

The Diplomatic Club

December 2017 | Since 1998



*4-7 Ambassador of Japan
to the State of Israel*

*8-13 President Rivlin meets Romanian
Foreign Minister and receives
diplomatic credentials of new
Ambassadors to Israel from Italy,
Denmark, the European Union,
Nigeria, Sweden, Portugal,
Uruguay and the Vatican*

23-25 Christmas in Israel

28-30 Entertainments



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Dear friends,

2017 has been an eventful year so far, and as we approach the end of the year, it is time for us to celebrate the many great moments and companions occurred in our lives.

We wish the Middle East an active 2017 year, focused on peace and development, where hatred dissolves and harmony blooms.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

According to Christian tradition, Bethlehem is the birthplace of Jesus of Nazareth and the town is inhabited by one of the oldest Christian communities in the world, though the size of the community has shrunk in recent years due to emigration. According to Biblical tradition, the city is also believed to be the birthplace of David and the location where he was crowned as the king of Israel.

HAPPY HANUKKAH!

The first night of Hanukkah is the festival of lights. Let the fact that the busses were still running in Israel show that it really isn't that major of a celebration for the Jewish faith. However, it's still important in that it commemorates the Jewish reclamation and rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem from the Greeks, and the small amount of olive oil they found to light the temple's menorah which miraculously lasted for eight days. Chanukah Sameah.

We just want to wish you all the best and of course health for the next year.

Due all this holidays we are celebrating a miracle.

We hope all your dreams and a wish comes true.

We also hope that all the political and economic and political problems will solved as soon as possible.

We wish that no more bombs are falling in the Middle East and other parts on this planet!!

But I am also sure, that some of these wishes are just dreams. But I am also sure, that sometimes dreams can get reality.

So I don't stop to believe in it.

Remain courageous and once again HAPPY NEW YEAR and all the best and see you next year!

Happy Holidays

Julia Verdel

Publisher

And the Editorial Team

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Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the State of Israel

Based on the speech of HE Ambassador of Japan to Israel Mr. Koji Tomita on The Emperor's Birthday celebration at his residency



Credit: Embassy of Japan in Israel.

Ambassador Koji Tomita



This year marks the 65th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Israeli-Japanese relations began on May 15, 1952, when Japan recognized Israel and an Israeli legation opened in Tokyo. 2017 started as a year to look back, but in fact it has turned out to be a year to look ahead, and look ahead with great optimism. Indeed, Ambassador of Japan to Israel Koji Tomita is willing to predict that 2017 will be remembered as a watershed year for the history of partnership because two countries are accomplished so much in so many areas.

After decades of distance in 2017 was reached the unprecedented level of political engagement between two countries. No less than six Israeli Cabinet Ministers visited Japan during the course of this year, each with great success. During the same period, three Japanese Ministers traveled in the opposite direction. The two Prime Ministers met in New York in September, and then have continued to communicate through the tele-conferences. Foreign Minister Taro Kono said

Japan can do more to help push forward the Israel-Palestine peace talks as the country seeks to play a bigger role in promoting peace in the Middle East. "Japan can make more contributions for the stability of the Middle East," Kono said in a speech to a security forum in Bahrain, the first stop of his trip to the Middle East and Europe".

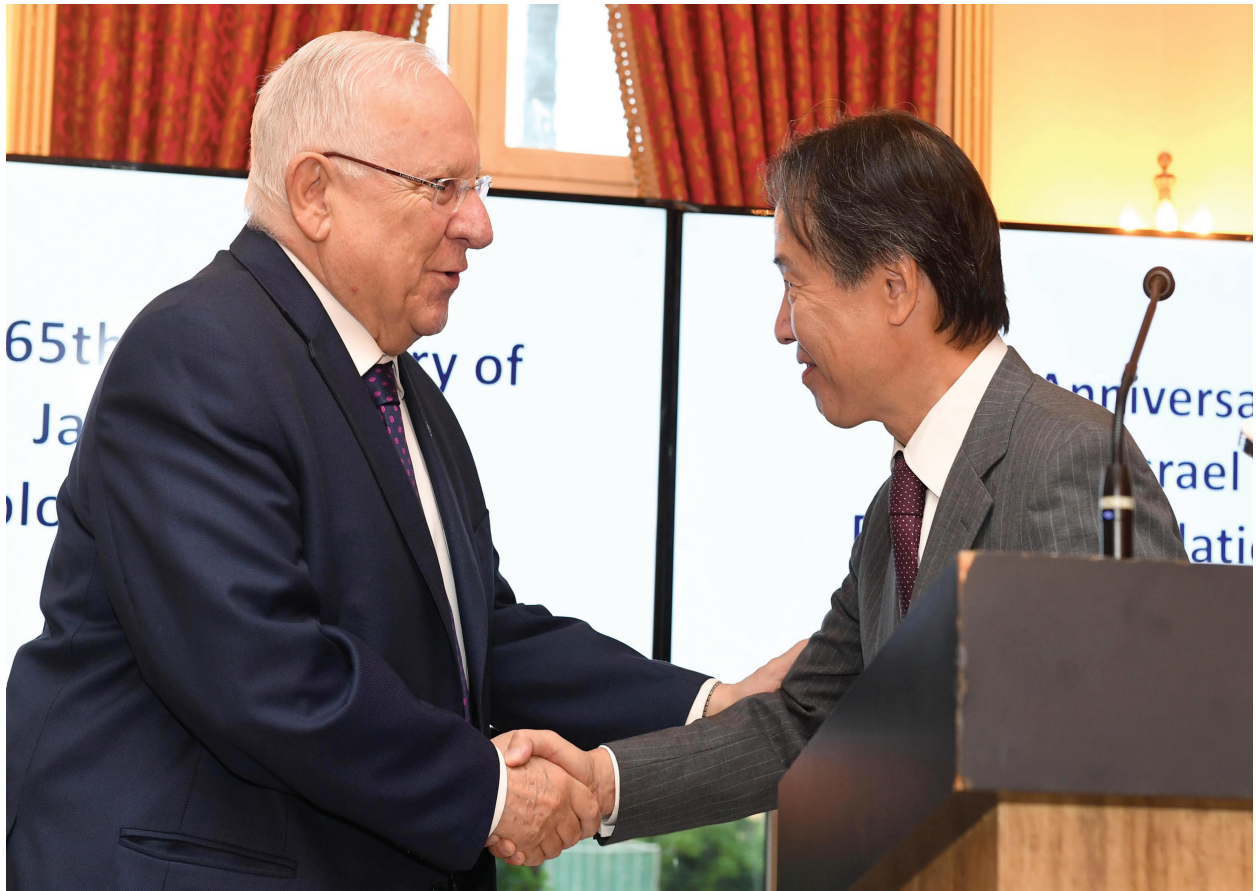
In 2017, economic and business partnership has really taken off, reaching the level that could only dream of five years ago. There has been a phenomenal increase in Japanese business's interests in the Israeli technology. Delegation after delegation seeking partnership with Israeli start-ups, and these moves have started to bear fruits. Tanabe-Mitsubishi, one of the leading pharmaceutical companies in Japan, has just announced an acquisition of the Israeli firm, NeuroDerm, for US\$ 1.1 billion.

