep in mind that *Imagine* Tours & Travel is in constant contact with the office we work with overseas to be sure we have the most current and accurate information, regardless of the media.

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