

Tinka Kohen At The Market In Tel Aviv



This is me at the market [the “Shuka”] in Tel Aviv. The picture was taken in April 1990. This is my second visit to Israel, but my first one after the changes. My husband Pepo Kohen was also with me and he took this picture of me at the market in Tel Aviv. This market is a favorite place of the Bulgarian Jews, who live in Israel or come to visit from Bulgaria, because here you can find very good products at low prices. Let me tell you a funny story - when I was in Israel around 1980, a friend of mine there called me and said, ‘Tinka, a friend of mine will come to see you in Bulgaria. Please, do her the favor that she will ask of you.’ But she told me nothing else on the phone. In a couple of days, a woman called, speaking in Russian and said, ‘I am the friend of your friend Shelly and I want to see you.’ She came and told me that she moved from Moscow to Israel seven years

ago. But she had relatives with whom she wrote letters and her sister went on an excursion to Bulgaria so that they could meet. She wanted me to help her find out in which hotel she was. When I checked all the big hotels, I remembered the Slavia Hotel. Indeed, it turned out that there was such a group of tourists there and I went to speak to the group leader. I made up the story that my daughter was a fellow student of that woman, that she heard that she was here and wanted to meet her. But he told me that there was no such person in his group. We both went to the hotel and asked a Russian woman in the foyer. It turned out that not only was the woman I had been looking for there, but she was also in the same room as the woman we asked. So, both sisters started meeting in secret. The woman went out of the hotel, as if to go shopping and went to see her sister, who had rented a room in another hotel. After this she traveled throughout Bulgaria to all the same places the group went to, such as to Pleven and Varna, to be with her. She couldn't even give her a little gift, because she was afraid that the Russian customs officials might confiscate it. So, such things happened then. Two sisters were not allowed to keep in touch properly!