

B"H

Everything you need to know

# BAT MITZVAH GUIDEBOOK





# MAZEL TOV!

Mazel Tov! Your daughter will soon be celebrating the biggest event of her adolescent life: Her Bat Mitzvah.

Bat Mitzvah ceremonies that are held in Chabad are meaningful, engaging and tailor made to suit the needs of your daughter and family. Your family and friends will enjoy the inclusive and uplifting atmosphere at your daughter's Bat Mitzvah at Chabad.

Bat Mitzvah is not a one-time experience, but the beginning of Jewish adulthood and a girl's personal connection and contribution to the Jewish people and to the world at large. It is an expression of her Jewish understanding and commitment rather than a "graduation" from it.



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# WHAT IS A BAT MITZVAH?

Bat-Mitzvah literally means "Daughter of Mitzvah," which describes the girl now responsible to do all Mitzvot (commandments).

The G-dly soul enters a woman in its entirety at the age of 12. The girl then attains her religious maturity and becomes responsible to fulfill all Torah commandments. This occasion is cause for great celebration and gratitude to G-d, and hence the Bat-Mitzvah ceremony.

One becomes Bat-Mitzvah automatically on one's twelfth Jewish birthday, with or without a party!

The Kabbalah teaches that from the age of 13 for boys and 12 for girls, the voice of our soul becomes more expressive. The needs, yearnings and feelings of our spiritual inner self are allowed to emerge. We begin to seek meaning, fulfillment, connection, inspiration. We meet a side to our personality that we never knew existed - a deeper side.

This is what makes us an adult in spiritual terms. We now have the tools to appreciate a multi-layered world because we ourselves are now multi-layered - we have an active body and an expressive soul. Until now our character was one-sided and shallow; only the body had a say.

From now on we can also see things through the eyes of our deeper self - our soul. Then the choice is ours - to continue to live superficially or to develop our spiritual awareness.

The Bat Mitzvah experience must be presented not as an end to a long process of Hebrew lessons, but an initiation into a lifetime of spiritual discovery.

Once it is over, start giving your child opportunities to express his or her soul. Suggest ways they can give of their time to help others, to volunteer for worthy causes - to use their fresh young energy positively.

Discuss questions of morality with your child; bring up real issues such as G-d and the soul, the challenges of growing up, the pain and beauty of true love. Welcome your child into the world of living thoughtfully.

When planning the Bat Mitzvah, remember that the really important stuff begins after the fanfare has died down. People will forget who the caterer was a week after the event, and the table decorations will mostly be destroyed by the time the main course is served. But the values you pass down to your children are eternal. That is a gift that they will cherish every day of their lives - the gift of spiritual maturity.

# HOW WE CELEBRATE AT CHABAD

ChabadSheepsheadBay.com



ChabadSheepsheadBay.com

Chabad of Sheepshead Bay provides a complete Bat Mitzvah preparation and celebration. We work together to make sure that every aspect of this tremendous milestone and the time leading up to it is fun, meaningful and uncomplicated. Your daughter will enjoy a very personalized and meaningful preparatory experience for her Bat-mitzvah with Chabad. When a girl reaches the age of twelve, she officially becomes “Bat-Mitzvah” and should mark this milestone with a meaningful celebration. The celebration does not need to be exactly when she turns twelve, especially if more time for preparation is desired.

**Let’s break it down step by step:**

# STEP 1: ADVANCED PREPARATION OPTIONS:

Here is where you start when it comes to thinking about your daughter's big milestone. How much Jewish knowledge does she know? The more options you have, the better equipped she will be.

<p>4 YEARS PRIOR</p>	<p><u>HEBREW SCHOOL</u></p>	<p>Girls are encouraged to continue their Jewish education at Chabad Hebrew School up to age thirteen, even if their Bat-Mitzvah is mid-year. Continuing in a Jewish environment with Jewish learning will enhance the message Chabad wishes to convey to all Bat-mitzvah students - that this milestone is a beginning - not end - to Jewish womanhood.</p>
<p>1 YEAR (SEASON) PRIOR</p>	<p><u>BAT MITZVAH CLUB</u></p> <p><u>*MANDATORY</u></p>	<p>The Bat-Mitzvah Club is an educational and enriching club which allows your daughter to prepare for her Bat-Mitzvah with other girls in the area. The club is open to ages 11-13. It is a wonderful venue for Bat-Mitzvah age girls to socialize and learn together in a focused yet fun atmosphere. The program includes fascinating guest speakers, social action opportunities and meaningful trips.</p>
<p>1 YEAR PRIOR</p>	<p><u>ATTEND SHABBAT SERVICES</u></p>	<p>The Bat Mitzvah girl will attend Shabbat morning services a minimum of 3 times prior to her Bat Mitzvah ceremony. This will help familiarize her with the prayer service, help her feel comfortable in a synagogue setting and feel more prepared for her Bat Mitzvah service. This also gives the Bat Mitzvah family a chance to meet other synagogue members who will be present on her special day.</p>

3  
WEEKS  
PRIOR

INDIVIDUAL  
PREPS

Once the basics are in place, your daughter is ready to prepare for the big day. Please contact Chayale to schedule a date for your daughter's Bat-Mitzvah. Once this date is set, 1-3 sessions of private tutoring will be arranged to prepare your daughter for her special day and guide her through her private study. At the private sessions, your daughter will choose which prayer or mitzvah she will be presenting at her Bat-Mitzvah. She will also compose a Bat-Mitzvah speech highlighting what she has learned to recite at her ceremony.

