

Marcel And Michel Israel



These are my two sons as children - Michel, four years old, and the older, Marcel, five years old. The photo was taken in Velingrad. My husband Salvator had been a physician at the same camp where this photo was taken on our vacation nearly ten years later. We got married in 1942 in Karnobat. After the war ended, we returned to Karnobat, where my husband started work as head of the district medical center until 1950. Meanwhile, our two sons were born - Marcel, in Plovdiv in 1945 and Michel, in Karnobat in 1948. We tried to educate our children in the spirit of the Jewish traditions. Neither I, nor my husband is religious, but we still chose to observe the traditions. I believe that Jewish traditions are a real treasure to everyone who respects them and observes them, without going to extremes. We celebrated all holidays. Salvator - or Daddy as we all called

him, myself included - always read the prayers. We celebrated at home and didn't go to the synagogue. On Sabbath my mother lit the candles and later on I did. My mother cleaned the house on Thursday, cooked on Friday and Saturday was a day for rest. We didn't go to work then. When the children were little, they loved Tu bi-Shevat very much. I made them purses with various fresh and dry fruits, in which they groped as if they were bottomless and their contents - priceless. Marcel ate everything right away, but Michel preserved his fruits and ate them gradually, until his brother asked him to share them 'like brothers'. Now I make such purses for my granddaughters, who are no longer little children, but are still very happy to receive them. Our sons learned Ladino. At first Michel refused to speak Ladino, but then they both started speaking it. Unlike my childhood years when many people gathered during the holidays, Salvator and I always celebrated the holidays at home with the children.