



9. Beit Khouri

This structure is the remnant of a large farmhouse built by the El-Khouris family around 1880. It was constructed, room by room, around an internal courtyard. Most of the building stones were taken from the ancient farmhouse at Horvat

'Aqav. Though the El-Khouris themselves were Christian, they built a mosque – the large hall that stands out at the south side of the manor house – for their Moslem tenants.

In 1913, the Jewish Colonisation Association (ICA) purchased the El-Khouris farm on behalf of Baron Edmond de Rothschild. Today the farmhouse and lands surrounding it are part of the grounds of Ramat Hanadiv.

From 1919–23, three groups of Jewish pioneers settled here. Due to the difficult conditions, however, their settlement experiments did not succeed. Remains found at the manor house document the lives of the pioneers: the floor (cast in 1920) of the mosque hall, which served them as a dining room, and the charred brick oven which can still be seen in the kitchen.

In front of Beit Khouri, the trail turns left and enters a sparse pine grove with an understory of mastic trees. It passes a Tabor oak, runs into a dirt road, and turns left onto it. After some 20 metres, the trail turns right up the slope and then traverses several ancient quarries (Station #10).



10. Ancient Quarries

Within Ramat Hanadiv's perimeters are many limestone quarries; they supplied building stones for the ancient settlements here and perhaps those nearby. The limestone layer that yielded the construction stones was no more

than six metres deep. When miners reached the soft bedrock beneath the limestone, they left their shallow quarries behind and went elsewhere to mine. Over time, most of the quarries were buried in soil and vegetation; others turned into seasonal pools in rainy winters and served as habitats for frogs, toads, and other aquatic creatures.

From here the trail returns to its starting point at the trailhead. Enjoy your hike and come back soon!



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Welcome to Ramat Hanadiv!

Ramat Hanadiv is a private park dedicated to commemorating the life of Baron Edmond de Rothschild and to conserving nature, for us and for future generations.

Ramat Hanadiv expends great effort to maintain and protect nature's resources for your enjoyment. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us.

Please note:

- The Nature Park is always in danger of forest fires. Lighting a fire is permitted only in the picnic area next to the Memorial Gardens.
- Though dogs may be our best friends, they are not part of the park's natural ecosystem. Dogs must be kept on leashes.
- Please stay on marked paths at all times!
- Bikers: Hiking paths are meant exclusively for pedestrians. Cycling is allowed only on the roads for vehicular traffic.
- Many wild animals live in the Nature Park. At dusk, we humans clear the way for the animals to wander about freely and safely. Please complete your visit before sundown.

Visiting Hours

Sunday – Thursday: 8 am – 4 pm | Friday: 8 am – 2 pm
Saturday: 8 am – 4 pm (The crypt is closed on Saturday.)

Last admission to the Memorial Gardens is 15 minutes before closing.

Visiting hours may vary on holidays and festivals; check our website for details.

InfoShop: 04-6298111 | www.ramathanadiv.org.il



Ramat Hanadiv The Spring Trail

Points of interest: Ein Tzur, a spring flowing year round through a tunnel that was hewn in the rock; a shaded brook; observation points overlooking vistas of Hanadiv Valley and the hills of Samaria; prehistoric agricultural areas (reconstructed); an ancient bath house; a rich archaeological complex; and the remains of a farmhouse from the Ottoman period.

