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2019-2020

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## From the Desk of the **PUBLISHER**

If you've picked up this issue of Mitzvah Market Magazine, you are either at the beginning of the planning process or deep in the process and dealing with all the details of your son or daughter's upcoming Bar or Bat Mitzvah. We are here to help. For those who are planning ahead, we offer information and ideas for what's coming down the pike so you have a jumpstart on all the action. If you are in the midst of it all, we can provide last minute inspiration and encourage you to enjoy the moments as you and your family reach this amazing milestone.

In this issue, we feature the story of Jared Schwartz and how his family tradition of helping pediatric cancer patients continues with his generation. Nesya Bayewitz writes about doing a 10-mile bike ride to raise money for the Jewish Family & Children's Services of Northern New Jersey Kosher Meals-on-Wheels program. We learn what it's like to be a 13-year-old on the Bat Mitzvah circuit and hear the story of a mom who planned two different Israel celebrations for her sons. We've got information on how to create your own personalized tallit and we share the planning process of two very different parties – one as the first Bar Mitzvah at the new TWA Hotel at JFK Airport, and a sparkly event at SPACE Events with a special musical surprise. You'll also find our numerous checklists to help you in the planning process.

In addition to the magazine, check out our corresponding website, [MitzvahMarket.com](http://MitzvahMarket.com). It's updated weekly with new family spotlights, great party ideas, vendor resources and so much more. Sign up for our free email newsletters filled with tons of clever, useful, and entertaining ideas to have a fun and meaningful celebration. And join our many Facebook groups that provide local tips and resources. We now have 17 regional Bar/Bat Mitzvah planning groups on Facebook, with nearly 10,000 members. They have become a trusted place for families to ask questions and get great advice within minutes. You can find a location near you at [mitzvahmarket.com/local-groups](http://mitzvahmarket.com/local-groups).

Please also join us for one of our free Celebrate! Party Showcases ([celebrateshowcase.com](http://celebrateshowcase.com)). Bring the kids to an upcoming all-day celebration in your area, where you can meet and chat with vendors and check out their offerings, while enjoying food, prizes, and entertainment.

If you need help while you plan, sign up for our web-based Mitzvah Organizer ([mitzvahorganizer.com](http://mitzvahorganizer.com)). This comprehensive, easy-to-use software makes planning a breeze. It was created after years of communicating with thousands of parents planning their children's simchas to help you keep track of the many details that come with party planning. The interactive software auto-updates all your information, tabulates expenses and can be accessed quickly and easily on cellphones, tablets, and computers. It will help you make table arrangements, compare vendor prices, and share lists in a completely customized process. We at Mitzvah Market hope we can arm you with lots of new knowledge and inspiration. This is an exciting time for your family and we're happy to be by your side.

*Mazel Tov!*

Sheri Lapidus  
Publisher





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# Mitzvah Market

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*Jacob Solomon's tallit that he helped weave (below), his brother Liam's (above).*

# THE *Power* OF A PERSONALIZED *Tallit*

**By Bethany Kandel**



While every Bar Mitzvah boy and Bat Mitzvah girl may wear a tallit during services, the pieces of cloth are all unique.

Wrapping oneself in a shawl during prayer or reading from the Torah is meant to aid in attaining a proper mood of reverence for God. Made of silk, cotton, wool, or synthetics, a tallit can be plain and simple, or highly adorned.

What transforms it from a mere piece of cloth into a tallit are the tzitzit, the specially knotted fringes on the four corners, which are to remind us of the commandments of the Torah.

The tallit a young boy or girl wears for their Bar or Bat Mitzvah, can have great significance. Some are passed along from generation to generation. Others are bought on a trip to Israel. And now, many young people are choosing to either make or design their own, to add personal and truly unique meaning and expression to the symbolic garment.

Do you love the color purple? Design one in all its gorgeous shades. Why not weave in the names of your beloved late grandparents? Or how about including a whole family tree?

When you design your own tallit, the sky is the limit. Here are some ways to create your own:



### Weaving at the Loom Room

For the past four years, the Loom Room founded by the sisterhood at Neve Shalom Synagogue in Metuchen, NJ, has been a hub of activity and creativity. Hundreds of tallitot have come off the loom with colors that represent the rainbow, as well as the traditional blue and white stripe.

“It’s a priceless experience for the whole family to create a custom tallit,” explains Cory Schneider, founder of the Loom Room. Not only are they creating a one-of-a-kind family heirloom, but, “It’s a journey they do together. It creates powerful memories. You don’t get that when you buy a tallit in the store.”

Laurie Solomon recently completed tallitot for each of her two young sons and a challah cover for her daughter there. The entire family took part in the weaving process, from the 93-year-old great-grandmother, to the youngest 6-year-old son. Why do it now, when her sons are only 10 and 6? “To make sure all the generations were around to participate,” says Solomon.

“I was never a weaver; I had no idea what I was getting into,” she adds. But over the months of work, she became very proficient. Now that the projects are complete, she’s excited for them to be worn by her sons in the future. “It’s something so meaningful and they’ll have forever. I hope they’ll remember the love and work that went into making them, and always think of us when they wear them; even we’re no longer around.”

### Make Your Own

“I want the tallit to be a work of art,” says New York textile artist Susan Schorr. She works with students at West End Synagogue to design, dye, and paint on silk, sometimes using an ice-dye method. For kids who are vegetarians, or especially environmentally aware, she offers fabric made out of bamboo, pineapple leaves, cruelty-free silk, and even from recycled soda bottles.

Before starting the process, she encourages the kids to go through a design process and play with color until they find something they love. “I remind them to think to the future,” she says. “Some designs might be great for a 12-year-old, but they aren’t going to want to wear them at 17. They all want something they are going to be proud of.”



Photos by Laurie Solomon

Top: Two grandmas and a great grandma helped weave the Solomon boys’ tallitot. Middle: Laurie Solomon and her three children weave in the Loom Room.

A silk dyed tallit made with Susan Schorr.



Photo by Susan Schorr





A silk dyed tallit made with Susan Schorr.

Some students incorporate photos, embroidery, and other embellishments. They often want to print quotes, including the traditional blessing. “I had one student who wanted to use the quote ‘Man plans; God laughs.’ The parents weren’t too happy about it, until they discovered that it was the quote the grandfather had used in his law school yearbook. Then they loved it.”

She encourages all the family members to get involved in tying the tzizit to make it even more special.

### One-of-a-Kind Creativity

When Maxine Feldman was planning her son’s Bar Mitzvah 15 years ago, she wanted to do something creative for him. So, the New York City printmaker designed a tallit in his favorite colors, green and yellow.

She collaborated with a quilter from Ashland, OR, to complete the project. When people kept asking where she got his tallit, a business was born. Now Feldman works with local students to create custom tallitot out of raw silk. She hand-paints the four corners and a colorful stripe down the middle or a piece to go under the atara. She can also make a matching pouch.

“I ask them what colors they like; what color combinations,” she says. “They love playing around with swatches and choosing color schemes. They want to be a part of the process instead of going to the store and just picking out a premade one. These are special and they’ll last a lifetime.” •



Photo by Maxine Feldman

## Resources to create or commission your own hand-crafted tallit:

- Susan Schorr: To learn about classes or commission a tallit contact, [srschorr@aol.com](mailto:srschorr@aol.com)
- Maxine Feldman: Find out how to commission a handmade tallit by emailing, [maxigirl425@optonline.net](mailto:maxigirl425@optonline.net)
- For information about the Neve Shalom Loom Room, contact Cory Schneider, 717-574-1807, or email [corstan65@gmail.com](mailto:corstan65@gmail.com), [neveshalom.net/sisterhood](http://neveshalom.net/sisterhood)
- There is also a loom room at the JCC of Wyoming Valley in Wilkes-Barre, PA. 570-824-4656, ext. 237, [jewishwilkes-barre.org/activities/programming/tallis-weaving-at-the-jcc](http://jewishwilkes-barre.org/activities/programming/tallis-weaving-at-the-jcc)
- Pennsylvania Rabbi Rayzel Raphael makes personalized silk-painted tallit and offers workshops where you can make your own. 215-782-1221, [shechinah.com/shechinah-silks.html](http://shechinah.com/shechinah-silks.html)
- The Tallis Lady sells hundreds of varieties of handmade tallitot, plus tallit clips, beaded and crocheted kippot, and more. 201-321-4995, [thetallisladylady.com](http://thetallisladylady.com)
- Artist Jan Lichtenstein will be teaching a class in making handmade silk scarf tallitots with a marbling technique in December at Brotherhood Synagogue in Manhattan. For more info or to commission a tallit, contact: [jan@itsbyjan.com](mailto:jan@itsbyjan.com), or see her scarf work at: [itsbyjan.com](http://itsbyjan.com)
- Etsy: Many artists on [etsy.com](http://etsy.com) sell all types of customized tallit.





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By Penelope Sheer

# The Mitzvah Season: A Year in the Life of a Bat Mitzvah Girl





As a Jewish, thirteen-year old girl, you better believe that I have been to a lot of Bar and Bat Mitzvahs. My calendar has been filled almost every weekend. Sometimes, I've even had two or three services and parties to go to, and I have to choose between them.

Bat Mitzvah season is the year when everything changes. Suddenly, invitations pile up. The fridge is covered with them., My social life has gone crazy! The parties are new and exciting. Girls and guys are mingling, and friendships are forming.

After morning services, on Saturday nights we go to clubs, hotels, and ballrooms. It wasn't like anything I have ever done. Most Saturday nights before my friends and I turned 13, I'd stay in and watch Netflix with my girlfriends and order a pizza. Now, I'm usually out till at least midnight or later. And then it's time to start again the next Saturday.

I lost my voice every weekend from all of the singing and screaming over the DJs music. But who cared.... it was so much fun.

In order to prepare for my new social life, my friends and I went on shopping sprees, buying many different versions of black dresses that basically all look the same. Most of us had at least 10 of them so we didn't have to wear the same thing every weekend.

We bought tall heels that were impossible to walk in...and then we took them off as soon as we got on the dance floor and put on the socks that usually got handed out. We spent hours on our hair and make-up.

It was so exciting to get glammed up with my friends, hang out with boys, dance to my favorite songs, and stay out so late.

At my first Bat Mitzvah of the season, I had no



idea what to expect. I prepared for hours.

This was my first girl-boy party. At all the other birthday celebrations I had been to, it was just girls going out to dinner, or maybe having a sleepover. Going into this party, I had no idea of the extravagant Bat Mitzvahs that I was to encounter.

