

Welcome to the En Gedi Nature Reserve

The Israel Nature and Park Authority hopes that you will enjoy your visit to the reserve. The goal of the reserve is to ensure the perpetuation of the landscape, springs and waterfalls, flora, fauna and remnants of the past. Remember: the animals, plants, water, rocks and traces of the past are an inseparable part of the reserve while we the visitors are only guests for a short time. By following the instructions listed below, you will guarantee that the reserve remains unspoiled, ensure your own safety and be able to enjoy your stay.

Rules of Behavior While Visiting the En Gedi Nature Reserve

- It is absolutely forbidden to damage or harm flora, fauna or inanimate objects!
- Please do not feed the animals. All their food is found in the reserve and any other nourishment might be unhealthy for them!
- Do not bring food into the reserve. Eating is only permitted in the designated areas in the parking lots.
- Do not bring in pets.
- Do not bring musical instruments or radios into the reserve. Enjoy the quiet sounds of Nature and do not make unnecessary noise.
- It is absolutely forbidden to smoke or light fires on the reserve grounds!
- Do not climb walls of ancient structures and do not enter buildings that are marked out-of-bounds.
- It is absolutely forbidden to remain in the reserve after dark! For your convenience there is an overnight parking and camping area on the En Gedi public beach.
- Keep the reserve clean and take your garbage away with you.
- It is forbidden to climb rocks and/or rappel from them.
- Keep to marked paths. Wandering from marked paths could endanger your own safety as well as that of other visitors and could cause damage to the reserve.
- Make sure you have an updated topographical map (1:50,000) of the trails.
- Carry at least 5 liters of water per person per day. Do not depend on natural water sources for drinking water.
- Make sure you wear a hat and comfortable walking shoes.
- There is a danger of floods during the winter, spring and fall. Do not walk in or cross streambeds during those seasons.
- Some of the areas of the reserve are marked "closed to visitors" for reasons of safety and to protect the natural environment – please observe these instructions.

The En Gedi oasis contains sources of water and food that are vital to the wildlife's existence. The limited number of hours that the reserve is open makes it possible for the animals to reach these resources safely and quietly. The reserve is open from 08:00 to 16:00 in the winter and from 08:00 to 17:00 in the summer (depending upon standard and daylight saving time). Below is a list of trails in the reserve, arranged for your convenience according to degree of difficulty and the amount of time they take. We will be happy to assist you in planning your visit to the reserve and to answer any questions you may have. Our telephone numbers are: 08-6584285; 08-6584517; fax: 08-6520228.

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Map: Shalom Kveller; Photographs: INPA Archives
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Trails

The ancient synagogue – the focus of Jewish settlement in ancient En Gedi in the 3rd–6th centuries CE. The synagogue's floor – a mosaic – is decorated with animals and inscriptions. A visit to the synagogue can be combined with the beginning or end of any walk through the reserve.

Lower Wadi David – the trail passes by waterfalls and pools containing lush streambank vegetation and culminates at David's Waterfall. Concentrations of trees characteristic of the reserve can be seen at the beginning of the walk: acacias, jujubes, thorn trees, cordia, etc.

Upper Wadi David – David's Waterfall, Shulamit's Spring, the Dodim Cave, the En Gedi Spring – a scenic trail from which one can see the desert oasis of En Gedi and overlook the Dead Sea. One can discover the natural flora of the reserve and reach its water source. Dodim's Cave is located above David's Waterfall. It is a karstic cave. The trail passes close to archeological sites: the Chalcolite temple, the flour mill, ancient water reservoirs and terraces for irrigated cultivation.

Wadi Arugot – a walk along the route of one of the largest streams in the Judean desert. The trail passes through wild vistas with an abundance of water the whole year around. (The table below describes the short and long trails).

Lookout trail, the Dry Canyon, the En Gedi Spring, Lower Wadi David – a scenic trial along the "seam line" between the desert portion of the reserve and the oasis. It is possible to follow the northern bank of Wadi David, go down to its canyon-like, dry section until the Dry Waterfall, and then return by following the southern bank of the stream. From the Dry Waterfall one has a beautiful view of the descent of Wadi David, the Dead Sea and the Moabite Mountains in the east.

