GENERAL

map of israel and neighbouring countries

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Map of Israel and Neighbouring Countries: A Comprehensive Guide

When you look at a map of Israel and its surrounding region, you see more than just lines and colors. The geography of this small, yet historically rich country is intertwined with the histories, cultures, and politics of its neighbours. Whether you are a student studying Middle Eastern geography, a traveler planning a route through the Levant, or simply curious about how borders have shifted over time, this article will guide you through the essential features of Israel's map and the landscapes of its neighbouring countries.

Geographical Overview

Israel occupies a land area of approximately 22,000 square kilometres, stretching along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. The country's terrain is diverse: a fertile coastal plain, the rolling hills of the Galilee, the volcanic highlands of the Judean Hills, and the arid plateau of the Negev Desert. The map of Israel and neighbouring countries reveals a complex tapestry of physical features that influence settlement patterns, agriculture, and transportation routes.

Key Physical Features

- Coastal Plain: From Tel Aviv to Haifa, this low-lying strip hosts Israel's largest cities and major ports.
- Mountains and Hills: The Carmel Range, Mount Hermon, and the Galilean highlands create natural barriers and scenic vistas.
- Deserts and Plateaus: The Negev Desert dominates the south, while the Judean Desert lies in the central highlands.
- Rivers and Water Bodies: The Jordan River, Sea of Galilee, and the Dead Sea are prominent hydrological features that shape the region's ecology and economy.

Political Boundaries and Borders

The modern map of Israel and neighbouring countries is a product of centuries of conflict, diplomacy, and international agreements. Borders are often contested, and the lines drawn on a map may not fully capture the reality on the ground. Below, we examine the main borders that define Israel's relationships with its neighbours.

Israel–Palestine (West Bank and Gaza)

Israel shares a 190-kilometre border with the Palestinian territories: the West Bank to the east and the Gaza Strip to the southwest. The West Bank is a landlocked enclave that includes major Palestinian cities such as Ramallah, Hebron, and Nablus. The Gaza Strip is a narrow coastal strip, roughly 41 km long and 6–12 km wide, bordered by Israel to the north and east, Egypt to the south, and the Mediterranean Sea to the west.

Israel–Jordan

Spanning 241 kilometres, the Israel–Jordan border follows the Jordan River and the Dead Sea. The border is largely peaceful, with a well-established demarcation line. The two countries cooperate on water-sharing agreements, particularly concerning the Jordan River and the Dead Sea.

Israel–Egypt

Israel's southern border with Egypt stretches 173 kilometres, largely defined by the Sinai Peninsula. The border is marked by the Suez Canal and the Gulf of Aqaba. The 1979 peace treaty between Israel and Egypt established a secure and stable frontier, and the area is now a popular destination for desert tourism.

Israel–Lebanon

The Israel–Lebanon border is approximately 79 kilometres long, running through the northern highlands. The border is heavily militarized and has been a flashpoint in regional conflicts. Despite this, there are several crossing points for humanitarian aid and limited trade.

Israel–Syria

Israel's northern border with Syria extends 110 kilometres, largely along the Golan Heights. The Golan Heights is a strategically important plateau that Israel captured in the 1967 Six-Day War and later annexed. The border area remains tense, with occasional skirmishes and diplomatic disputes.

Key Landmarks and Cities

Understanding the map of Israel and neighbouring countries means recognizing the major urban centres that anchor the region. These cities are hubs of culture, commerce, and history, and they serve as key reference points on any map.

Israeli Cities

- Jerusalem: The city sits on a hill in the center of Israel, surrounded by significant religious sites such as the Western Wall, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- Tel Aviv: A modern metropolis on the Mediterranean coast, known for its vibrant nightlife, beaches, and high-tech industry.
- Haifa: Israel's third-largest city, located on the slopes of Mount Carmel, featuring the Baha"i Gardens and a bustling port.
- Eilat: A resort town on the Red Sea, known for its coral reefs and desert landscapes.
- Be"er Sheva: The capital of the Negev Desert, a growing tech and research hub.

Palestinian Cities

- Ramallah: The administrative capital of the Palestinian Authority, situated in the West Bank.
- Nablus: Known for its historic Old City and traditional markets.
- Gaza City: The largest city in the Gaza Strip, with a dense population and a rich maritime heritage.

