Guide to the Archaeological Sites in East Jerusalem’s Central Business District
Emek Shaveh is an Israeli NGO working to defend cultural heritage rights and to protect ancient sites as public assets that belong to members of all communities, faiths and peoples.

Emek Shaveh is supported by organizations, countries and individuals who promote democracy and human rights. It is primarily funded by foreign countries. This publication was made due to the generous support of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in Switzerland (FDFA), the Norwegian Embassy in Israel, The New Israel Fund (NIF), and HEKS. Its contents are the sole responsibility of Emek Shaveh and do not necessarily reflect the views of the abovementioned entities.
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Introduction

This is a guide to the “Central Business District (CBD) East,” an historically important area in Jerusalem. The district includes four neighborhoods: Sheikh Jarrah, Masoudiya, al-Husseini and Bab a-Zahara. In the second half of the 19th century, this area evolved into one of the most important commercial centers in the city. Even now, the area remains a focal point for many stakeholders in East Jerusalem. Settler organizations working toward the Judaization of Jerusalem consider it strategically important for shaping the city’s character and identity, and to securing Israeli control over the route between the Old City (Temple Mount/Haram a-Sharif) and Mount Scopus. Accordingly, in recent years the area has been the focus of development programs initiated by the Jerusalem Municipality. Such plans are expected to change the face of CBD East, weakening its unique character as a Palestinian urban center. This guide was written as part of an effort to counter these processes and offers the opportunity to become familiar with the area and its’ better-known historic sites.

The guide can be used in two ways: One involves creating your own route: we invite you to walk around the East CBD area while learning about the history of the buildings you pass on your way. The other involves walking along fixed routes – each of which focuses on buildings that represent different chapters in the history of the East CBD area.
Historical Background

The area north of the Old City was a frontier until the end of the 19th century. Archaeological excavations have unearthed burial grounds spanning from the Iron Age (1000-538 BCE), a period identified with the Kingdom of Judah and the First Temple, to the present day. In ancient times, the inhabited city was strictly separate from the areas designated for burial due to purity laws and in order to avoid the spread of disease. In fact, the designation of the area as burial grounds for so long meant that it constituted Jerusalem’s northern perimeter until the 19th century when communities inside the Old City began to settle outside its’ walls.

Excavations in the area revealed the existence of a “Third Wall.” According to the writings of the Flavius Josephus, the Third Wall was built in the late Second Temple period as part of an attempt to fortify the city ahead of the Roman army’s impending siege. This wall represents the boundary of Jerusalem in the first century CE. Other excavations unearthed remains of a manor house dating to the Byzantine period, which was used for agricultural and industrial purposes while also serving as a second home for nobles who sought refuge from the crowded city. The phenomenon of building structures as part of the development of the city’s agricultural and industrial infrastructure and as holiday homes became prevalent again in the 18th century. At the time, over 100 buildings called “Qasr” were constructed outside and around the city’s walls. These were seasonal residential complexes encircled by walls which included agricultural facilities, such as olive presses, a flour mill or winepress, along with cottages for the city’s dignitaries and clerics.

In the second half of the 19th century, Muslim migration to areas outside the Old City walls concentrated around this area. This process took place parallel to the migration of Jews to new neighborhoods to the west of the Old City.

The fact that the area in question had historically constituted the perimeter of the city meant that the area was not politically or religiously significant compared to the Old City. Its proximity to Damascus Gate, one of two central gates to the Old City, aided its’ development into an important commercial center in the 19th century as the residents of the Old City began to migrate outside the city walls. During this period, the Ottoman Empire was attempting to promote modernization in all the regions under its control, to compete with Western powers. Paradoxically, one of the outcomes of this attempt was further Ottoman dependence on Western powers: the Western countries offered the Empire services in exchange for special rights, “capitulations”, to foreign citizens residing in the Empire’s territory. In practice, the Western powers were granted autonomy over the management of all their subjects’ civil issues. In Jerusalem, Western powers established missions and were granted complete autonomy to manage their affairs which conformed to the system of laws practiced in their respective countries. The Western entities established a variety of alternative civic mechanisms to those offered by the Ottoman Empire, such as postal services, banks, hospitals, railroads, and more.

