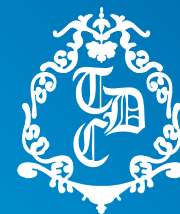


The Diplomatic Club

MARCH 2015



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COL. RICHARD KEMP

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REVEALED IN ANCIENT INKS





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Dear friends,

February and March are busy months with lots of major festivals and events taking place around the world.

In the western countries, Valentine's Day and International Women's Day are traditionally celebrations on which people express their love for one another by presenting flowers, offering chocolates and sending greeting cards. These holidays have lost their original religious or ideological meanings.

People across Asia have celebrated Chinese New Year, known variably as the Year of the Goat, the Sheep or the Ram. The sign's confusion stems from its Chinese character, "yang," which broadly describes any of the ruminating mammals, with or without horns. Many Chinese prefer to translate it as the "Year of the Sheep" because sheep are cute and cuddly, and large sheep figures have appeared around the capital's shopping areas in recent weeks. The goat, however, is more likely to be the original meaning, because it was a popular farm animal among Han Chinese, who started the zodiac tradition.

As for Israel – it is preparing to celebrate Purim in the beginning of March. Purim festivities commemorate the survival of the Jewish people in Ancient Persia, from the threat of annihilation at the hand of the powerful and evil Haman, the "prime minister". Haman plotted to kill the Jews on the 13th of Adar, but his plan was foiled and he ended up being killed himself. As a consequence, the Jews celebrated the next

day, the 14th of Adar.

To celebrate the joyous holiday there is a reading of the Megillat Esther (The Book of Esther) which tells the whole story of the events relating to the holiday. In addition, there is dressing up in costumes, giving gifts to the poor (matanot le'evyonim), giving gifts to friends (mishloach manot) and having a large Purim feast (seudat Purim).

The Diplomatic Club is celebrating International Women's Day with hope for a good future for all women, and every mother and child in the world.

This issue includes several articles, related to the security of Israel. It wasn't our intention, but it is a reality of Israel, which is not likely to change, not before elections and not after.

Sincerely yours,
Julia Verdel
General Manager



QUESTIONING THE CREDIBILITY OF THE UN INVESTIGATION INTO OPERATION “PROTECTIVE EDGE”

AN INTERVIEW WITH
BRITISH COL. RICHARD KEMP



By Gabriel M Avner

As Israelis and Palestinians continue to feel the reverberations of Operation Protective Edge nearly six months later, the focus appears to have shifted away from the battlefield and into the legal sphere. In response to accusations of wartime violations by both Israel and Hamas during the 52 days of fighting, the United Nations Human Rights Council appointed a panel to investigate and determine if there are grounds for moving forward with charges of war crimes. While support for the inquiry has been building abroad since before the conflict ended in late August, here in Israel both the public and officials have expressed their doubts regarding the impartiality of an UN-backed investigation. In the face of mounting pressure on Israel by the international community, British Colonel Richard Kemp was recently in Israel to lend his voice and experience to the conversation over the legality of the

“Being anti-Israel has become a proxy for anti-Semitism. It is no longer acceptable in British culture to be openly anti-Semitic, but it is almost a requirement to abuse Israel publicly in Europe.”

Israel Defense Forces' actions during the last Gaza conflict.

Colonel Kemp served for 30 years as a service member of the British Army, taking part in operations in Northern Ireland, the Balkans, and Iraq. In 2003, he was appointed to command of the British forces serving in Afghanistan where he led their counter terror actions. Working with both local Afghans and coalition members, Kemp's efforts aided in disrupting al-Qaeda and to bring a measure of stability to the area. Since

his retirement, he has been involved advising on issues of security and terrorism, as well as an advocate for Israel in the international arena.

In explaining why Israel's conduct from the war is viewed so negatively abroad, he points to a general anti-Israel sentiment in places such as Europe. 'A large number of people in the UK are anti-Israel. However, if you ask many people in the UK to point out Israel on a map, they would probably fail to be able to do so. They don't really know anything about what is going on here and why would they? The only thing they really know about Israel is what the media tell them. I believe that there is an institutionalized bias against Israel in the media that influences what people say. This includes the conduct of the IDF in combat. What they see on the BBC and Sky News, that's all they know about Israel and it's generally negative.'

Kemp goes on to say that, 'Being anti-Israel has become a proxy for anti-Semitism. It is no longer acceptable in British culture to be openly anti-Semitic, but it is almost a requirement to abuse Israel publically in Europe.' He notes though that there is generally a different view taken by British who have served in the military in recent years since they have had to face similar situations against enemies who have utilized the same kind of tactics. 'A lot of the same techniques that are used by Hezbollah have been transferred to Iraq and were used to kill British and American soldiers. There is a lot of respect for the IDF among British troops, so you will see an almost opposite point of view to that of the mainstream public.'

He disputes the idea that groups like Hamas are not cognizant of the laws



of armed conflict, saying that, 'These groups use these conventions against and design their tactics to exploit the rules of engagement against us. In other words, to take advantage of our restraint and humanity, making it an unfair fight in a number of ways. It is remarkably hard to make soldiers in a democracy understand why they must be restrained against an enemy who is not.' He adds though that it is important to uphold to the laws of armed conflict, even if it makes operating more difficult and dangerous.

While agreeing that an investigation that was evenhanded could be appropriate, he discounts the United

“A lot of the same techniques that are used by Hezbollah have been transferred to Iraq and were used to kill British and American soldiers. There is a lot of respect for the IDF among British troops, so you will see an almost opposite point of view to that of the mainstream public”

Nations as being a credible body to carry out such a task, noting that they have historically singled out Israel in his view unfairly for similar probes. Kemp expands saying that he believes that the UN should be investigating Hamas' actions, but doubts that there will be any serious efforts to do so. As he sees it, Israel should not cooperate with the Human Rights Council's investigation since it has its own internal mechanisms for reviewing charges of violations to the laws of war in the same way that Britain and the United States do.

The most worrying part of this conflict to Kemp was how Hamas began firing increasingly intensive volleys of rockets into Israel, citing rates of fire of over 60 projectiles in a single day. He is disturbed by how he views the Palestinian groups, including Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad, as acting consistently in contrast to the laws of war, adds that this is unlikely to be a factor in the results of the current investigation. Kemp notes that in past reports such as the Goldstone Report, the militant groups were essentially absolved of wrongdoing for their actions.

In discussing the recent resignation of William Schabas who had led the current investigative panel, Kemp points to the fact that the jurist had previously worked as a consultant to the Palestinian Liberation Organization, and had steered the investigation with a serious bias. Even though he has stepped down from his position Kemp says, the reality is that the findings of the report are due to be published in March, and they will have been heavily shaped by Schabas, thus further compromising perceptions that Israel is being criticized unfairly by the UN, concluding that 'Personally, I'm not sure that the report will be worth the paper it's written on.'

Colonel Richard Kemp

Richard Kemp has spent most his life fighting terrorism and insurgency, commanding British troops on the front line of some of the world's toughest hotspots, including Afghanistan, Iraq, the Balkans and Northern Ireland.

Richard was sent to Kabul in 2003 to take command of British Forces in Afghanistan. Realising that there was an increasing terrorist threat, but no resources or plans in place to deal with it, he immediately put together an unconventional force of British troops and US Marines. They begged, borrowed and stole equipment to gain intelligence and launch covert surveillance. Writing about Richard, the Canadian general commanding international forces at the time said: "His efforts led directly to the most successful offensive counter-terrorist operations in Kabul, with several key terrorist leaders now under arrest, significantly setting back the enemy campaign." Along the way, Richard helped to disarm local warlords, trained the fledgling Afghan army and police and even played a part in preventing a coup d'état against President Hamid Karzai.

Richard joined the British Army the day after he left school, and spent the next 30 years in some of the world's most notorious trouble spots. He first came under enemy fire on the Falls Road in Belfast as a 19-year-old infantry platoon commander. During one of the 8 tours of duty in Northern Ireland that followed,

he was wounded in a multiple terrorist mortar attack in South Armagh's bandit country. In 1993 he was appointed Member of the Order of the British Empire by the Queen for intelligence work in Northern Ireland. He took part in the invasion of Iraq in 1991 in a Challenger tank with the Desert Rats, and was decorated for bravery with the United Nations Protection Force in Bosnia in 1994. In 2001, he formed a tri-service organization to train 45,000 British troops deploying on operations each year around the globe, and later was counter terrorism adviser to the Macedonian premier.

