

Inviting Seven Israeli Ushpizot

The holiday of Sukkot celebrates experiencing the moment. The sukkah is a temporary dwelling – easy to build and quick to dismantle. In Deuteronomy 16:14 it is written "And you shall rejoice on your festival..." The rabbinic tradition understood this joy to be a shared joy, mutual for families and the greater community. In order to bring about such joy, however, it was required to turn the temporary into something permanent. People make this possible. Together, we eat our meals in the sukkah, inviting new faces each night, bringing together communities to share in the experience. In a temporary situation we create one experience of joy for all.

Tradition increases this joy by encouraging us to invite special guests into our sukkot each night. Known in Aramaic as Ushpizin, the supernatural presence of our ancestors joins us in our celebration of the holiday. Just as we share the joy with our family and friends, we are encouraged to invite our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph and David.

The Talmud teaches us about their female counterparts. In Tractate Megillah there is a brief discussion of the seven prophetesses of Israel, listed as Sarah, Miriam, Devorah, Avigail, Channah, Hulda and Esther. We have taken this teaching to invite the presence of all of these ancestors to our sukkah.

In order to expand the joy we offer an additional list of seven Israeli Ushpizot. Each of these women have made a significant impact on the Modern State of Israel. We encourage you to bring this placemat into your Sukkah and use it as a starting point to learn about these women, as well as to invite any other guests to join you over the holiday.

When we invite the Ushpizin and Ushpizot, we recite in the Sukkah:

I am ready to perform the mitzvah of dwelling in the sukkah as instructed by my divine Creator: "In sukkot shall you dwell for seven days: every inhabitant of Israel shall dwell in sukkot. So your descendants may know that I caused all Israel to dwell in sukkot, when I brought them out of Egypt."

Be seated, be seated
honored guests.
Be seated, be seated
heroes of our People.

Be seated in the shade of the Holy One, and grant us the merit of the mitzvah of sukkah. As it is written: "For the Lord's portion is His people, Jacob His own allotment. May the pleasantness of our Eternal God rest upon us; establish for our benefit the work of our hands."

הֲרִינִי מוֹכֵן וּמְזֻמָּן / מוֹכֵנָה וּמְזֻמְנָת / לְקִיּוֹם
מִצְוֹת סִכָּה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּי הַבּוֹרֵא: בְּסִכַּת תֵּשְׁבוּ
שִׁבְעַת יָמִים, כֹּל הָאֲזָרָח בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יֵשְׁבוּ
בְּסִכַּת. לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ דוֹרֹתֵיכֶם כִּי בְּסִכּוֹת
הוֹשַׁבְתִּי אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, בְּהוֹצִיאִי אוֹתָם
מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם. שְׁבוּ שְׁבוּ אֲזָרָחִים, אֲשֶׁפִּיזִין
יְקָרִים. שְׁבוּ שְׁבוּ אֲזָרָחִים, גְּבוּרֵי עַמּוֹנוֹ, שְׁבוּ
בְּצִלּוֹ שֶׁל הַקְּדוֹשׁ-בְּרוּךְ-הוּא, וְזָכוּ עַמּוֹנוֹ
בְּמִצְוֹת יְשִׁיבָה בְּסִכָּה, כַּכָּתוּב: כִּי חֶלֶק יְהוָה
עִמּוֹ, יַעֲקֹב חֶבְלֵי נַחֲלָתוֹ. וַיְהִי נַעַם יְהוָה
אֶלְהֵינוּ עָלֵינוּ, וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָה עָלֵינוּ,
וּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵינוּ כּוֹנֵנָהּ.

Israeli Ushpizot



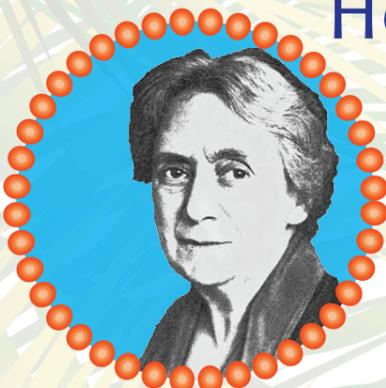
Alice Shalvi



A professor of English literature and a longtime social activist. Among her many achievements, she revolutionized the Pelech School for girls in Jerusalem, encouraging advanced Talmud study for girls in Israel. Shalvi founded the Israel Women's Network and is a recipient of the Israel Prize for lifetime achievements. She also served as rector of the Schechter Institute in Jerusalem and serves today as the president of Zion, a Masorti congregation in Jerusalem.

