If you remember the fear of May-June 1967 as Nasser roused the Cairo masses; if you were ever careful of Jordanian snipers walking in Jerusalem; if you ever craned your neck on David’s Tomb rooftop to see the Kotel’s top course; if you were one of the 100,000 people there on that first Shavuot, then you never, ever need a reminder how special Yom Yerushalayim is. To engage the rest of us, here are lesser-known sites around the Old City’s walls.

At the traffic light below the Jaffa Gate ascent, turn right, to the walking path along the walls. The city installed upper and lower routes with explanatory signs and recorded explanations of the walls and the views. Look for the First Temple Wall adjacent to the Hasmonean Wall; ancient tombs in the bedrock; and the ‘secret’ entrance into Herod’s palace. Allow 20-40 minutes to the wall’s end depending on your interests; more if with children, as they have plenty of room to run around.

A small open plaza offers several options. Descending to the roads below leads to the secret tunnel exit that helped soldiers cross safely from the Mount Zion Hotel position to the Zion Gate base. The cable car stretching across the valley served the same purpose, between 1949 and 1967; access its free museum by speaking to hotel security.

At the intersection, one road ascends to Jaffa Gate; one crosses the valley towards Yemin Moshe - Sultan’s Pool, right, Cinematheque Theater and open park, left - and left up towards Zion Gate. Cross the street; go left and down just below the road. A small metal staircase leads onto a new unmarked walkway overlooking Hinnom Valley, lit at night, with benches. As you walk, look left and identify the Herodian water aqueduct visible on the hillside, with one collapsed section - the channel is set amidst the ancient concrete structure surrounding it. The walkway ends below the first Mount Zion parking lot, near Chamber of the Holocaust and King David’s Tomb; and just before the cemetery where Oskar Schindler’s grave is the only one with stones on top of it.

Back at the plaza, a different option is turning left, past a little rest area provided by Canadian donors, and up a staircase towards Zion Gate following the walls. The stone marker on the left marks where Shlomi Cohen, a young man coming to pray at the Kotel before his wedding, was murdered. Remembering him heightens our appreciation of being here now.

Where the city wall bulges out in a tower, look carefully at its base. The 250-kilogram bomb, the “conus” meant to blast through the wall to let Jewish soldiers in, was clearly ineffective against the thick Ottoman walls. It is claimed that the entire July 1948 “Operation Kedem” was a staged decoy to prevent the Irgun and Stern group from capturing the Old City.

At Zion Gate, notice the many, many holes; particularly around the shooting slits on the upper level. Entering through this gate can only evoke an appreciation of those who fought here; whose dreams were fulfilled 19 years later, which enables us to walk in. Let us do that for a minute, orient ourselves, and then exit again.

With the gate to our backs, forward leads towards the Diaspora Yeshiva, King David’s Tomb, Chamber of the Holocaust, and the synagogue bravely built just after the Old City’s fall; Schindler’s grave across the street, and the Hinnom Valley overlook path.

Lesser-known, is the walking path hugging the walls...

Passing the parking lot, on the right-hand slope is the “Dig Mount Zion” excavation, revealing First and Second Temple period structures at the ancient city’s heart (ignore the Ottoman walls altogether!). Many periods are represented here, with finds illuminating historical events; and secrets not yet publicized.

Moving onto the sidewalk, look left into the grassy area. A pipe set into a low stone wall is an aqueduct bringing water from past Bethlehem; enabling Herod’s expanded Jerusalem. Continuing down towards Dung Gate, turn left onto the path to see Second Temple cisterns and ritual baths; one with divided stairs – preventing the impure entering from touching the purified people exiting (Sheqalim 8:2).

Take the path left overlooking the ancient road with columns on the ground. Enter the small gate behind the tower to find yourself over that ancient road.

Welcome to sanctified Jerusalem, thanks to Israel’s prayers and the fighters of 1967. Thank you, G-d, for letting us walk and breathe in Your Holy City, and may we see the Temple rebuilt in peace, in our days.