

IT'S SABABA!

CHAVERA BAT YAM ~ JWRP TRIP TO ISRAEL

by Tiffanie Nichols for our fellow travelers

OUR STORY

Starting as strangers...

Ten women; the only thing we knew we had in common was that we knew we all had a dream to go to Israel. We are moms with children, spouses, jobs, and adult responsibilities. ...the dream seemed so far-fetched... but...a couple of us started talking one day at Sunday school about a friend's wife who had been on this trip in another city. This started a conversation that turned into an idea which, turned into this trip, which has made our dreams come true! Thanks to the unwavering dedication and

devotion of our City Leader, Rachel White and Rabbi Susan Warshaw, these 10 moms, with that seemingly implausible dream, were privileged to get on a plane and fly to Tel Aviv on May 16th for the trip of a lifetime!

Some of us had been friendly through religious school and we saw each other at shul from time to time but, for the most part, we were pretty much strangers but that didn't last long. Because of this trip we have become 10 women bound by a journey that



changed us all forever and bound us as Jewish mothers, women and friends.

SABABA

סבבה

Meaning:

It's great, wonderful, awesome
Everything is cool!

Example:

How are things with you? Sababa!

BIRTHRIGHT FOR MOMS

JWRP – Jewish Women's Renaissance Project

"Hi G-d, its me." That is how Nili Couzens, our Trip Leader asked us to introduce ourselves as we approached the Kotel; the Western Wall. It is such a powerful statement - ..."*its me*". The concept that G-d knows us is so simple yet, was so foreign at the beginning of our trip. As simple as saying Shabbat Shalom when you pass a stranger on the stairs of the hotel on Shabbat

...simple, comfortable, safe and loving...yet foreign because we live in a community with a very limited Jewish population. Touching the wall and feeling the prayers of the hundreds of thousands that came before us, and the history that came before us, and the love that was there at that moment....I wept; for the feeling of relief and the love that was in my heart for all my sisters

that stood with me from Chavera Bat Yam and my new extended family of sisters in JWRP. I reached out for one of those sisters, a stranger, who couldn't quite reach the wall to touch it and



with that one grasp, it bound us inexplicably. With my blue pashmina over my head from Berlin, Maryland and her red pashmina over hers from Buennos Aires, Argentina; in that moment we spoke the same language, saying the same thing, though we were from different countries.

Nili Couzens is a popular Jewish Educator and motivational speaker who has spoken across the US, Israel, Greece, South Africa, and Central America. She is the Founding Director of Jewish Life Seminars, a Jewish educational organization in Philadelphia and

recently moved to Israel with her husband and children. We had the privilege of looking at ourselves through a series of fabulous seminars by her, throughout the trip. In the seminars Nili discussed subject matter that ranged from raising the bar for our children and ourselves, to marriage, and our personal place on planet Earth. She talked about the two facets of who we are, the body and soul, and what it is to be a Jew.... how mitzvot remind us

that we are the souls inside of a body. We spent a lot of time discussing parenting and values...two essential goals of motherhood – unconditional love & accepting your child.

JWRP MISSION -

“TO EMPOWER WOMEN TO CHANGE THE WORLD THROUGH JEWISH VALUES THAT TRANSFORM OURSELVES, OUR FAMILIES, AND OUR COMMUNITIES.”

ITINERARY -
The Places We Went

Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv



Left to Right:
Kerry Case, Ellen Kane, Karen Abrams, Rachel White, Tiffanie Nichols, Laurie Heller

Night #1 –
Tiberias

Chavera Bat Yam Group from Berlin, MD

Left to Right:
Karen Abrams, Ellen Kane, ?,
Gail Scheiber, Kim Cuesta,
Naomi White, Ella Davis,
Kerry Case, Rachel White,
Laurie Heller, Tiffanie Nichols



Sunrise over the Sea of Galilee - Tiberias

Day 2 -
Tsfat – the mystical city
Dubrovin Farm

Left to Right:
Karen Abrams, Tiffanie
Nichols, Kerry Case



Abouhav
Winery -
Tsfat



Dubrovin Farmstead – in the heart of Yesod
Hamala's fruit orchards



Old Jaffa
Port

Day 3 –
Tel Aiv & Old Jaffa
Na Laga'at – "Please Touch"
Beit Haatzmaut – Independence Hall
Army Base



Old City
Jaffa



Tel Aviv

Rachel White

Day 4 –
Old City Jerusalem
Kotel



The Kotel,
Jerusalem

Day 5 –
Shabbat with Rav Gav
Jenna & Ben Alpern – "Shabbat of a Lifetime"
Aish Hatorah – Havdala

Left to Right:
Laurie Heller & Gail Scheiber

May 6 –
Masada
The Dead Sea
Eretz Bereshit – Abraham & Sarah's tent & camel rides



Havdala from Aish Hatorah overlooking the Kotel



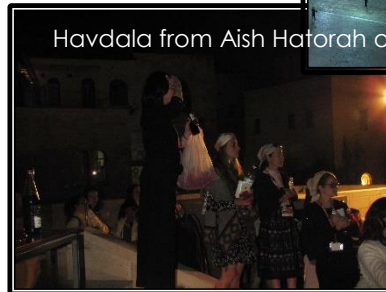
The Dead
Sea

Left to Right:
Kerry Case & Tiffanie Nichols



Eretz Bereshit – Abraham &
Sarah's Tent

Left to Right:
Kim Cuesta, Rachel White, Kerry Case





Our bus group at Susan's House

Day 7 -

Yad Vashem – Israel's Holocaust Museum

Har Hertzl – Israel's National Cemetery

Susan's House – Helping at risk youth – a unique workshop that empowers teens at risk to find their place within society through artistic expression, personal investment and creative initiatives. All income generated by the handcrafted items at Susan's House is used for funding the continuation of the project and the ongoing development of the participating youths. www.susanshouse.org.il

Mega Event -

Day 8 –

Kotel Tunnels



Above:
Rachel White



Left to Right:
Karen Abrams, Kerry Case, Tiffanie
Nichols, Rachel White, Gail Scheiber

Toda Raba – Thank you very much to everyone who helped us with this amazing opportunity that enriched our minds and souls! A special thank you to the Fine Foundation and the anonymous donators for their extraordinary generosity.