



This month's edition...

- 1 A Word from the Rothberg Provost
- 2 Student Profile
- 3 Upcoming 'Chanukiot' Tour
- 4 Coexistence in Israel - Lecture and Tour
- 5 Knesset Tour
- 6 Israel Museum Tour
- 7 "Only in Jerusalem"
- 8 Announcement for Potential Students

H.I.C.P. Updates.....

Dear Students,

It is my great pleasure to officially welcome you to the Mount Scopus campus for the inaugural class of the Rothberg International School's Hebrew and Israeli Culture Program. As you can see, we have worked hard to develop and hone this program so that you can experience Israel and Jerusalem to the fullest. You are a gifted and wonderfully diverse group of individuals, and we have already felt your positive impact on our school.

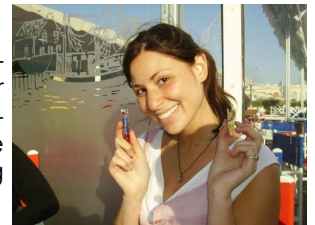
Best of luck,

Prof. Mimi Ajzenstadt, Provost of the Rothberg International School

An Interview with H.I.C.P. Student Sarah Cohen (France):

Why did you decide to join this program?

So many reasons! I wanted to truly discover Israel, learn Hebrew, meet people from all over the world, explore sites and get to know Jerusalem. I wanted to feel the history of the place...and even though I'm not religious, living in Jerusalem is a spiritual experience.



And...what do you think now that you're here?

It's much better than I expected. Our teachers are so good. Also, we have a lot of trips, and with that you can really meet other students, see so many places, and it's all facilitated by the School. We learn a lot in Hebrew, English, and even French!

What's the funniest thing that has happened to you here so far?

Well I'm taking Salsa classes on my own and I barely understand the teacher's Hebrew. He asked the girls to do some sort of move, I still don't know what it was, but everyone suddenly formed a circle, leaving me standing on my own both confused and amused. Obviously everyone, including myself, had a good laugh.

Well, while we're on the topic, how's your Hebrew now?

After one month???. Well, I barely knew any Hebrew before I came, only how to read a little, but now I can understand a lot. Obviously, I don't understand everything, but I get the main idea of conversations, and some words here and there. I also can speak a little.

A Hanukah Invitation

Please join us to light the second candle for the Hanukah Holiday



Wednesday
21.12.11
18:00

3rd floor - Rothberg

Lecture and Tour on Coexistence

Last Thursday, December 8th, Vice Provost Shimon Lipsky spoke to the students about co-existence. He not only addressed the general topic of coexistence but also delved into the struggles and successes that we experience here in Israel. On December 15th, the students were treated to a tour of Jerusalem on the same theme. We first met with a Muslim leader who spoke of his personal interactions and discussions with many Israeli politicians, rabbis, and world leaders. We were then led on a unique tour of Jerusalem's old city with a resident of the Jewish Quarter.

'Chanukiot' Tour

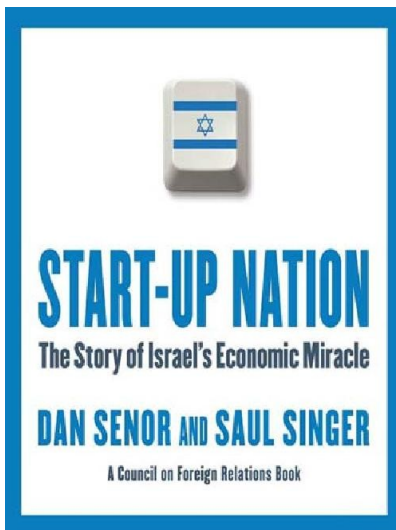
On Thursday, December 22nd, we will tour several quaint Jerusalem neighborhoods with a certified tour guide, in order to see how Jerusalemites celebrate Hanukah. On the tour, we will observe a variety of chanukiot (menorahs) lighting up the city streets.

Knesset Tour



One day after the memorial day for the late Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, when Knesset Members spoke about their memories of Rabin and the lessons that Israel should take from his assassination, HICP students visited the Knesset to learn about Israeli democracy. We heard stories about the signing of the Declaration of Independence, saw Marc Chagall's beautiful tapestries, and discussed the complexities of the Israeli democratic system. Since the students hail from four different countries, we also compared our governing systems from home with that of Israel's.