" I firmly believe, said Ambassador Tomita, that this year has produced enough positive momentum to bring our economic partnership

forward in the years to come".

In 2017, the human exchanges have also expanded dramatically. In the past few years it was a big jump in Israeli tourists going to Japan. This trend has continued in 2017, with a number of visitors for the period between January and August rising by 20%. More importantly, I am glad to report that the Japanese visitors to Israel are also increasing significantly. From January to October this year, the number of the Japanese visiting this country has increased by 45%. Soon, will open nonstop flights from Tel Aviv to Tokyo. A new aviation deal between Israeli and Japanese airlines will offer customers up to 14 direct flights between the two countries each week.

So the year 2017 is coming to a close, looking forward to in the 2018 coming year, also a historic year, that will mark the 70th anniversary of Independence for the State of Israel. In this historic year, embassy of Japan will work for the further progress in all aspects



of partnership, including political cooperation, economic partnership, and human exchanges.

There is a big difference between 1948 and 2018, that is, Israel is no longer an isolated country. Because of heroic efforts to build a strong democracy in the most difficult environments, you have gained great respect among the countries around the world. You have many friends now, and you can certainly count Japan as one of your closest friends.

My hope, said Ambassador Tomita on the The Emperor's Birthday celebration at his residency, is that you take courage from what you have accomplished in the past 70 years and have the confidence to renew your efforts to achieve a just and lasting peace in the region. And I pledge Japan will be a partner you can trust in this endeavor.

Professional History

Nov. 2015 - Present

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the State of Israel

2013

Director-General, North American Affairs Bureau

2012

Minister Plenipotentiary and Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan in Washington, DC

2009

Deputy Director-General (North American Affairs Bureau and Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau)

2006

Minister (Head of Political Section), Embassy of Japan, UK

2004

Minister (Head of Political Section), Embassy of Japan, Seoul

2003

Director, Policy Coordination Division, Foreign Policy Bureau

2001

Director, National Security Policy Division, Foreign Policy Bureau

1999

Director, Second International Organizations (OECD) Division, Economic Affairs Bureau

1981

Joined Ministry of Foreign Affairs



President Rivlin received diplomatic credentials of new Ambassadors to Israel from Italy, Denmark, the European Union, Nigeria, Sweden, Portugal, Uruguay and the Vatican

President Reuven Rivlin received the diplomatic credentials of the new Ambassadors to Israel, from Italy, Denmark, the European Union, and Nigeria. Each ceremony began with the raising of the flag and the playing of the national anthem of the visiting country, and - after the presentation of the credentials - the signing of the guest book, before the playing of Israel's national anthem 'Hatikva'. Later the President held a working meeting with Foreign Minister of Romania, Teodor Melescanu.

The President wished him much success in his role and said, "It is an honor for us to host you and your family in Jerusalem. You are not just an ambassador, you are a scholar, who has helped raise new and deeper understanding between our peoples. I know you were an important part of the efforts to translate the Talmud into Italian. My father was a scholar



First to present his credentials was Ambassador of Italy, H.E. Mr. Gianluigi Benedetti.

and translator, and he taught me that the key to understanding other cultures, was through gaining an understanding of their history and language. You have made a great contribution to the understanding between our peoples."

The President added, "I was greatly impressed by your work to help make clear to the Italian people and Government, the ancient connection of the Jews to Jerusalem in light of

UNESCO's attempt to eradicate it." He continued, "I am also aware of your actions in the struggle against BDS. I appreciate your work for the Jewish people and the State of Israel and your friends."

Ambassador Benedetti thanked the President and said, "Thank you very much for the hospitality in Jerusalem, a city that people around the world look to in love and admiration. Our two peoples share



President Rivlin receives new ambassador from Denmark, H.E. Mrs. Charlotte Slente

her credentials, accompanied by her family. The President welcomed them and said, “We have a close and warm relationship despite sometimes we have different opinions.” The President stressed the significance of the Danish people's rescue of Jews during the Holocaust and said, “Jews throughout the world and in Israel, remember with emotion and appreciation the efforts of the Danish people to save Jews during the Holocaust.”

in an unprecedented brotherhood and friendship and it is an honor to serve as ambassador. The roots of our friendship are rooted deep in history, which is important to stress, and in the last 15 years we have done much, but I promise that every day we will work to do more, with determination and passion it is possible to increase the friendship between our two peoples.” He added, “The Mediterranean is an area that brings us big challenges, and it is important that we stand together. Italy will always stand besides Israel whenever Israel's identity, or right

to exist in peace in the region is threatened.”

Ambassador of Denmark, H.E. Mrs. Charlotte Slente, presented

Ambassador Slente thanked the President and responded, “My family and I have been very impressed by the dynamic, entrepreneurial society in Israel, and thanks to this you have been able to create what Israel is



Ambassador of the EU, H.E. Mr. Emanuele Giaufret



Ambassador of Nigeria H.E. Mr. Enoch Pear Duchi

today in such a short period of time.” Speaking of the rescue of Jews by Denmark during the Holocaust, she said, “It is a part of our history we are proud of. Next year is 75 and we look forward to marking this together. We are very proud that we managed to bring a little light in the dark.” She added, “I congratulate you on your personal efforts to promote coexistence and I am sure we can work together well.”

Ambassador of the EU, H.E. Mr. Emanuele Giaufret then arrived to present his credentials, accompanied also by his wife and their three young children. The President raised Israel’s concerns about Iran’s infiltration into the region its attempts to establish

itself on the Mediterranean coast on its way to Europe. The President added, “The Iranians reject the very existence of Israel and openly support terrorism, Hamas and Hezbollah, as well as the terror organizations in Yemen.” The President added, “Europe wants to reach an understanding with the Iranian people, and we are also interested in such an understanding. But the Iranian people are now led by a Shi’ite leadership that promotes religion over the needs of its people. The Iranian problem is not related to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians, and it is impossible to tie things together.”

Ambassador Giaufret thanked the President for his welcome and said, “For me personally, I am very happy

to return to the country in which I enjoyed my service in the past. Europe and Israel have intense and good trade relations, we are working to find new understandings for the future, in the fields of energy, and Israel is contributing greatly to this, and also Israeli tourism to Europe is growing. I agree that from time to time we have differences of opinion, as is the case among friends, but we share fundamental values. The struggle against anti-Semitism is a necessary struggle. We cannot accept anti-Semitism and will fight it every day and wherever it raises its head.”

