



# HERODIAN QUARTER

In the time of Herod, the area of the modern-day Jewish Quarter was part of a luxurious "Upper City," occupied primarily by the families of important Jewish Temple priests. Excavations after the War of 1967 exposed the remains of several mansions dating to this period. This rediscovered Herodian quarter now lies from three to seven meters below street level, preserved in the Wohl Archaeological Museum.

On display are geometrically patterned mosaic floors, colorful frescoes, and costly glassware, stone objects, and ceramics that provide a peek into domestic life at the top in the days of Herod and Jesus. In the first part of the museum (called the Western House) several small stone cisterns have been identified as private mikveh, Jewish ritual baths; holograms depict their use. A small ascending staircase ends abruptly, a reminder that nothing above ground level survived the Roman devastation of 70 A.D.

In the Middle Complex is where archaeologists discovered the remains of two separate houses with a maze-pattern mosaic floor covered in burnt wood. This is believed to be fire damage from the Roman attack on Jerusalem. The largest and most complete of the Herodian houses is the Palatial Mansion, which also has signs of fire damage as well as beautiful mosaic floors and ritual baths.