Several missions were established north of Damascus Gate in closed areas protected by guards. These compounds, in turn, offered a greater sense of security in the area and encouraged wealthy Muslim families in Jerusalem, such as the al-Husseini and Nashashibi families, to establish closed complexes outside the city. Such compounds are the nuclei
around which the neighborhoods of Sheikh Jarrah, Masoudiya, al-Husseini, and Bab a-Zahara, developed in the following years. At the time, this area also served as a central attraction for Christian denominations that lacked the political power to carry influence at sites sacred to the Christian world, particularly the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Thus, in the 19th century, for example, the Protestant community had identified an ancient tomb as the tomb of Jesus.

These trends continued during British rule over Palestine from 1917. The Mandatory government built the Rockefeller Museum to display archaeological findings unearthed in British ruled territories. This museum is a monumental structure that functioned as a symbol of British rule in Palestine.

Between 1948–1967 the area was under Jordanian rule. Jordan turned the area into Jerusalem's business and commercial center with banks, shopping centers, and hotels. The Jordanian authorities also developed Atarot Airport – built during British rule – as an international airport, thanks to which East Jerusalem was accessible to tourists from all over the world.

The solid business, cultural, and tourism infrastructure in the area informed a decision by the Jerusalem Municipality in the early 2000s to designate this area as one of Jerusalem's three main business centers. The municipality plans to establish three business and commercial centers that will serve as an economic engine for the city's growth, following years in which its economic status was compromised due to the construction of the separation barrier and the political reality following the Second Intifada. The areas selected to serve as CBDs are: the center of West Jerusalem, located at the heart of West Jerusalem and geared toward the city's secular population; the area between Hanevi’im, Jaffa, and Tzefania streets, as the ultra-Orthodox CBD; and the area north of the Old City, detailed in this guide.

The municipality's decision ostensibly intended to incentivize investment in the area and enable ongoing growth. Local residents claim that over the past two decades since the plan's adoption, almost no resources have been invested in development of the area. Moreover, within the framework of the plan, strict conservation practices have been formulated, creating construction restrictions that impair developers’ capacity to build or allow the residents to renovate and expand their homes. At the same time, in recent years, the State has invested heavily in the development of the Damascus Gate area, in a manner that excludes Palestinians: street vendors previously located at the gate were cleared away; Palestinians have been forbidden from sitting on the steps leading to the gate; and a museum opened beneath the gate displaying remains from the Roman period. Against this backdrop, the CBD development plan is not perceived by Palestinians as a plan intended to benefit them, but rather, as another means of impinging on their basic needs and rendering the area more attractive to settlers.
1. Sheikh Jarah Mosque
2. American Colony
3. Orient House
4. Hind al-Husseini House
5. Tombs of the Kings
6. St. George Cathedral
7. The Third Wall
8. Sa’ad wa Saeed Mosque
9. The Birds Mosaic
10. Albright Institute
11. St. Etienne Monastery
12. The Garden Tomb
14. Jeremiah’s prison
15. al-Sahira Cemetery
16. Post Office
17. Qasr al-Hallil
18. Rockefeller Museum

Old City wall
1949 Armistice Line
Fixed Routes
The Red Route: Archaeology in East CBD

Start of Route: Tombs of the Kings

End of Route: Abbey of Saint-Etienne

Sites: Tombs of the Kings, Third Wall of Jerusalem, Birds Mosaic, Jeremiah's Grotto, Garden Tomb, Abbey of Saint-Etienne.

