

Larissa Rozina With Her Husband And Friends



This is a picture of my husband Aron Hankin and me and our friends. The photo was taken in Kiev in the 1990s. In the 1970s my husband was trying to convince me to emigrate to Israel. I didn't mind, basically, but I was afraid that my parents - my father, in particular - wouldn't accept this decision. This was the main reason for my unwillingness to move. Besides, I am a woman of the Russian culture and I love Kiev. But this wouldn't have stopped me. I often think that if my husband had said to me that he would go alone, I would have followed him. But he has a soft character and he wouldn't have said anything like that. Our friends were leaving. I had a friend, and when he was leaving I said, 'I'm very happy for you and unhappy about myself. It's a pity you are leaving'. We had warm relationships in our family. We had many friends visiting our home with their children. We had up to 30 guests at birthdays or New Year celebration. We didn't celebrate religious or Soviet holidays. We were atheists and didn't raise our daughter Alexandra religiously. I felt like a Jew only when I was hurt. My husband is different in this respect. He never forgot about his roots, religion and traditions of his people. He wanted to live where his people were living on their own land. During Perestroika in the 1990s I came across a book by the famous Zionist, Jabotinsky, that changed me. I read Isaac B. Singer. We couldn't find such books before. Now my national self-consciousness has returned to me. But I still believe that one cannot be proud of being Polish or Jewish. It's equal to be proud of being red-haired or blonde. But my heart aches when I hear about terrorist attacks in Israel. I have become chauvinistic about Arabs. Many of our friends left in the 1990s. We couldn't afford to visit Israel. We've seen photos, guide-books and read books about it. My husband knows more about it than I do. We listen to all the news from Israel. We listen to Israeli programs in Russian on radio Reka [River] every night.