Finally, Ambassador of Nigeria H.E. Mr. Enoch Pear Duchi presented his credentials to the President.



Ambassador of Sweden, H.E. Mr. Mangus Hellgren

The President welcomed him and his family and said, “I’m looking forward, knowing that everyone one of us would like to have even better relationships between our peoples and our governments. Africa is the future.” He added, “We have so much together, so many challenges that we can face together. We have experience when it comes to health, agriculture, water, and security.” The President expressed his hope that Nigeria would support Israel to regain its observer status at the African Union.

Noting the history of Israel-Nigerian relations, Ambassador Duchi said, “Our relations have remained cordial and have greatly increased our level of interactions. Nigeria has benefited from Israeli expertise in security, the fight against terrorism, education, agriculture, and more besides.”

He added, “I will work toward strengthening the bilateral

relations for the benefit of both our peoples.” President Reuven Rivlin on the end of November received the diplomatic credentials of the new Ambassadors to Israel, from Sweden, Portugal, Uruguay, and the Vatican. Each ceremony began with the raising of the flag and the playing of the national anthem of the visiting country, and - after the presentation of the credentials - the signing of the guest book, before the playing of Israel's national anthem 'Hatikva'.

First to present his credentials was Ambassador of Sweden, H.E. Mr. Mangus Hellgren.

The President welcomed him to Israel, and said, he appreciated greatly the Ambassador’s experience and knowledge of the region. He said, “We in Israel admire the welfare system of Sweden, this is a model of a country's ability to care for its citizens, and to grow and prosper economically. In the relationship between our countries, we have of course experienced ups and downs,

but we have always remained strong friends. I very much hope that during your term here we will be able to strengthen this relationship even further – both in the political sphere and in our bilateral trade and other cooperation between our peoples.” The President stressed that while Israel was prepared to accept criticism, he warned of the dangers of boycotts and politically motivated unilateral moves.

The President also thanked the Ambassador for his government’s commitment to the fight against anti-Semitism, and urged the Swedish Government to adopt the working definition of anti-Semitism of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) in its entirety.

Ambassador Hellgren thanked the President for his warm welcome and said, “It is a great honor to be received here by you today. It is an historic day, as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the UN resolution which set in motion the process that



Ambassador of Portugal H.E. Mr. Joao Bernardo De Oliveira Martins Wienstein

led to the establishment of Israel.” He noted, “Sweden was a strong supporter of the idea of creating two states in this region, with a Jewish state for the Jewish people. Our commitment to the two state solution has been steadfast ever since. We have had differences of opinion but that has not stopped us from being a good friend of Israel. We are definitely not supporting any idea of boycotting Israel. We want to see more trade with Israel, not less.” The Ambassador stressed that the Swedish Government was committed to Holocaust remembrance and education, especially to ensure that the younger generation understood the dangers of hatred, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism.

Next to arrive was Ambassador of Portugal H.E. Mr. Joao Bernardo De Oliveira Martins Wienstein.

The President welcomed him and said, “For the Jewish people, the Iberian Peninsula is not only a

place, it is an idea. It is the wisdom, and the philosophy of the Jewish people, so much of which grew and developed there. We are very proud of being part of the Peninsula for many centuries.” The President spoke of the warm relations between the two countries adding that more could be done to strengthen and deepen existing cooperation in many areas between the two countries. The President concluded by saying that he was looking forward to the opportunity to host the President of Portugal, who was due to visit Israel in 2018.

Ambassador Wienstein thanked the President, and said, “We are so delighted that so many Israelis are coming to Portugal, visiting Portugal, and enjoying Portugal.” He stressed, “There are lots of alliances between our educational institutions, and I want to increase the number of cooperation activities between our universities, and our students.”

The President then received the diplomatic credentials of Ambassador of Uruguay, H.E. Mr. Bernardo Greiver, who was beginning his second term as Ambassador to Israel having previously served in the post 2009-15. The President welcomed him back to Israel and said, “We know all you have done for Israel, and how you have supported Israel over the years, and we are looking forward to your return.”

The President added, “You are here on a very special day,” and noted the important role played by Uruguay’s Ambassador to the UN during the vote on Resolution 181 which had been adopted 70 years earlier. “We cannot forget the unique Uruguayan Ambassador to the UN in 1947, Ambassador Fabregat, and I know that your former President is here today to receive the Jerusalem Prize along with Ambassador Fabregat’s son, at a time when we are celebrating the decision of the



The President welcomed the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli

United Nations to recognize the need and the moral right of the Jewish People to return back to our homeland.” The President also spoke of the close relationship between the two peoples and noted that the President of Uruguay held a post-doctorate degree from the Weizmann Institute.

Ambassador Greiver thanked the President and noted, “Today is a symbolic day, seventy years ago Uruguay did not just vote for the resolution, the Uruguayan permanent representative to the UN was the one who drafted the resolution that was approved.” He spoke of the long history of diplomatic relations between Israel and Uruguay, and of the current cooperation, in particular the free trade agreement through the Southern Common Market (Mercosur).

The Ambassador expressed his hope that the peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians would be renewed. The President replied

that the Palestinians still denied Israel's right to exist and that the trust between the sides should be restored.

The President then welcomed the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Leopoldo Girelli who presented his diplomatic credentials on behalf of the Vatican. He said to him, “This is the land, and this is the city where it all began. We know this city is holy to Jews, Christians, and Muslims - it became a political issue but this is the city of God.” The President stressed his appreciation for the Pope’s efforts and commitment to build understanding between different faiths. “There is only one God, and everyone worships Him according to their traditions, but we have to respect each other because we are all children of God. I had the honor to visit the Pope in the Vatican. We spoke of the efforts to bring cooperation between the different communities in the Holy Land, and of Israel’s efforts to develop the

Land of Monasteries on the banks of the Jordan River to allow for more pilgrims to visit from around the world.” He added, “We are doing everything in Jerusalem to allow everyone to worship God according to their belief.”

The Archbishop thanked the President and said, “I take this opportunity to convey to you Mr. President, the greetings and the blessings of the Holy Father. Pope Francis has the Holy Land in his heart, he is very close to the people.” He added, “The Pope wishes to stress the importance of dialogue, of tolerance, of mutual understanding. Through dialogue we really can achieve peace and security.”

The President invited the Pope to visit Israel as part of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the State and said, “The Pope has a message for all people all over the world. He is doing much in the fight against anti-Semitism.”



Independence Day of Albania 4 December

On this day in 1912, Albania declared its independence from the Ottoman Empire, and the Albanian flag was raised in Vlora. It coincided with the day Skanderbeg, whose real name was George Castriot (1405-January 17, 1468), raised the same flag in Kruje on November 28, 1443, in defiance of the Turks who ruled Albania. It is for this reason that Albania's Independence Day (Dita e Pavarësisë) is also called Flag Day (Dita e Flamurit).