The route includes important archaeological sites in the East CBD: parts of the ancient city wall, cemeteries, and estates used by nobles who sought refuge from the crowded city. The remains demonstrate the relationship between the city center and its periphery. During periods when the city was smaller in size and its inhabitants were afraid to leave its gates, the area was primarily used for burial. Evidence of broader use including for housing and industry, exists for periods of prosperity characterized by a greater sense of security.
The Red Route: Archaeology in East CBD

5. Tombs of the Kings
7. The Third Wall
9. The Birds Mosaic
12. The Garden Tomb
14. Jeremiah’s prison

Old City wall
1949 Armistice Line

The Red Route: Archaeology in East CBD
The Blue Route: Muslim Departure from the City Walls

Start of Route: Orient House

End of Route: Abbey of Saint-Etienne


This is a tour of structures built by Muslims who left the Old City. Unlike Jews who built neighborhoods outside the Old City walls thanks to financial support from rich Jewry around the world, Muslims left the Old City under the auspices of the city’s wealthy Muslim families. Each of the new neighborhoods in the East CBD was built for the benefit of one family. Over the years, the buildings became the area’s financial, cultural, and political anchors. The East CBD area also attracted many of the Western countries to establish their own missions in the area.
The Blue Route: Muslim Departure from the City Walls
The Green Route: The British Mandate and Jordanian Government

Start of Route: Rockefeller Museum

End of Route: Central Post Office Building

Sites: The Rockefeller Museum, Central Post Office Building, W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, St. George’s Cathedral.

During the British Mandate period and throughout Jordanian rule, extensive modernization processes took place in the area, involving major construction. Multiple public buildings were constructed under British rule, and under Jordan the area became the commercial center of East Jerusalem.
The Green Route: The British Mandate and Jordanian Government
The Yellow Route: Religious Sites

Start of Route: Sheikh Jarrah Mosque

End of Route: al-Sahira Cemetery

Sites: Sheikh Jarrah Mosque, Tombs of the Kings, Sa’ed and Sa’id Mosque, al-Sahira Cemetery.

A route along important religious sites in the East CBD – sites of worship and burial that attest to this area’s religious significance for Jerusalem’s residents from the Roman period to the present day.
The Yellow Route: Religious Sites

1. Sheikh Jarah Mosque
8. Sa'ad wa Saeed Mosque
14. Jeremiah’s prison
15. al-Sahira Cemetery

Old City wall
1949 Armistice Line
Sites Arranged Geographically
American Colony (Blue Route)

Location: 1 Louis Vincent street

One of the most luxurious and prestigious hotels in East Jerusalem. It was built adjacent to the Sheikh Jarrah Mosque in 1870, funded by Rabah al-Husseini, a Jerusalem dignitary. Initially four of al-Husseini’s wives lived in the building. The structure is built around a paved courtyard. Such construction characterized the first compounds built for the city’s dignitaries outside the Old City and granted household members a degree of protection against burglary while allowing them to spend time outdoors. The complex included a personal flour mill and a large eight dunam yard.

At the end of the 19th century, a group of evangelical Christians from Chicago and Sweden settled in the Old City of Jerusalem. As the number of community members increased, they sought a new place where they could settle. They first rented, and later purchased, Rabah al-Husseini’s estate, hence its name. With time, members of the American Colony left the complex, and in the late 1950s the estate was converted into a hotel. The hotel includes Rabah al-Husseini’s original home, along with the new surrounding buildings.

After Israel’s conquest of East Jerusalem, the site continued to function as a hotel, and was run by descendants of the American Colony’s community leaders, Horatio and Anna Spafford. Throughout the years, the hotel has maintained its international character, hosting foreign politicians and diplomats who sought to avoid recognizing Israel’s sovereignty over East Jerusalem.
Sheikh Jarrah Mosque (Yellow Route)

Location: Nablus road corner of Pierre Van Passen street

The tomb of Sheikh Jarrah, a surgeon and prince from the court of Salah ad-Din. The tomb is considered a very important pilgrimage site for Muslims. The tomb structure was first built in 1202 and served as a madrasa (school). In the 19th century it was rebuilt as a mosque with a minaret. Toward the end of the 19th century, the neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah developed around the tomb and became one of the most prestigious neighborhoods in Muslim Jerusalem.