Level: Suitable for families

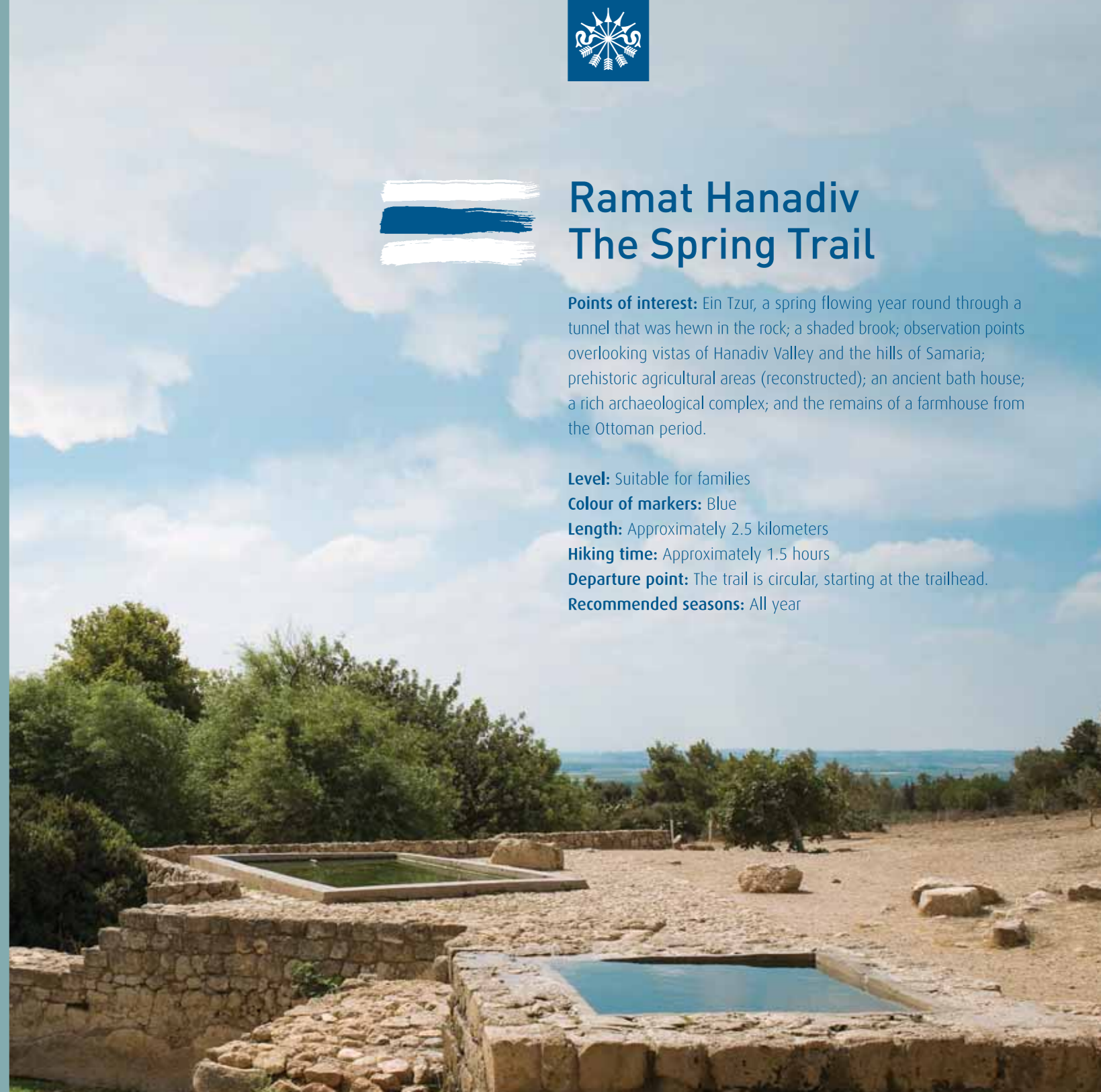
Colour of markers: Blue

Length: Approximately 2.5 kilometers

Hiking time: Approximately 1.5 hours

Departure point: The trail is circular, starting at the trailhead.

Recommended seasons: All year



The Trail

From the trailhead, the trail marked in blue turns slightly left towards the southeast, crosses a dirt road, and enters a low scrubland. The trail again crosses a dirt road, then proceeds eastward to higher scrubland composed primarily of native plants – phillyrea and mastic shrubs. Emerging from the thickets, the trail pauses at a stunning panorama of Hanadiv Valley and the Samaritan hills (Station #1).

1. Observation Point

Spread out below is Hanadiv Valley, cultivated primarily with vineyards and orchards. Immediately south of it lies the town of Binyamina. North of Samaria, on the horizon beyond the valley, one can see Mt. Amir, where the towns and villages Umm el-Fahem, Mei Ami, Katzir and Arara are located. To the north are the houses of Zikhron Ya'akov. The trail continues to a stone step, where a large carob tree is growing (Station #2).



2. Large Carob Tree

The stone step here indicates the existence of a geological rift line. Beneath the step the top layer of hard limestone has been worn away, exposing the volcanic stone beneath it. The leafy carob tree provides a welcome resting spot for hikers.



The trail slopes off to the right, then immediately turns left into a grove of cypresses. Beyond the fence to the left is a Moslem cemetery that belongs to the old village of Umm el-'Aleq. The trail continues towards the left and crosses a dirt road. It passes a thorny hedge of 'sabra' cactus bordering the 'Aleq ruins and the remains of an oil press, located in the shade of the carob tree (to the left), before reaching a large Tabor oak (Station #3).

