When the founding Rosh Yeshiva, Moreinu VeRabbeinu HaRav Amital zt"l was asked what's special about Yeshivat Har Etzion, he would tell the following story.

Many years ago, the Baal HaTanya was learning in his room. In the next room, his grandson, the Tzemach Tzedek, was learning and in the third room a baby slept. Suddenly, the baby woke and began to cry. The Tzemach Tzedek continued studying. The Baal HaTanya got up, walked past the Tzemach Tzedek into the room with the baby. He picked up the baby and comforted it. When the baby was quiet, the Baal HaTanya said to his grandson, "If you learn Torah and don't hear a Jewish baby's cry, there is something wrong with your learning."

In Yeshivat Har Etzion, our goal is to learn Torah AND hear the baby's cry. In every generation, a baby cries: some obvious, some hidden. Sometimes the child itself doesn’t realize its crying. It is our job, as a Yeshiva, to hear even the hidden cries of our generation.

Here is a beautiful video of our alumni telling the story:  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hn7K6vI9PWM&feature=youtu.be

What is the Yeshiva's approach to learning?
The primary goal of Gemara study in Yeshivat Har Etzion is to refine talmidim's Gemara learning skills while instilling a passion for Ahavat Hashem. To truly love Torah, a talmid must be equipped with the tools to master its learning. The Yeshiva stresses that talmud Torah is a vital instrument for a relationship with Hakadosh Baruch Hu.

The study of Gemara in the Gush Beit Midrash trains talmidim to analyze, explore and evaluate multiple opinions so that they will grow to be discerning individuals, sophisticated thinkers and compassionate leaders.
How much contact will I have with the Roshei Yeshiva?
The influence of the Roshei Yeshiva is the cornerstone of the Yeshivat Har Etzion experience. A year at Yeshivat Har Etzion offers students the opportunity to be inspired by these prestigious personalities. All are eminent Talmidei Chachamim and dynamic educators. They are entrenched in the Beit Midrash, yet sensitively and perceptively attuned to the concerns of the broader Jewish community.

Whether through a question-and-answer session, a sicha, or a tisch, the Roshei Yeshiva meet with all the bachurim on a regular basis.

They are present in the Beit Midrash every day and actively participate in the learning process. They engage questions in Torah study, and are available for discussions, thoughts and insights.
What are the shiurim like?
An hour and a half shiur yomi is given during morning seder. A talmid will spend an intense three to four hours a day preparing for this shiur bechavruta delving through parallel sugyot and the rishonim on the daf.

All students attend shiur klali, the weekly shiur given to the entire Yeshiva by the Roshei Yeshiva. This shiur deals with a major topic in the masechet being studied.
What is the kind of guidance does my Rebbe provide?

Yeshivat Har Etzion has a staff of over 25 rabbeim who serve as teachers and mentors. Eleven of the ramim are talmidim of HaRav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik zt"l and all are alumni of the Yeshiva. Through their shiurim, talmidim explore the Gemara conceptually in the structured manner known as “The Brisker Derech”.

One of the strengths of a large teaching staff is that the threads of “The Brisker Derech” are woven into every shiur, yet each Rebbe contributes his individual perspective. Talmidim (under the guidance of the Yeshiva’s staff) can select the level and style of limud that suits them best.

Yeshivat Har Etzion Rebbeim are foremost educational mentors who maximize their talmidim’s unique abilities, build upon their already outstanding middot, and promote sincere learning.

The Ramim live in the community and talmidim are warmly welcomed to their homes for shabbat meals, tischim and vaadim. Ramim join tiyulim and host Shabbatonim for their shiur.
How are talmidim placed in a shiur?
The Yeshiva offers a full range of shiurim. There are shiurim that develop textual skills and begin to analyze concepts that stem from the Gemara to shiurim that focus on the rishonim and the sevaras of each rishon. As a talmidim’s skills and knowledge develop, and they are encouraged to switch to a different level or different style of shiur. The Yeshiva fosters progress over the course of the year both in terms of learning and the unfolding of a Torah personality.

In Elul, talmidim are placed in a shiur for overseas students. To enable greater access to Rabbeim who serve as a primary source of guidance, the shiurim are kept small (between 15-25 talmidim). These shiurim cultivate acclimation to Yeshiva life and help talmidim ease into the Yeshiva’s schedule.

Yeshivat Har Etzion’s Overseas Program is a fully integrated part of the Hesder Program. The Yeshiva is host to many English speaking talmidim from the United States, Canada, England, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. As talmidim progress through their year of study, they choose their level of Hebrew immersion. There are daily shiurim offered in English, however the Yeshiva encourages its overseas talmidim to take full advantage of the many opportunities open to them. Talmidim are welcome to join Hebrew shiurim when they feel ready and prepared to do so.
What is learned during night seder?
Night seder is devoted to the study bekiut. The overall goal is to finish an entire masechet. Students learn in chaburot (approximately 10 students) with a member of the Kollel, concentrating on different perakim within the masechet.

The Yeshiva is a large family. The Yeshiva hosts many “older talmidim” and married talmidim. There are Israeli talmidim who stay in the Yeshiva after their five year program of study to further their education. They study education in Michlelet Herzog, learn for smicha exams, or learn in one of the Yeshiva’s kollelim.

The Yeshiva also has talmidim who return to the Yeshiva from overseas. They join the Yeshiva during the course of their university studies, join the Yeshiva’s graduate learning program, or join the Kollel.