At that time, Jews purchased plots in this area of the city and established the Shimon Hatzadik neighborhood, which is located near a burial cave associated with Shimon Hatzadik (Simeon the Just), one of the high priests during the Second Temple period. Archaeological excavations date the tomb back to the beginning of the Byzantine period, approximately 500 years after Shimon’s death. A Latin inscription was found in the tomb, indicating that a woman named Julia Sabina was buried there. In 1948, the area was occupied by Jordan, and the Jewish residents of the Shimon Hatzadik neighborhood fled to West Jerusalem. After East Jerusalem was recaptured by Israel in the Six Day War, pro-settlement groups began pressuring the Israeli government to approve the return of Jews to the neighborhood’s homes, although the residents who had fled had been granted alternative housing in 1948 and their homes were populated by Palestinian residents.

Since the start of the 21st century, Sheikh Jarrah has been at the center of tensions, following attempts by settler groups to gain control over the neighborhood’s homes.
Orient House (Blue Route)

Location: Corner of Abu Obeidah street

Ismail Bak al-Husseini built the structure in 1897, as part of the process of emigrating outside the Old City walls. The al-Husseini family was among the richest and most influential families in Jerusalem at the time. Husseini was the head of the educational council and held an important position within the Ottoman government. Among other things he helped increase the number of tax paying residents in the rural areas around Jerusalem.

The building was intended to serve as a residence for Ismail al-Husseini’s family, yet soon began to be used for public events. For example, in 1898, approximately one year after it opened, the Austro-Hungarian Emperor Wilhelm II was hosted there during his visit to Palestine. Until 1948, many personages were hosted in the building on a variety of occasions, including Emir Abdullah (who later became King of Jordan), Emperor of Ethiopia Haile Selassie, and others.

In 1948, the building remained under the jurisdiction of the Kingdom of Jordan, as part of East Jerusalem. It served as the headquarters for the Conciliation Commission for the Land of Israel, which operated under Resolution 194 of the United Nations General Assembly. The building also served as the headquarters of UNRWA, the body that functions on behalf of the United Nations to address the Palestinian refugee problem.

Following Israel’s conquest of East Jerusalem in 1967, the building was leased to various organizations. Until the early 1980s the building served as a hotel which was run by members of the family. The hotel was called “The New Orient Hotel”, a name which continued to be associated with the building even after the hotel closed down. In 1983, Dr. Faisal Husseini founded the Arab Studies Society in the building in what marked the beginning of a process turning the Orient House into one of the most important Palestinian national symbols in Jerusalem. By the outbreak of the First Intifada in 1988, Faisal Husseini was a prominent Palestinian leader, and the Arab Studies Society was advancing Palestinian political goals.

After the signing of the Oslo Accords, the Orient House became a political, cultural, and social center. The Orient House also served as the Palestinian Authority’s arm in Jerusalem, becoming the Palestinian peoples’ most important political symbol in the city. The Palestinians designated the Orient House as the seat of government in the future Palestinian state.

In 1995 Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin was assassinated. Subsequent Israeli governments threatened to close the center as relations between the Palestinian Authority and Israel deteriorated. The Orient House continued to serve as a center for Palestinian Authority’s activity until the outbreak of the Second Intifada in 2000, and the waves of suicide bombings. In 2001, the Israeli government led by Ariel Sharon deemed these incidents, along with Faisal Hussein’s death, sufficient to justify closing down the Orient House. The order has subsequently been renewed every six months.
Tombs of the Kings (Red Route, Yellow Route)

Location: Salah ad-Din street, next to the Jerusalem District Court

A magnificent burial complex dating to the Second Temple period, hewn entirely in stone. Twenty-three steps descend from street level to the burial site leading to a large plaza featuring old water reservoirs. The entrance to the burial caves is located on the western front of the plaza and is adorned by fruit themed reliefs.

Several traditions are associated with this compound. In the Muslim tradition this tomb is called Qubur al-Muluk (Tombs of the Kings) or Qubur a-Salatin (Tomb of the Sultans) – these names express the belief that such a magnificent tomb could only be built for a member of the royal family. According to the Jewish tradition, this is the tomb of Rabbi Akiva's father-in-law, Kalba Savua (who lived in the first or second century CE). On the other hand, based on the writings of Flavius Josephus, archaeological research typically identifies the compound with the burial plot of the Kingdom of Adiabene’s royalty, who inhabited modern-day northern Kurdistan. The best-known member of this royal family is Queen Heleni who lived in Jerusalem for some time.