"Only when all its citizens are free to choose between the various religious streams or to opt for civil marriage and divorce will Israel be a fully democratic state."

Henrietta Szold



Even though she never saw Israel gain its independence, her impact on the modern state continues today. A Jewish Zionist from the United States, she won permission to study Jewish texts at the then male-only Jewish Theological Seminary, on condition that she never ask to be granted rabbinic ordination. Szold founded t Hadassah, which defended women's rights, autonomy and social liberation worldwide.

"Dare to dream, and when you dream – dream big"

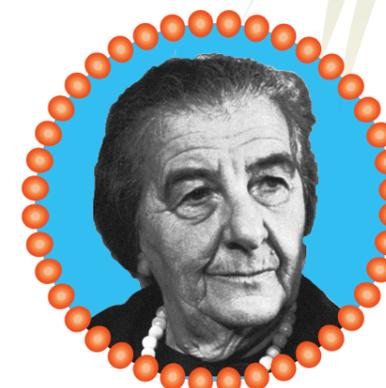
Keren Leibovitch



A four-time gold medalist and world champion Paralympic swimmer. After suffering back injuries while in training to be an officer in the Israel Defense Forces, she took on swimming as a method of rehabilitation and excelled within a short time. Leibovitch competed in the Sydney, Athens and Beijing Olympics, winning eight medals, and has won multiple European and World Championships. She also holds the current world records in three separate swimming events.

"If people can relate to a disabled person as a winner, then the whole attitude towards disabled persons might change. And if I achieve that, that's my fourth medal"

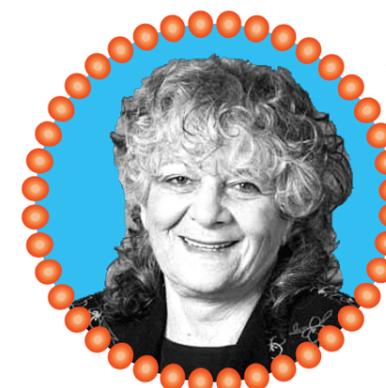
Golda Meir



The first female and fourth Prime Minister of the modern state kept the country together during the tragedy of Munich and helped it survive the Yom Kippur War. She was influential in Israel's creation as well as, in terms of global impact, serving as foreign minister and defending Israel's right to exist for decades.

"I cannot say if women are better than men, but they are definitely not worse"

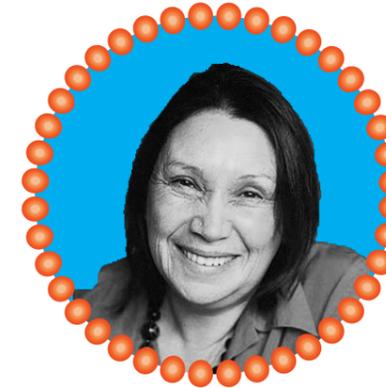
Ada Yonath



A recipient of the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2009, Yonath has advanced the production of proteins in cells using crystallography scientific methods. She is the current director of the Weizmann Institute of Science.

"Follow your curiosity- especially women- even if the concessions you make seem colossal. When genuine curiosity leads you, you will reach great heights."

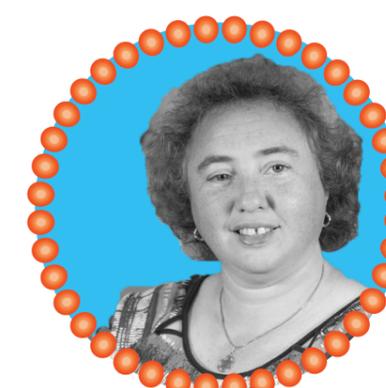
Naomi Shemer



One of Israel's greatest poets and songwriters. Her most famous song Jerusalem of Gold became the country's unofficial national anthem following the reunification of Jerusalem during the Six-Day War.

"For the sake of all these things, Lord, Let your mercy be complete. Bless the sting and bless the honey, bless the bitter and the sweet."

Rabbi Sandra Kochmann



Ordained by the Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano in Argentina in 2000, Rabbi Kochmann served as Brazil's first female rabbi before making Aliyah in 2005. Since then she has worked within the Masorti Movement and currently serves as head rabbi and organizer for Ezrat Yisrael, also known as the Masorti Kotel.

"When I think of my role as a woman rabbi i think of the famous quote: Some people see things as they are and say why? I dream things that never were and say, why not?"