3. Tabor Oak

The Tabor oak (Quercus ithaburensis) is a deciduous native tree that grows abundantly from the Sharon plain to Ramot Menashe, the Galilee and the Golan Heights. Its large acorns are an important source of food for Eurasian jays, rodents, and wild boars.



The trail goes down past the area of the spring (to which you will return), descends into a grove of willow trees, then continues towards the brook. A wooden footbridge crosses the water, and the trail – now a paved stone path – goes down further to a little wetland (Station #4).



4. Wetland

The pond and its surroundings are an experimental attempt to create a wetland. Dense clumps of water parsley (Apium nodiflorum), a relative of cultivated celery, are growing here among the other aquatic plants.



Marsh frog

Green toad

Common tree frog

In the past Israel had many wetlands, breeding grounds for amphibians such as common tree frogs (Hyla savignyi), marsh frogs (Rana ridibunda), and green toads (Bufo viridis). With the draining of the swamps, exploitation of water sources, and consequent destruction of most of the seasonal ponds in the country, such habitats became rare. The pond here, created to facilitate and encourage the proliferation of plants and animals native to wetlands, also serves as an important on-site laboratory for Ramat Hanadiv's Education Department.

From here, there are three options:

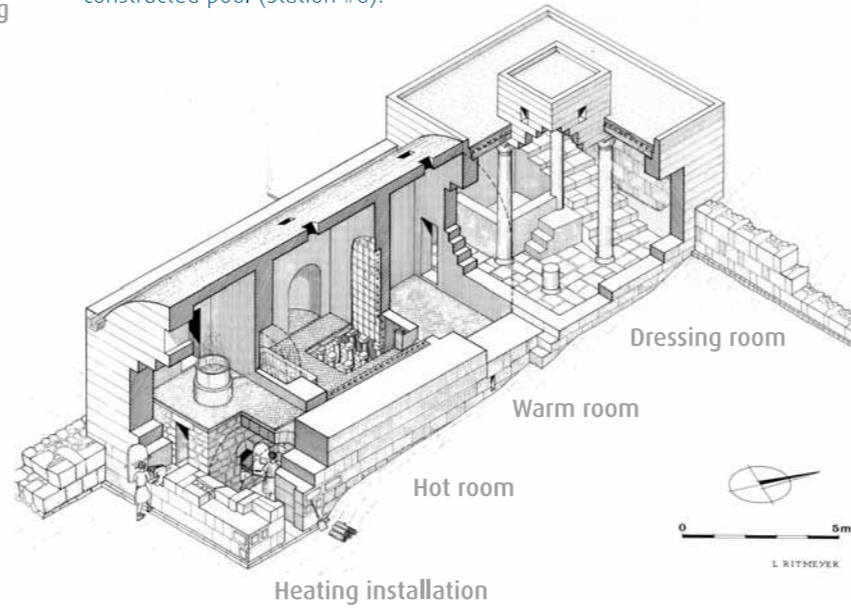
- A right turn brings walkers to the parking lot of the ORT School.
- A left turn leads hikers up to the trail marked in yellow, culminating at the historic Tel Tzur hill. (It takes about 10 minutes to get to either destination.)
- For those who want to continue walking: The Spring Trail continues straight on, passing an olive grove (on the right) and a Geiger tree notable for its wide leaves (on the left). At the beginning of the 20th century, tests were conducted to see whether this tree could be cultivated for use in the glue industry. Next to it is a hedge of sweet acacia trees which were studied too, for possible commercial use in perfume. The trail returns from here to the grove of willow trees and then ascends metal steps to the bath house (Station #5).

5. Bath House



bathers walked down seven steps to the dressing room (apoditerium). After immersing themselves in cold water, they entered the warm room (tepiderium), then moved on to the hot bath or sauna (caldarium). Note the many short columns here: they raised the floor level so that the warm air generated by the heating installation next door could circulate into the space beneath the floor and heat the room.

The trail passes the bath house en route to the water system of Ein Tzur, which includes the spring, reservoir, tunnel, and a constructed pool (Station #6).



Reconstruction of the Roman bath house at Ein Tzur

6. Ein Tzur and the Water System



bedrock, the source of the water. In the winter of 2001, a flood damaged the tunnel's roof. A pillar was erected at the entrance to the tunnel in order to reinforce the roof; it was based on the example of an ancient pillar next to the first shaft.

During the Roman period water accumulated in the tunnel, possibly for use as a ritual bath. To raise the water level and create a pool within, the opening of the tunnel was blocked.