During the 19th century, the complex was damaged in an antiquity theft following a rumor that the tomb contained valuable treasures. The compound was sold to the Ferrer family – a Jewish family from France, who transferred control to the French government. France controls the site to this day.

In 2019, the tomb was at the heart of a struggle between groups of religious Jews and the French government. That same year, the tomb was opened to the general public. The religious Jews demanded exclusive permission to enter the site, while the French government permitted Jews and Muslims to pray at the site together.
St. George’s Cathedral (Green Route)

Location: Between Nablus road and Salah ad-Din street

The cathedral is the seat of the Archbishop of the Anglican Church’s Diocese of Jerusalem. It serves the Anglican communities in Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. The Anglican Church is the official church in England and split from the Vatican in the 16th century, during the Reformation. The Queen of England is the head of the church.

The construction of the church after Bishop Blythe’s appointment as head of the Diocese of Jerusalem in 1887, marked the end of a dispute between factions of the church operating in Jerusalem at the time: on one side stood two old factions, represented by the London Jews’ Society (The church’s ministry among the Jewish people) and the Church Missionary Society; and on the other hand, Blythe and other Christian factions, who established religious centers in the vicinity of Jerusalem throughout that period. Blythe eventually overcame the older factions and established St. George’s Cathedral.

The cathedral was built in the style of English churches of that time: a long hall from west to east – with the entrance to the west and the apse to the east. Corridors that provide ventilation and natural lighting extend from either side of the hall. The church has 15 windows, some of which are painted. The church is part of a larger complex known as St. George’s College, and includes a cathedral, residential area for pastors and archbishops, a library, and a boys’ school.

In 2004, the cathedral made headlines in Israel after Mordechai Vanunu, who was arrested and imprisoned for revealing Israel’s nuclear secrets, moved to live there following his release from prison.
Third Wall of Jerusalem (Red Route)

Location: Between Pikud ha-Merkaz street and Naomi Kis street

Most of the excavations north of Damascus Gate focused on locating the Third Wall of Jerusalem, the wall that expanded Jerusalem in the first century CE, during the late Second Temple period. According to Flavius Josephus, King Agrippa I commenced construction during the first century CE. It is called the “Third Wall” as it was the third wall built around the city. The construction of the wall was likely completed in 67 CE as part of Jerusalem’s preparations for the Great Revolt. British archaeologist Kathleen Kenyon, among Jerusalem’s leading researchers, disagreed that sections of the wall discovered were those of the Third Wall. She claimed that the remains were part of the defense system built by the Tenth Roman Legion, during the siege of Jerusalem in the 67 CE. Kenyon’s claim is no longer accepted. In 2016 a section of the wall was discovered in the Russian compound, with markings indicating that it had been breached by the Roman Legion.

At the intersection between Pikud ha-Merkaz street and Naomi Kis street, adjacent to a gas station, a 4.5-meter-wide, approximately 450-meter-long section of the wall was exposed. The excavations revealed the wall’s infrastructure for the wall and fragments of a guard tower that protrudes from the wall, along with the remains of a church’s mosaic floor including a dedication inscription in Greek. The inscription makes it possible to date the church to the Byzantine period (the sixth century CE). This church is likely one of several buildings constructed north of Damascus Gate, at the main entrance to the city.