A Start Up Nation: An Evening with Saul Singer



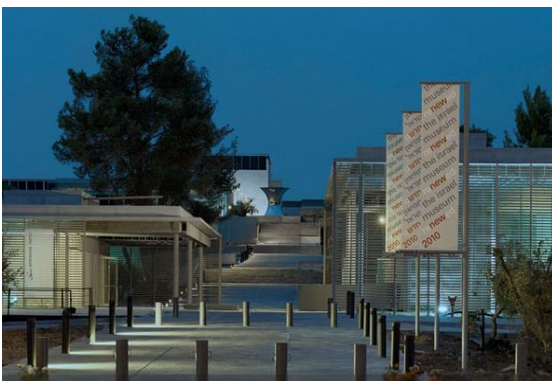
On November 17th, the HICP students travelled to Herzliya for a lecture by Saul Singer, co-author of the popular book, *Start-Up Nation: The Story of Israel's Economic Miracle*.

The evening opened with a reception where we met students from other universities while enjoying fresh fruit, pastries and coffee. We were then ushered into a small hall where we heard an enthralling lecture on economic innovations in Israel today.

Mr. Singer painted an optimistic picture of Israel's economic potential. He was kind enough to answer questions from the students following his hour-long lecture.

After the lecture, we returned to Jerusalem, and most of the students promptly changed into their "going out clothes." They arrived on time to enjoy the annual opening party thrown by the Hebrew University's Student Union.

Israel Museum Tour



As a special treat, HICP students will be touring the Israel Museum during the holiday of Hanukkah.

The tour is intended to bring the students closer to Israeli culture by exposing them to the fascinating exhibits and displays at the Museum.

Pictures of the tour will appear in an upcoming newsletter.

Only in Jerusalem

It's Friday morning as we meet at the beautiful Jaffa Gate, just outside of Jerusalem's Old City. I've been here at least 100 times before, but every journey through these gates brings a new surprise.

Today, we are being treated to a personal tour with Dr. Rona Avissar-Lewis, archaeologist and teacher at the Rothberg International School. While the hour is early and none of us slept enough last night, there is always a bit of excitement when travelling around the Old City. And to top it off, Dr. Avissar-Lewis is the perfect guide to lead us through space and time, stealing glances at the lives of kings, warriors, architects, builders, shop keepers, and travelers.

"This turret was designed and built by the Ottomans, in the 16th century," explains Rona as she climbs up to demonstrate how the ancient soldier stood. "As you can see, the design is perfect for an archer to stand right here and be protected from attackers below."

We jump from the Crusaders to the Greeks, from the Mamaluks to King David, all within the Old City walls. Houses built upon houses, towers upon towers, each using a previous generation's stonework in order to create something new.

We are standing above a large archaeological site that lies midway between the City of David and the Temple Mount. We are not sure whose house this is, but clearly they had money. As Rona hands us a layout of the site and asks us to be "amateur archaeologists,"

the Muslim call to prayer can be heard from the direction of the Al Aqsa Mosque.

We lift our heads, soaking in the moment, and continue to meander through the mounds of large stones, past large clay containers that once held grains of some sort. From above us we see a lone Ultra-Orthodox Jewish man approaching the site. He stops and gently stands at the edge, appraising the rocks before him, and then suddenly he opens his mouth and begins to sing:

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want...

His voice beautifully repeats the words from the Psalms of David, and as his prayers echo off of the rocks, they seem powerful enough to cast a slight breeze across the his overgrown gray beard.

But just as quickly as he came, the man finishes his prayer, lifts his arms waving goodbye to the ancient stones of Jerusalem, and hastily walks away in preparation for Shabbat.

And then I think, "only in Jerusalem."

Only in Jerusalem can you stand on the ruins of a home that is more than a thousand years old, listening to the booming call to prayer from one of the most famous mosque's in the world, all while being serenaded with the sweet music and poetry of the Bible. Only in Jerusalem.

- Jonathan Madoff, Academic Advisor -



Students tour the Old City of Jerusalem with Dr. Rona Avissar-Lewis



POTENTIAL STUDENTS

We would love to hear from you! Does this program speak to you? If so, contact us or read more on our website.

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