Leaving the beautiful ancient city of Jerusalem, our next stop on the trip was an area here’s a bit of a contentious issue (to put it lightly) – The West Bank. So here’s the thing, arriving into this area, we knew there was a conflict between Israelis and Palestinians however, the true nuances behind why this was the case and the lack of resolution of this thus far was something we didn’t fully grasp. We arrived here absolutely aware of the gaps in our knowledge and determined to fill those gaps. This is in large part why we embraced an opportunity to step away from the more shiny, beautiful hot-spots and visit this area. More importantly, than that though – we would actually get to meet with both Israeli and Palestinians living in the West Bank to get a more unfiltered understanding of it. Every single destination has different facets and getting to understand this bit was an opportunity (even if in just a small way) was something we were really than grateful to have. We started off actually with a visit to the Way of the Patriarchs, an ancient route in the bible that was travelled by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – checking out the centuries (perhaps even millennia) old Roman milestone used to mark the route back when the Romans used this as a major road. We carried on to a 2,000-year-old Mikvé (do you remember this 13th-century Mikvé we found in Montpellier, France?). A Mikvé is a Jewish bath for cleansing prior to going to temple and there were actually two of them there (I think one’s for men and the other for women). Then we got to sit down and speak to the locals living in the area – an Israeli and a Palestinian from The West Bank. Typically, their paths would never really cross (Palestinians and Israelis living here live very separate lives) and for the most part, the relationship between both is so far from cordial but thanks to an organisation called Roots, there’s a little spark of change happening. Roots is essentially all about opening a dialogue between both communities in an effort to help humanise ‘the other side’ and show that behind all of the conflict are actual every day human beings. It’s about mutual respect and recognition built on the idea that it is possible to have more than one truth. The Israelis feel they have a claim to the land – it’s been their ancestors’ homeland and they have every right to be there. The Palestinians also feel they have a claim to the land – similarly, it’s been their ancestors’ homeland and they have every right to be there. Roots recognises both sides and the fact that it’s possible that one side’s story doesn’t have to negate the other’s it’s indeed possible for both truths to exist.