Traditionally, the Albanian flag is ceremonially raised in Tirana in the presence of the President and other key government officials. They visit the national martyrs' cemetery. Concerts are staged in the capital, featuring famous Albanian singers and dancers.

The Republic of Kazakhstan held a gala evening

The Republic of Kazakhstan held a gala evening on December 5, 2017, to mark the occasion of 26 years of the country's independence at the beautiful residence of the Kazakh Ambassador to Israel, H.E. Mr. Doulat Kuanyeshev and his wife Gulmira. The evening was attended by Minister of Immigrant Absorption Sofa Landver representing the State of Israel.





Our Embassy staff sends happy greetings to everyone celebrating Finland's 100th Independence 6 December

Embassy staff sends happy greetings to everyone celebrating Finland's 100th Independence Day. December 6 is observed across Finland as Independence Day. This year marks the centennial anniversary of this joyous occasion, adding just a bit more sparkle to traditional celebrations.

On cold (and sometimes snowy) Independence Day evenings, family and friends come together over warm drinks and sweet treats, tuning in to watch the Annual Independence Day Reception at the Presidential Palace. The ones willing to brave the cold outdoors are treated to the best of Finnish culture — hockey games, concerts, art festivals, and celebratory parades. Everywhere you turn, you're met with infectious enthusiasm and good cheer.

The National Day of the Kingdom of Thailand

Royal Thai Embassy in Tel Aviv hosted the Reception on the occasion of the National Day of the Kingdom of Thailand on 5 December 2017 at Hilton Hotel, Tel Aviv attended by many distinguished guests from the Israeli Government, diplomatic corps, public and private sectors and Thai community, including H.E. Mr. Ayoub Kara Minister of Communications, Guest of Honour, Mr. Meron Reuben, Chief of State Protocol, Mr. Gilad Cohen, Deputy Director General, Head of Asia and Pacific Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. H.E. Ms. Penprapa Vongkovit, Ambassador to Israel delivered speech emphasise the importance of 5 of December as the National Day, the Birthday Anniversary of His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej and Thailand's Father 's Day. In addition, the UNGA has declared the 5 of December as "the World Soil Day" This year also marked a very special occasion for Thais, a saldaewood laying ceremony to bid a sad final farewell to His Majesty the Late King Bhumibol was held in Israel at the Thai – Israel Friendship Pavilion in Ben Shemen Park, Modi'in. Ambassador further stated the relation between Thailand and Israel has reached the 63th anniversary this year, with close cooperation in the field of labour and agriculture and hoped that both countries will foster closer relation and cooperation in the field of Green technology, medicine and pharmaceutical, and start-ups.

A photograph of a hotel lobby. In the foreground, a round wooden table with a glass top holds a vase of white lilies. Two dark armchairs are positioned on either side of the table. In the background, a large window with a globe on a stand and a stack of firewood. A chandelier hangs from the ceiling. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

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History...tranquility...service, a perfect place for new and lasting experiences in a unique and historic resort on the shores of the Sea of Galilee with a touch of Scottish hospitality.

Built on nearly four acres of land on the shores of the Sea of Galilee (the Kinneret) and looking towards the Golan Heights, the Scots Hotel occupies historical 120 year old buildings and enjoys breathtaking views.

This luxurious hotel was built by the Church of Scotland in the refurbished historical buildings of the Scottish Hospital in Tiberias, allowing guests to enjoy a unique fusion of 19th century basalt stone buildings combined with a modern and innovative hotel facility that meets international standards.

The hotel offers 50 modern and comfortable rooms in its contemporary facility and 18 additional uniquely designed rooms. The overall re-design of the hotel focused on preserving the original character and atmosphere of the buildings while also creating a harmonious merger of the old with the new.

The ethnically diverse hotel staff members are among the top professionals in their fields and they all believe that providing guests with excellent service is a top priority.

The quiet and tranquil atmosphere of the Scots Hotel, together with the open spaces steeped in history and mystery, and the unrivalled service, will ensure that guests enjoy the ultimate retreat for body, mind and spirit.

For a culinary & leisure experiences the hotel offers The Torrance Restaurant which is well known for the fine cuisine and rich gourmet food (non-kosher); the Gazebo Terrace with the beautiful botanical gardens overlooking the stunning vista of lake & mountains; the

During this year, we have taken a few steps to upgrade and enrich our hotel's accommodations and facilities. More than ever, your guests can enjoy the perfect place for new and lasting experiences in a unique and historic resort on the shores of the Sea of Galilee with a touch of Scottish hospitality.

We have

- *Improved the decor and amenities of all our Unique rooms*
- *Renovated and enhanced our visitors' center – a journey in time – featuring a multimedia presentation about the story of Dr. Torrance, the Scots Hospital and the activities of the St. Andrew's Church*
- *Transformed our Wine Cellar into a place for exquisite wines from Israel and Palestine. Individual or group wine tastings can be reserved for hotel guests as well as for nonresident groups visiting Tiberias*
- *Created our own unique line of scents and cosmetics LAKEVIEW HERITAGE*

We are

- *Transforming our Antique rooms to bring back the grand ambiance and décor from the turn of the 19th century. Indulge yourself in the small pleasures of life.*
- *Restoring the St. Andrew's Church & Gardens for hotel and visiting guests, families and groups who are looking for serenity on the shores of Galilee.*
- *Remodeling our Scottish Ceilidh Bar, enabling us to host live entertainment in the bar while guests can enjoy a large variety of Gins, Whisky and Cocktails.*

We continue to offer

- *Lunch-en-Route, weekend brunches (non-Kosher cuisine)*
- *LAKEVIEW HERITAGE Spa Treatments*
- *Free meeting space for groups, hotel guests and nonresident groups at St. Andrew's Church.*

Ceilidh Bar with the authentic Scots Pub atmosphere; the Wine Cellar, the Visitor's Centre and the LAKEVIEW SPA wellness center.

History

This luxurious The original 19th century hospital building was built by Scottish surgeon, Dr. David Watt Torrance, who believed it was his mission to heal the people of the Holy Land.

In January 1894, the first hospital was opened in Tiberias, in the building that is today part of the Scots Hotel. Dr. Torrance worked and administered this hospital and also travelled throughout the region, including to Safed, to treat the local residents.

Dr. Herbert Torrance joined his father in 1921, and continued to run the hospital until his retirement in 1953. The Mayor of Tiberias at the time presented Dr. Torrance the son, with a gold pin as a mark of the city's profound gratitude to his father, the late Dr. David Torrance.

Dr. David Watt Torrance is buried in a plot adjacent to the hotel swimming pool, alongside other family members who died during their sojourn in Tiberias. The hospital continued to operate as a maternity hospital until its closure in 1959. The building was later converted to a guest house.