Most of the last five years of Richard's military career were spent in Downing Street as head of the international terrorism team at the Joint Intelligence Committee, where he was responsible for producing assessments on the growing global terrorist problem for the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. In 2005, at the request of the US Ambassador to Iraq, he spent three months on a special intelligence assignment in Baghdad, Fallujah and Mosul. Over this period he was also a member of Cobra, the government's top-level crisis management committee. He chaired the Cobra Intelligence Group, responsible for coordinating the work of the national intelligence agencies, including MI5 and MI6, during the July 2005 London bombings, the Madrid and Bali attacks and



a number of high profile political kidnappings. He was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire for his work and, in the words of the Chief of Defence Intelligence, had "huge influence at the highest level of government."

Since retiring from the Army Richard has been responsible for security of one of the most threatened terrorist targets in London, has advised on countering the terrorist threat in New York and Mumbai, and was appointed special adviser on terrorism to the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee.

In 2007 and 2008 Richard led a campaign to recognise the sacrifice of British troops killed and wounded in action by the award of a medal similar to the US Purple Heart. This gained support of the majority of Members of Parliament as well as widespread support among serving and retired military personnel, and resulted in the institution by Her Majesty The Queen of The Elizabeth Cross, awarded now to the next of kin of all British servicemen and women killed on operations.

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES FACING PALESTINIANS



By Gabriel M Avner

In a report on 18 January 2015 in the Israeli newspaper Haaretz, defense officials expressed their fear that deteriorating economic conditions in the Gaza Strip could give rise to renewed violence along the southern border. Questions of how a future state of Palestine will be able to sustain itself without the reliance on international donors, how the hot button issue of "normalization" is harming cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians, and other important challenges to an economically viable Palestinian society weigh in heavily on the future security relations between the two nations.

Brigadier General (res) Gadi Zohar of the Council for Peace and Security provides some insights on the current state of the Palestinian economy and its complicated relationship with Israel. In addition to leading the Civil Authority during the early 1990s, Zohar sits on the board of the Israeli-Palestinian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IPCC). In his work with these organizations, Zohar has become well acquainted with the successes and difficulties that are being experienced in Palestinian society.

Zohar notes that it is important to differentiate between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which is currently under control of the Hamas government. The situation in the West Bank is markedly different he says, and when compared to other

economies in the region, it is fairly impressive. That said the West Bank is extremely dependent on Israel – where it buys most of its goods.

The Palestinian economy is mostly based around services and donations. As employment options are more limited in the West Bank, some 50,000 travel to work legally in Israel. Zohar says that, despite the hassles of security checks, Palestinians can earn nearly double of what they could make domestically. This number does not include those who cross into Israel illegally.

In speaking about the smaller proportion of the various manufacturing activities in the West Bank, Zohar notes that the stonework industry there is well developed. Others produce items such as textiles

and shoes as subcontractors for Israeli companies. Industrial areas, like the one in Barkan, have helped to provide jobs for Palestinians and have been useful in providing them with additional opportunities. Zohar says that there is a high level of motivation by Palestinians to work toward building a stronger economy, even establishing a functioning stock exchange based in Nablus.

In more recent years, there has been a rise of a small hi-tech sector based in cities such as Nablus, Ramallah, and Bethlehem. This move toward hi-tech comes with an increasingly better-educated workforce. Zohar notes that, "The Palestinian population is very well educated with even more institutions of learning than even in Israel. Some attend Israeli schools such as in Ariel." Many of them have





gone to study elsewhere in places like Jordan and the West, from which they have returned with important skills for growing this new sector. It is important to note, though, that

many of these tech firms are also subcontractors for Israeli companies, which bring on additional issues with accusations of “normalization.”

Concerns over appearances that they may be complicit in normalizing the continued situation, vis-à-vis the conflict with Israel, many Palestinians have avoided economic cooperation with Israelis. The specter of normalization has shown itself in Zohar’s experience with the IPCC, noting that it is an Israeli organization without a parallel partner from the

Palestinian side. While the group has had some success in pairing Israelis and Palestinians for business ventures and guiding Palestinians through the bureaucracy of the Israeli system, the IPCC has faced challenges due to the desire to dissociate from Israel.

Palestinians, he says, have “rejected ideas of an economic peace in exchange for some level of autonomy,” adding that, “We here at the Council and many of my colleagues believe that we need to work to resolve the conflict.” ●

THE WEST BANK AND GAZA STRIP MAIN STATISTICAL INDICATORS

INDICATOR	WEST BANK	GAZA STRIP	REFERENCE PERIOD
Population			
Population (million)	2.79	1.76	Mid 2014
Population Density (individual/Km2)	493	4,822	Mid 2014
sex ratio	103.3	103.3	2014
Number of localities	524	33	2013
Average Number of Rooms in the Housing Unit	3.4	3.5	2013
Average Housing Density (persons per room)	1.5	1.8	2013
Population structure			
0-14	37.6	43.2	2014
15-29	30.1	29.9	2014
30-59	27.4	23.2	2014
60+	4.9	3.7	2014
Natural increase rate	2.59	3.41	2014
Life expectancy at birth (Male)	72.2	71.2	2014
Life expectancy at birth (Female)	75.1	74.1	2014
Average household size	5.1	6.0	2012
Total fertility rate	4.0	5.2	2008-2009
Infant mortality rate	18.1	20.1	2010

INDICATOR	WEST BANK	GAZA STRIP	REFERENCE PERIOD
Employed Persons by Sector			
Public Sector	15.6	41.0	2nd quarter 2014
Private Sector	67.5	54.0	2nd quarter 2014
UNRWA	0.6	5.0	2nd quarter 2014
Israel and Settlements	16.3	0.0	2nd quarter 2014
Total	100	100	2nd quarter 2014
National Accounts			
Gross Domestic Product (Value in USD Million)	5,064.40	1,878.30	2013
GDP per capita (Value in USD)	2,051.40	1,103.90	2013
Real GDP growth rate (%)	0.7	6.3	2013
Consumer price index (Base year 2010=100)	111.5	101.26	June 2014 compared with May 2014
Foreign trade			
Registered Exports (US Thousand Dollar)	777,685	4,683	2012
Registered Imports (US Thousand Dollar)	4,305,590	391,766	2012
Infrastructure			
Quantity of Consumed Water in the Economic Establishments (1000 cubic meter/month)	2631.6	1858.3	2013
Percentage of connected Economic Establishments to public water network, %	90.7	71.0	2013
Percentage of connected Economic Establishments to sewage network, %	62.8	70.3	2013
Percentage of connected Economic Establishments to solid waste service, %	84.9	79.3	2013
Percentage of connected households to public water network, %	94.5	99.9	2013
Percentage of connected household to sewage network, %	40.6	83.1	2013
Percentage of household that have solid waste service by local authority, %	77.8	59.9	2013
Area of Land (km2)	5,655	365	2013
Area of Forest (km2)	98.2	3.2	2011
Area of Cultivated Land (km2)	843.5	88	2011

PRESIDENT RIVLIN HOSTS LATIN AMERICAN AMBASSADORS TO ISRAEL

On 11 February 2015, President Reuven Rivlin hosted at his residence Ambassadors to Israel from Latin American countries. At the beginning of the meeting, the President welcomed the Ambassadors and said he was delighted to welcome them to his residence.

He said, "These are not easy times, when we are across the region, dealing with the threat of terrorism and extremism. We are seeking a return to dialogue and the negotiating table, instead of unilateral steps. It is important that we return to negotiations, and arrive at agreements which are as always, subject to one key principle – the rule of democracy. Every treaty or agreement that Israel's government has brought before the Knesset has been accepted by the power of the majority."

The President urged the ambassadors to carry the message to the Palestinian Authority, that unilateral initiatives will not lead to a viable solution. The President said, "The common fear we share, is that of economic instability leading to an unstable democracy. At such times, there is great importance in the strengthening of society in our country, and our commitment to the values of democracy. These values are key to the security of our citizens."

