

## Gracia Albuhaire With Friends In Israel



The picture was taken in Jaffa in November 2000. I was visiting my friend Sara. The photo was taken in her home. I am second from the right. To my right is Yuda, Sara's second husband. Sara is to my left. Sara's first husband Vitalii Haimov passed away. He was interned to Karnobat during the Holocaust and once he wanted to marry me. I didn't like him; I was already involved in a relationship. And so, he married my friend Sara. After we were liberated, Sara left for Sofia with her husband and there she gave birth to her first son. Then they moved to Israel, where she gave birth to another boy. They are both married to Israeli women. Sara's second husband Yuda Varsano is also from Bourgas. I know his brother Nicko. The other two women are also from Bulgaria. Katya is married to a Jew; she used to live in Israel. Rosa Mitrani's husband is from Karnobat. Rosa was invited to my recitation [in Jaffa]. I went to Israel in 2000. My nephews sent me the ticket and organized my stay there. In the course of a month I visited all the relatives on my father's side and some on my husband's side. When I arrived I felt like I was on an Asian continent. In Tel Aviv I saw broad-leaved trees. My first impression was that the country was wonderful. I had meetings with poets and leaders of different organizations, who had arranged literary meetings for me. I saw many people from Bulgaria. Obviously they had announced my visit and people from Karnobat came especially to see me. I traveled to many cities. Be'er Sheva, Jaffa, Tel Aviv, Rishon Letzion, Ramat Gan, Jerusalem, Haifa. When I was in Israel I was as though in a dream-like state - full of emotions and experiences. We were all the time worried about our relatives and friends in Israel, as well as now. During my trip to Israel that year, I also visited professor Albert Behar in Jerusalem. We saw the sights of Jerusalem; we visited the Yaf Ashen memorial. At the same time the road to old Jerusalem was closed. The Arabs had announced a day of revenge, a day for peaceful manifestations and meetings, although they actually fired shots. It was frightening. Therefore the police had cordoned off the whole region. I celebrated Yom Kippur in Jerusalem; we did taanit [means fast in Ivrit] and went to the olive forest. The professor showed me the city. When we saw a package with a bottle sticking out of it, he told me that we should immediately report it to the police because it might be an explosive. I thought that it was probably a bottle of water. But he insisted that it might be a 'Molotov' cocktail.