Despite the site’s historical importance, it has been subject to minimal restoration. Due to its proximity to a gas station and busy street, along with a lack of explanatory signs, it is very difficult to find the site.
Saed and Saeed Mosque (Yellow Route)

Location: Corner of Nablus road and Naomi Kis street

A building with a minaret built in the late 19th century. Remains of earlier Crusader structures are also incorporated into the building. The mosque is named after two important figures from the beginning of Islam: Saed Ibn Abu Waqqas was the governor of the city of Kufa, located in present-day Iraq, and was one of the six council members appointed to select a replacement for Caliph Umar who was assassinated in 644 CE; and Saeed Ibn Zaid was among the first to emigrate from Mecca to Medina with Muhammad. According to the Muslim tradition, he was among the ten men to whom Muhammad promised paradise within their lifetime.
Birds Mosaic (Red Route)

Location: Corner of Hanevi’im street and Ben Shadad street

A mosaic floor was discovered in 1894 during the construction of a residential building. Following the discovery, construction was halted, and excavations began on site which unearthed a 28-square-meter mosaic floor depicting a variety of birds. An inscription was also found in the Armenian language: “In memory and redemption of all the Armenians, whose names are known only to God.” Beneath the mosaic was a burial cave which contained human bones and oil lamps. The inscription is likely dedicated to the people buried there. According to an analysis of the decorations and writing, the mosaic floor dates to the sixth century CE.

Following the discovery of the floor, the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem sought to purchase the territory to emphasize the importance of the Armenian Church in the development of Jerusalem during the Byzantine period. Today the floor belongs to the Armenian Patriarchate, through which entry to the site must be coordinated. The site is among the most important to the Armenian community in Jerusalem.
W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research
(Green Route)

Location: 26 Salah ad-Din street

Construction of the building began in 1909 when the American Society of Oriental Research’s acquired the site, and was completed in 1931. The building originally served as the permanent home of the American Society of Oriental Research. It joined other European institutes built in this area of Jerusalem, which engaged in archaeological research of the ancient Near East, including the French Biblical and Archaeological School in Jerusalem (École Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jérusalem) and the Kenyon Institute (formerly known as The British School of Archaeology). The construction of the Albright Institute reflects colonialist beliefs that they have nothing to learn from local Palestinian culture. For example, the building’s initial plan was accepted within the framework of a student competition in Yale University’s School of Architecture in the United States. It soon became clear that though the plan was endowed with much architectural praise, the student who designed it was unfamiliar with Jerusalem’s climatic and environmental conditions – thus the plan was not implemented. Ultimately the task of proposing a plan for the building was entrusted to the architect Friedrich Ehmann, a veteran architect from Jerusalem. The plan conformed to the style of other buildings in the area and included an inner courtyard surrounding three buildings. The Albright Institute hoped to add a fourth structure in due time, yet this did not materialize due to budgetary challenges.
Home of Hind al-Husseini (Blue Route)

Location: 14 Ibn Jubair street

Hind al-Husseini was a young woman in 1948, when she found 55 orphans who had been brought to Jerusalem following the Deir Yassin massacre with no one to take care of them. She took them under her wing and initially housed them in a monastery in the Old City. After the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Jordan came into effect, she transferred them to her parents’ home in the al-Husseini neighborhood. Al-Husseini decided to turn the mansion she grew up in into an orphanage. With time the mansion was turned into a girls’ school. Furthermore, Al-Husseini opened a research institute for the documentation and preservation of Palestinian culture and heritage. Over the years she received many accolades from figures including Pope Paul IV in 1964, the Italian Adelai Ristori award granted to pioneering women in 1980, the Order of the Star of Jordan for Education in 1985, and a First Degree Medallion from the German government in 1989.
Abbey of Saint-Etienne (Red Route, Blue Route)

Location: 83 Nablus road

The Abbey of Saint-Etienne is a Dominican order monastery. Excavations conducted in 1883 revealed a church dating back to the Byzantine period and identified as established by Empress Eudocia (in the 5th century). The church was intended to commemorate the site where the first Christian martyr, Stephen, was killed. According to tradition, Stephen was stoned to death by Jews at this site. The church was destroyed and rebuilt several times following the conquest of Jerusalem by the Persians and Muslims and was destroyed by Salah ad-Din in the 12th century.

