

Medric Milu At His Bar Mitzvah Ceremony



This is a cousin of mine, Medric Milu, at his bar mitzvah ceremony. The photo was taken in Iasi in the 1930s.

There is a street in Iasi in the area where we lived that was called just like that: the Synagogues Street. A lot of synagogues were there, separate synagogues according to trade: the Tailors' Synagogue, the Publicans' Synagogues, and the Grand Synagogue that remains today the only synagogue in the area to still be used for prayer and Jewish cultural events. In my childhood and even later, when I was 15 or 16, my father would take me with him to Friday and Saturday evening prayers. When others would go outside to play football, I had to go to the synagogue. But this is how I learned everything that is to know about Judaic tradition. I liked it because I learned all kinds of useful stuff.

More often than not the holidays were about the relationship with God, about going to the synagogue. That was the atmosphere, especially in Iasi. There were a lot of shopkeepers and during the Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur holidays, Iasi would be a commercially dead city. All shops were closed, all synagogues were full. Everybody spent the New Year's Eve with the family.