

Mikhail And Berta Gauzner



This is me with my wife Berta Gauzner, nee Kelshtein at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. The photo was taken in 1997. I got acquainted with my future wife in 1961 when I was 25, and she was 22. We got introduced to each other by a mutual friend. It was a brief encounter in the street that resulted in nothing. A year later, I spent time with this same friend and came back from a tourist walking tour. Following habits, our tourist company went to the seafront Zhemchuzhina Restaurant in Arkadia in the evening. I met Berta again there. We stayed late into the night and danced. Night. Moonlight across the sea. I walked her home; it was three in the morning. Deep inside I knew for sure - I was in love. Three months later, on 5th August 1962, we got married. My wife was born in Zhytomyr in 1939. Berta finished school with a golden medal and entered the Department of Mathematics at Odessa Pedagogical Institute. In 1962 she graduated and worked for a year at the Molodaya Gvardiya [Young Guard] Republican pioneer camp. Later she was employed by the most popular physical-mathematical school. She looked young for her age and was very beautiful. When she peeped into the classroom the pupils thought she was a freshman. But she never had problems with discipline: her pupils always loved and obeyed her. My wife and I visited Israel in 1997. I understood that it was a completely unique place, I don't know if there's another one like it on earth. It has a very special flair, especially Jerusalem. We were in Jerusalem twice, but only on flying visits because we stayed in Holon with a friend of mine who had invited us. We traveled all over Israel with my friends and relatives. I heard from them that every bush and every tree in that country had been planted by human hand. And there I felt that I was one with that heroic people, that I belonged to the Jewish people. I have to admit that I wasn't overcome by religious inspiration, it was rather the spirit of these heroic, proud people that managed to create their own state and

restore national independence.