The three trails described below ascend to the top of the desert, overlooking the magnificent view of the Judean Desert to the west and towards the Dead Sea and the Moabite Mountains to the east. The ancient paths are the En Gedi (Flower Hill) and the Essenes Ascents. The trails are:

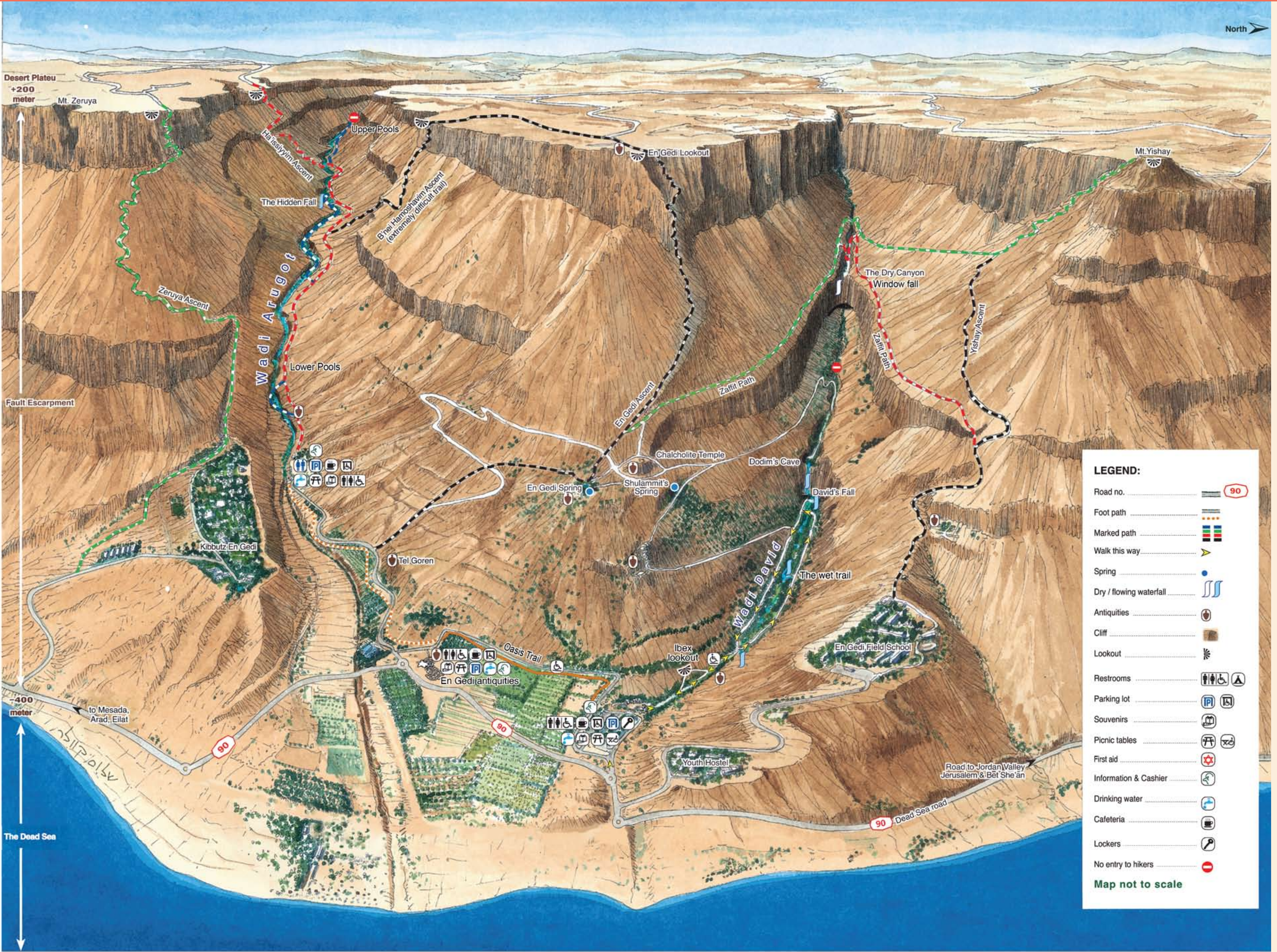
- Walk through the field school crossing to **Mount Yishai**, walk on the desert plain until reaching the **En Gedi Lookout**; descend via the **En Gedi (Hatsits) Ascent** and along **Lower Wadi David**, exiting through the Wadi David ticket office.
- Climb from **Tel Goren** up the **En Gedi (Hatsits) Ascent** to the **En Gedi Lookout**; descend through the **Bnei Hamoshavim Ascent** to **Wadi Arugot**, exiting through the Wadi Arugot ticket office.
- Climb up the **Zeruiah Ascent** from Kibbutz En Gedi to the desert plain, descending via the **Essenes Ascent** to **Wadi Arugot**, exiting through the Wadi Arugot ticket office.