This year, I've been to at least 30 Bar and Bat Mitzvahs. With a few exceptions, most

of the parties are the same. There is a cocktail hour, where most kids walk around drinking soda, Shirley Temples, or mocktails named after the girl or boy we are celebrating; (I had "Pina-Lope Coladas"), snacking on appetizers, and waiting for the party to begin. There is always a photo-booth where you can take tons of goofy pictures. There is a meal and dessert to follow. Usually for the kids there are sliders, mac and cheese, and Caesar salad. Desserts can be outrageous – donut walls, candy bars, cotton candy machines, and rolled ice cream stations. One friend had a Cookie Monster cake and others were at least six tiers.

There is a montage, where everyone oohs and aahs over baby pictures. There are male and female dancers who get the party moving. Sometimes there's a magician, a caricaturist, or a glow-in-the-dark face painter.

Then there are the presentations. These are usually done at Bat Mitzvahs, where the girl's best friends prepare speeches and gifts such as blankets, pillows, and posters with funny sayings, inside jokes, photos, and special personal messages.

There are games, like Coke and Pepsi that involve running around with a partner till the last couple is left standing. There is always dancing to the same rap and party songs where we know all of the lyrics. Everyone makes their way to the dance floor and jumps up and down, screaming the words to their favorite music for hours. I'm right in there, busting out my best moves.





Pina-Lope Colada  
Pina Colada Topped with Whipped Cream  
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Blue Raspberry Daquiri Topped with Whipped  
Cream and Blueberries







And then there is always merchandise. I have so much stuff, I can't even begin to count it all. My closet is overflowing with all the hoodies from these parties. I have pop sockets, fuzzy socks, pajama pants, blankets, beanies, baseball caps, t-shirts, sweatpants, long sleeve shirts, sunglasses, bucket hats, and quarter-zipped sweatshirts with my friend's names and the date of their celebration. I have never left a Bar or Bat Mitzvah empty handed.

Some of the parties have definitely been over the top. At one, there was bungee jumping during the cocktail hour. At another, the Bat Mitzvah girl entered the room on a giant rainbow pool float. One girl had a professional music video filmed just for the night and I've seen girls wearing long white dresses resembling wedding gowns.

There have been silent disco raves, virtual reality roller coaster experiences, and live performances from famous musicians. Can you believe Cardi B made a surprise appearance at my friend's party, but I missed it! I had to leave early because I had to go to another Bat Mitzvah.

Unfortunately, I think the idea of celebrating the Jewish coming-of-age milestone has been virtually lost in the planning of some of these over-the-top parties.

Kids deserve to be rewarded for all the work they do studying and learning Hebrew and their Torah portions, and doing mitzvah projects, but they sometimes seem to forget what the whole celebration is really all about and the meaning behind it.

You might think I would be sick of these Bar and Bat Mitzvahs by now. In a sense, I'm worn out. However, this year was life-changing for me. I got a chance to socialize with the kids in my grade outside of school. I got an excuse to visit my camp friends who live far away. Every weekend, I always had a party to look forward to. It was a social experience that I will never forget. My own Bat Mitzvah was the best night of my life.

I made the most of every second of every party. No matter how many times I heard the same song, I sang it as loud as I could. For every girl my age, Bar and Bat Mitzvahs are a chance to come out of your shell and make new friends....which I did.

This year was a pretty significant one for a girl like me. I was able to have unapologetic fun every Saturday night. I gained confidence in myself. I made everlasting memories. I will miss this mitzvah season.

Now, I wonder, what am I going to do every Saturday night? •



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# Logo Mania

## How to make your logo stand out

By Chloe Rehfield

There is no better way to personalize a Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebration than with a great logo. It's the perfect way to brand your party and make it unique. These customized — often clever — logos, which can showcase your child's name, initials, or even their passions and favorite colors, can be printed on anything and everything, from invitations to napkins, sign-in boards to decals on the dance floor. And when you put them on the giveaways, guests get to take it home as a memento of the celebration.

Even if you don't have initials that spell out something cute --think OMG or LOL -- the experts can create a logo that's yours alone.

Mitzvah Market consulted party planning and design professionals about ways to make your logo stand out:



### COLORS are everywhere

In the past couple of years, designers have seen some new requests. "We are seeing a trend towards watercolors, monograms, and solid colors for logos, vs themes," says Stephanie Feldman from Cutie Patootie Creations. A Knicks fan, for instance, might choose to have his name backdropped against blues and oranges, instead of transposed over a basketball. These colors will tie together the entire party aesthetic and be incorporated into the tablecloths, napkins, and centerpieces, thus letting the party more subtly revolve around the colors, rather than the sport itself.

Stephanie Steinberg from Party Logo Design says she's noticed the color trend becoming popular particularly with girls. Many are switching from themes like Alice in Wonderland or Dubble Bubble to "more sophisticated and simple color schemes."

"I recently did a logo for a girl named Lyndsey who started out wanting a dance theme but ended up deciding that she wanted pink and silver with just her name and the date," says Steinberg, who even made an animated logo to be used in the montage.

"Thirteen is a unique age, as they are walking a tightrope between childhood and adolescence," Steinberg says. "As their 13th birthday approaches, they decide that they want to embrace a more sophisticated persona."

Glitter and iridescent colors are top trends, and rose gold is a new fav, according to Ali Weitzman of MitzvahLogos.com. She also says that watercolor designs are hot with teens this Bar/Bat Mitzvah season. "They offer a more sophisticated take on color and allow for an amazing way to brand the party. Watercolor or even iridescent patterns look great both inside the text of the logos or reversed and used as background images."





## INITIALS and PUNS

"Many kids are looking to use their initials in their logos instead of their full name to create cooler swag," says Weitzman. "We love when kids hop on the design trend and want to create a design using their initials similar to Tiger Woods and LeBron's logos."

It's also "super hot," she says, to have the design be the main focus. "Think lips or lightning bolts with small initials on the bottom vs. the initials being the main focus of attention."

One of the most popular ways to create a personalized logo is to bounce off and incorporate your child's name to come up with a witty tagline. Event planner Melisa Imberman, from The Event Of A Lifetime, has done several: Ryan used *RYdiculous Night* as the theme and logo for her party and Lauren used the catchphrase *SpectacuLAUR Day*.

Using initials as groundwork for a great logo takes some creativity. FabuDesigns.com came up with Alex's *Party to the AM* (her initials are AM), Carly's the *siCKest night*, and Shayna's *juSt paRty*.



## BRANDING

A great logo is the only pièce de résistance you need.

"The logo is going to become the centerpiece of your décor," says Imberman. "When you brand the whole room, you're making a cohesive statement between décor and giveaways and having your image on everything."

Imberman worked with one client who went above and beyond in terms of branding his party. He wanted to incorporate sports, but instead of basketball star cutouts lining the room, he went for concession stand-style food with his logo branded on mini pizza boxes, taco holders, hamburger and hot dog trays, cups, popcorn containers, even the napkin dispensers. Who needs the Knicks when you can be your own incredible team?





## MULTIPLE logos

According to Steinberg, a coordinated set of multiple logos takes branding to a whole new level, adding dimension to the party aesthetic.

"I think having multiple logos really makes the party décor more interesting while still giving it the look of being coordinated," says Steinberg. "Also, it looks great as a step and repeat backdrop for photos."

A monogrammed logo with a child's three initials, for instance, could be the party's main emblem, and then stamped throughout the room would also be a monogrammed logo with only one or two coordinated initials.

The guest of honor can choose a variation of name puns and work those throughout the party as well. One family Imberman worked with had a daughter named Bailey Goodman. The main logo was *B Good Man*, and from there, offshoot taglines: *B Nice*, *B Creative*, *B Friendly*. Artistically working logos like these can be a special way to convey a message.

In order to seamlessly tie together these logos, static clings come in handy; they're large, removable decals that feature your child's logo and can go on glass doors, bathroom mirrors, or even the entire dance floor. Clings are essential if you're branding the party floor. Clings with multiple logos and you need a big tie-in. These huge stickers are easy to put on and peel off, and they definitely make a memorable statement.

If you're still having trouble coming up with a creative logo for your child, work with your designer to help get your creative juices flowing. Imberman, for example, sends pictures of past logos to clients who are stuck and asks them to dissect what they like and dislike about them. The company then designs a few logos based on these preferences, and the client chooses their favorite one, tweaking it until it's spot on.

Sites like mitzvahlogos.com and cutiepatootiecreations.com have a large selection of premade templates you can choose from and then customize with your own colors, name, and date to help you achieve your perfect vision.



(17)



(18)



(19)

(17),(18),(19) Party Logo Design

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# THE RIPPLE EFFECTS OF AN *Israeli Bar Mitzvah*

**By Lori Silberman Brauner**







Photo by Ayelet Tours

Before my son Ezra became a Bar Mitzvah in 2013, we knew the standard American-Jewish celebration, with a large, over-the-top party, was not for us.

It seemed most natural to hold the event in Israel, a place for which we all had a special affinity, as my sons were enrolled at a Jewish day school that strongly emphasized Zionism and Israel. I had also spent extended periods of time there as a college student, and while I had returned a few times, had never visited with my family.

We decided to pull the kids out of school for almost two weeks and hold the Bar Mitzvah at the Western Wall in Jerusalem on February 18, which happened to be President's Day that year in the United States.

There were many reasons we chose to have his celebration in Israel, and specifically at the Kotel.

Simplicity and spirituality were the main themes for our family. My son had certainly attended his share of Bar Mitzvah parties in the U.S., and while he enjoyed them, never sought such a spotlight on himself, let alone a "this is your life" themed video montage. If we were going to spend a decent sum of money on the simcha, we would much rather channel it into an occasion beyond one day or evening with an Israel adventure — exploring Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, and Masada; digging for shards of pottery; and celebrating Purim. And the Kotel, or Western Wall — the holiest site in Jewish tradition that was liberated triumphally by Israeli paratroopers in 1967 — seemed the perfect place to celebrate becoming a Jewish adult.

I spent a good six months carefully planning out the itinerary. Friends who had spent extended periods with their families in Israel e-mailed me their choreographed schedules, and I spent hours of time online researching hotel and transportation options and booking expeditions.

Both sets of grandparents joined us, as did my sister and then-seven-year-old nephew, and my parents' best friends. (To include those who could not make the journey, we also decided to have a small party after our return at our New Jersey synagogue.)

To secure a place at the Kotel, all we needed to do was make an online reservation for the day through the website of the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, which would also furnish a certificate to mark the occasion. The service at the Kotel was beautiful and went quite smoothly, despite our nervousness over the logistics of showing up and claiming a prime viewing spot by the mechitzah, the barrier separating men and women in prayer, in order for all the guests to fully observe the service.