Following the discovery of the church and other archaeological remains, Dominican Priest Marie-Joseph Lagrange established a school for archaeology on the site. Initially called the École Pratique d’Études Bibliques, it was renamed the French Biblical and Archaeological School in Jerusalem (École Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jérusalem) in 1920. The excavations revealed a magnificent burial system dating to the Iron Age. No inscriptions were found on site to identify those buried. Over the years it has been hypothesized that the tombs belonged to the late kings of Judea, but nothing has been verified.

Alongside the school of archaeology stands a cathedral. Built in 1900 in the style of a basilica, it is divided into three passages. There is an apse at the end of each passage. The ornamentation style on the cathedral is eclectic. For example, the building’s windows are round with Gothic-style stained glass; the arches are constructed with alternating red and white stone, akin to the Ablaq architectural style that originated in the East; and the capitals atop the arches’ supporting pillars feature the deciduous leaves motif typical in Crusader-era mosaics.
**Garden Tomb (Red Route)**

**Location: Conrad Schick**

Protestants identify the Garden Tomb as Jesus’ burial site, unlike most Christian denominations that identify his burial site with the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, located in the Christian Quarter of the Old City. In the 19th century, Major-General Charles Gordon decided this was Jesus’ burial site, because when he looked at the hill where the Garden Tomb is located from Damascus Gate, it appeared similar to a human skull. Excavations on site revealed several tombs. One particular tomb is associated with Jesus. Remains of an ancient garden were discovered around the tomb, hence its name. Archaeological excavations discovered that the tombs date further back in time, to the First Temple period. Though many Protestants accept this dating they continue to regard the site as important.

Attributing this tomb to Jesus may be indicative of an attempt by Protestants to cultivate competition with the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, over which they could not obtain ownership of any territory. Instead, the Garden Tomb served as a foothold for Protestant Christians in the vicinity of ancient Jerusalem.
Paulus-Haus (Blue Route)

Location: Nablus road near Sultan Suleiman street

The building is located adjacent to Nablus Gate. It was founded by the priest Wilhelm Schmidt. The decision to build the structure was part of a large-scale process in which Western powers established institutions that represented their interests in Jerusalem. The guest house is affiliated with the German Catholic Church. Construction of the building was completed in 1910, and included a church, dining rooms, and guest rooms. During the First World War, the hostel served as a German headquarters, and after the British conquest of Jerusalem it served as their center of governance.

The German Catholic Institute for the Study of the Land of Israel (Orientalisches institute der Gorres Gesellschaft) for German theologians also operated within the guest house. The founder of the institute, Father Schmidt, was interested in birds and established a nature museum in the basement of the building.

The compound also houses the Schmidt’s Girls College. The school initially operated on Hillel Street but was transferred to Paulus-Haus once it was built. During the period when East Jerusalem remained under Jordanian control, girls from across the Arab world were sent to study at the institution. The school has a respectable reputation to this day, and many parents seek to send their daughters to study there.
Jeremiah’s Grotto (Red Route)

Location: Next to Zedekiah’s Cave

Adjacent to Zedekiah’s Cave and the walls of the Old City is a cave. Tradition has it that the prophet Jeremiah was imprisoned in this cave and is where he wrote the Book of Lamentations. According to testimonies from visitors to Jerusalem over the generations, great importance has been attributed to the site and it is considered one of the city’s most important stops along the pilgrimage route. Testimonies claim that the cave had been divided into several rooms. Ancient tombs dating back to the Early Roman period were discovered on site, and they join other tombs discovered in excavations of other sites in the area, including the Garden Tomb and the Rockefeller Museum. Today, a mosque has been constructed at the entrance to the cave.
al-Sahira Cemetery (Yellow Route)

**Location: Adjacent to Flowers Gate (Herod’s Gate)**

The area likely began to function as a cemetery during the Mamluk period (13th–16th century) and was among the three Muslim cemeteries of Jerusalem at that time. Its name means “the sleepwalkers,” and was likely chosen due to a description in the Quran about the resurrection of the dead when people will walk around as sleepwalkers (al-Sahira). The Ramadan cannon in Jerusalem is located in the cemetery and fired at the end of each day throughout the month of Ramadan, to signal permission to start eating. This custom has existed since the 19th century at least.
Central Post Office Building (Green Route)

Sultan Suleiman Street, adjacent to Flowers Gate (Herod's Gate)

The Central Post Office Building was built on the ruins of an old structure in the early 1960s, when East Jerusalem was still under Jordanian rule. The changes in the structure are very indicative of the large-scale processes that took place in East Jerusalem, Jordan and then under Israeli control.