In 1999, the Church of Scotland decided to embark on a major refurbishment of the guest house, envisioning that the unique boutique hotel that it is today would serve as a tranquil multi-cultural center for its guests and that it would become a center of faith, progress and peace that would eventually spread throughout the entire region.

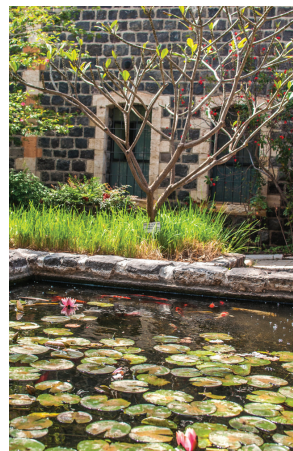
Lakeview Wellness Centre

Between the green gardens of the Galilee and the high mountains of the Golan Heights, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee... here, in this tranquil location we have established our Health Center set deep in breathtaking scenery and soaked in local tradition.

Enter the faithfully restored ancient building and into the peace and tranquility of the 19th century and the exquisite pampering of the 21st century. Start your journey inward with our welcoming process which includes a bubbling foot bath in mineral rich and revitalizing water. The light, reflected off of the waters of the Sea of Galilee flickers on the ceiling and the intimate treatment room cloaks you with peace and tranquility. Let the professional and sensitive touch of our therapists introduce you to the LAKEVIEW HERITAGE, our prestigious collection of premium bath & body care products exclusively developed for the Scots Hotel. Its distinctive fragrance features Patchuli, Musk and White Blossom notes, capturing the unique atmosphere of the shores of the Lake Tiberias, better known as the Sea of Galilee.

Take the time to find the source for your natural rejuvenation and revitalization, encourage it and bring it out into the open air so that it will go with you from now and until your next treatment.

For further information and reservations please dial 04-6710701 or enter our website: www.scotshotels.co.il





With an estimated 390 million speakers, Arabic is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. It is also one of the six official languages of the United Nations, as well as the liturgical language of 1.6 billion Muslims. Being one of the only modern languages to be written and read in a right-to-left form, Arabic is a fascinating language with a long history. For all of these reasons and many more, we can all agree that Arabic is more than deserving of its very own day.

This History of Arabic Language Day

Although the Arabic language is the language of Islam, it dates back over one hundred years further than the religion. The earliest Arabic inscriptions were created in the early 6th century AD. Arabic was originally based mainly on the Aramaic alphabet that was then modified and adapted over many years to finally become its very own, distinct language. In 632, the year that Muslims believe the Quran was revealed to Muhammed, Muhammed's language became the language of his new religion. The holy book of Islam, the Quran, was written in Classical Arabic and it is still used in religious ceremonies and sermons till this day. By the 8th century, many poems and other works had been written in Arabic as well. Arabic has had an enormous influence on people all over the world, as the majority of countries in the world today officially use the Arabic numerical system. Furthermore, because of the countless wars waged in the Middle Ages especially, the Arabic language is an

important source of vocabulary for many European languages, such as Portuguese, Spanish, English, French and Sicilian, as well as non-European languages such as Swahili and Uzbek. Many of the words that English-speakers use regularly come from Arabic, including cotton, coffee and guitar.

World Arabic Language Day (WALD), also known as the UN Arabic Language Day is observed annually on December 18. First established by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2010, the day celebrates the Arabic language and promotes cultural diversity and understanding and to highlight Arabic as one of the most important languages in the world. Today, there are three different types of Arabic: Classical; Modern Standard Arabic, the last of which is used in publishing, education and the media across the Arab world. Colloquial Arabic, an everyday dialect, is also used in different regions and has numerous variations. Due to its elegant, flowing lines, thousands of people the world over have also chose to get tattoos in Arabic, singer Christina Perri and actors Colin Farrell and Zoe Saldana, to name but a few.

Celebrate World Arabic Language Day

WALD is celebrated all around the world as a means to promote cultural understanding and encourage dialogue among people who speak different languages.

Organizations and governments hold cultural events that showcase the history and richness of the language. Seminars and conferences highlight the current developments in Arabic literature through lectures, talks and workshops by Arabic writers and poets.

Schools promote the education of Arabic as a medium of communication and organize short story and poetry competitions.

The best way to celebrate this day would be to increase a knowledge of this language. Many people living in parts of North America or Europe may not even really know how it sounds. Of course, it is nearly impossible to learn to read even small fragments of this complex language during the course of just one day, but that shouldn't stop you from discovering it. The Arabic language is especially beautiful when sung. If you like opera, you could check out one of Sarah Brightman's most acclaimed albums titled, "Harem". The songs on it are a truly original mix of Arabian pop and opera, and are sung in several different languages, including Arabic. Listening to this album will not only allow you to become acquainted with what the language sounds like, but also introduce you to various.

Public Life

World Arabic Language Day is not an official holiday and businesses, schools and government offices are open on this day.

About World Arabic Language Day

Arabic is a language with a rich history and is spoken by almost 1.5 billion people around the world and in UNESCO's 22 member states. WALD recognizes this and acknowledges the contribution of the language in fostering ties between different cultures and in the development of science, medicine, mathematics and literature through the ages.

The date for WALD signifies the day in 1973 when Arabic became the sixth official language of the UN. The other official languages of the UN are French, English, Russian, Spanish and Chinese.





A-SHAM – THE THIRD ARAB FOOD FESTIVAL DOWNTOWN HAIFA DECEMBER 13-15, 2017

More than 70 Arab and Jewish chefs and culinary experts will collaborate to present a variety of flavors and stories from the Arab cuisine in dozens of restaurants and bars in Downtown Haifa – “humus chef” dishes, street food, cooking workshops, pop-up shops, music performances and more

A-sham, the Arab Food Festival, will take place for the third consecutive year in downtown Haifa from December 13-15, 2017, celebrating the world of Arab cuisine and showcasing forgotten dishes from the Levant. More than 70 leading chefs and culinary experts from the Arab (Muslim, Christian and Druze) and Jewish sectors will work together to give their personal, contemporary interpretations of traditional dishes from the Levant food culture, hosted by dozens of downtown city restaurants and bars, including specially-created festival menus and dishes. The festival, an initiative of the Downtown Haifa Administration and under the creative direction of 2014 Master Chef Israel winner Dr. Nof Atamna-Ismaeel, will also include street food, cooking workshops, lectures, pop-up stores, music, dance and parties. Festival founder and creative director Dr. Nof Atamna-Ismaeel: “The Arab Food Festival connects peoples and cultures through food. There is no room in the kitchen for politics, only for cooperation, collaboration and teamwork. This is the third year of the festival, and once again we have Arab chefs - Muslim, Christian and Druze - and Jewish chefs working together to recreate long-forgotten dishes from the Levant, as well as giving their own modern twists to traditional dishes. This year we have over 70 chefs and culinary experts taking part, as well as music performances, cooking workshops and more - all showcasing the Arabic culture and the cuisine of the Levant.”