Recommended Trails for Walking in the En Gedi Nature Reserve

Trail	Degree of difficulty*	Length of time (in hours)	Starting point	Conclusion	Starting time – no later than:**	Comments
The ancient synagogue	1	1/2	The synagogue	The synagogue	15:30	Guided tours and special activities are available, to be coordinated in advance
The lower section of Wadi David: David's Waterfall	1	1	The Wadi David ticket office	The Wadi David ticket office	15:00	You must leave David's Waterfall by 15:30
The upper section of Wadi David: David's Waterfall, Shulamit's Spring, Dodim's Cave, En Gedi Spring	2	3–4	David's Waterfall	The Wadi David ticket office or the Tel Goren	13:30	You must leave Dodim Cave by 14:30; you must leave En Gedi Spring by 15:00

*1 – easy; 2 – relatively easy; 3 – difficult; 4 – very difficult

**time indicated is according to standard time; during daylight saving time, add one hour



Trail	Degree of difficulty*	Length of time (in hours)	Starting point	Conclusion	Starting time – no later than:**	Comments
Wadi Arugot (short walk): The Hidden Waterfall	2	2–3	The Wadi Arugot ticket office	The Wadi Arugot	14:00	You must leave the Hidden Waterfall by 15:00
Wadi Arugot (long walk): The Hidden Waterfall, The Upper Pools	3	4–5	The Wadi Arugot ticket office	The Wadi Arugot ticket office	12:00	You must leave the Upper Pools by 15:00; You may begin the trail from the Hidden Waterfall to the Upper Pools no later than 13:00
Tsafit Trail, The Dry Canyon, En Gedi Spring, Lower Wadi David	3	4–6	The Field School	The Wadi David ticket office	12:00	Dangerous during floods!

*1 – easy; 2 – relatively easy; 3 – difficult; 4 – very difficult

**time indicated is according to standard time; during daylight saving time, add one hour

Trail	Degree of difficulty*	Length of time (in hours)	Starting point	Conclusion	Starting time – no later than:**	Comments
Mount Yishai, En Gedi Lookout, En Gedi (Hatsits) Ascent, Lower Wadi David	4	7–9	Field School	Wadi David	8:00	Physically challenging long trail, must inform
Tel Goren, En Gedi spring, Spring, En Gedi (Hatsits) Ascent, En Gedi Lookout, B'nei Hamoshavim Ascent Wadi Arugot	4	6–8	Tel Goren	Wadi Arugot	8:00–9:00	Physically challenging long trail, must inform
Zeruiah Ascent, desert plain, Essenes Ascent, Wadi Arugot	4	7–9	Kibbutz En Gedi	Wadi Arugot ticket office	8:00	Physically challenging long trail, must inform reserve staff of planned route

*1 – easy; 2 – relatively easy; 3 – difficult; 4 – very difficult

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