"We are very proud of the strong connection between Israel and the Latin American countries. This relationship impacts the lives of our peoples in many ways – from economy to security, from hi-tech to agriculture."

Speaking on behalf of the delegation of ambassadors was Ambassador of Mexico, Federico Salas. He told the President, "We are greatly honored to have this meeting with you, and will be pleased to continue to hold such meetings in the future. All of us come from a group of countries with a friendly predisposition toward Israel, and we look to this part of the world with a keen interest, not only to what is happening in the political arena, but also in the strengthening of economic ties, ties of cooperation, ties between our peoples. I want to assure you, Mr. President, that we will do all we can to promote harmonious living for Israelis and the Palestinians, together, in mutual prosperity, and in security."



President Rivlin with Ambassador of Mexico H.E. Federico Salas



CHINESE AMBASSADOR ZHAN YONGXIN ARRIVES IN ISRAEL

On the occasion of the arrival and assumption of office of a new Ambassador to Israel, H. E. Ambassador Zhan Yongxin, the Embassy of the People's Republic of China to the State of Israel hosted an event at Dan Hotel.

In his opening remarks, the Ambassador welcomed the guests to continue to lending they support to the Chinese Embassy and himself, contributing this efforts to promote friendship and cooperation between China and Israel. "Let me conclude by wishing you a pleasant evening. Wish you and your family a good health and success in the Chinese New Year. Wish the China-Israel relations bear even more fruits and progress in the future", he said.



66TH REPUBLIC DAY OF INDIA

On 26 January, 2015, the Indian Embassy celebrated the 66th Republic Day of India at the Ambassador's residence in Herzliya. H.E. Ambassador Jaideep Sarkar hoisted the national flag of India to mark the beginning of the ceremony. This was followed by singing of the Indian National Anthem.

Ambassador addressed the gathering and read out excerpts from the Indian President's speech that was made on the occasion of the Republic Day. There were Indian cultural performances: patriotic songs and Bhangra, an Indian dance form, which was performed by Indian soldiers at the UNDOF. Delicious Indian snacks



Ambassador Sarkar hoisting the Indian flag.



Singing of Indian National Anthem



Ambassador Sarkar addressing the gathering

CHINA'S HAINAN AIRLINES TO LAUNCH TEL AVIV-BEIJING ROUTE



Minister of Tourism Dr. Uzi Landau with VP Hainan Airlines Hou Wei

China's Hainan Airlines has filed a request with Israel's Civil Aviation Authority to operate three weekly direct flights between Beijing and Tel Aviv from September.

In the initial stage, Hainan will operate three weekly flights between Ben Gurion airport and Beijing on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, probably using A330 passenger jets. These are days on which El Al does not operate flights on the Tel Aviv-Beijing route. Hainan Airlines, whose representatives visited Israel last month, plans to launch a fourth weekly flight at a later stage.

According to the Israel Airports Authority, 54,000 passengers travelled on the Tel Aviv-Beijing route in 2014, up 5% from 2013. The potential for growth is huge, with 34,000 Chinese tourists that visited Israel in 2014, up 36.2% from 2013, according to the Ministry of Tourism.

ALITALIA ISRAEL NEWS FOR SUMMER 2015

Israel is one of the main strategic markets for Alitalia, starting 29 March 2015 we will increase our activity between Israel and Italy from 26 to 29 weekly flights on the route from Tel Aviv to Rome with connections to 26 Italian destinations and beyond.

With 4 daily flights (Monday - Saturday) and 5 daily flights on Sunday we can provide the Israeli guests maximum flexibility and availability to reach our entire network.

This year we are inviting the Israeli market to Enjoy the experience of the Universal exhibition of The Expo 2015



in Milan, open every day

10:00-23:00, from 1 May - 31 October 2015.

Over this six-month period, Milan will become a global showcase where more than 140 participating countries will show the best of their technology that offers a concrete answer to a vital need. Alitalia together with Etihad are the official global airline carriers of the event and such as tickets are available for sale with special discount via Alitalia web site www.alitalia.co.il

and via selected local travel agencies.

This summer we are offering very special fares to all Alitalia destinations when departing from Tel Aviv.

Current promotion valid for sale until 16 March 2015.

Italy starting from 296\$, North America starting from 799\$(fares are for round trip and include all taxes).

Looking forward to welcome you on board on Alitalia flights!

THE BEACH-OUTDOOR LIBRARIES ARE BACK!



Last year The Tel Aviv-Jaffa Municipality opened its first ever outdoor library, where tourists and beach-goers are able to check-out books for their leisure time at the beach. At the beginning of April, eight libraries will be reopened, and you are invited to participate. We wish to include a variety of books from around the world, as the library serves both residents and tourists. We are looking for fiction or poetry books for "light reading" (since it is outdoors, and the book cannot be taken home).

The library offers books in the following languages: English, Russian, French, German, Spanish and Hebrew. If you have books in the aforementioned languages and would like them to

be included in our libraries, please let us know at enoch-maoz_y@mail.tel-aviv.gov.il

The books will not be returned, but we will store them during the winter and take them out again the following year. You're books will be highly appreciated in our effort to reinforce inter-cultural relations. Please be sure to mention the books were the present of your Embassy to the city of Tel Aviv-Jaffa.

Holidays are coming!

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FRANCOPHONIE FILM FESTIVAL

The Romanian Cultural Institute in Tel Aviv and the Embassy of Romania to the State of Israel are proud to invite you to the first edition of the Francophonie Film Festival which will take place on March 13, between 12:00-18:00 at the Tel Aviv Cinematheque. During the festival there will be screened, in three series, films from Romania, France, Switzerland, Canada, Belgium, Cyprus, Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Greece. Concurrently, in the lobby of the Cinematheque there will be organized national stands from all 12 of the participating countries: France, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, Greece, Switzerland, Vietnam, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Ivory Coast, the Republic of Congo, Cameroon and Romania.

The festival will open with the screening of the Romanian film "The Bridge" (2014, directed by Vlad Trandafir), followed by the Swiss film "Back to Mandima" (2011).



LITHUANIAN STATEHOOD DAY

On the occasion of the day of restoration of Lithuania's statehood, and 25th anniversary of re-establishment of the independence of the Republic of Lithuania, the Lithuanian Embassy in Israel held a gala concert at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art, with the cooperation of the Israel-Lithuania Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The concert featured performance by the pianist Petras Geniusas – one of the most prominent, versatile and adventurous Lithuanian musicians, as well as graphic artworks by Kristina Norvilaite, a renowned and awarded artist, and member of Lithuanian Artists' Association.

יפן: ממלכת הדמויות

מאורגן על ידי שגרירות יפן בישראל, מרכז תרבות בבית אריאלה וקורן יפן

12 בפברואר - 22 במרץ 2015

JAPAN Kingdom of Characters

February 12 ~ March 22, 2015

Astro Boy : Hattori-kun : Hello Kitty
Doraemon : Chibi Maruko Chan
Neon Genesis Evangelion
Pokemon : Rilakkuma : Tamagotchi
and many more!



Beit Ariela Cultural Center | 25 Shaul HaMeleah Boulevard, Tel Aviv Sun. ~ Thu., 10:00am ~ 18:45 pm, Fri. 9:00am ~ 11:45am | Sat. Closed
מרכז תרבות בבית אריאלה | שד' שאול המלך 25, תל אביב | פתוח בימי א'-ה' 10:00 עד 18:45, יום ו' 9:00 עד 11:45 | שבת סגור
www.israel.emb-japan.go.jp | www.facebook.com/EOIIsrael | www.tel-aviv.gov.il/ariela | www.facebook.com/tlv.libraries



FOOD FOR THOUGHTS HOLON DESIGN WEEK

25TH - 26TH MARCH 2015,
DESIGN MUSEUM HOLON

During Holon Design Week 2015 the Embassy of Italy in Israel, the Israel-Italy Chamber of Commerce, the Italian Trade Agency and the Italian Cultural Institute, in collaboration with Design Museum of Holon, are holding "Food for Thoughts" – a conference dedicated to design in the context of food. The timing is very appropriate: the universal exhibition EXPO Milano 2015, opening on May 1st, is dedicated to the theme "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life". This topic gives both Israel and Italy a unique opportunity to present their excellence in food and agriculture to the world at large. In both countries, today more than ever before, quality foodstuff and its preparation have been elevated to an art form, prominent in culture and society. Cuisine, being an expression of culture, both traditional and innovative, can prompt sociological, cultural, historical and artistic reflections. Indeed, the Embassy of Italy, in cooperation with the Israel-Italy Chamber of Commerce, the Italian Trade Agency and the Italian Cultural Institute, have organized a carnival of events aiming at strengthening the economic, commercial, cultural and artistic ties between Italy and Israel through food and design.