The word A-sham in Arabic refers to the geographic

area known as the Levant, with its famous Arab cuisine, which stretches from Aleppo in the north through to the Negev in the south, in Lebanon and Trans-Jordan. The festival dishes include traditional foods with sentimental value in Levantine food culture, typically served at life-cycle events such as weddings, births and mourning, as well as seasonal dishes and dishes using local ingredients that are identified with a particular region or village, alongside dishes that are based on superstition or have “healing properties”.

Many of the festival dishes will be priced at an accessible NIS 35, with some restaurants offering special humus chef dishes, a wider festival menu and even gourmet meals with advance reservation.

Among the participants: Osama Delal, Salah Kurdi, Hussam Abbas, Mayssir Abu Shehadeh, Alaa Musa, Nashaat Abbas, Mo’in Halabi, Amos Sion, Elias Matar, Ali Khatib, Dohul Safdie, Omar Alwan, Ahmed Salameh, Sabina Waldman, Adnan Dahar and Maher Araida.

Chefs creating special humus dishes for the festival include, among others, Haim Tibi, Nir Tzuk, Avi Biton, Ayelet Latovich/Mahneyuda group and Efrat Enzel.

2017



Christmas in Israel



Christmas in Bethlehem



Christmas in Israel wouldn't be Christmas without visiting Bethlehem, enjoying the magical alleyways of Jerusalem's Old City, and taking part in the annual parade and Christmas Mass in Nazareth, but we've collected all the events and services here for you to make sure Christmas 2017 is one to remember... and check out this tour if you need an awesome, budget-friendly Christmas Eve tour of Bethlehem, highly recommended!

Note that during the Christmas celebrations the Ministry of Tourism should be providing free transport for those traveling between Jerusalem and Bethlehem (alternatively, check out our guide on getting from Jerusalem to Bethlehem). Buses will leave according to demand from Mar Elias Monastery to the Church of the Nativity, and back again, and will be operating non-stop from noon on 24 December through to noon on 25 December.

Christmas in Nazareth



Unfortunately, Nazareth has now cancelled its Christmas festivities due to political reasons. However, you can still feel the Christmas spirit at the BIG shopping mall, and enjoy the church events on Christmas Eve/Christmas Day.

Nazareth is a great place to visit for those of you not able to make it to Bethlehem/Jerusalem. There is the now annual Christmas Market, a Christmas Parade, and Midnight Mass in the Church of the Annunciation, so plenty to enjoy!

Christmas in Tel Aviv



Tel Aviv might be The City That Never Sleeps but celebrating Christmas it's not particularly renowned for. OK, you might be able to get high and happy at one of Tel Aviv's cool bars, but actually feeling the festive spirit is not easy. The one place we do know is open to some REAL Christmas vibes is the Immanuel Church in Jaffa .

Having said that, the Jaffa Christmas Festival could also be worth a visit as it's in collaboration with the Israel Food Channel (last year it happened for the first time, so are still presuming it will happen again this year)!

One event that has fast become a favorite is the annual lighting up of the huge Christmas tree in Jaffa (located at the Clock Tower at the entrance to Jaffa). This year it happens on December 17, between 6-8 pm.

Another tree lighting activity will be held at HaTachana, where a huge 15m tree will be lit on the 14th December (at 6pm). It's a little different to the traditional ol' tree, but expect to be wowed with some great lighting effects, courtesy of the Eventika production crew!

Again, Abraham Hostels (the newest and best hostel in Tel Aviv) is the place to be if you're looking for a Christmas Party for fellow travelers.

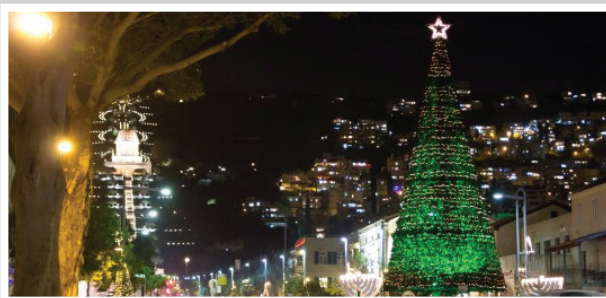
Christmas in the Galilee



With a number of Christian Arab villages located in the Western Galilee, you can expect to get a very decent dosage of Christmas! And with the annual Winter Festival taking place across the region, you're almost spoilt for choice!

The festival takes place this year from December 21-23 and includes a number of special events including culinary workshops by chefs, arts and crafts workshops, a concert combined with a tour, culinary tours, group-singing and storytelling evenings, music shows, festive dinners, nature and art tours, jeep tours, Christmas tours and yes, even a Galilean Christmas Run! Most of the action takes place in villages like Kfar Yasif, Mi'ilya, Tarshiha, and Beit Jann.

Christmas in Haifa



Without a doubt, the place to be this festive season in Haifa is the Holiday of Holidays festival. This unique festival celebrates THREE holidays: the Jewish holiday of Hanukka, Christmas, and the Moslem holiday of Eid-al-Adha. This year – its 23rd – it runs from the 8th to the 24th December



FROM HOGMANAY IN SCOTLAND TO NEPAL'S BALACHATURDASHI, LIGHT PLAYS A STARRING ROLE IN HOLIDAYS ACROSS THE GLOBE.

Bright lights of Christmas

Since Neolithic times, man has gravitated toward fire, especially during the dark days of winter when luminous celebrations set gloomy nights aglow. From Scotland's Hogmanay to Nepal's Balachaturdashi, light plays a starring role in holidays around the world, brightening skies, spirits – and travel itineraries – alike.

This shimmering stunner of a Christmas tree in Tokyo's Shiodome – where marine life combines with festive illuminations in this year's theme of White Christmas in the Sea – illustrates a universal holiday truth: in the dark days of winter, nothing is more welcome than a luminescent celebration.