4  
MONTHS  
PRIOR

FAMILY  
JEWISH  
HISTORY  
PROJECT –  
CONNECTING  
THE CHAIN  
  
\*OPTIONAL

A unique project to connect the Bat-Mitzvah girl with the richness of her personal heritage. Assisted by parents and siblings, the Bat-Mitzvah girl reaches out to as many family members possible, asking if they own Jewish items related to culture, tradition and history. Examples of Judaica family heirlooms may include a Chupah, passport, Kiddush cup, Seder plate, special piece of Judaica Jewelry, Tefillin, etc. Relatives should photograph the objects. If there is detailed information about the history of the item, please take note as this will aid the learning and research process. At private learning sessions, we will explore what these items are and discover unique Judaic aspects relating to the Bat Mitzvah girl's personal family history.

# STEP 2.

## CHOOSE A BAT MITZVAH CEREMONY & DATE

At your daughter's Bat-Mitzvah ceremony, she should be properly prepared for the incredible rite of passage of becoming a Bat-Mitzvah. In addition to her Hebrew school and Bat-Mitzvah club education, she will have practiced a prayer to recite or Mitzvah to present, and written a Bat-Mitzvah speech.

Please keep in mind that the Ceremony is not the main part of your daughter's Bat Mitzvah. No matter how grand or simple you choose to celebrate, it is the Bat Mitzvah Girls maturity and meaning in life that we are truly celebrating.

### THE BAT MITZVAH CEREMONY WILL INCLUDE:

- Presentation of a Mitzvah, Prayer or Torah Passage by the Bat Mitzvah Girl
- The Bat Mitzvah's speech with reflections on the meaning of this important milestone, her path in reaching it, etc..
- The Rabbi's explanation of the process, ceremony, and respective reading and prayers
- As per your guidance, we call on family members and friends for honors, blessings and/or personal addresses.
- Upon request, A handout will be prepared for all the guests containing a schedule and what to expect.
- The parents bless the Bat Mitzvah girl.
- A candy throw, in which we shower the Bat Mitzvah with sweetness.
- Mazel Tov singing and dancing!

# CEREMONY OPTIONS

The main focus of a Bat mitzvah is the meaning more than the ceremony. Therefore there is no specific traditional ceremony to observe. We therefore have a few options for you to choose from, so that you can enjoy this milestone in a way that suits you and your family.

## **SHABBAT DAY KIDDUSH**

*Saturday Morning/Afternoon:*

The ceremony is done after Shabbat morning services. At the conclusion of the Shabbat prayers, the Bat Mitzvah girl is called up and shares her speech and Hebrew reading with the entire congregation.

The family of the Bat Mitzvah sponsors the Kiddush luncheon following the service. During the Kiddush, parents and siblings of the Bat Mitzvah, as well as close friends and relatives, share a few heartfelt words as part of the 12 Cups of Blessing ceremony.

Please bear in mind that cameras, music and microphones are not to be used due to Shabbat..

## **CUP FULL OF BLESSINGS CEREMONY**

*Any day, Any time:*

After the Bat-Mitzvah girl recites her prayers and speech, twelve people are honored to make a toast on a small cup of wine or grape juice and offer a message/blessing to the Bat-Mitzvah girl. The small cups of blessings are then poured into a larger cup.

The Bat-Mitzvah girl recites the prayer for wine/grape juice and drinks the cup, thereby "internalizing the blessings."

## **CHARM PRESENTATION CEREMONY**

*Any day, Any time:*

This is a creative, meaningful and customized event to fit your daughter's Bat Mitzvah theme. The Bat Mitzvah girl will study a particular Prayer, Mitzvah or Torah passage based on her theme, and recite it. The service can include several prayers, Dvar Torah by the Bat Mitzvah, and parents' blessings.

The highlight of the service is the Bat Mitzvah Charm Presentation—a beautiful ceremony where family members and friends are called up to present the Bat Mitzvah girl with a charm—representing great Jewish women— and give her a blessing connected to the message of that charm. This ceremony celebrates Jewish womanhood and it is unique and creative.

## **SHABBAT CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY**

*Friday Night:*

The ceremony takes place prior to the start of Shabbat. You may choose to do this ceremony as part of the Friday night service or as a stand alone service.

The Bat Mitzvah girl will learn about the beauty of lighting Shabbat candles and will perform this special mitzvah in the presence of her guests. Mothers and grandmothers can participate in the candle lighting as well. Afterward she shares her speech, as well as others that wish to speak. The ceremony can be followed by Kiddush, Challah and a Shabbat Dinner.