These are the young men who run the night seder chaburot under the direction of the Ra”M who is the achrai of night seder.
Along with Gemara study, what other areas of Torah does the Yeshiva foster?
While the intense study of Gemara is the central focus of the learning in Yeshivat Har Etzion, other areas of Torah knowledge such as tanach, machshevet yisrael, and halacha lemaaseh are integral as well. The family of Riva Koschitzky z”l have partnered with the Yeshiva and generously sponsored “The Revava Program.”

Revava: The Riva Koschitzky z”l Torah Enrichment Program hosts daily shiurim or chugim given to strengthen areas of learning and spiritual development crucial to the development of a Ben Torah.

Please take a look at the Yeshiva’s chug schedule listed on our web-site.
What requirements and obligations do talmidim have?
Talmidim are expected to fulfill their obligations relating to their davening and learning (both in shiur and in seder). On a personal level, they are to conduct themselves in accordance with the standards of a Ben Torah. The educational philosophy of Yeshivat Har Etzion is that, insofar as reasonably possible, each bachur should be honored and trusted to work to the utmost of his capacity. The Yeshiva promotes earnest intellectual activity and directs its talmidim toward emotional and spiritual maturity. In order that a talmid remain a dedicated Ben Torah after leaving the Beit Midrash, he must come to Ahavat Torah and Avodat Hashem through self-motivation and personal responsibility.

What is Shabbat like?
Each Shabbat is hosted by one of the Ramim. The Ram gives the Friday night sicha, and shares Shabbat meals with the talmidim in the Chadar Ochel. Dinner is followed by a tish. Davening on Shabbat morning is followed by a Kiddush and shiur on parshat hashavua. Before Mincha, one of the Ramim will deliver a shiur on a halachic topic. Seudah Shelishit features a second sicha on the parsha.

Here is a beautiful video of Havdalah Motzei Shabbat Parshat Zachor, before Purim.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eBMAPKzT-WQ
Will I see the country while in Yeshiva?
There are numerous tiyulim (including afternoon tiyulim every few weeks) and Shabbatonim over the course of the year. Talmidim will find their shiurim in Tanach echoing in the hills as they walk in the footsteps of the Avot and stand in the battlefield where David slew Goliath.

What better way to celebrate Yom HaAtzmaut then a tiyul for the entire Yeshiva. The Yeshiva honors Yom Yerushalayim by davening at the Kotel and walking through its holy alleyways.

During Bein HaZmanim, there are major hiking tiyulim to the Galil, Golan, and Negev. Other highlights include shabbatonim in the Old Cities of Jerusalem and Tzefat.
Do talmidim volunteer while they are in Yeshiva?
By its nature, a talmid’s stay at the Yeshiva is concentrated and inner-directed. However, it is also a preparation for what lies beyond – a life of service to Klal Yisrael. The Yeshiva is committed to developing communal leadership by stimulating both the ability and desire to serve.

Yeshivat Har Etzion is proud to be the home of Yeshivat Darkaynu.

Yeshivat Darkaynu is an innovative program developed for religious young men with special needs who want to continue their learning, develop vocational skills, build independence, improve self-esteem and expand their love of Israel and the Jewish people.

The Yeshiva offers a wide range of chesed opportunities so that each talmid can choose a project that resonates with him. Volunteering opportunities include Shabbatot in Children’s Homes, supporting our troops, acting as big brothers, and volunteering in Shalva (a home for challenged children). The Yeshiva has a long-standing relationship with Beit Blumenthal (a foster home for children) in Geula, and overseas talmidim organize annual Chanuka and Purim mesibot for the children who are housed there.
**What are the provisions for room and board?**
The Yeshiva is in the process of renovating all of its dorms! Most talmidim will live in newly renovated, comfortable two, three, or four-person room with friends of their choice. The Yeshiva provides three meals a day and is opened two out of every three Shabbatot. During Bein HaZmanim periods, the Yeshiva is officially closed. Most students stay with relatives and friends. Arrangements can be made for students to stay with their Israeli peers.

In Yeshivat Har Etzion, talmidim can choose their roommates, but the dorms are shared by all. Talmidim can request roommates from close to home. They can choose English speaking talmidim not from their country of origin, or Israeli talmidim.

**Where is The Gush?**
Yeshivat Har Etzion is located in the dynamic Torah community of Alon Shevut, which is approximately 10 miles south of Jerusalem. Alon Shevut is the second largest community in Gush Etzion and there is a bus every hour to Yerushalayim (a 45 minute bus ride). Gush Etzion community has a mega supermarket, a bakery, a steak house and a pizza shop 1.5 kilometers or less than a mile away from the Yeshiva. The Mamilla Mall 22.3 kilometers or 13.8 miles from the Yeshiva! There is a sefarim store on the Yeshiva’s campus, a mini market within short walking distance.

The Alon Shevut community has blossomed, and there are hundreds of English speaking families in Alon Shevut. The friendship between Yeshiva talmidim and families in Alon Shevut is a great source of inspiration for a life of communal cooperation and mutual assistance. Talmidim are often invited for Shabbat meals. Alon Shevut families host bi-monthly Vaadim (informal group meetings) in their homes. Children of the community learn with talmidim on a regular basis.
What facilities are available in the Yeshiva and in Alon Shevut?

The Yeshiva has a beautiful newly renovated music room. All musical instruments are welcome. This year a talmid brought is bassoon from the UK! However, the talmid who plays the cello rented one from a music shop in Alon Shevut.

Outdoor basketball and tennis courts and a soccer field are all within a five-minute walk from the Yeshiva. The Gush Etzion municipal indoor pool, gym and exercise room are also very close and they encourage student membership. Alon Shevut has a bank (and cash machine), post office, and a grocery store.

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Here is a video that the staff produced while getting ready for the arrival of incoming talmidim before Rosh Hodesh Elul 5772!
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_KoS9nRDQ