A blazing Scottish new year

Scots ring in Hogmanay on 31 December with a blazing celebration inspired by Gaelic and Viking traditions, which held that fire burned off the bad spirits of the old year and invited fresh spirits for the new. Today, revellers dance in torchlight processions, swing burning fireballs and burn a replica Viking ship, pictured here in a celebration in Edinburgh. (Getty Images)

Bulgaria's Christmas of caring

Eggnog, gifts and stockings rarely come into play for Orthodox Christians, who view Christmas as a time to fast, pray and care for the poor. Many Orthodox Christians – found predominantly in Belarus, Greece, Romania, Russia and Ukraine – celebrate the holiday on Epiphany (7 January) when they light a small fire of frankincense and palms (a religiously significant plant) to commemorate the wise men's gifts to baby Jesus, and light candles to represent the light of Christ, seen here in the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral in Sofia, Bulgaria. (AFP/Getty Images)





A triumph of good over evil in India

On a new moon night in late autumn, Hindus around the world light diyas, or oil lamps, to signify the triumph of light over darkness, good over evil, knowledge over ignorance, and hope over despair. One of the most important Hindu festivities, Diwali (which falls between mid-October and mid-November), sees celebrants shop, feast, clean their homes, dress in their finest and light fireworks. Pictured here, widows celebrate the festival of lights in Mathura, India. (Hindustan Times via Getty Images)

A Jewish festival of lights

When a scarce supply of sacred oil miraculously burned for eight days in Jerusalem's Holy Temple in the 2nd Century BC, the tradition of Hanukkah was born. Today, Jewish people observe the Festival of Lights – which may occur between late November to late December – by lighting one branch of a menorah, pictured here in Washington DC, each night for eight nights. (Getty Images)



A crown of candles in Scandinavia

In this Scandinavian holiday commemorating Saint Lucia, a Christian martyr known for her service to the poor, the eldest daughter in a family dresses up as in a white robe and glowing candle-decked crown to serve her parents mulled wine and Lucia buns, a traditional sweet pastry. St Lucia Day is celebrated on 13 December, the winter solstice in the old Julian calendar and a pagan festival of lights

Fire fights ice in an old Gaelic holiday

Got a case of the mid-winter blues? Take a cue from the ancient Gaels, who waged a war against winter with bonfires, candles and torches of fire. The pagan festival known as Imbolc marks the halfway point between the winter solstice and the spring equinox – typically around 4 February – and encourages the rejuvenation of the land and the return of the sun. Fire festivals take place in locations throughout Wales, Ireland, Scotland and England, including the town of Huddersfield.



Total Red: Photography October 26th - February 10th at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art

The Museum commemorates the centennial of the 1917 Russian Revolution with an exhibition of works by early 20th century Soviet photographers. It follows the development of Soviet photography against the background of the revolution and further events, illustrating the power of photography to document reality as well as mold it. Among the featured photographers are Max Alpert, Emmanuel Evzerikhin, Simon Fridland, Yevgeny Khaldei, Yakov Khalip, Alexander Rodchenko, Georgy Zelma and others. Sacher Park – this is free for all.

The exhibition marks the centenary of the Russian Revolution with a selection of works by leading Soviet photographers from the museum collection. In addition to a presentation of each photographer's individual work, the selection also allows reflection on the dramatic events that unfolded in the Soviet Union's early years.

The 1917 Russian Revolution, which ended Tsarist rule and led to the establishment of the Soviet Union, had a huge impact on all forms of avant-garde art during this period, including photography. Members of the avant-garde artist group October, led by Alexander Rodchenko, sought to create a novel type of vision that would correspond to radical political awareness. Among these photographers, active mostly in the period immediately after the revolution, are Rodchenko, Yakov Khalip, Alexander Ustinov, and Semyon Fridliand, as well as director Sergei Eisenstein, whose film October, co-directed with Grigori Alexandrov, is on view in the exhibition. These artists preferred innovative visual means – such as unusual viewpoints, abstracting close-ups, extreme shooting angles, and acute crops – that evoke startling associations and require viewers to decipher the images.

However, during the 1930s, with the exacerbation of the totalitarian aspects of Stalin's dictatorship, artistic liberties were brought to a halt. In those years, photography was considered the most effective medium for agitation and propaganda. The style adopted to that end was Socialist Realism, with its clear language easily intelligible by the masses. Soviet photography took up the cause, producing photojournalistic documentation of historic occasions, sporting events, parades, and factories – all images that glorified the achievements of the Soviet regime.

Such is, for example, the work of Emmanuil Evzerikhin, Ilya Narovlyansky, and Max Alpert, as well as that of Oleksander Dovzhenko, director of Earth, also here on

show.

Many of the images exalt the proletariat and eulogize the hastened industrialization and collectivization processes underway at the time. This is ideological art that has great faith in its power to effect change in society. Yet in producing it, these photographers overlooked – unknowingly or intentionality – the horrors that were part and parcel of the processes transforming their country. Unsurprisingly, most of the photographers active in those years were members of the Communist Party. In 1932 works by many avant-garde photographers were shown for the last time – and following the Great Purge of 1937, directed against anyone thought to undermine Stalin's rule, all such works were removed from public galleries. Many artists, including Socialist Realists, fell victim to purges and show trials, and were finally executed or sent to Gulags. In retrospect, despite the stylistic and ideological dictates, the photographs produced in the Soviet Union until the 1950s are wonderfully original. The impact of modernist avant-garde was so dramatic and revolutionary that its traces are evident even in the enlisted art of the time.

The photographs in the exhibition are silver prints from the collection of Tel Aviv Museum of Art, gift of Howard Schickler, David Lafaille, and an anonymous donor through the American Friends of Tel Aviv Museum of Art.

Chris Rock performs in Tel Aviv, Israel. January 8, 2018



American actor and comedian Chris Rock has scheduled a performance of his "Black Out Tour" in Tel Aviv, in early 2018. Chris Rock is one of the most acclaimed comedians in the USA, voted several times in the top 10. He became famous with Saturday Night Live, and then acted in movies such as Beverly Hills cop, Lethal Weapon 4, Madagascar, Laughing Dead... In 2005 and in 2015, he hosted the Academy Awards ceremony. Chris Rock will perform in Tel Aviv at the Nokia Arena, on January 8, 2018

The City Of David Celebrates Jerusalem's Jubilee

In honor of the 50th anniversary of the unification of Jerusalem, the City of David presents a breathtaking sensory experience with two light shows projected onto the walls of the Old City (in the Givati parking lot) and the ruins of the ancient City of David (Area G).

The shows will make use of revolutionary technology that works with the unique weather of Jerusalem to create sublime images in the two beautiful outdoor locations with the Mount of Olives, Mount Scopuls, Valley of the King's and slopes of the City of David in the background.

The sound and light show lasts about 1.5 hours and tells the story of return to Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile over 2,000 years ago through innovative video mapping technology, creating one of the most unique experiences in the country.

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The Art Of Utopia – International Graphic Art Exhibition

30/11/2017 to 08/03/2018

U T O P I A

THE ART OF UTOPIA
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The Van Leer Jerusalem Institute, Polonsky Academy Building, 43 Jabotinsky St.

The idea of the perfect world has existed for millennia, but the dawn of modernity and the belief that man can create such perfection on his own has given birth to myriad utopian ideas in Occidental thought. The Art of Utopia displays posters by 35 renowned artists from around the globe, presenting their take on the possibilities and dangers of the concept of the perfect world.

Entrance is free of charge.

