

Bella Zeldovich



This is a picture of me in my apartment. The photo was taken in Odessa in 2002. At the end of the 1980s Jewish life revived in Odessa. The synagogue in Osipov Street was opened and the building of the main synagogue in Yevreyskaya Street was returned to the Jewish community . There are two Jewish schools, kindergartens, the charity center Gemilut Hesed and an Israeli cultural center in town. We receive Jewish newspapers and watch Jewish programs on television - all in Russian. There is a kosher store in the yard of the synagogue in Richelievskaya Street, and a slaughterhouse in Stolbovaya Street that supplies kosher meat to Jewish organizations and kosher stores. I've lived

with my daughter's family since my husband's [Esay Zeldovich] death in 1987. I have many friends of different nationalities. I've been friends with some of them for 52 years already. My daughter and her husband go to the synagogue very seldom, but we have matzah on holidays and my daughter and I cook traditional Jewish food that our grandmothers used to make: gefilte fish, chicken and other delicious things. I buy matzah at the synagogue in Osipov Street. Many of my acquaintances and relatives have recently left Odessa. The people that were leaving were treated with sympathy by others. Everybody understood that people had a right to live where they preferred to live. Only my niece remained in Odessa. I think it's a very brave decision of people to move to another country. I remember I couldn't wait to come back to Odessa when I had to stay a few years in Yerevan. Odessa is like a Promised Land to me.