Some 2100 coins from the Byzantine period (324-638 CE) were discovered beneath this tunnel. A historic source from that period (the 'Bordeaux Pilgrim') attributes healing powers to a spring at Har Sinah, near Caesarea. It is likely that this was the pool that attracted pilgrims in those days: women apparently came to bathe here, hoping to enhance their fertility, and dropped the coins into it.

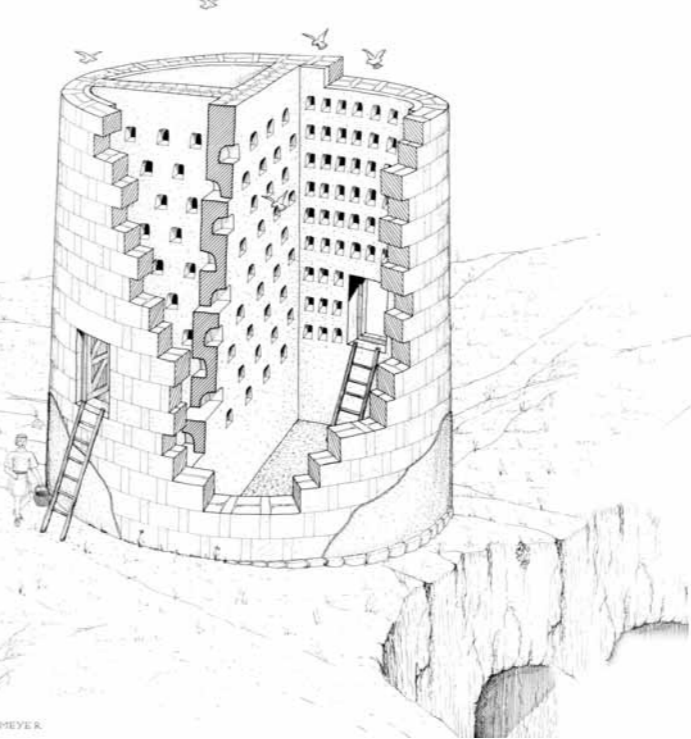


The large reservoir at the end of the aqueduct supplied water to the bath house and fields as well as serving as the bathing pool. When Beit Khouri was established above the archaeological site (approximately 1880), the Ein Tzur reservoir was moved to a new pool built

of stone, west of the Roman pool, and its water was pumped up the hill to the farmhouse. In 1939, a group of young Jews

from the Betar youth movement founded a small 'stockade and tower' settlement on the hilltop east of the spring, which they named Tel Tzur Hahadasha (the New Tel Tzur). Near the Roman pool they built an additional one of concrete, which supplied the settlement's water needs. As mentioned above, one can visit the historic Tel Tzur site on the trail marked in yellow, which exits from the area of the brook.

From the aqueduct, the trail goes up the stairs beyond the columbarium (Station #7).



7. Columbarium (Dovecote)

Doves served a multitude of purposes in ancient times: their eggs and meat provided food; their excrement was a valuable fertilizer; and they performed ceremonial roles in both pagan and Jewish rituals. The columbarium here was built as a round tower that reached a height of 18 metres. Its name reveals its function: the Latin word 'columba' means 'dove'. As one can see



A bird's-eye view of the archaeological digs at Horvat 'Aleq

from the reconstruction of the structure, the birds entered the tower through apertures in its upper section and nested in small cubbyholes built for them inside, within the walls of the tower and in two additional, interior walls placed side by side. The tower's outer walls were covered by heavy layers of smooth white plaster. The columbarium workers entered the tower on a ladder through a high opening on the side of the building. The plaster and the raised opening prevented reptiles and other animals of prey from scaling the walls and getting into the columbarium.

The trail turns left and continues west to a large archaeological complex (Station #8).



Clay oil lamps from Horvat 'Aleq



8. Horvat 'Aleq

Archaeologists have discovered numerous treasures here. Strategically located next to a source of water in a fertile agricultural region, this multi-layered site was already populated by humans in the prehistoric period, more than 10,000 years ago. The settlement continued to be inhabited until the 2nd century CE, through the Iron Age and the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman periods. The site has been reconstructed as it was when it reached its acme in the early Hellenistic period. The remains of the original stockades and towers that surrounded it then are clearly evident in the area. Settlement was renewed towards the end of the Ottoman era with the establishment of the village of Umm el-'Aleq. Archaeological findings bear witness to the extended, ongoing habitation of this place and to the residents' long lives during the different periods of settlement.

The trail turns left and passes next to Beit Khouri (Station #9). A visit to the site is recommended.