Please bear in mind that cameras, music and microphones are not to be used after the candles are lit due to Shabbat.

## **HAVDALAH CEREMONY**

*Saturday Evening:*

This ceremony works well for Bat-Mitzvahs celebrated on a Saturday night in the winter months when Shabbat departs early in the evening.

This is a lovely ceremony which incorporates the Havdalah ceremony (which is recited after Shabbat to differentiate the holy day of Shabbat from the rest of the week). After the Bat-Mitzvah girl recites her prayers and speech, twelve people are honored to hold a candle and offer a Bat-Mitzvah message to the Bat-Mitzvah girl. This leads into a beautiful Havdalah ceremony.

Please note this service can only take place after nightfall. Thus, this option only works practically speaking in the fall or winter months.

## **PASSING THE FLAME CEREMONY**

*Any day, Any time:*

Similar to the Havdala Ceremony, this can be done on any day of the week.

After the Bat-Mitzvah girl recites her prayers and speech, twelve people are honored to hold a candle and offer a Bat-Mitzvah message to the Bat-Mitzvah girl. They will then pass the flame and light another candle. There is no blessing recited on the candles.

We can conclude the ceremony with a song of peace for Israel.

# STEP 3. CHOOSE A VENUE

At Chabad of Sheepshead Bay, we can offer our synagogue and backyard tent for a modest fee- \$250 per room including cleaning fee. (free for Hebrew School Families. Just pay for Cleaning - \$100)

We have 130 chairs and 20 rectangle tables. The Synagogue can fit up to 80 people. The Tent can hold up to 130 people seated.

You are welcome to use our service and choose another venue as long as it is kosher. See below for a full list of suggested venues.

## IMPORTANT NOTES

We provide Hebrew/English prayer books

Jewish Law prevents us from allowing pictures or videos, and music/microphones on Shabbat. Photo shoots can be taken on Friday or any time prior to the Bat Mitzvah.

Upon request, we can provide assistance and samples for the wording of the Bat Mitzvah invitation. Please submit a copy of the invitation before printing or emailing.

We traditionally have the assembled guests throw candies after the Bat Mitzvah girl completes her reading. We will let you know which candy to buy.

If you choose the Shabbat Kiddush option, please contact Rabbi Cohen at 646 523 9608 for pricing and info.

We are glad to assist your family in the plans of your Bat Mitzvah in any way we can. Please let us know how we can be of help!

# STEP 4. FINALIZE THE DETAILS



Two weeks before the event, we will meet to go over the exact schedule of the event based on the ceremony chosen, as well as who is speaking and receiving any honors etc..



The week of the Bat Mitzvah, we will do a practice run with your daughter ( in the synagogue if choosing our venue) to ensure that she feels confident, comfortable and fully prepared for her big day!

# Frequently Asked QUESTIONS

Q

## QUESTION:

I am not a member of Chabad of Sheepshead Bay. Can I still have my daughter's Bat Mitzvah at Chabad?

## ANSWER:

Yes! No need to be a member to join in any service, program or ceremony at Chabad. You are always welcome!

Q

## QUESTION:

My family and I are not religious. I am afraid that we may feel uncomfortable in the Chabad Synagogue setting.

## ANSWER:

Chabad is all about embracing every single Jew regardless of background or religious level. If you are Jewish, you belong! We don't believe in labels, we are one People. We are committed to making you and your family feel comfortable and warmly accepted.

Q

## QUESTION:

What is the fee for hosting a Bat Mitzvah at Chabad?

## ANSWER:

As for the tutoring and officiating the Bat mitzvah Ceremony, you are welcome to give as much as you feel comfortable. We will only charge you for anything you request that will cost us (printing material...)

Bat Mitzvah Club includes 8 monthly events for \$250

Please see above for the Venue pricing



## STEP 1. ADVANCED PREPARATION

Go through the list to ensure your daughter attends as many activities as possible.



## STEP 2. CHOOSE DATE & CEREMONY

Choose a party date, as well as a ceremony theme that talks to you most.



## STEP 3. CHOOSE A VENUE

You are welcome to use our space or choose a kosher hall of your choice.



## STEP 4. FINALIZE DETAILS

Sit down and put together the last minute details.

## WE HOPE YOU FIND OUR GUIDE HELPFUL

We look forward to working with you on your milestone. For any questions or more information please reach out to us!

Rabbi Moishy & Chayale Teitelbaum

# SUMMARY

# SUGGESTED VENUES



King Solomon Restaurant | 40-100 Guest | 1787 Coney Island Ave



Castells Resaurant | 40-60 Guest | 222 Avenue U



Ohel David & Shlomo | 100-150 Guest | 710 Shore Blvd



Metropolitan\* | 200 Guest | 2555 Shell Rd **\*Request Kosher Menu**



Sephardic Lebenese Congregation | 70-100 Guest | 805 Avenue T