

Zikhron Ya'akov



Zikhron Ya'akov is a wonderful town for tourists, both local and foreign. This picturesque moshava semi-cooperative farming community built at the tip of the Carmel mountain range is the first moshava ever built in Israel and is a main tourism and vacation site in this region.

Anyone who visits Zikhron Ya'akov goes straight to Ha-Nadiv Street, and Ha-Meyasdim Street in the town center, which has become a very popular pedestrian mall, thanks to the special atmosphere in this place. The streets are paved with stones and pass between the moshava's original houses (some of which have been reconstructed), which are bustling with activity.

There are many quaint and charming restaurants and coffee shops, interspersed between beautifully designed stores that sell local art works and lovely souvenirs. There are art galleries, unique artists' studios and workshops. New, modern buildings stand alongside old ones, such as the synagogue and the administration building, an old courtyard with a display of antique agricultural implements.

Two of the moshava's original buildings have been turned into history museums: Beit Aharonson - dedicated to the history of the pre-state Nili underground resistance organization - and the Museum of the First Aliya (wave of immigration to Israel). All these and more make the main street a vibrant and colorful celebration of history and life.

From its early days, Zikhron Ya'akov had two main characteristics: wine and tranquility. The moshava's founding farmers cultivated vineyards and the large winery built here in 1889 became the area's most important industry. The winery (now owned by Carmel Mizrahi wineries), has a visitors center with free guided tours. During the British Mandate period (1917-1948), the moshava became a holiday resort and rural vacations site, and to this day has hotels, spas and guesthouses.

Zikhron Ya'akov was founded in 1882 and was assisted greatly by Baron Edmond de Rothschild, a Jewish philanthropist who established and financially supported many of the early moshava communities. During World War I the moshava became the headquarters of the Nili underground organization, which provided the British with intelligence information in order to help the British conquer the Turks, who ruled the country at that time. Despite rapid urban development after Israel's independence, and even though the local population has grown thanks to immigration absorption, the unique rustic character of the town has been preserved.