The Exhibition will be open:

Sunday, Tuesday: 9:00-21:00

Monday, Wednesday, Thursday: 9:00-19:00

Friday: 9:00-13:00

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The 2017 Jerusalem Film Festival Winners Announced

Scaffolding And On The Beach At Night Alone Take 34th Jerusalem Film Festival's Top Prizes

The Wilf Family Foundation Award (20,000 USD) for best International film was presented to ON THE BEACH AT NIGHT ALONE by Hong Sang-soo.

The Robert Nissim Haggiag Award for best Israeli Feature Film (100,000 ILS) was presented to SCAFFOLDING by Matan Yair.

The Van Leer award for Best Israeli Documentary Film (35,000 ILS) was presented to CONVENTIONAL SINS by Anat Yuta Zuria and Shira Clara Winther.

Heading into its final weekend, the Jerusalem Film Festival held its awards ceremony Thursday night, announcing its usual wide array of distinctions for both Israeli and International films. The Jerusalem Film Festival's 34th edition continues to run through July 23rd. Along with its Israeli competition line-up, this year's edition saw the return of Jerusalem's International Competition, which was held for the second year and continues to award a \$20,000 USD cash prize supported by the Wilf Family Foundation.

ON THE BEACH AT NIGHT ALONE by Hong Sang-soo was declared this year's winner by a jury gathering Israeli writer and director Nadav Lapid (THE KINDERGARTEN TEACHER), award winning actress Evgenia Dodina, and The Hollywood Reporter international editor Deborah Young. The jury awarded the film stating: "Using the simplest of cinematic tools, Hong Sang-soo creates a mysterious magic, rooted in the heart of daily life. Love, hatred, affection, rage, sexuality, loneliness and deep pain are reflected in the face and body of a young woman, the main character, one of the deepest descriptions of a human being we've seen in cinema in recent years."

A MAN OF INTEGRITY by Mohammad Rasoulof and WESTERN by Valeska Grisebach, two standout titles from Cannes, also were distinguished with honorable mentions from the international jury.

SCAFFOLDING by Matan Yair won the Robert Nissim Haggiag award for best Israeli Feature Film which comes with an award of 100,000 Israeli Shekels (approximately

\$ 28,000 USD) and also took the prize for Best Actor and garnered an honorable mention for Best Cinematography. Produced by Gal Greenspan, Roi Kurland, Stanisław Dziedzic, Moshe Edery, and Leon Edery, SCAFFOLDING world premiered in Cannes' ACID Selection and is sold internationally by Jan Naszewski's New Europe Film Sales.

The jury consisting of ELLE producer Saïd Ben Saïd, Yael Bartana, Agnès Godard and Cíntia Gíl said they distinguished SCAFFOLDING: "For a film that combines the reality of a group of teenagers and the will of questioning cinema and the role of filmmaking. For its capacity of capturing the tenderness sometimes behind these kids' violence, their capacity for love, their surprising imagination, in a society that places them in a marginal role forever."

The full list of awards and accompanying jury statements are included below.

International Competition

The Wilf Family Foundation Award, in the sum of 20,000 USD: On the Beach at Night Alone by Hong Sang-soo; Jury Motivation: "Using the simplest of cinematic tools, Hong Sang-soo creates a mysterious magic, rooted in the heart of daily life. Love, hatred, affection, rage, sexuality, loneliness and deep pain are reflected in the face and body of a young woman, the main character, one of the deepest descriptions of a human being we've seen in cinema in recent years."

Honorary Mentions: Western by Valeska Grisebach; A Man of Integrity by Mohammad Rasoulof.

International First Features Competition

The FIPRESCI Award for Best International First Feature: Tehran Taboo by Ali Soozandeh; Jury Motivation: "Tehran Taboo is an important film while still remaining entertaining. It brings us into a corrupt and unequal society, and gives every character a chance to exist without judgement and in an uplifting tone."

In the Spirit of Freedom Competition in Memory of Wim van Leer

The Cummings Award for Best Feature Film: The Other Side of Hope by Aki Kaurismäki; Jury Motivation: "A film that masterfully uses humor to tackle a harsh reality, showing that one person's act of kindness could make a difference."

The Ostrovsky Family Fund Award for Best Documentary: City of Ghosts by Matthew Heineman; Jury Motivation: "A harrowing film about a group of young Syrians struggling to shed light on the horrors happening in their home town at great personal risk."

Honorary Mention: The Venerable W. by Barbet Schroeder

The Haggiag Competition for Full-Length Israeli Feature Films

The Robert Nissim Haggiag Award for Best Feature Film, in

the sum of 100,000 ILS: Scaffolding directed by Matan Yair and produced by Gal Greenspan, Roi Kurland, Stanisław Dziedzic, Moshe Edery, Leon Edery; Jury Motivation: "For a film that combines the reality of a group of teenagers and the will of questioning cinema and the role of filmmaking. For its capacity of capturing the tenderness sometimes behind these kids' violence, their capacity for love, their surprising imagination, in a society that places them in a marginal role forever."

The Anat Pirchi Award for Best First Film: Doubtful by Eliran Elya

The Anat Pirchi Award for Best Script: Longing by Savi Gabizon

The Haggiag Award for Best Actor: Asher Lax for his performance in Scaffolding; Honorary Mention: Adar Hazazi for his performance in Doubtful

The Haggiag Award for Best Actress: Samira Saraya for her performance in Death of a Poetess

The Aaron Emanuel Award for Best Cinematography: Shai Goldman for Doubtful; Honorary Mention: Bartosz Bieniek for Scaffolding

The Jerusalem Foundation Award for Best Editing: Michal Openheim for The Cakemaker

The Jerusalem Foundation Award for Best Original Score: Daphna Keenan for Family

The Audience Favorite Award: Longing by Savi Gabizon

The FIPRESCI Award for Best Israeli First Feature: Holy Air by Shady Srour; Jury Motivation: "Holy Air is a good crossover between comedy and drama about serious issues reflecting religious and political complexities in modern Israeli society."

The Van Leer Competition for Full-Length Israeli Documentary Films

The Van Leer Award for Best Documentary: Conventional Sins by Anat Yuta Zuria, Shira Clara Winther

Van Leer Award for Best Director of a Documentary: In Her Footsteps by Rana Abu Fraiha

Honorary Mentions: Born in Deir Yassin by Neta Shoshani; A13901 by Tal Haim Yofee

The Israeli Short Films Competition

The Van Leer Award for Best Live Action Film: Portrait of my Family in my Thirteenth Year by Omri Dekel-Kadosh

The Van Leer Award for Best Documentary Film: Keren Or (A Ray of Light) by Lihi Sabag; Honorary Mention: The Bride's Tree by Shadi Habib Allah

The Jerusalem Development Authority Award for Best Animated Film: Hadarim by Shlomi Yosef

The Israeli Video Art and Experimental Film Competition

The Lia van Leer Award, courtesy of Rivka Saker: Sleepers by Ruth Patir | The Ostrovsky Family Fund Award: Sham (There) by Thalia Hoffman

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