

Netanya



Netanya is a lively seacoast town situated on the Sharon coastal plain, and a center for tourism that attracts thousands of visitors each year. The lovely beaches that extend along its entire length, its numerous vacation facilities, and hotels have made it a popular tourist resort. Exploring Netanya, one can hear a variety of languages spoken in the streets by tourists from all over the world.

Netanya was originally a moshava – a small agricultural village with citrus groves and a flourishing tourist trade. Since the 1930s it has also become a center for the diamond cutting industry, which provide work for many of its residents.

Today Netanya is a bustling resort city. It has dozens of hotels and guesthouses, charming coffee shops, restaurants offering a variety of tastes and styles, fashion boutiques, shopping centers, galleries, and entertainment spots. Festivals and other events are held in Netanya throughout the year, making the city become a lively gathering place.

The city center has a food bazaar that is known for its colorful stalls and exotic aromas. There is also an authentic market open each week in the industrial area where you can find clothing, shoes, jewelry, and other wares.

The finest feature of Netanya is its beautiful beaches that extend for 12 kilometers along the city's seacoast. The bathing beaches have sports and vacation facilities for the entire family, and they are filled with bathers and vacationers throughout the summer. Above the beach is a ridge of rugged cliffs - the only ones of their kind in Israel - with a long promenade overlooking the sea. The promenade constitutes part of the "Israel Road" - a marked walking path that extends the entire length of the country from Kibbutz Dan in the north to Eilat in the south.

Netanya has a distinguished place in local history. There are several interesting sites such as the Um Khaled Khan that dates back to the Mamluke period. In the nearby park there is a sycamore tree that is 1,000 years old. The Pninat Shabtai Museum features an exhibition of Yemenite folklore, and the Diamond Center Museum has an exhibition of diamonds and a miniature model of a diamond mine.

Nature lovers can stroll through the southern section of the city where there are several large nature reserves, including the Irises Reserve, where there is a large concentration of rare purple irises that flower in February and March, the Nahal Poleg Nature Reserve that contains fauna that is unique to the area, and the Udim Reserve where there is a pool with turtles, fish, and water birds.