Beyond securing an optimal viewing spot, we were overjoyed at the experience of publicly celebrating at the Kotel, where many other families were gathered that day to mark their sons' coming of age. Friends from past and





*Ezra Brauner and family picking oranges with Leket Israel. Daniel Brauner in the Old City ramparts after his Bar Mitzvah, and the boys surveying the country.*

present showed up, including a former madricha (youth movement counselor) I had not seen in 22 years and some I had only met through membership in mutual Jewish social media groups. And in a spontaneous “rak b’Yisrael” (only in Israel) moment, a local family with their own Bar Mitzvah boy joined our service in order to ensure a minyan for themselves, further enhancing the ceremony with their Sephardi-style ruach (spirit) and candy pelted from the women’s section. Afterward, we hosted a celebratory lunch at Te’anim, a beautiful dairy restaurant in the charming neighborhood of Yemin Moshe, overlooking the Old City.

Once the ceremony was behind us, we were able to focus on truly experiencing all that Israel has to offer, renting a car and hitting the road while using Jerusalem as our base. We did many of the usual first-trip activities, such as ascending Masada, hiking in Ein Gedi, and going underground at an archeological site to dig for treasures. In Jerusalem itself, we discovered the history of the Old City’s Jewish Quarter by taking part in a scavenger hunt, celebrating Purim and Shabbat with family and friends, and wandering around the Machane Yehuda shuk (open-air market), where we snagged Purim costumes at a major discount.

It was also important for us that the Bar Mitzvah trip have an element of chesed — kindness, or what many American Jews call their “mitzvah projects.” We heard about Leket Israel, a charity that (currently) rescues over 35 million pounds of produce and perishable food that would otherwise go to waste, and redistributes it to 200 nonprofit organizations, serving some 175,000+ Israelis in need every week.

The project appealed to us because of its twofold nature: we could ask our friends back home to make a donation to Leket in my son’s honor and we would become physically involved with the project through actually picking fruit in the fields that would later be donated to families in need.

We reserved a date and time online to pick fruit, and two days after the Bar Mitzvah ceremony piled into our rented minivan to head to an orange grove outside of Rehovot. We were met by Leket staffer Deena Fiedler, an







Cousin Benjamin Zareh (left) reading from the Torah at the Western Wall years after Ezra (on the right) did it and inspired him.

American immigrant to Israel, who made us feel at home and reiterated the significance of what we were doing for ordinary Israelis in need of a balanced, nutritious meal.

My kids, joined by their cousin and aunt, got to work, and had a blast picking and helping fill a giant bin of oranges, which Fiedler told us was later distributed to 100 families. The experience was beyond writing a check; it was a hands-on endeavor with tangible results.

The impact of that trip did not simply end with our firstborn's Bar Mitzvah. Four years later, it was time for Ezra's brother, Daniel, to celebrate his own Jewish adulthood. While we were not able to hold the actual ceremony in Israel due to mobility issues with two of his grandparents, I was determined to give him a similar experience.

Visiting this time during the summer, my son and I had our own adventure. We skipped the more typical tourist attractions in pursuit of more off-the-beaten-track experiences, including bird watching in the North, taking part in a scavenger hunt in the city of Tzfat, and splashing in Aqua Kef, an inflatable water park popular with Israelis in the Sea of Galilee. We also spent time hanging out with American and Israeli friends and even attended the Bar

Mitzvah of two of Daniel's close friends, twins whose mother was originally from Israel.

As for Ezra and Daniel's younger cousin? That cute seven-year-old is now 13 and celebrated his own Bar Mitzvah in June. Determined to return to Israel to celebrate his big day, Ben, his parents, and younger sister Dalia did just that, spending two weeks touring the country and having the ceremony — where else — but the Western Wall. •

## WHAT TO DO ON YOUR BAR/BAT MITZVAH TRIP TO ISRAEL

Below are some of the highlights of our Bar Mitzvah trip and later return visit to Israel:

**Western Wall Heritage Foundation** ([english.thekotel.org/bar\\_mitzvah/main/](http://english.thekotel.org/bar_mitzvah/main/))

Families from Israel and abroad may celebrate their child's B'nai Mitzvah at no cost; the website gives detailed instructions about how to prepare for the event and offers other Bar and Bat Mitzvah resources.

**Leket Israel** ([leket.org/en/bar-bat-mitzvahs/](http://leket.org/en/bar-bat-mitzvahs/))

The organization hosts families of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah to harvest fruits and vegetables in the field or sort and pack produce for delivery to Israelis in need. The celebrating child also receives a personalized certificate.

**Dig for a Day** ([digforaday.com](http://digforaday.com))

Participants, led by professional guides under the auspices of the Israel Antiquities Authorities, excavate, sift, examine pottery, and literally crawl through archaeological caves on site at Beit Guvrin National Park.

**Israel Scaventures** ([israelscaventures.com](http://israelscaventures.com))

Teams of family and friends explore the country on a "ScaVenture," experiential scavenger hunts around Jerusalem, Tel Aviv/Jaffa, Tzfat, and the Gush Etzion region. Special programs are available for those celebrating their Bar Mitzvah.

**Aqua Kef** ([aquakef.com/en/main](http://aquakef.com/en/main))

Aqua Kef is a floating water park on the Ganim beach in the Kinneret, or Sea of Galilee, complete with inflatable trampolines, domes, obstacle bridge, ladders, climbing walls, and monkey bars. A fun way to escape Israel's summer heat, the park will also test your fitness as you make your way through the course.



Ein Gedi

Photos by Ayelet Tours





Masada

## RESOURCES FOR BAR/BAT MITZVAH TRAVEL TO ISRAEL:

- **Tova Gilead, Inc.**, [tovagilead.com](http://tovagilead.com)  
As a tour operator since 1982, Gilead operates small, upscale and unique tours. Three-generation family trips are her specialty.
- **ARZA World**, [arzaworld.com](http://arzaworld.com)  
ARZA World creates 9, 11 and 13 day comprehensive tours of Israel with local reform rabbis performing the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony in Jerusalem at the Southern Wall at the Davidson Center, The Goldman Promenade, Mt. Scopus, or on the rooftop of Hebrew Union College.
- **Israel Discover Tours**, [israeldiscoverytours.com/israel-tours/family-bar-bat-mitzvah-tours](http://israeldiscoverytours.com/israel-tours/family-bar-bat-mitzvah-tours)  
This company is family owned and operated for 25 years, offering three different tours (12 day Deluxe, 14 day Deluxe or December Deluxe), with options for different budgets. The ceremony is at Masada and presentation of certificates is in front of the Menorah outside the Knesset (the Israel Parliament).
- **Authentic Israel**, [authenticisrael.com](http://authenticisrael.com)  
Find a wide range of programs including family and celebration experiences and custom private tours. They arrange the tour, ceremony and celebration. On the family tour, they provide a tour leader and a youth counselor.
- **Travel and Events in Israel**, [travelandeventsinisrael.com](http://travelandeventsinisrael.com)  
Custom tailored for your family, they help with your itinerary, book hotels according to your budget, connect you with a rabbi who will assign the Torah portion and make all necessary arrangements. They also offer custom special events at unique destinations in Israel.
- **Mabat Platinum, LTD.**, [mabat.com](http://mabat.com)  
Designs a tailor-made trip for you and your family.
- **Gil Travel**, [giltravel.com/israel-tours/tour/bar-bat-mitzvah-in-israel](http://giltravel.com/israel-tours/tour/bar-bat-mitzvah-in-israel)  
With over 40 years of experience, Gil Travel can help you plan a private tour or organize a group tour, while arranging all of the touring details.
- **Jewish National Fund Travel and Tours**, [jnf.org/travel/BnaiMitzvah](http://jnf.org/travel/BnaiMitzvah)  
Join a Bar/Bat Mitzvah tour or plan a private one and have your service at the Southern Wall in Jerusalem or other sites throughout Israel. JNF also provides other opportunities including planting trees in Israel, coordinating a mitzvah project and participating in the B'nai Mitzvah Remembrance Wall.
- **Keshet**, [keshetisrael.co.il/barbatmitzvahinisrael](http://keshetisrael.co.il/barbatmitzvahinisrael)  
The Center for Educational Tourism in Israel helps you create a tailor-made Bar/Bat Mitzvah trip to Israel that introduces your family to the land and history through youth centered programming, hands-on mitzvah projects and encounters with local people.



Dead Sea Waterscape

## BAR/BAT MITZVAH CEREMONY SITES

There are many wonderful places to choose from to have your Bar/Bat Mitzvah services and celebrations in Israel. The most popular days for services are Monday, Thursdays and Saturdays. Make sure to confirm that the location of your choice is open on the day you wish to have your ceremony. Go to [bar-and-bat-mitzvah-in-israel.com](http://bar-and-bat-mitzvah-in-israel.com) to view the different locations. Here are some of the most popular ones:

**The Western Wall**, known also as The Kotel. The Western Wall Heritage Foundation offers a free service to help families with everything from initial planning of the event to helping conduct or explain the service. Additional assistance is available, including lending Tefillin (phylacteries), or Talitot (prayer shawls), and organizing a tour of the Western Wall tunnels for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child and family following the service.

**The Southern Wall, Jerusalem**, is no less holy than the Western Wall, for it is part of the remaining Southern enclosure of the Temple Mount. Unlike at the Western Wall, ceremonies are held according to your and your Rabbi's traditions – so men and women can celebrate, sit and pray together.

**Neot Kedumim:** The Biblical Landscape Reserve in Israel is located halfway between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. This unique recreation of the physical setting of the Bible in all its depth and detail allows visitors to see life as it was lived by our ancestors 3,000 years ago.

**The Western Wall Tunnels**, (Strictly Orthodox), is one of Israel's most splendid archeological discoveries.

**The Tower of David Museum of the History of Jerusalem:** Private ceremonies may be held in the historic courtyard and gardens at the ancient citadel.

**The Hurva Synagogue:** Destroyed in the War of Independence in 1948, it is now a simple and elegant memorial. It has become a symbol of the Jews' return to the holiest city.

**Synagogues around Israel:** A synagogue in Jerusalem, or anywhere in Israel is an ideal location, especially if you wish to hold the service on Shabbat.

**Masada:** Ceremonies atop Masada are held in the remains of the Zealots' Synagogue, said to be the world's oldest Synagogue still in use. Services are conducted by a rabbi of your choice, according to orthodox, conservative, reform or reconstructionist tradition.



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# Flying High

WITH BENNY AT THE TWA HOTEL

By Brynne Magaziner



(above) Benny takes to the skies at his Bar Mitzvah.  
(below) His passport invitation.



The only turbulence at Benny's Bar Mitzvah was on the dance floor. His celebration was the very first Bar Mitzvah to fly at the new TWA Hotel at JFK Airport on September 7, 2019. The unique venue restored and redesigned the 1962 TWA Flight Center into a retro hotel and event space with nostalgic touches everywhere.

