



Yom Ha'atzmaut, or Israel Independence Day commemorates the establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948. In Israel, Jewish people celebrate the day with fireworks, barbecues, and public concerts. Outside Israel, Jewish communities host parties and gatherings to celebrate. Often, the focus of these events is on Israeli culture, everything from classic Israeli foods -- hummus, falafel, schnitzel, and shawarma -- to Israeli dance, Israeli [music](#), and all things [Hebrew](#). People wear blue and white and wave Israeli flags. You can celebrate *Yom Ha'atzmaut* too by trying [Israeli foods](#), listening to music, and learning about Israel.

Enjoy a few fun resources we've collected to enhance your celebration!

Music

Songs and music are a great way to bring Israel's culture to Jews worldwide. Consider these program ideas that focus on music:

- Choose from the [Makom playlist](#) or from one of the [iCenter playlists](#).
- Share the [text](#) and this special [rendition](#) of the anthem from the 2020 Yom HaZikaron ceremony in Israel, which was held under lockdown because of the pandemic. To take the session to the next level, explore the lyrics using the [Four Hatikvah Questions](#) from the Makom Israel section of the Jewish Agency for Israel website.

Touring the Land

- [Running Around Jerusalem](#) offers 20- to 30-minute videos of a tour guide and his friend running through different neighborhoods of Jerusalem—an excellent opportunity to see Israel and learn some of the nuances of the country's history and contemporary stories. Use these as part of your Yom Ha'tzmaut celebrations.
- Jump on YouTube and check out visit Israel's library of stunning videos showcasing Israel! [Go Israel!](#)



Culinary Arts

Programs that focus on cooking and the culinary arts are other ways to infuse Israeli culture into North Americans' lives, so consider some of these activities for Yom Ha'atzmaut:

- Plan an "Master Chef" event. Share this JCC created "Taste of Israel" [recipe booklet](#).
- Check out Adeena Sussman's [website](#). She is the author of "Sababa: Fresh, Sunny Flavors From My Israeli Kitchen: A Cookbook, coauthor of 14 other cookbooks, and as presented to JCCs both in person and online.
- Use the iCenter for Israel Education's video series, [Homemade Jam](#), in which Israeli chef Hedai Offaim invites celebrities from different backgrounds into his kitchen to cook and sing together.

Other Great Resources

- Check out this [video](#) in which Gal Gadot teaches viewers several idiomatic Hebrew slang terms.
- Add Hebrew ambiance by hanging posters of [Hebrew slang](#) from the iCenter
- The [Tali Fund of Israel](#) has produced fun activities and resources suitable for families around the Hebrew month of Iyar (which includes Yom Ha'atzmaut).
- Perfect for family engagement, professional learning, or adult discussion groups is "[For the Sake of Argument,](#)" written by Robbie Gringras and Abi Dauber Sterne. The book features 24 short stories specially designed to be used by family and friends to argue some of the thorniest issues facing Israel and the Jewish world today. These short stories have been curated to enable readers to explore and grapple with other viewpoints and voices and deepen their understanding of themselves, others, and Israel.
- [PJ Library](#) offers a huge array of choices for families and children!
- Visit [goisrael.com](#) for breathtaking photos and find inspiration for your gathering!