King Hussein came to power in 1952 and began promoting the development of East Jerusalem, much of which focused on the East CBD area which was already East Jerusalem's main business and commercial center at the time. Development processes were aimed at urbanizing East Jerusalem, hitherto primarily a rural area. The construction of the Central Post Office Building, a sign of urban development, on the ruins of East Jerusalem's Municipal Slaughterhouse – a site associated with agricultural activity—typified these processes.

Even after Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem, the structure of the Central Post Office Building continued to reflect the geopolitical changes in the city. After 1967, the building served as a post office and police station. Such uses indicate the State of Israel's desire to maintain continuity in the city from Jordanian rule, while at the same time establishing means of control and oversight in large Palestinian population centers. In 2013, part of the building was sold to the Ateret Cohanim settler organization, and a guest house for groups and families was established on site, including a beit midrash (Torah study hall). This development is an expression of the settlers' effort to Judaize the area between Damascus Gate, the Old City, and the neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah.
Qasr al-Halili/Qasr al-Sheikh (Blue Route)

Location: 32 Sultan Suleiman street, within the Rockefeller Museum

Qasr al–Halili is one of two “qasr”-esque buildings (meaning “palace” in Arabic) that remain standing in the eastern part of the city. This is nearly the last remnant from many such structures built outside the Old City walls in the 18th century. These palaces were used for both agricultural and industrial purposes, and as holiday homes for the city’s dignitaries and clerics. Qasr al-Sheikh is a two-story stone structure. There were two large halls and an olive press on the first floor, while the second floor served as a family residence. It was built by Sheikh Muhammad al-Halili (the Hebronite), the Shafi’i Mufti of Jerusalem, who built many other structures in Jerusalem and elsewhere in Palestine. The structure was named after him, along with the vineyard within which it was built. The building is currently used by the Israel Antiquities Authority’s Director of Conservation.
Rockefeller Museum (Green Route)

Location: 27 Sultan Suleiman street

The Rockefeller Museum was built in 1938 to display the archaeological remains unearthed in excavations under the British Mandate. The museum building was erected in the al-Halili vineyard, where Qasr al-Halili/al-Sheikh is located. Many groups sought to purchase the vineyard before the British purchase. For example, the Jewish National Fund tried to acquire the land for the Bezalel School of Art because artist Boris Schatz had the vision of establishing the school there.

The building was planned by architect Austen St. Barb Harrison. He sought to integrate motifs from contemporary western architecture with the local style. He did the same in other buildings he designed, including the Government Printing Office, the Commissioner’s Palace and the Central Post Office on Jaffa Street. The wings of the building are constructed around a large courtyard and an octagonal tower stands atop the structure, influenced by remains dating back to the Crusader period, as the British perceived themselves to be successors of the Crusaders. This courtyard would later inspire the design of the Supreme Court.

The museum’s exhibitions are displayed in chronological order. Its display cabinets feature findings from areas under the control of the British Mandate. Due to the fact that changes to museums in occupied territories are prohibited under international law, the museum’s exhibitions have not changed at all since Jordan’s conquest of the city in 1948. In this sense, the museum’s exhibition serves as a time capsule of sorts, an exemplar of the ideals that guided museum curators throughout the first half of the 20th century.

The Rockefeller Museum currently serves as both a museum and the administrative offices for the Israel Antiquities Authority. In contrast to the museum’s exhibitions, which have not undergone any changes, in the past decade the Israel Antiquities Authority has begun removing many of the collections conserved in the building’s storerooms amid preparations for the opening of a new building for the Israel Antiquities Authority near the Israel Museum in West Jerusalem. The High Court of Justice rejected a petition filed by Emek Shaveh against this action.