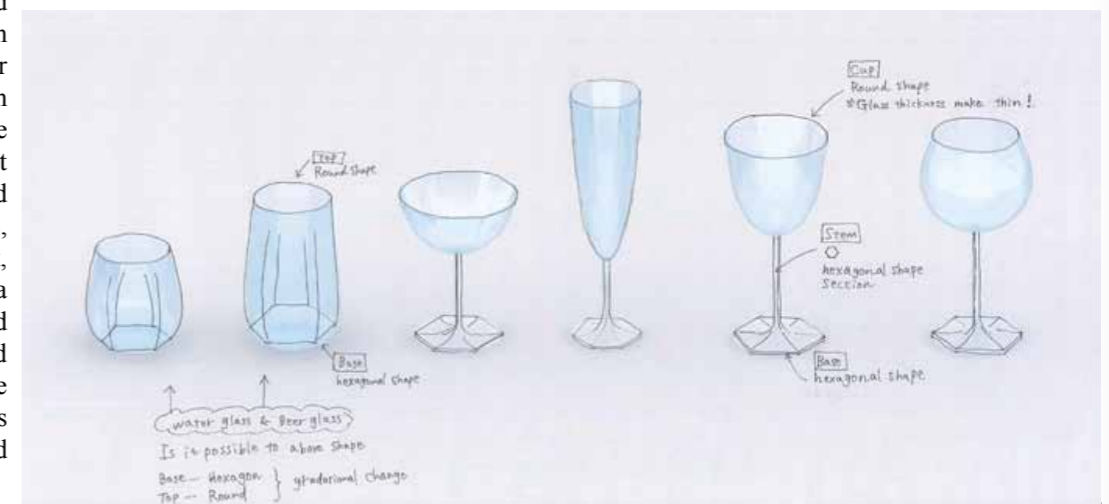


67TH NATIONAL DAY OF SRI LANKA

The Sri Lanka Embassy in Israel celebrated the 67th National Day of Sri Lanka on 4 February at the Embassy premises in Tel Aviv. The event was organised by the Embassy with the participation of Ambassadors, Honorary Consuls, professionals and business community representatives of Israel and the Sri Lankan community.

DESIGN MUSEUM HOLON IN-POSSIBLE BY ALESSI MARCH 25 - JUNE 06, 2015

The exhibition invites viewers for a behind-the-scenes glimpse into one of the most important and influential design companies in the world of design. The exhibition will be presenting for the first time more than fifty designs by some of the world's best and most renowned designers and architects, including Philippe Starck, Zaha Hadid, Patricia Urquiola, Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec, and Ettore Sottsass, whose development process was halted before they reached the finish line.



ISRAEL ERASED FROM ASIAN CUP HISTORY VIDEO

Omission of 1964 host and winner Israel embarrasses Asian Football Confederation; oversight blamed on external production agency. An official video history produced in the run up to the 2015 Asian Cup has omitted Israel, despite the country having both

hosted and won the 1964 football cup. The three-minute clip, posted on the Asian Football Confederation's official site, traces the history of the cup from South Korea's victory in 1956 to Japan's triumph in the most recent 2011 tournament. However, conspicuously absent

from the clip, replete with rousing music and dramatic narration, is the tournament's 1964 winner, Israel.

Despite the video's reading, "As we head towards the AFC Asian Cup 2015, we take a look back at all the past winners and legends of the AFC Asian Cup since 1956," the narrator skips from Korea's 1960 victory to Iran's victory in 1968.

In response to the omission, AFC officials told Guardian Australia that Israel's absence from the video was a surprise to the confederation, which would be "seeking answers." The Guardian writes that it is understood the video was produced by an outside agency.

A spokesperson for the Executive Council of Australian Jewry, the elected representative body of Australia's Jewish body, appeared to tie the omission to Arab and Muslim



Not omitted: Iran. The Iranians won the 1968, 1972 and 1974 Asian Cups – the only team to have won three consecutive AFC tournaments. (YouTube screenshot)



Israel's triumphant national soccer team holds the Asian Cup in 1964. Photo by Moshe Pridan/Government Press Office

countries refusal to recognize Israel's right to exist: "There are countries in the AFC which wish that Israel didn't exist and that the Jewish people's sovereignty in its homeland was brought to an end," Alexander Ryvchin said to Guardian Australia. "It would bring great shame to the world game, which should unite and inspire, if the omission of Israel from the film was an act of politically motivated historical revisionism."

Ryvchin called on the Football Federation of Australia to bring the issue up with the AFC president, Bahraini royal Salman Bin Ibrahim Al-Khalifa, if a "satisfactory explanation" was not provided.

Despite being omitted from the video history, Israel does, however, feature on the cup's online table of past winners.

Just for the record...

Despite the video's selective memory, Israel hosted the finals of the third AFC Asian Cup from May 26 to June 3, 1964, winning in title with a perfect record of three wins. India was runner-up (only four countries competed, the others being South Korea and Hong Kong). The four venues were Ramat Gan Stadium, Kiryat Eliezer Stadium in Haifa, Bloomfield Stadium in HJaffa and Hebrew University Stadium in Jerusalem.

As Guardian Australia notes, the 1964 victory is Israel's only international football competition title. Citing a veritable golden age in Israeli soccer, the paper also notes that Israel was runner-up in both the 1956 and 1960 tournaments, and placed third in 1968.

However, after a Kuwaiti motion to have Israel expelled from the confederation was adopted in 1974, Israel spent two decades without belonging to a regional confederation, until it was accepted into the European confederation in 1994.

Up against so many illustrious European national teams, however, odds are that Israel's 1964 triumph may remain its single solitary victory for many years to come.

pictures from HAARETZ. ●

TRUTH BEHIND GOSPEL OF JUDAS REVEALED IN ANCIENT INKS

By Stephanie Pappas

A long-lost gospel that casts Judas as a co-conspirator of Jesus, rather than a betrayer, was ruled most likely authentic in 2006. Now, scientists reveal they couldn't have made the call without a series of far more mundane documents, including Ancient Egyptian marriage licenses and property contracts.

The Gospel of Judas is a fragmented Coptic (Egyptian)-language text that portrays Judas in a far more sympathetic light than did the gospels that made it into the Bible. In this version of the story, Judas turns Jesus over to the authorities for execution upon Jesus' request, as part of a plan to release his spirit from his body. In the accepted biblical version of the tale, Judas betrays Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.

As part of a 2006 National Geographic Society (the Society) investigation of the document, microscopist Joseph Barabe of McCrone Associates in Illinois and a team of researchers analyzed the ink on the tattered gospel to find out if it was real or forged. Some of the chemicals in the ink raised red flags — until Barabe and his colleagues found, at the Louvre Museum, a study of Egyptian

documents from the third century A.D., the same time period of the Gospel of Judas.

"What the French study told us is that ink technology was undergoing a transition," Barabe told. The Gospel of Judas' odd ink suddenly fit into place. [Religious Mysteries: 8 Alleged Relics of Jesus]

CSI: Ancient Egypt

Barabe and his colleagues specialize in thorough investigations of old — or supposedly old — documents and artwork. The chemical composition of inks used can reveal the difference between something authentically ancient and a forgery. In 2009, Barabe helped expose a gospel called the "Archaic Mark," which some claimed was a 14th-century manuscript, as a modern forgery. He's also worked with the Federal Bureau of Investigation to detect forged paintings.

A call from National Geographic, however, was a "big deal," Barabe said. "It was both thrilling and an honor," he added.

The Society wanted to find out if the Gospel of Judas, discovered in the 1970s, really dated back to early days

of Christianity or whether it was, like Archaic Mark, a fake. Barabe brought together a team of scientists with a variety of specialties, and they ran the Gospel through an intensive analysis of microscopy and spectroscopy.