The venue was a perfect and meaningful location that combined Benny's love of aviation, geography, history, and travel. Benny's mom vividly remembers traveling through the terminal as a child and Benny's parents took their very first trip together from its gates. Because of all of these factors, the family took a leap of faith and booked the property while it was still under construction.

There were a lot of uncertainties in planning a party





without having actually seen the completed venue, so they worked closely with the venue, planner Amy Rubel of Rubel Event Management, and event designer Tina LaMorte of Oh So Fabulous. They also used artist renderings to utilize and enhance what was planned for the TWA Hotel.

Guests knew they were in for something special from the start, when they received their passport-shaped invitations. The rest of the event stayed perfectly on theme. The hosts provided bus transportation from New York City to the event venue. While waiting in traffic, adults enjoyed beverage service by bartenders. Kids munched on popcorn served in custom containers with Benny's logo and drank juices with names like Malawi Mango and Costa Rica Clementine.

Once they arrived at the hotel, guests walked through the jetway (which you may have seen in the movie "Catch Me If You Can") to receive their first-class tickets on BNF Air. The adult cocktail hour took place in the Landmark Hall named as a nod to the building's landmark status. Adults sampled various "Captain's Cocktails" and "In-Flight Snacks," surrounded by historic TWA artifacts. Then they "boarded" the party through the giant airplane hangar doors to the Constellation Ballroom.

Inside the ballroom, red, white, retro, and aviation elements were everywhere, from centerpieces of airplanes and runways, to tables named after airport abbreviations, to "Inflight Menus" and "First Class Mocktails." The family carefully chose the menu knowing they wanted



*The refurbished TWA Hotel was the site for Benny's Bar Mitzvah. Lots of aviation-themed details and Benny's BNF logo greeted guests.*







to serve primarily dairy and fish during cocktails and ensuring that all meat was certified kosher. Benny's friends relaxed in the First Class Lounge with comfy couches featuring pillows declaring "Born to fly" and "Up, up and away!". Gobo lights included his logo and airplane propellers on the wall.

Benny's logo was a play on the "TWA" tag, with his initials "BNF". The venue's iconic Solari split-flap message board (like you once saw in all transportation hubs) said "Mazel Tov Benny on your Bar Mitzvah."

As a different twist on the traditional photo booth, a photographer shot vignettes of guests in front of TWA artifacts with decade-appropriate props. The photos were then made into luggage tags.

Even the dance floor area kept to the theme with its custom logo wrap and giant screens which projected images of airplanes, moving propellers, and cloud-filled

skies. Guests danced the night away with the help of MC Jordan of Xplosive Entertainment. Jordan and his dance crew wore shirts that said "Ground Crew." When it came time for dessert, flight attendants served nostalgic candy and mini apple pies and churros from an inflight food cart brought right to the dance floor.



Benny's friends and out-of-town guests received white retro toiletry bags with a variety of helpful and fun items for travel, including LED message flashing fans, an inflatable neck pillow, a lip balm, screen cleaner/earbud combo, and mini suitcases filled with jelly beans.

Mom offers the following advice for parents planning their own celebration: "Make it personal and get creative. There are so many ways to incorporate a theme in a fun way and keep it Jewish. I love that we offered guests an opportunity to color a traveler's prayer keychain for their luggage." •

### The following vendors helped to make the celebration special:

**Venue:** TWA Hotel at JFK Airport, [twahotel.com](http://twahotel.com), 212-790-373

**Planner:** Amy Rubel of Rubel Event Management, [rubelEventManager.com](http://rubelEventManager.com), 917-886-8609

**Decor:** Tina LaMorte of Oh So Fabulous, [ohsofab.com](http://ohsofab.com), 201-981-7280

**Invitations:** Out of the Box NY, [outoftheboxny.com](http://outoftheboxny.com), 914-934-2323

**Photography:** Cynthia Chung, [cynthiachungweddings.com](http://cynthiachungweddings.com), 646-678-0777

**DJ/Games/Photo Novelty:** Xplosive Entertainment, [xeevents.com](http://xeevents.com), 732-866-1620

**Montage:** Marvelous Montages, [marvelousmontages.com](http://marvelousmontages.com), 732-431-4391

**Graphics and Logos:** Robin Hammer Design, [robinhammerdesign.com](http://robinhammerdesign.com), 917-439-5889

**Projection and Lighting:** Lumi Events, [lumievents.com](http://lumievents.com), 718-850-5864

**Dance floor decal:** Holo-Walls, [holowalls.com](http://holowalls.com), 818-735-3565

**Dancer T-shirts:** Custom Ink, [customink.com](http://customink.com)

**Ipad artist:** Drawing Booth, [drawingbooth.com](http://drawingbooth.com), 347-593-8663

**Favors:** 4imprint.com, [beau-coup.com](http://beau-coup.com), and [bigpromotions.net](http://bigpromotions.net)

**Transportation:** M&V Limousines Ltd, [mvlimo.com](http://mvlimo.com), 800-498-5788

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# A Sparkly Celebration With Style.... and Pickles

**By Claudia Miller**

What do you get when you combine custom pickles, a Justin Bieber impersonator, and one special girl swinging in from the sky? Hint: they all happened at Dylan Woods' Bat Mitzvah.

For many Bat Mitzvahs, deciding on a theme can be the hardest part. For Dylan, though, it wasn't a color scheme or a favorite sports team that defined her celebration; instead the entire weekend was simply a way to reflect her vivacious and outgoing personality. At the event held at SPACE Events in Englewood, NJ, you could see elements of the star all around.

"She got to make it her own thanks to the people at

SPACE," says Dylan's dad, Ethan Woods. "You can just tell that they enjoy what they do and they're really good at it. It really did reflect her (Dylan); she's got so many different areas of interest and intrigue so it worked out well."

Her personality popped starting at the invitations. The family wanted to keep it elegant and classic while still representing who Dylan is at her core. Purple, one of her favorite colors, served as the base for the plexi-glass invites, that featured glittering elements and flirty touches like a kiss mark. The response card offered options of "Love To," with a heart for those attending, and





“Broken-Hearted,” for those who couldn’t make it.

That same lighthearted feeling continued from the moment Dylan arrived at the afternoon extravaganza. She showed off her style with a quick change from the outfit she wore to synagogue, into a glittering two-piece mini-dress; trading her heels for a pair of sparkly sneakers.

For her logo, Dylan took inspiration from the must-have sweatshirts from the brand Aviator Nation and their iconic lightning bolt design. Projected on the screen at the center of the room and printed on t-shirts, pillows,

and décor around the venue, the unforgettable DW initial logo served as the glue connecting all sides of Dylan included at the party.

Her taste even shone through with the special treats from a Dunkin’ Donuts-like display, proclaiming “America Runs on Dylan,” to a custom pickle bar — one of her favorite snacks — playfully titled Dyl Pickles. And it didn’t stop there. She entered the party on a swing from the ceiling amidst fog, confetti, and music. She continued surprising her guests, spraying them with her own fog gun.



Dylan makes her entrance on a swing (left); the family at the candle lighting (top); her logo on pillows, and the clever Dyl Pickle bar.





Standing by a life-sized DW logo; the Justin Bieber impersonator wowed the crowd; and Dylan's Donuts were a dessert hit.



During the party, Dylan's friends enjoyed an exclusive glam bar, arcade games, and a couple of important special guests. Magician Devonte Rosero wowed friends and family during the cocktail hour with his mesmerizing tricks and illusion. The second was a surprise to everyone but her dad.

"After my speech and the montage and without Dylan or my wife Stephanie knowing, I secretly worked with SPACE to have a Justin Bieber look-alike," explains dad. He told the guests: "We have a very famous celebrity here today; please welcome Justin Bieber."

"The kids went wild... for about 12 seconds. The minute he came out it was so obvious it wasn't him, but they had fun dancing and singing with him."

Once the Bieber excitement died down, the DJ and dancers from SPACE kept the party going with classic games like Coke & Pepsi, giving away swag like Bluetooth speakers, Polaroid cubes, and gift certificates to the winners. Those who didn't win still left with custom photo magnets, bags full of candy, and trendy DM logo-branded sweatshirts, hats, and apparel.

Dylan and her camp friends didn't let the party stop there. The group hopped in a limo to head to a giant sleepover at the Hilton in Woodcliff Lake, NJ, where they spent the night splashing in the indoor and outdoor pools and diving into endless pizza pies.

"Everything just worked," says Woods. "From the food and drink to the music and the entertainment, people were just raving about it and the amazing time they had. You can tell the sincerity in what they were saying. It was one of those parties where everyone really let loose and had a great time." •

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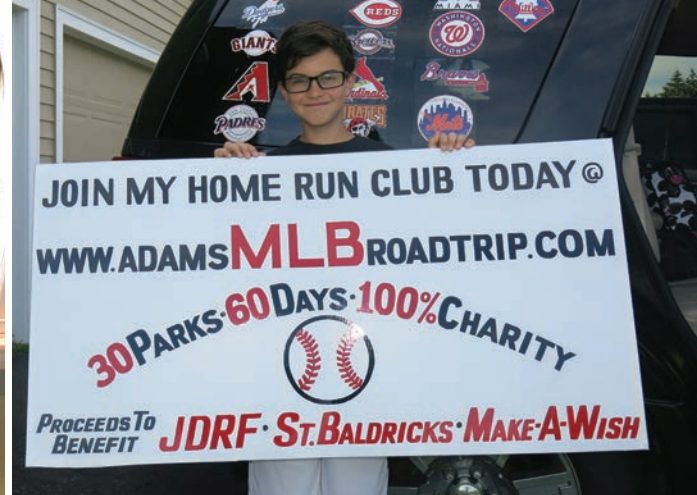
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## A MEANINGFUL MITZVAH PROJECT 🔍

Long after the DJ's name is forgotten and the imprinted sweatshirts outgrown, a young Jewish adult's Bar or Bat Mitzvah Project should be remembered. It should resonate for your child and open up a myriad of future possibilities. It should feel good.

We hope these next two first-hand Mitzvah Project stories help your child choose a do-able, but meaningful Bar or Bat Mitzvah Project. You can also start by asking a few questions:

- What are your synagogue's requirements for a project?
- Does it have to be related to a certain Torah portion?
- How much time can your child realistically devote to completing this?
- Then ask your child: What makes him or her happy — sports, fashion, technology, the arts? What does he or she care about — animal welfare, the environment, Israel, cancer research, education, hunger?

As a parent, your job is to help guide your child to find a project that is meaningful and uses his or her natural talents. It can involve volunteering time, educating others, selling products or services to benefit a cause, or collecting money or needed items for a charity. Hopefully your child will find something that leaves him or her with a full heart and a lifelong desire to help others and do good.