Neighbouring City Highlights

- Amman, Jordan: The capital, located on the slopes of Mount Nebo.
- Cairo, Egypt: The bustling capital of Egypt, situated near the Nile Delta.
- Baalbek, Lebanon: A UNESCO World Heritage site with ancient Roman temples.
- Aqaba, Jordan: A Red Sea port city, popular for diving and water sports.
- Damascus, Syria: One of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world.

Historical Evolution of the Map

The map of Israel and neighbouring countries has undergone significant changes over the past century. From Ottoman rule to the British Mandate, and from the 1948 Arab-Israeli War to the 1967 Six-Day War, each conflict has redrawn lines on the map. Understanding this history is essential for interpreting current borders.

Ottoman Era (1516–1917)

During the Ottoman period, the region that now comprises Israel and its neighbours was part of the larger province of Syria. Borders were loosely defined, and administrative divisions were based on local tribal and religious affiliations.

British Mandate (1917–1948)

After World War I, the League of Nations granted Britain a mandate over Palestine, which included modern-day Israel, Jordan, and the West Bank. The mandate period saw increased immigration, land purchases, and tensions between Jewish and Arab communities.

1948 Arab-Israeli War

Following the United Nations Partition Plan, the State of Israel was declared, leading to the first Arab-Israeli war. The war resulted in armistice lines that left Israel with more territory than originally allocated in the UN plan, and established the borders with Egypt, Jordan, and Syria.

1967 Six-Day War

Israel captured the Sinai Peninsula, the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights. The map of Israel expanded dramatically, and the Golan Heights remains a point of contention today.

Post-1967 Peace Agreements

- 1979 Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty: Returned the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt.
- 1993 Oslo Accords: Established the Palestinian Authority and set the framework for future negotiations.

Neighbouring Countries in Detail

To fully appreciate the map of Israel and neighbouring countries, it is useful to explore each country's geography, culture, and key points of contact with Israel. Below is a deeper dive into each neighbour.

Palestine

Palestine consists of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The West Bank is a landlocked area that borders Israel to the west, Jordan to the east, and the Dead Sea to the south. The Gaza Strip is a narrow coastal enclave on the Mediterranean Sea, bordered by Israel to the north and east, Egypt to the south, and the sea to the west. The region's topography is varied, featuring rolling hills, fertile valleys, and a coastline that has historically been a trade route.

Jordan

Jordan is a landlocked country located to the east of Israel. Its geography includes the Jordan River, the Dead Sea, the Jordan Rift Valley, and the desert plateau of the east. The capital, Amman, sits on the foothills of the Anti-Lebanon Mountains. Jordan's borders with Israel are largely defined by the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, and the two countries share a comprehensive water-sharing agreement.

Egypt

Egypt lies to the south of Israel, across the Sinai Peninsula. Its northern coast is along the Mediterranean Sea, while its southern coast borders the Red Sea. The Suez Canal, a critical maritime chokepoint, cuts across the Sinai, connecting the Mediterranean with the Red Sea. The border between Egypt and Israel follows the Sinai Peninsula, with the Gulf of Aqaba marking the southern terminus.

Lebanon

Lebanon is a narrow country along the Mediterranean coast, north of Israel. Its mountainous terrain is dominated

by the Mount Lebanon range, which separates the coast from the interior plateau. Beirut, the capital, sits on the coast, while the northern border with Israel runs along the highlands. The border area is heavily militarized, but there are crossing points for humanitarian aid and limited trade.

Syria

Syria lies to the northeast of Israel, with the Golan Heights forming the disputed border. The Golan Heights is a plateau that provides strategic military advantage and water resources. Syria's capital, Damascus, sits in the western part of the country, and the region's topography includes the Anti-Lebanon Mountains and the coastal plain along the Mediterranean.

Travel Tips and Navigation

For travelers, understanding the map of Israel and neighbouring countries is essential for planning routes, securing visas, and ensuring safety. Below are practical tips to help you navigate the region.

Visas and Entry Requirements

- Israel: Visa-free entry for many nationalities for up to 90 days. Long-term visas require an application through the Israeli embassy.
- Jordan: Tourist visas can be obtained on arrival for most countries. Certain nationalities may need to apply in advance.
- Egypt: Tourist visas can be obtained at the airport or through the Egyptian embassy. E-visas are also available for many nationalities.
- Lebanon: Visa-free entry for many nationalities for up to 30 days. Longer stays require a visa.
- Syria: Travel is highly restricted due to security concerns. Most nationalities are advised not to travel to Syria.

Transportation Networks

Baca Juga (Artikel Terkait)

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