At first, their findings offered little hope that the Gospel of Judas was real. The document was written in two inks — black and brown — mixed together. The black was an ink called "lamp black," which was consistent with the inks used in Egyptian writings from ancient times and into the third century, Barabe said.

But the brown ink was more mysterious. It was an iron-rich ink called iron gall, but it lacked the sulfur usually found in inks of this sort. The pressure was on to explain the difference.

"One thing that made this a little bit more dramatic than we would have liked is, we did the sampling in the third week of January of 2006, and the press conference was already scheduled for the third week in April of that same year," Barabe said. "So we had three months to turn this critter around with a conclusion, and it really put an enormous amount of pressure on us, because we were faced with what was essentially a three-month rush project."

Authenticating the gospel

Some facets of the document did suggest authenticity. The most promising of these characteristics, Barabe said, was that the ink wasn't piled up in the warped papyrus, suggesting the document was written before the warping happened. Had someone tried to write on a pre-warped papyrus, the ink would have gathered in crevices and dips — a sure sign someone had intentionally tried to make new papyrus look old.



The Gospel of Judas, a text dated to about A.D. 280, tells the story of Judas as a collaborator with Jesus instead of a betrayer. Credit: Joseph Barabe, McCrone Associates

Instead, the Gospel seems to have been written on flat papyrus and aged naturally. National Geographic also commissioned other analyses of the Gospel, including radiocarbon dating,

script analysis and linguistic style.

Barabe hit the books, looking for other studies on early Egyptian inks. The study of Egyptian marriage certificates and land documents from

the Louvre proved to be the clincher.

That study found that contracts in Egypt in the mid-third century were written in lamp black ink, in the traditional Egyptian style. But they were officially registered in the traditional Greek style, using brown iron gall ink.

The Louvre study findings suggested to the team that the presence of both inks was consistent with an early date for the Gospel of Judas, Barabe said.

What's more, the Louvre study found that the metal-based inks from this time period contained little sulfur, just like the ink on the Gospel of Judas.

The discovery gave the researchers the confidence to declare the document consistent with a date of approximately A.D. 280. (Barabe and his colleagues caution that this finding doesn't prove beyond doubt that the document is authentic, but rather that there are no red flags proving it's a forgery). "There was definitely a point where, all of the sudden, I just kind of relaxed and said, 'This is probably just fine,'" Barabe said.

Barabe presented the behind-the-scenes story of the Gospel of Judas investigation today (April 8) at the annual meeting of the American Chemical Society in New Orleans. After the National Geographic investigation of the Gospel of Judas, the document was returned to the Coptic Museum in Cairo.

Live Science" •



HOW *Hilda* THE FORGOTTEN FIFTIES PLUS-SIZE PIN-UP WAS REDISCOVERED ONE YEAR AFTER THE MAN WHO CREATED HER DIED

Meet Hilda, the creation of illustrator Duane Bryers and pin-up art's best kept secret. Voluptuous in all the right places, a little clumsy but not at all shy about her figure, Hilda was one of the only atypical plus-sized pin-up queens to grace the pages of American calendars from the 1950s up until the early 1980s, and achieved moderate notoriety in the 1960s and actually today.

Despite being one of history's longest running calendar queens alongside the likes of Marilyn Monroe, even the most dedicated vintage enthusiasts probably won't have come across Hilda before.

The typical Fifties pin-up girl was slim and conventionally-posed. But a recently-unearthed collection of images has revealed the less familiar Hilda, a plus-sized redhead who broke the mold with her plump figure and light-hearted demeanor.

A year after the death of Duane Bryers, the artist who created her,

online gallery ToilGirls has published prints of one of America's longest-running pin-up girls, who graced calendars from the mid-Fifties until the Eighties.

Although Hilda's creator passed away, his red-headed cartoon lives on today as a testament to the sex appeal of fuller-bodied women.

Not only was Hilda one of the only plus-sized pin-up girls of her time, but she also displayed a fun, carefree and

“Despite being one of history's longest running calendar queens alongside the likes of Marilyn Monroe, even the most dedicated vintage enthusiasts probably won't have come across Hilda before.”

somewhat clumsy attitude, making her all the more charming.

In one of Bryers' paintings, Hilda leans forward suggestively, squeezing between two rungs of a ladder to paint a wall.

A handkerchief hangs out of the back of her yellow bikini, barely covering her ample behind.

Another image shows an almost-nude Hilda warming up in front of a furnace, flashing a cheeky smile as she covers her breasts with her red pajamas.

Bryers told the Arizona Daily Star in 2010: 'I got the idea for a plumpy gal pinup and thought I'd like to make it into a calendar series. But how was I going to sell a plump girl?'

He then brought the series to the U.S.'s top calendar maker at the time, Brown & Bigelow, who 'reluctantly put it in the line and figured it would last a short time.'

In reality, while she may have been less prominent because of her curvaceous figure, the Hilda series



endured for more than three decades, and today there are numerous Tumblr, Facebook and Pinterest pages dedicated to the buxom redhead.

Many Hilda fans admire her uniqueness in a world of thin and conventionally attractive pin-up girls.

One writer wrote on his blog: 'If one's natural male instinct is to respond to the rounder, softer, more generously proportioned woman, you will understand why there is so much to like about [Hilda].'

'Her fresh and fun-filled freckled face create a symphony for the eyes. She's simply peachy-keen'

The blogger calls Hilda a 'vision of femininity' and 'an ideal example of full-figure perfection.'

She is all the more special in that Duane Bryers did not base her on a real life model, but instead fashioned her from his own imagination and fantasy.

'She's a creation out of my head,' the artist told online pin-up gallery ToilGirls in 2002.

“Voluptuous in all the right places, a little clumsy but not at all shy about her figure, Hilda was one of the only atypical plus-sized pin-up queens”

'I had various models over the years, but some of my best Hilda paintings I've ever done were done without a model.'

Hilda is often depicted wearing just a bikini made out of flowers which strategically cover her assets.

One painting shows her diving into water, causing the flowers to float away.

She humorously puffs up her cheeks and blows bubbles in the water as her nude womanly curves are put on display.

Artist and art collector Les Toil created a blog dedicated to Hilda after discovering one of her calendars in an antique shop.

He recounts his reaction to the plus-sized pin-up when he first laid eyes on her: 'As I browse through the incredible paintings in this calendar, the personality of this zany redheaded maiden of mayhem unfolds,' he writes.

'Curious, creative, giddy, anxious, exasperated, troublesome, but always fun. To gaze upon Hilda is to gaze upon a hot playful Summer's day.'

'Her large, full breasts, her round and gentle tummy, her thick curvaceous legs, and her fresh and fun-filled freckled face create a symphony for the eyes. She's simply peachy-keen.'

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/>



SAILING (SKIPPER) COURSE THE WAY TO FULFILL YOUR DREAM

GETTING OUT TO THE OPEN SEA, LIFTING SAILS, A GLASS OF WINE, HANGING WITH THE FAMILY, HOURS OF HAPPINESS WITH THE PEOPLE YOU LOVE – THAT'S THE FEELING OF LIFE. EVERYONE CAN FIND THE SAILING COURSE AS A FIT.

The ocean is big, as it is said, and so is the number of courses for people who wish to fulfill their dream and become Skippers. The courses that are held by the leading training centers varies from short courses of 2-3 meetings of several hours, that gives the basic knowledge and gives license for small speed boats, and up to long, overall and very professional courses, that take place for many months and holds deep knowledge of different topics about the sea and about sailing

in it. This article gives the basic information about the options that are in the market for learning how to sail.

ISRAELI SKIPPER COURSE

Skipper course is the "Flag" course of the sailing training centers. At the end of it you will get a license – issued by the ministry of transportation and allows sailing a vessel of up to 24 meters (78 feet), all over the world. In order to get this license you will have to demonstrate knowledge

in mechanics and ship handling, seamanship and navigation and participate in several courses for different topics.

No matter the "format" you choose – taking it easy, in your own pace, and getting the license in about a year, or making it intensively in about a month – the course is a unique and fun experience. The Skipper course opens a window to a whole new world: a world of fun and experience, a world of silence, of "escaping" the daily life, and the overload of work.