Each of our Celebrate! Party Showcases feature a Mitzvah Project Fair where your child can meet face-to-face with various organizations that offer meaningful Mitzvah Projects. Learn more at [celebrateshowcase.com](http://celebrateshowcase.com)

*Top left: Maya Ungar in front of the completed mural for the Leket offices in Israel. Top right: Adam Koss of Syracuse, NY prepares to embark on the MLB Road Trip. Bottom left: David Liliensfeld surrounded by some of the computers he will refurbish and donate to those in need of one. Bottom right: Sophie Glaser shaving her head at her Bat Mitzvah for the St. Baldricks' Foundation*







# Helping HOSPITALIZED KIDS IS A *family* TRADITION

**By Jared Schwartz**

Tradition, family, and giving back has been a big part of my life since day one. Yet, it's only recently that I truly understood its importance.

From a young age I have been attending my family's Adam Scott Weiss (ASW) Cares for Kids fundraisers year after year. When I was as young as five, I never really understood the meaning behind them. To me, it was just a fun party, as I would see family and friends, eat good food, and ask the DJ to play my favorite songs. However, I will never forget sitting at family dinners and hearing everyone discussing ways to improve the fund, and planning for the upcoming year. During these years of repeating these traditions I began to understand what this was all about.

My mom's oldest brother, Adam, was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer when he was 10 and she was 7. As you'd expect, Adam spent many days in the hospital, and time passed quite slowly. Adam had nothing but a hospital bed and a tiny TV in his room at NYU Langone Medical Center. Few toys, games, and books could be found in the hospital playroom. Not only was this terrible for the children in the hospital, but boring for my mom and my

uncles, who would always visit Adam for extended periods of time on the weekends.

Unfortunately, Adam passed away at age 12, which left my mom, grandparents, and uncles devastated. But sitting there, just being sad wouldn't help anyone; it couldn't be an option. So, after mourning, they created ASW Cares for Kids, a family foundation. The mission was to make sick kids' lives more enjoyable and help them and their families pass time faster while they're undergoing treatment as a patient in the hospital. Drawing on their experience while Adam was in the hospital for so many weeks, they began to transition the 9th floor of NYU Medical Center into a more child-friendly environment; adding a functional playroom, media center, library, a pantry where a family can warm a home cooked meal, and a treatment room for invasive procedures with an elaborate fish tank and movie screen to distract the children during these painful treatments.

When I began to study for my Bar Mitzvah and the cantor spoke to our class about a Mitzvah Project, it was very obvious to me what I would do. As I always knew that diagnosis of a sick child cannot be helped, however the way





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Jared Schwartz with some of the donations he collected for hospitalized kids.

a sick child goes about their day can. So, I spoke with the Supervisor for Pediatric Services at Hassenfeld Children's Hospital at NYU Langone and we brainstormed ideas. She told me that bubbles, Play-Doh, Uno, other card games, and crayons are items that are always needed for the children. Because they are concerned about spreading germs, these are single use items and they can never be shared.

After that conversation, my mom and I had a card printed up to be enclosed with my Bar Mitzvah invitation asking all my guests to kindly bring some of these items with them on May 11th. With that, the Amazon deliveries to my house bringing boxes of Crayola, decks of cards, and bubbles were amazing! Friends from Florida and Massachusetts, who were unable to attend but wanted to help, sent as much as they could.

And then, coming home from my party with eight boxes full of the requested items made my whole Bar Mitzvah experience worth it. Knowing and hearing from people and the child life specialists working at Hassenfeld Children's Hospital about how many kids lives and days were about to be made more enjoyable was so special to me and made it so worth my while.

One lesson I've learned from studying my family's organization and becoming a man in the Jewish religion officially at my Bar Mitzvah, is how to make the best out of everything that happens to you in your life. In fact, that was one of the main points I wrote about in my speech on my special day; if something in your life isn't going right, don't waste your time on that, find something else to do, or learn and grow with it. This is a lesson I am continuing to use and will take with me forever.

As I said, tradition is a big part of my life. One of my goals is to take the keys of this charity and inspire others, including, hopefully, my siblings and cousins. I hope to keep the tradition going, and someday give my own kids the gift of doing things in your life to benefit others that I was given at a young age. At the end of this Mitzvah Project, my wish is to expand on the mission to help hospitalized children and their families.

To give back will become my personal tradition. •

Jared Schwartz is an 8th grader from West Harrison, NY.

To learn more about ASW Cares for Kids, visit [aswcaresforkids.org](http://aswcaresforkids.org).

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# A Mitzvah RIDE

**By Nesya Bayewitz**

Instead of having the typical fancy Bat Mitzvah party, I thought about what becoming a Bat Mitzvah actually means. Bat Mitzvahs aren't only about having a pretty dress and a fancy party, but they're about becoming an adult in Jewish law. This means you now are obligated to do mitzvot and follow the Torah.

I thought, what a perfect way to celebrate becoming a Bat Mitzvah by actually doing a mitzvah. My mitzvah was a 10-mile bike ride to raise money for the Jewish Family & Children's Service of Northern New Jersey Kosher Meals-on-Wheels program. JFCS provides food to homebound seniors and other people who aren't able to go to the grocery store.

My family and I have been going on this bike ride since I was eight years old. I love it, because while doing what I love – biking – I also get to do a chesed. At the ride last year, I saw ten boys riding their bikes for someone's Bar Mitzvah chesed and thought, "I want to do that too, but I want to bring all of my friends."

My parents contacted JFCS about idea, and they were thrilled. I became part of the JFCS Bike Committee and went to meetings with my mom to help plan the bike ride. We got to learn a ton about JFCS.

A few weeks before my Bat Mitzvah, one of the Meals-on-Wheels volunteers, Rich Feldman, took me on his route to deliver meals to seniors. This was a really

special experience. Throughout our trip delivering meals, I discovered that not all the seniors are necessarily poor; they just can't leave their apartments to buy food. I also realized that there are people right in our neighborhood who need this food, and it's our job to help them. The seniors we visited were so appreciative of the meals and the visits, and I felt so proud to be part of this chesed.

On the Shabbat before the bike ride, I spoke at my shul about my experience with JFCS and Meals-on-Wheels. I told the congregation about how small acts of chesed are what keep the Jewish people alive and strong. This is the lesson of the menorah in the Mishkan – just like Aharon and the kohanim lit the menorah day in and day out, the mitzvot that we do behind the scenes are what matter the most.

When the day of my Bat Mitzvah finally arrived, 60 friends and 40 family members joined me at the JFCS Ride to Fight Hunger ([www.RidetoFightHunger](http://www.RidetoFightHunger)). Some of my friends' parents signed up too because they wanted to be part of this mitzvah. Before the ride, we all davened with siddurim we made for the occasion.

Although a lot of friends were planning on only doing part of the route, EVERYONE ended up riding all ten miles.

Some people asked me why I didn't want a typical party. My answer: "This ride is a party." After the ride



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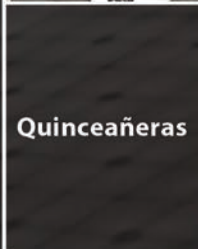
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Nesya and her family and friends ride for a cause and celebrate her Bat Mitzvah.



was over, there was a DJ, games, and a barbeque. I got all the special parts of a Bat Mitzvah (friends, family, a song written by my friends, etc.) all wrapped in chesed.

My team ended up raising \$18,000, including my parents' sponsorship for all the riders who came as our guests and the generous donations made by family and friends. After riding for JFCS, my grandfather, who is retired, is now signing up to deliver Meals-on-Wheels. Because the food delivery time is during the school day, I hope to stay connected with JFCS and deliver meals when I'm older. A lot of my friends had such a great time that they're planning to bring their families to the ride next year. I hope I can continue to raise awareness about food insecurity and people who need our help, and show people that you can have fun while doing a chesed. •

Nesya is a 7th grader from Teaneck, NJ. For more information about Jewish Family & Children's Service of Northern New Jersey, visit [jfcsnnj.org](http://jfcsnnj.org)

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# Fashion Fun

## A different look for every party without breaking the bank

By Amy Fish

When Jen Forman's daughter Charlotte was nearing Bat Mitzvah age, she wanted a new dress for every party. "Sometimes there would be two, three Bar/Bat Mitzvahs the same weekend!" says the founder and CEO of Charlotte's Closet, an online store that rents designer dresses to teens and tweens.

Like many parents of young girls, Forman had to find a way to combine her daughter's love of fashion and her budding independence, with Forman's own needs for a manageable price and reduced shopping time. And so, five years ago, she launched the Charlotte's Closet website. Last year, she opened a corresponding store in Port Washington. With Charlotte's Closet, girls have access to a communal clothing rack with hundreds of designer dresses that they can borrow. They can pick several dream outfits online and get them delivered right to their door, all for one flat fee. When the parties are over, they simply pack them up and send them back.

Their slogan: Rent It! Rock It! Return It! There are several different options to choose from, ranging from a one-time rental for the girl who needs a special gown, to the "Endless Closet," where those with a packed social calendar can borrow several designer dresses for a month.

It's a lot greener than having an overstuffed closet and there's no need to wear the same dress twice, says Forman.

Alas, that's the dilemma many girls face today: what to wear when you're invited to dozens of parties with the same people during one Bar/Bat Mitzvah season. You want different looks, but you don't have a bottomless budget. Hence the popularity of Charlotte's Closet.

There are other ways to have a runway of styles, colors, and trends without repeating a look or breaking the bank. Here are some ideas:

- Have a dress and accessories swap with friends who don't share all the same social circles. Trade what no longer fits or isn't your fav, for something someone else wants to give up. It won't cost you a dime to get many new outfits.
- "Upcycle. Repurpose what you have: shorten a long dress, take the sleeves off a top, or add a lace trim to a mini, and voilà, you have a whole new look. If you're crafty you can do this yourself; if not, a tailor can help for a fraction of the price of buying something new.
- Check out resale, consignment, and thrift shops for a cache of dresses, accessories, scarves, belts, and other items to change up your look at bargain prices. Some stores like Buffalo Exchange even sell new, current-trend, tags-on garments.





#### HERE ARE SOME LOOKS FROM CHARLOTTE'S CLOSET:

One popular designer is Un Deux Trois, worn by Zelda in a black A-line dress on the left. In fact, Zelda will be wearing this to her own Bat Mitzvah in a few weeks. Many moms like this more conservative style for synagogue, and the girls are attracted to the cheetah pattern. Plus, the back has a stylish V-neck.

Ella (middle) is wearing an ombré bandage dress by Jolene, similar to the one Goldie and Zelda have on in the other photo but in a shades-of-pink colorway. The girls report that these bandage dresses are very comfortable. Sometimes, months after the dress has been worn, a girl will request it again in a different color. On the right, Goldie has on a Jolene deep blue dress with strappy detail. The three navy straps on each shoulder fit into a criss-cross pattern on the back. Girls love the tight fit and moms love the thicker fabric which offers a more elegant, stylish look.