Becoming a licensed Skipper has long changed from a distance dream to a very realistic thing. In Israel about 1,500 students attend this course yearly, FOUR TIMES the number of students than a decade ago. The population that attend the courses these days diverse as well and about 30% of them are women. The students population includes three sub-population that has specific characteristics:

- Discharged soldiers
- Middle Class + (business men, high

tech employees etc') at 35-50 years old that wants to create a new hobby

- 50-60 years old heading to their pension or in it

AMERICAN SKIPPER COURSE

Few training centers in Israel offers to option to receive an American license. This license is recognized worldwide and lets you charter a yacht abroad.

Studding for the American license is significantly easier than the Israeli requirements and relatively shorter.

One can accomplish these studies in 10 classes in Israel or while sailing abroad for several days.

COURSE LENGTH

The training centers wishes to reach 100% graduation and therefore the course is taking place "Until you become a Skipper". The average however, is 6-8 month.

The training center walks you throughout the whole process, with no time limit, until you become a Skipper. Afterwards, the sailing club gives his graduates the option to keep on sailing on the yachts that they studied on as club members, for domestics and abroad sails.

PRIVATE SKIPPER COURSE

The big training centers are aware to the difference in population that wishes the get the Skipper license. Many times, these people are very busy with little time to spare. Therefore, you can take a private Skipper course at home or at your

office. The information is being given by e-learning system that contains all the needed theoretical material (in slide shows and videos) and practice apps for Smartphone's and tablets. Guided by a personal instructor that will take you all the way, until you get your license, will help you get the Skipper license in no time.

10 DAYS IN PARADISE AND YOU'RE A SKIPPER

This unique course opens the way to get the Skipper license in one 10th of the standard time. It is built for people that like to get "everything now". The way it works:

A group of 4-6 persons are flying to a destination of their choice (ex. Greece, Turkey, and Croatia), with an instructor, they sail in the region for a whole week and study the theory during that. Staying onboard the yacht for a whole week while studying the practice and getting to know thoroughly the yachts' systems improves the sailor skills significantly.

After this week of sailing abroad, we get back to Israel and do a "marathon" studying on Monday and Tuesday, and on Wednesday you take two out of four exams. On the following week we repeat the same procedure and take the remaining exams.

After passing successfully the four exams, one has to clear his calendar for 4 days of training for the practical exam of the ministry of transportation that will take place on the 5th day. Congratulation, you are a Skipper!

The "typical" Israeli skipper uses his license in varies ways: many of them finish the course and keep on sailing as club members in the club they graduated from. In that way they can charter the clubs yachts and keep on the "sea party" with family and friends.

The other common option is chartering yachts abroad and sail bareboat or as part of a flotilla in beautiful locations. The remaining sailors that stay in Israel uses the Sea of Galilee or the red sea.



ABOUT THE COURSE:

Starting date - 15.3 on Sundays Hours - 18:00-21:00
The entire course will be in English (instructor, teaching materials, etc.)

The course includes a theoretical part conducted in the classroom, and a practical part conducted on a yacht at sea.

Those interested in the course, can have a free trial cruise that takes place on week days at 16:00, or Friday at 9:30 or 12:00.

1700-700-058

Herzliya Marina. Open Hours – 8:00-21:00 Sunday to Friday

MEDICAL SERVICE FOR DIPLOMATS.



Who once have had some business with Israeli medical service providers will understand this article very quickly.

Yesterday I was waiting for the officer in one of the public Sick funds. I just wanted to pay and receive forms.

I spent 2 hours for this. What you can do? Nothing. Only this officer can receive your money, only this officer can give your permissions for the treatments, only this officer become a most important person in this medical center.

What can I say? The same situation with the insurance companies, with the medical centers. I remember, one of my friends, diplomat, asked me to found a gynecologist, who can do immediate US according to the list of the insurance company. If it wasn't me, fluent speaking Hebrew, I could not believe in this. It's took me a few hours to understand, that it is not any gynecologist with equipment for US on the list of this company. Under promising to leave this company, a mane coordinator made us a favor and found one.

I am not talking about not- up-dated web sites; about lines to laboratory

and other. Same for Ambassador and same for the worker from Sudan. Of course: this is a public medicine.

According to the National Health Insurance Law of 5751-1991 public medicine provider can not supply the better service then to citizen of Israel.

The shaming is that the private insurance company based on the services of public sick funds. All of them.

Do you want a good medicine - you need money. And, I don't need to tell you, when doctor hear that you are diplomat – price jump up. How many times the representative of foreign insurance company suggested you a full service and could not provide it?!

Good service for foreigners is not a very strong side of the medical service in Israel, Israelis know to handle it – they know this language.

During our long experience with the diplomatic insurance plans (since 1998), and, a newly with a public Sick funds,

The Diplomatic Club suggested you as following:

We will take all this problems from you. We will arrange an appointments to the best local doctors for you, we

will arrange a medical tests at your home, we will receive a "tofes 17" for you, we will get a check up for you, we will take care about your children's health in Israel. If you are diplomat, if you have a family, if you have a children you have to think about it.

WE ARE OPEN THE DIPLOMATIC MEDICAL COORDINATION CENTER. IT IS ALREADY ESTABLISHED. IT IS ALREADY WORKING. TRY US.

- We have an agreements with Meuhedet, Macabi.
- We have an agreements with Harel, Clal, Ayalon.
- If you are member of one of them – we can help you.
- If you don't know what to do and how to purchase a local insurance – call us.
- We have a legal supporting for diplomats .
- Remember – you are a very special.



ASSUTA

A WORLD OF QUALITY CARE

In Israel, one name is literally synonymous with health: Assuta, which means “health” in the ancient Aramaic language. Today Assuta is known worldwide as the private hospital network that has redefined healthcare for the modern generation.

Assuta is the leading private hospital chain and largest surgical center in Israel, attracting patients from across the globe that are drawn by its record of excellence in all facets of healthcare.

For the past 80 years, Assuta has provided a “one-stop-shop” service for every medical need. It appeals to discerning patients who are seeking the most highly-skilled medical personnel, superior quality standards, and state-of-the-art technologies available anywhere in the world.

These crucial factors, together with the chain’s devoted personal service, have firmly established Assuta as the most advanced hospital in the Middle East, and one of the most attractive medical tourism destinations worldwide.

The Personal Touch

Established in 1934, Assuta’s flagship hospital in Israel’s largest city has set a new benchmark for medical excellence. The complex was recently entirely rebuilt to fulfill 21st century needs – not only the very latest technology, but also an inviting environment that helps patients and their families feel at home.

Assuta’s staff members believe that their goal isn’t simply to carry out sophisticated, highly effective surgeries and other treatments, but

to promote wellbeing and a healthy lifestyle throughout the community. A visit to Assuta may only be for a brief period, but the hospital’s surgeons, specialists, nursing teams, technicians, and other staff – fully understand that healthcare continues at home. This is why Assuta’s treatment concept is a holistic one, encouraging healthful approaches to everyday life.

This commitment to personal service is also enshrined in a unique professional program that focuses on developing the bedside manner – respectful, patient, and compassionate – of all the staff.

In line with this approach, Assuta’s dedicated International Department supports patients every step of the way, till the completion of the entire treatment period. Patients are able to select their own preferred specialist,

ensuring they receive the best possible care for their personal needs. The Department also coordinates appointments, helps patients navigate the details of insurance coverage, and provides full reports in English.

Every treatment at the hospital, whether minor or major, is conducted in accordance with the highest standards of quality and proficiency. More than 500 types of procedures are carried out at Assuta every year in a variety of fields, ranging from the common to the relatively rare: oncology, general surgery, cardiology, neurology, treatment of spinal injuries, ENT, abdominal surgery, ophthalmology, dermatology, and more.

Assuta also devotes particular attention to diagnostics and ongoing care throughout its four hospitals and three medical centers, which include imaging institutes, cardiology institutes, dialysis units, IVF centers, an oncology institute, women’s health centers, gastroenterology units, pain clinics, sleep clinics, and a wide variety of specialist clinics.

Always a Step Ahead

Technological advances play a more significant role in healthcare today than they ever have before, complementing human surgical and diagnostic skills. Assuta has embraced these developments, adopting the state-of-the-art equipment it feels will positively contribute to patient recovery and wellbeing.