Stella M'Lia

Here's the perfect LBD, the Sammy from STELLA M'LIA. The fit and flare tank dress with skater skirt comes in stretchy neoprene, made with the fun fabric that's used in scuba wear. It's a comfy classic that's suitable for both synagogue and to party afterwards, either day or night. Dress it up or down; Embellish it with sparkly jewelry, eye-catching shoes in a fun, bright color, or top it with a sequined sweater or short leather jacket for lots of different looks. It also comes in bright purple, magenta, and cobalt for those who want to stand out from the crowd.





On the left, Zelda is wearing a blush pink bandage dress by Jolene. Note the cap sleeves, which many people like for the bimah because it's appropriate to keep your shoulders covered. This dress also comes in blue ombré (worn by Goldie, in the middle) and pink ombré (worn by Ella in the previous photo).

In Goldie's version of the Jolene dress, the brighter colors follow the ombré trend that we've seen in hair color over the past few years. The shades of blue and turquoise highlight the bandage construction of the dress, especially the two-tone straps that go over the capped sleeves and the stripes around the midsection. This dress looks different on each girl, and this versatility has contributed to its popularity.

On the right, Ella has on a royal blue and black bebe mini dress, also a bandage style, fitted to her body. The black stripes add energy and movement to the straight shape of the dress. Here the dress is strapless, but it's possible to add detachable straps. You can also add a black sweater or shrug for synagogue; just remove when it's time to party.



## How to mix things up



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Want a different look for every party? Switch things up. The little black dress (LBD), for example is a blank slate. Add a sparkly belt and some fun costume jewelry one night, and then a sequined or furry bolero jacket over it to another party. No one will be wiser that the LBD is the same. Or step out in animal print ballet flats and matching shawl and then trade them out for trendy boots and a coordinated clutch with a pop of color.

Animal prints, metallics, and navy are all the rage in girl's attire, says Andrea Forbes, area manager for Lester's stores. Plus, hair accessories are hot. "Headbands, scrunchies, and clips can help you. change your look. Wear your hair up or down with a headband that coordinates or contrasts with your outfit. Add color or texture with one in velvet or plaid, rhinestones, or grommets."

Make sure your wardrobe has a few great pieces that can be rotated, advises Forbes. Have separates -- a skirt and two tops -- a dressy jumpsuit, and a couple of dresses in different shapes including straight, fit and flare, and bandage.

Be creative with accessories, suggests Esther Fortunoff, president of Fortunoff Fine Jewelry. "Girls change their look these days by adding big gold hoops in an '80s revival, or they add lots of stacking bracelets. You can do them in silver, gold, or mix with blackened metals. Wear a big blingy pendant of cubic zirconium. There's a whole rainbow of costume jewelry," she says.

"Girls are also layering lots of fine gold necklaces of different lengths, some with tiny diamonds, little bars, or gemstones. You can even raid your mom's jewelry box."

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# Bar/Bat Mitzvah 101

## A Glossary For Those in the Know

By the time your son or daughter steps up to the bimah one Shabbat morning to recite his or her haftarah, they will understand perfectly well what the first half of this sentence meant. But will you? And will you be able to explain it all to your guests? Here is a short glossary of important Hebrew phrases to know before you go:

- **Aliyah:** In Hebrew, the word aliyah means to go up, or, as a noun, an ascent. During the Torah reading portion of the service, some members of the community are offered an aliyah, meaning they are called up to the bimah to perform a certain role. This can include reciting the blessing over the Torah, reading from the Torah, dressing the Torah and returning it to the ark, or some other function. It is considered an honor to be called up, and as such it is often given to family members and close friends of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah.
- **Aron Ha-Kodesh:** Literally meaning “the holy ark,” the Aron ha-Kodesh is an ark where the sacred texts used during a prayer service are held. Mostly, this includes one or more scrolls of the Torah and perhaps a similar looking scroll that will hold the haftarah portions. The ark itself is meant to symbolize the mishkan (tabernacle) in which the ancient Israelites stored the sacred tables Moses received on Mount Sinai.
- **B’nai Mitzvah:** B’nai Mitzvah is the plural of Bar Mitzvah and is the term used to describe the coming of age according to Jewish tradition. Literally meaning “master of commandments,” becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah means the person is obliged to observe the Jewish commandments, and a ceremony, along with a celebration, takes place to mark this moment. The Bar Bat Mitzvah event is a formal and spiritual declaration of a child’s accession to adulthood. Jewish tradition designates Bar and Bat Mitzvah age as 13 for a boy and either 12 or 13 for a girl.
- **Bimah:** Hebrew for stage, the bimah is the raised location in the sanctuary where the Torah is read. At Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, family members and close friends are often called onto the bimah for an aliyah, or to assist with the service.
- **D’var Torah:** Literally “a thing of Torah,” a d’var Torah is a speech that tried to convey a life lesson or message supported by the story in the weekly parasha or haftarah (scripture readings). After the Torah portion is read, the Rabbi will give a d’var Torah, typically as part of a sermon; when a child becomes a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, he or she delivers a d’var Torah as well, often tying it into personal experiences.
- **Davening:** A transliteration of the Yiddish word, meaning praying, to daven is to pray. Like in many other faiths, davening can take numerous, varied forms, from mediation to the more traditional chanting of prayer in synagogue.
- **Haftarah:** Often mispronounced as “haf-torah,” the haftarah is a selected reading from one of the other sections of the Jewish Bible (Old Testament). Traditionally, the haftarah is recited after the Torah reading on the Shabbat or another holy Jewish day, and is usually thematically related to the parasha. It is customary for the Bar Bat Mitzvah to read this portion of the scriptures in addition to any part of the parasha he/she has read.
- **Kiddush:** This is the blessing recited over wine on Shabbat and other Jewish holy days. Kiddush derives from the Hebrew word kadosh, which means holy. By saying kiddush, one is proclaiming the holiness of the day.
- **Kippah:** The Hebrew name for the traditional head covering worn by Jews in synagogue as well as, for some, in daily life. Often called a yarmulke, its Yiddish name, the kippah is meant to signify a Jew’s recognition of the presence of God. In more orthodox Jewish sects, only men wear kippot (plural of kippah), though some observant women cover their heads using hats, veils, or wigs. Less observant Jews often choose to wear kippot only during religious pursuits, such as when in a synagogue or while studying sacred texts. And some more liberal Jews do not wear a kippah at any time.
- **Minyan:** The number of people required to be present for certain prayers to be recited. A minyan consists of 10 Jewish adults, or, for Orthodox Jews, 10 Jewish males. When a child becomes a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, he or she is eligible to be counted in the minyan.
- **Motzi:** The blessing recited over bread, which ordains the start of the meal. On Shabbat and other holy days, a festive, braided challah bread is used.
- **Parasha:** The weekly Torah portion read in synagogue. On Shabbat, a cantor or members of the





Photo by Leo Vatikn Photography

congregation read the parasha. The Torah portion is divided into seven sections. As a new member of the Jewish community, the Bar Bat Mitzvah will often read a section or even the entire parasha during his or her Bar or Bat Mitzvah service. Once children receive their Bar Bat Mitzvah date, the parasha they will read from is known.

- **Shabbat:** The Jewish day of rest, where everyone is commanded to stop all work before sundown on Friday and enjoy the company of friends and family until sundown on Saturday. This is also typically the day on which Bar and Bat Mitzvahs are held (by custom though not by requirement). It is customary to indulge in an extensive meal on Friday night with guests, and the following morning a longer prayer service is usually held. Shabbat is meant to be a moment of peace in an otherwise hectic world and, depending upon one's level of observance, some choose to refrain from many activities on Shabbat such as driving, writing, or watching TV. A special Shabbat service is held in most synagogues on Saturday morning that includes these three parts: Shacharit, the morning prayers; the Torah Service, which includes the reading of the Torah and the haftarah (the focal point of the Bar Bat Mitzvah); and Musaf, the additional Shabbat prayers focusing on song-like praises of God.
- **Simcha:** The literal definition of simcha is joy. Simcha refers to a special happy occasion in a Jewish life, such as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, a bris, or a wedding.
- **Tallit:** A tallit is a traditional prayer shawl worn by Jewish adults while praying in synagogue. At each of

the four corners of the garment are fringes of string, or tzitit in Hebrew, that are braided and knotted as a way to remind Jews of the commandments issued in the Torah. Anyone of Bar Bat Mitzvah age or older who approaches the bimah to take a leadership role in the services is required to put on a tallit; beyond that circumstance, however, there are different customs on who wears a tallit, according to different sects of Judaism. Orthodox sects of Judaism traditionally reserve the privilege of wearing a tallit to married men, while conservative and reform sects allow both sexes to wear a tallit, starting from Bar Bat Mitzvah age.

- **Torah:** Torah has multiple definitions, but in this context it refers to the first five books of the Bible, often called the Five Books of Moses. The Torah recounts the creation of the world and the establishment of the Jewish faith, while also offering a set of laws on which Jewish life is based. The Torah is divided into 54 portions with one read each week (two weeks have double portions). The reading of each week's portion (or part of the portion in some traditions) serves as the focal point of the Shabbat prayer services.
- **Trope:** In Jewish tradition, sacred text is chanted rather than simply read, whether for public reading or for study. Trope is the Yiddish word for the 1,400-year-old system of distinctive marks that function as musical notation and punctuation for the biblical text. The trope determines the actual tune used by readers for the parasha and haftarah. As part of their preparation, some B'nai Mitzvha learn the names and tunes for each trope marking so they can figure out the cantillation for themselves.



# Timeline

## Planning Your Event Month by Month

If it “takes a village to raise a child,” it can take at least that many people to plan that child’s Bar or Bat Mitzvah. It’s a lot to take on alone, so seek out help. Besides, it truly is more fun when you involve others. The following timeline should help you with your planning process and highlight how many villagers you may need to involve.

### TWO YEARS BEFORE

- ❑ **Get a Bar/Bat Mitzvah date from your synagogue.**
- ❑ **Sign up for MitzvahOrganizer.com.** This planning tool will keep track of all your party details.
- ❑ **Talk to friends who’ve already planned a Bar or Bat Mitzvah for ideas and tips.**
- ❑ **Go to a Celebrate! Party Showcase.** celebrateshowcase.com. There are three locations in the tri-state area.
- ❑ **Formulate a realistic budget.** Have a budget in mind so you can decide where you want to spend your money and what type of event you will have.
- ❑ **Begin looking at venues.** You may not want to book two years in advance, but you can start looking at your options. Instead of a cash deposit, ask if you can put a soft hold on a space with a written agreement giving you the first right to that date. If you put down money, ask what the refund policy is.

### EIGHTEEN MONTHS BEFORE

- ❑ **Decide if you want to hire a party planner.** If so, start interviewing. Understand their services and how their cost structure works. Remember: you can hire a planner just for specific tasks including running events the day of.
- ❑ **Start thinking about a party theme.** If you have a theme (even if it’s your child’s name or initials) then your invitations, décor, party favors, etc. may all be coordinated.
- ❑ **Brainstorm with your child about ideas for a Mitzvah Project.**

### ONE YEAR BEFORE

- ❑ **If you are hiring a party planner, sign a contract.** Keep a folder with copies of all contracts, your notes and contact information.
- ❑ **Sign a contract with your venue and put down a deposit.** Confirm what will be provided, including feeding the outside staff you bring in, lighting, etc.
- ❑ **Interview and sign your band or DJ.** Now’s the time to check out a few recommended DJs/bands in person.
- ❑ **Interview and sign a photographer/videographer.**
- ❑ **Interview and sign a florist.**
- ❑ **Purchase a tallit.** If you are designing your own tallit, or having one commissioned, plan to do this at least 8 months to one year in advance.
- ❑ **Plan the extra entertainment you want and sign contracts.** Ask your DJ or party planner for recommendations.
- ❑ **Interview and sign a montage specialist.** Begin organizing your photos and videos for inclusion. If you are doing it yourself, start now.

### TEN MONTHS BEFORE

- ❑ **Firm up your guest list.**
- ❑ **Book a block of hotel rooms for out of town guests.** You can often get a discounted rate if you guarantee a certain number of rooms. Do this even earlier if it’s over a holiday weekend or a busy time of year like June or December.







- ❑ **Send out a Save the Date card or email.**  
This is especially important if your event is over a holiday weekend and for out-of-towners who need to buy plane tickets in advance.
- ❑ **Choose and order invitations.**

### SIX TO EIGHT MONTHS BEFORE

- ❑ **Begin planning/booking other weekend events.**  
These can include a Friday night dinner, Kiddush after services and Sunday brunch.
- ❑ **Have florist or party planner show you a sample centerpiece.**
- ❑ **Hire a calligrapher to address the invitations.**
- ❑ **Begin shopping for clothes for the special day/weekend.**
- ❑ **Begin thinking about what you want to do for a sign-in.**

### THREE TO FIVE MONTHS BEFORE

- ❑ **Plan the menu and do a tasting with your venue/caterer.**
- ❑ **Get invitations to calligrapher and order personalized stamps.**
- ❑ **Order party favors.**
- ❑ **Order cake if you want a specialty design.**
- ❑ **Arrange for buses to transport guests to events.**
- ❑ **Plan the candle lighting ceremony.**

### TWO MONTHS BEFORE

- ❑ **Mail the invitations.** Traditionally this is done 6-8 weeks before the date.
- ❑ **Make a play list of “must have” songs for band or DJ.**

- ❑ **Make a detailed timeline of your event.** Work with the venue or party planner on this. Decide who will say the prayers over the bread and wine.
- ❑ **Re-confirm all vendors and timing.**
- ❑ **Make arrangements if you are donating your centerpieces.**
- ❑ **Book a hairdresser and make-up person.**
- ❑ **Write speeches.**
- ❑ **If you are doing a program for synagogue, have it printed.**

### ONE MONTH BEFORE

- ❑ **Do dress/suit fittings.**
- ❑ **Order personalized kippot.** Check first if your synagogue allows them.
- ❑ **Call any guests who haven't sent in RSVPs and make a final seating chart.** Print out place cards or have calligrapher start doing it.
- ❑ **Make a list for photographer of “must have” group shots you want.**
- ❑ **Put together welcome baskets for out-of-towners.** Arrange to have these delivered to their hotels.

### ONE WEEK BEFORE

- ❑ **Have a dress rehearsal.** The synagogue will usually arrange this so you know the sequence of events.
- ❑ **Have everyone in the family try on their synagogue/party outfits.** This is especially important with growing teens. Make sure everything fits and that you have all the parts (belts, accessories, etc.).
- ❑ **Schedule a photo shoot.** Some families take photos in the synagogue during the week before if this isn't allowed on Shabbat.
- ❑ **Give the final guest count to venue/caterer.**
- ❑ **Finalize the seating chart.**
- ❑ **Do a final re-confirm with all vendors, including hair and make-up.**
- ❑ **Remember to relax, enjoy, and savor this special moment!**







# Checklist

## Getting Ready for the Service

Though most of us know this already, it's helpful to remind yourself and your child that the Bar or Bat Mitzvah is not the party afterwards but the religious duties he/she performs during the service. Sometimes the emphasis can fall more on the celebration than the actual religious milestone. Here is a checklist to keep your family on track with the real elements of the big day.

### ONE YEAR TO EIGHTEEN MONTHS BEFORE

- ❑ **Meet with a member of the clergy.** You and your child will want to find out what your synagogue requires. Some require that the child attend a certain number of services and perform a mitzvah project.
- ❑ **Your child will be assigned a Torah portion.** You may have known this years before if your synagogue assigns dates early, but now's the time to start researching the Torah portion to get familiar with the story.

### SIX TO EIGHT MONTHS BEFORE

- ❑ **Begin working on a Mitzvah Project.** There are many organizations that are happy to help your child put together a project. You may also want to discuss with your child the idea of donating a percentage of his or her monetary gifts to charity (sometimes a denomination of chai, 18).
- ❑ **Learn the elements of the service.** If you are not a regular synagogue attendee, you may want to begin to attend Shabbat services as a family to get a feel for the service and understand what your child will be undertaking. Remember, becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a process and not a single day in your child's life.

### SIX MONTHS BEFORE

- ❑ **Start working with a tutor.** The synagogue may provide one or you can hire your own to work with your child (usually once a week) to learn the Torah portion and haftarah.

### THREE MONTHS BEFORE

- ❑ **Your child should begin writing his or her D'var Torah.**
- ❑ **Decide who will receive aliyahs and other honors during the service.**
- ❑ **Plan the siblings' role.** This event is so much about family, but siblings—particularly younger ones—can get lost in the shuffle. Be sure that everyone feels a part of this meaningful moment.
- ❑ **Check in with your child's tutor and the clergy.** Make sure that your child is on track and that you know all your responsibilities for the day, including sponsoring a kiddush, ordering flowers, etc.

### ONE MONTH BEFORE

- ❑ **Coordinate a rehearsal with your synagogue.** This is also a good time to take a step back and revel in how far your child has come toward becoming a Jewish adult.
- ❑ **Order tallit and kippot for celebrant.**
- ❑ **Order personalized kippot for your guests.**



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# MITZVAHNOMICS

## Keeping Track of Your Costs

No matter what kind of celebration you plan for your child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah, there are many costs involved. First, you need to decide what kind of party to have and what extras to include. Do you want to spend more money on the entertainment or the food? Do you want to hire a magician or have the kids make flip books? What other events will you host? We've provided a list of all of the potential costs. Check off those that pertain to your party and how much you want to budget for each. Planning ahead and keeping track of your expenses will help you develop a realistic picture of the total costs.

### FOR THE SYNAGOGUE

- ☐ **Synagogue Fees** Ask what costs are associated with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Programs** Some families choose to print a program or brochure to explain the service rituals and who is participating. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Kippot** See if your synagogue allows personalized kippot before ordering. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Flowers** Do you need to provide flowers for the bimah? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Tallit** Are you purchasing, designing, or commissioning a new tallit for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child or using one from a family member? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Kiddush** If you plan to host a buffet or luncheon following services, ask your synagogue what costs are involved (food, staff, flowers, linens, etc.) If there is another celebrant, see if you can share the costs. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### PRINTING NEEDS

- ☐ **Invitations** These can range from expensive custom invites to do-it-yourself homemade ones. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Thank You Notes** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Save the Date Cards** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Table Place Seating Cards** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Calligraphy** If you decide to hire someone to hand write your place cards and/or envelopes. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Postage** Make sure to weigh an envelope with all enclosures to determine the final cost. For an extra fee, you can order customized stamps through many websites including zazzle.com and stamps.com. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### LOOKING GOOD

- ☐ **Clothes for synagogue and party for your child and other family members** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ **Hair and makeup** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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# MITZVAHNOMICS

## FOR THE GUESTS

- **Transportation** Will you transport out-of-town guests from the hotel to the synagogue and to the party if it is off site? You may also need transportation for children attending without parents. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Additional Meals** Are you having out-of-town guests for Friday night dinner and/or Sunday brunch? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Welcome Gifts for Hotel Guests** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## FOR THE CELEBRATION

- **Party Planner** (if you choose to use one) \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Venue** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Caterer** Food may be included in the total rate, but can be additional. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Band or DJ** Keep in mind you will be charged extra for dancers and motivators and be sure to factor in feeding the extra staff. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Entertainment** This varies widely depending on the type and quantity of activities you bring in. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Flowers/Décor/Lighting** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Centerpieces** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Sign-in** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Montage Specialist** You can hire a specialist or ask your DJ/Entertainment company if they can put together a creative montage of photos and videos. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Photographer/Videographer** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Custom Cake** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Party Favors** \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Giveaways** Some DJs supply giveaways they hand out on the dance floor; others may ask you to supply your own or you may want to supplement their offerings. Ask what's included in their fee. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Socks** Sounds odd, but trust us, girls will often take off their shoes for dancing and will want to don socks for sliding around the floor. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Exit Treats** Many parties include candy bars, coffee trucks and other fun food as guests exit the party. \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- **Tips** There may be some staff you would like to tip afterwards. \$ \_\_\_\_\_



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### iSparkle Events

202-302-2001

[isparkleevents.com](http://isparkleevents.com)

We concentrate our efforts on Bar Bat Mitzvah planning in the DC Metro area. We specialize in luxury Mitzvah event planning with a focus on meticulous service & end to end creativity that allows us to create unforgettable memories. Every celebration is unique & reflects our client's personality, taste, style, and budget.

### Rubel Event Management

Maplewood, NJ

917-886-8609

[rubeleventmanagement.com](http://rubeleventmanagement.com)

We're your mitzvah planning experts. We produce extraordinary mitzvahs and manage every detail imaginable. You'll feel like a guest at your own simcha.

### The Event Of A Lifetime, Inc.

914-762-5770, 212-251-0163

[theeventofalifetime.com](http://theeventofalifetime.com)

The Event Of A Lifetime is a full service event planning company that can assist with all aspects of the planning process to ensure that the experience is stress free and enjoyable.

## FASHION: APPAREL/JEWELRY

### Bratenders

630 Ninth Avenue, Suite 601, NY, NY 10036

212- 957-7000

[bratenders.com](http://bratenders.com)

Whether you're a mom with a daughter who needs her first bra, is being Bat Mitzvahed, or becoming a bride, we'll support the whole family to look and feel beautiful.