Recently, the hospital’s pride and joy has been the da Vinci medical robot, which represents a renaissance in the surgical art. The robot is operated entirely by a human surgeon, but enhances the surgeon’s own abilities by guaranteeing the precision necessary for the most complex laparoscopic, urological, and gynecological procedures.

Remaining at the forefront of its field, however, requires ongoing efforts that recognize constantly-rising standards as well as higher patient expectations. As part of these efforts, Assuta has gained accreditation from the Joint Commission International (JCI), representing the very highest quality patient care.



Tel: +972-3-7643247

Email: TouristCenter@assuta.com

Address: 20 HaBarzel st., Tel Aviv

Website: www.assuta.com

Take a Medical Vacation

The qualities that appeal to medical tourists throughout the Middle East and around the world are also very attractive to international citizens based in Israel. It isn’t just the highly skilled and experienced physicians or the state-of-the-art equipment, but that all-important personal touch.

Patients and their families are ensured a hassle-free trip with full peace of mind, as every issue is handled by a personal assistant who accompanies them throughout their treatment program. Assuta’s staff is multilingual, helping each patient feel informed and completely at home. The International Department works for the patient, helping to book accommodation, select the right surgeon or specialist, and arrange nursing care or a private anesthesiologist.

Among the international health insurance providers that currently have agreements with Assuta are BUPA International, AXA PPP International, Vanbreda International, Goral Assistance, Allianz Worldwide Care, Aetna International, Mutas, and BCBS.

With its winning combination of skill, technology, and an unparalleled personal touch, Assuta’s enviable record of high-quality healthcare has already endured for 80 years, and seems certain to continue for decades to come.

Essential Assuta Facts

- ✓ 80 years of excellence
- ✓ 1,500 top physicians and specialists
- ✓ 500 kinds of procedures
- ✓ 16 operating theaters, 9 departments



Organization Accredited
by Joint Commission International





SOOTH YOUR BODY AND SOUL AT GAASH HOT SPRINGS

ONLY FIVE MINUTES
FROM HERZLIYA - A
MAGICAL EXPERIENCE
TO RELAX AND
REJUVENATE

There is no better way to escape the frustrations and stress of your busy life than having an amazing soak in natural hot springs. We invite you to take a break from your hectic schedule to join us for a day of pure serenity at Gaash Hot Springs.

Since time immemorial, the rejuvenating effects of hot mineral spring water have been recognized for their ability to heal our bodies and souls. More than just a chance to relax and spoil yourself, soaking in hot water brimming with essential minerals has been shown to have truly amazing effects in promoting improved health. For generations, people who have taken advantage of the gifts of natural hot springs have enjoyed improved skin, an easing of joint and muscle pains, and

lower blood pressure. Throughout the world from the ancient times, hot springs like those of Baden-Baden in Germany to the town of Spa in Belgium from which the name is taken, have been important destinations for those who recognized the healing powers of the waters.

Thankfully, now you do not have to travel far to take advantage of this incredible experience. At the Gaash Hot Springs, you can easily enjoy an excursion to a professional spa and its reinvigorating waters without the hassle. Only a five-minute drive from Herzliya, the tranquility of the soothing waters awaits you.

Gaash Hot Springs offers visitors a comprehensive spa experience at our recently refurbished establishment. Designed to meet the standards of the top spas in Europe, we offer



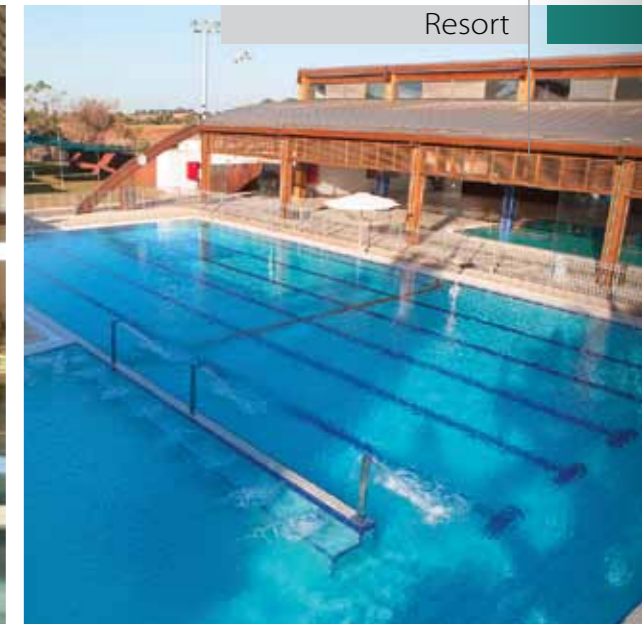
four mineral-rich pools with varying temperatures for your enjoyment. Natural light pours in to the inside pools from the expansive glass windows, adding to the sense of serenity as you move between the dozens of powerful jet streams of water located throughout the sides and floor of the pools.

Adding to the complete spa experience, visitors can also enjoy our wet and dry saunas as well as a seasonal swimming pool. We even have a seasonal pool for small children and infants, allowing you to bring the whole family.

Looking to really spoil yourself? Our wellness center has 14 rooms where visitors can treat themselves to a wide range of massages and treatments to heal your body and soul.

Our facilities are constantly being updated to keep up with the newest innovations to further improve your spa experience. We strive to maintain the highest standards for our visitors with excellent service and attention to the finest details of the experience. A visit to the Gaash Hot Springs is perfect for those who seek the finer parts of life, as well as those looking for a revitalizing day away from the hustle and bustle.

For those looking for a totally immersive experience, we have available 32 guest rooms that offer a rustic and laid back escape from reality. Our cottages are perfect for a romantic get away or an easy to arrange family vacation.



CONTACT US TODAY

Gaash Hot Springs, Kibbutz
Gaash – 09-952-9404
www.hameigaash.co.il

DIRECTIONS

TO GAASH HOT SPRINGS SPA

We are located right off of the central Tel Aviv-Haifa road (Road 2)

TRAVELERS FROM THE NORTH

From Road 2, take the right turn from at the Sharon Beach interchange after passing the Wingate Institute. Continue straight on the road until the marked turn to Gaash.

TRAVELERS FROM THE SOUTH

After passing Rishpon on Road 2, follow the signs to the right toward Gaash. Turn left to go under the overpass and follow the road to the traffic circle. At the circle, turn right and follow the road past the shopping center and then follow the signs to Gaash.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Sunday: 10:00 – 18:00
Monday-Wednesday: 8:00 - 22:00
Thursday: 8:00-18:00
Friday: 8:00-16:00
Saturday: 8:00-18:00

SPECIAL

Song and Dance Parties are held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 19:00



Lunar New Year's Day is the first day of the year, according to the traditional lunar calendar. With the adoption of the solar calendar, New Year's Day came to refer to the first day of the solar year. In order to distinguish the two, Lunar New Year's Day is sometimes referred to as Spring Festival. The Lunar New Year is China's most important traditional holiday. However, this holiday is not just one day; rather it encompasses an extended period of time, often lasting until the fifteenth day of the first lunar month.

With the adoption of the solar calendar, New Year's Day came to refer to the first day of the solar year.

Legend has it that long ago there was a king named Zu Yi who found it difficult to predict seasonal weather changes and the movement of wind and clouds. He ordered his minister Ah Heng to build an altar and make sacrifices to the deities seeking their assistance. But the deities did not reply. As it happened, a young man named Wan Nian had just invented the sundial and a four-level water clock, which enabled him to accurately predict weather conditions according to the changing seasons. Wan Nian sought out the king and presented him with his inventions. The king



LUNAR NEW YEAR

was delighted with this development, and ordered Ah Heng to use the new inventions to create a calendar. But when Ah Heng climbed to the top of the Temple of the Sun and Moon, he saw the following poem written by Wan Nian inscribed on the wall:

The sun rises and sets three-hundred and sixty times, circling the horizon

to return to its beginning.

Plants wither and flourish over four seasons; twelve moons make up one year's cycle.

When Ah Heng saw this poem, he realized that Wan Nian had already invented the calendar. Fearing that he would fall out of favor if the king learned of this accomplishment, Ah Heng sent an assassin to kill the young inventor. However, his plot was not successful. The king richly rewarded Wan Nian, who exclaimed, "Now the old year has ended and the new year begins; will the king give this auspicious day a name?" Zu Yi replied, "Let it be called Spring Festival."