### Fortunoff Fine Jewelry

1500 Old Country Road, Westbury, NY 11590

516-222-7879, 800-636-7886

[fortunoffjewelry.com](http://fortunoffjewelry.com)

Family-run retailer established in 1922 offering a wide range of fine jewelry for men, women & kids.

### Lubin's

1 Boniface Circle

Scarsdale, NY

914-713-0300

[lubinsny.com](http://lubinsny.com)

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[rebootz.net](http://rebootz.net)

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## FAVORS: WEARABLES/PHOTOS/NOVELTIES Baked in Color

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[BakedinColor.com](http://BakedinColor.com)

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[MisterPromotion.com](http://MisterPromotion.com)

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### S'well Celebrations

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## INVITATIONS: CALLIGRAPHY/STAMPS

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[cutiepatootiecreations.com](http://cutiepatootiecreations.com)

Cutie Patootie Creations specializes in custom invitations, logos, socks, sign-ins, favors, place cards, table cards + all finishing touches and party accessories for Mitzvahs and Weddings.

### Invitations4Less.com

888-497-3581

[Invitations4Less.com](http://Invitations4Less.com)

Invitations4Less.com has been providing quality invitations at affordable prices since 1999. Our experienced staff will provide you with superior customer service from start to finish.

### Pioneer Announcements

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### The Tallis Lady

201-321-4995

[thetallislady.com](http://thetallislady.com)

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## LOCATIONS/VENUES

### Atlantis Banquets & Events

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631-574-8008

[atlantisbanquetsandevents.com](http://atlantisbanquetsandevents.com)

Atlantis Banquets + Events creates a magical atmosphere for your event with our most captivating and colorful tanks within the Long Island Aquarium.

### Chelsea Piers NY

62 Chelsea Piers, 23rd Street and Hudson River

Park, New York, NY 10011

212-336-6777

[chelseapiers.com](http://chelseapiers.com)

With a variety of themed options, Chelsea Piers ensures that your child's special day is both unique and exciting! From action-packed parties to formal catered receptions, let us customize a Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebration your family and friends will never forget.

### Cradle Of Aviation Events

Charles Lindbergh Blvd, Garden City, NY

516-572-4063

[cradleaviationevents.com](http://cradleaviationevents.com)

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### Clyde Frazier's Wine and Dine

485 10th Avenue, New York, NY 10018

212-217-9110

[clydefraziers.com](http://clydefraziers.com)

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### Dave & Buster's

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Massapequa:

1 Sunrise Mall, Ste 2192, Massapequa, NY

516-809-8514

Palisades Center:

4661 Palisades Center Dr., West Nyack, NY

845-348-6006

Pelham Manor:

881 Pelham Parkway, Pelham Manor, NY

914-380-8506

### Staten Island:

2655 Richmond Ave., Staten Island, NY

929-464-2706

Times Square:

234 W 42nd St, 3rd Floor, New York, NY

646-495-2015

Wayne:

310 Willowbrook Blvd., Wayne, NJ

973-435-9245

Westbury:

1504 Old Country Rd., Westbury, NY

516-247-6337

Woodbridge:

274 Woodbridge Center Dr., Woodbridge, NJ

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[Heritageclub@bethpage.com](mailto:Heritageclub@bethpage.com)

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[hornblowernewyork.com](http://hornblowernewyork.com)

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### iPlay America

110 Schanck Road, Freehold, NJ 07728

732-577-8200, x383

[theeventcenteratipa.com](http://theeventcenteratipa.com)

State-of-the-art event spaces at this New Jersey venue offer a unique setting for your teen's Bar or Bat Mitzvah.

### The Mansion at Oyster Bay

One Southwoods Road, Woodbury, NY

516-921-5707

[Themansionatoysterbay.com](http://Themansionatoysterbay.com)

The Mansion at Oyster Bay stands majestically in the heart of 120 perfectly manicured acres in Woodbury, Long Island.

### Maritime Aquarium

10 North Water Street, Norwalk, CT

203-852-0700 x: 2217

[maritimeaquariumevents.com](http://maritimeaquariumevents.com)

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### Meadowlands Racing & Entertainment

1 Racetrack Drive, East Rutherford, NJ 07073

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playmeadowlands.com

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### MetLife Stadium

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### NY Hall of Science (NYSCI)

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### SPACE Events

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### SPACE54

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space54nyc.com

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### The Rock Club

130 Rhodes Street, New Rochelle, NY

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climbrockclub.com

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### The Sands at Atlantic Beach

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[seaportdistrict.nyc](http://seaportdistrict.nyc)

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## Urban Air Trampoline & Adventure Park

69 Wesley Street, South Hackensack, NJ

201-212-6454

[urbanairtrampolinepark.com](http://urbanairtrampolinepark.com)

Experience a Bar/Bat Mitzvah that Defies Gravity with Urban Air Trampoline & Adventure Park! With more attractions than any other park, your event will be the talk of the town!

## Village Club at Lake Success

318 Lakeville Road, Great Neck, NY

516-829-5493

[villageclubatlakesuccess.com](http://villageclubatlakesuccess.com)

The Village Club at Lake Success is an uber-chic space with a NYC vibe offering innovative menus that will leave your guest's asking for seconds!

## Woodbury Jewish Center

200 S. Woods Road, Woodbury, NY

516-864-0001

[regalcaterers.com](http://regalcaterers.com)

The Woodbury Jewish Center is a conservative synagogue in Nassau County. With 90 chandeliers, a three tier wall of fire, and a massive 65-ft. bar, the Woodbury Jewish Center will have all your guests talking for months after your event.

## MITZVAH PROJECT ORGANIZATIONS

### JDC

220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017

646-871-3267

[jdc.org/mymitzvah](http://jdc.org/mymitzvah)

JDC is the leading global Jewish humanitarian organization. For over a century, we've put Jewish values into action when the world needs it most.

## Pitch In For Baseball & Softball

1565 Gehman Road, Harleysville, PA

267-263-4069

[pifbs.org](http://pifbs.org)

Pitch In For Baseball & Softball, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, collects new/gently used baseball and softball equipment to redistribute to kids in underserved communities worldwide.

## SCOPE (Summer Camp Opportunities Promote Education)

108 W. 39th Street, 15th floor, New York, NY

212-627-4097

[scopeusa.org](http://scopeusa.org)

SCOPE provides children from underserved communities with life changing opportunities through the experience of summer camp. SCOPE funds camp scholarships to help campers develop to their full potential.

## The Hole in the Wall Gang Camp

555 Long Wharf Drive, New Haven, CT 06511

203-772-0522

[holeinthewallgang.org](http://holeinthewallgang.org)

Founded in 1988 by Paul Newman, Camp provides more than 20,000 healing experiences to seriously ill children and family members all free of charge.

## The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society National Office

3 International Dr., Suite 200, Rye Brook, NY 10573

914-949-5213

[lls.org](http://lls.org)

The LLS mission: Cure leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma, and improve the quality of life of patients and their families.

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[aspechtoremember.com](http://aspechtoremember.com)

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## MitzvahLogos.com

202-302-2001

[mitzvahlogos.com](http://mitzvahlogos.com)

MitzvahLogos.com specializes in effortless, economical and exquisite logo design to help you set the stage for your event. We offer ready-made design options on our website, or we can work with you on a custom logo design that fully meets your mitzvah needs.

## MitzvahOrganizer.com

646-652-7512

[mitzvahorganizer.com](http://mitzvahorganizer.com)

Simplify your simcha! With this comprehensive Web-based planning tool, you have access to all the details of your celebration including the guest lists, seating arrangements, invitations, favors, transportation, honors, candle lighting and much more.

## Party Logo Design

Westchester County, NY

[partylogodesign.com](http://partylogodesign.com)

Party Logo Design creates logos for Bar Mitzvahs, Bat Mitzvah's, B'nai Mitzvahs and Sweet Sixteens.

## Poems By Carolyn

Woodbury, NY 11797

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[poemsbycarolyn.com](http://poemsbycarolyn.com)

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Roslyn, NY 11576

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### Chad David Kraus Photography

450 Manville Road, Pleasantville, NY

917-532-3478

[chadkraus.com](http://chadkraus.com)

Chad David Kraus Photography is a Westchester Magazine "Best of Westchester" award winner 4 times over. Specializing in fun, friendly, and engaging B'nai Mitzvah photography, Chad and his experienced team of lead associate photographers capture over 100 B'nai Mitzvahs each year and are now booking dates well into 2022.

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212-633-0502

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[barmitzvahbouncer.com](http://barmitzvahbouncer.com)

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## TRAVEL

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Ayelet Tours offers specialized Israel tours for Bar/Bat Mitzvah families, creating memories that will last a lifetime. Let's start planning your family's Israel adventure today!

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# TOP ENTRANCE Songs

## FOR THE BAR OR BAT MITZVAH CHILD

Among the many decisions that need to be made when planning your child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebration, one of them will be entrance songs. In addition to the Bar or Bat Mitzvah child making a special entrance, you may also want to plan a special moment for parents and siblings when they are announced by the MC and introduced to your guests.

This exciting moment happens at the beginning of your celebration and can set the mood and party intensity, so pick songs that reflect the way your family wants to celebrate!

Here's a list of song suggestions from EJ the DJ. These songs will get your guests off their feet and keep them on the dance floor!

- *Break Free* – Ariana Grande
- *Celebrate* – Pitbull
- *Don't Stop the Party* – Pitbull
- *This Is What You Came For* – Rihanna
- *Adventure of a Lifetime* – Coldplay
- *Turn Down for What* – DJ Snake
- *My House* – Flo Rida
- *Love Myself* – Hailee Steinfeld
- *Jackie Chan* – Tiesto & Dzeko
- *The Man* – Aloe Blacc



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# unlimited

## MITZVAH POSSIBILITIES



We offer private suites, a stunning rooftop terrace, modern outdoor decks, open-concept lounge, and fully customizable trackside area. Wow your guests with personally tailored menu options, TV screens, lighting effects and more!

Our venue's sizzle reel - [playmeadowlands.com/sizzle](https://playmeadowlands.com/sizzle)

360° virtual tour - [playmeadowlands.com/360tour](https://playmeadowlands.com/360tour)

Event space information - [playmeadowlands.com/dining](https://playmeadowlands.com/dining)



# AMAZING VIEWS. UNFORGETTABLE MITZVAHS.

With six unique vessels and spaces to accommodate 20-1200 guests, Hornblower has a venue for you! Amazing views. Unrivalled atmosphere.

Event planners experienced in Bar/Bat Mitzvahs will help you create an unforgettable event for everyone who attends.

We can customize everything from decorations to menus, drinks, and much more.