In northern China, the first meal of the New Year is boiled jiaozi (stuffed dumplings). In the south, it is niangao (New Year's cake). In Chinese, niangao is a homonym of the phrase "higher every year," signifying the wish for steadily increasing prosperity.

New Year's cake is made with glutinous rice and short grain rice, plus sweet osmanthus sugar, lard, nuts, and candied fruit added according to taste. New Year's cake can be steamed, boiled, deep-fried, or stir-fried. Its sweet taste and chewy texture make it a favorite holiday treat.

After the first New Year's Day meal is eaten, offerings are made to the ancestors in the family ancestral hall. After consulting the almanac to determine the luckiest route, the family sets out on a procession, bearing lanterns and offerings to the auspicious deities, burning incense, and setting off firecrackers. When they reach the temple, they burn more incense, pay their respect to the deities, and entreat them for good fortune in the coming year.



PURIM EVENTS MARCH 6-7, 2015

Tel Aviv Purim Street Party – Friday, March 6, 12:00-evening. This annual street party is Tel Aviv’s biggest Purim event. The celebration will take place at Kikar Hamedina in the north of the city, and will feature, as it has done in previous years, performances from some top musicians, including headline DJ John Digweed (ranked 17 best DJ in the world by Resident Advisor in 2013). The event has a great party atmosphere and is free to enter. The event will not take place in rain.



Tel Aviv Purim Zombie Walk – Saturday, March 7, from 21:00. This annual event brings people into the streets dressed up as zombies. In past years thousands of zombies participated on this macabre walk in the middle of the night. In 2015, the gathering will take place at the corner of Ben-Zion Boulevard and King

George (Near the Dizengoff Center). Totally unique and unforgettable, the 2015 event will feature a special surprise at the end of the walk.

Purim at Safra Square – Friday, March 6 from 13:00. This is the central Purim festival of the Jerusalem Municipality. It is a huge party that takes place in the municipality’s Safra

Square, in between the Old City and from the city center. This colorful carnival includes Israeli television stars and beloved characters from fantasies and movies. The event includes a costume competition with prizes, a stage with an array of performances including puppet theater, clowns, a circus, creative workshops and more.

SADDAM HUSSEIN, A MYSTERY PLAY, BY YONATAN LEVY ON 2/27/15 IN TEL AVIV 28 HEBRON ROAD, JERUSALEM

In a lyric and ceremonial prose, Saddam Hussein invites the audience to an oily mystery tour. The theatrical journey into the Iraqi Heart of Darkness explores an invented mythology consisting of the hidden dynamics between East and West. Enclosed in his bunker with three of his doubles, quadrantly reflected, the Iraqi tyrant experiences inner visions, culminating in a final initiation rite which strikes the esoteric meaning of Oil. The actors, all mustached, in red Sufi skirts and khaki shirts, instantly change roles from Iraqis to Americans and back. In an ambiguous melange of metaphysical poetry and pretentious nonsense, accompanied by Gurdjieff-inspired sacred dances, the performance creates a vivid and masculine depiction of Man’s troubled relations to his time, place, history and mainly – his Self. at Hazira- Performance Art Arena , established in 1988 as HaBama Theatre, together with HaKaron Theatre and the School of Visual Theatre. The Association split in 2000, and since then Ha’Zira has served as an alternative stage for theatre, the only one of its kind in the local artistic landscape.



Photography: Eyal Landsman

MAPPING THE HOLY LAND III: MILESTONES IN MODERN MAPPING OF THE HOLY LAND OF ISRAEL FROM THE COLLECTION OF RISA AND RICHARD DOMB FEBRUARY 17 – JUNE 27, 2015



This important, comprehensive new collection of topographic maps of the Land of Israel from the 19th and 20th centuries enriches the holdings of the Museum’s Section for Maps of the Holy Land. The maps reflect the historical and geopolitical processes that took place in the region in the modern era, which continue to affect us to this day. The exhibit is located at the Kay Merrill Hillman Gallery, the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

WALK ABOUT LOVE MARCH 5-MAY 23, 2015

“Walk About Love” is an annual walking festival in Israel where locals and tourists from around the world join together in an incredibly special and unique trek across the land of Israel. The route follows the Israel National Trail which traverses the entire breadth of the land from the country’s southern point at the Gulf of Aqaba in Eilat to Mount Hermon near the Lebanese border in the north.



The trail is 1,000km and takes approximately 80 days to complete. Israel’s diverse terrain means that each day brings with it new and exciting spectacular scenery. Beginning with the breathtaking red rock mountains and vast sandy desert over time the landscape transforms into clear blue seas and lush green forests. For additional information visit www.masawalkaboutlove.com

NOT TO BE MISSED! ONLY ONE EVENT
ON 2/27/15 IN TEL AVIV



SOUNDS OF THE OLD CITY
MARCH 9-12, 2015



The streets of the Old City of Jerusalem will come to life with the Sounds of the Old City Festival which will take place on March 9-12, from 19:00 until midnight. The alleyways, streets and squares in the four quarters of the Old City, will be brought to life with sounds emanating from the culture of the quarter, with quarters, ensembles, and bands dotted throughout the area, playing everything from Armenian folk music to early Christian tunes, traditional Arabic music, and shows and music inspired by Jewish Culture. Visitors can follow a circular route through the Old City starting and ending at the Jaffa Gate. Entrance is free.

DRESS CODES: REVEALING THE JEWISH WARDROBE
MARCH 11, 2014 – MARCH 7, 2015

From India to Tunis, abd from New York to Baghdad: dresses, suits, wedding outfits, undergarments, and children's clothing. A spectacular range of 19th to 20th century Jewish garments from around the world, offering a multi-cultural view of dress, its significance, and its influences on the styles of today. The exhibition is located at the Bella and Harry Wexner Gallery, Israel Museum, Jerusalem.



THE SWINGLE SINGERS FEATURING VOCALOCITY
MARCH 28, 2015

The Swingle Singers are a world-renowned jazz-infused a cappella group performing covers of well-known songs in a wide range of styles, ranging from pop songs (Björk, Annie Lennox, and The Beatles) through classical music (Bach, Mozart) to contemporary music (Luciano Berio and others). The seven gifted singers are famed for showcasing the virtuosity of the human voice. Their international popularity over the decades originated with the arresting synthesis of classical music performed in a jazz setting.



Vocalocity is a dynamic new Israeli modern a cappella group. Numbering 40 singers, it is a thoroughly new voice on the Israeli musical scene, including both young and more experienced singers. Vocalocity recently recorded backing tracks for The Swingles' upcoming CD, "Deep End". The mutual performance will be held at the Tel Aviv Performing Arts Center.

ROBERT CRAY
IN TEL AVIV
APRIL 11, 2015



Blues legend Robert Cray is heading to Tel Aviv for his first ever concert in Israel in April 2015. A five times Grammy award winner, Robert Cray has had successes both as leader of his band, the Robert Cray Band, and as a solo musician who has collaborated with

acts including Eric Clapton, B. B. King, Jimmie Vaughan, and Stevie Ray Vaughan. Robert Cray will play at Tel Aviv's Palace of Culture on April 11, 2015. Tickets are on sale now.

"AIR" CONCERT
IN TEL AVIV
SUMMER 2015

The French electronic duo Air broke through in 1998 with their classic album Moon Safari, and in the years since have built up a rich discography of romantic, atmospheric, and immaculately produced pop albums.



Air is expected to return to Israel for a concert in Tel Aviv this summer. During their twenty year career, Air has produced a number of highly recognizable hits, including 'All I Need' and 'Cherry Blossom Girl' which are still regularly played on hit music stations around the world.

BLONDE REDHEAD IN TEL AVIV MARCH 7, 2015



American alt-rock band Blonde Redhead are returning to Tel Aviv for their third concert in Israel. Formed in the 1990's in New York, Blond Redhead have a strong niche, having released nine albums, the most recent of which, Barragán, precedes their concert in Tel Aviv. Blonde Redhead will perform at Tel Aviv's Barby Club on March 7, 2015. Tickets are on sale now.

*We are pleased to present the 3rd edition
of the Diplomatic Club Restaurant Guide
as a service to the diplomatic corps.*

RESTAURANT *guide* 2015

