

In the early 20th century nearly, one million Jews indigenous to the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf Region were displaced from their country of origin. Collectively known as Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews, their rich culture and ancient history is in danger of being permanently forgotten.

Culture and Tradition

For over 2,500 years Jewish communities throughout North Africa, the Middle East, and the Gulf Region thrived — as witnessed by literature, archaeology, and art documenting their existence. The vibrant cultural and spiritual traditions of Sephardic and Mizrahi Jewry helped lay the foundation of Jewish life world wide. The list of cultural and spiritual contributions of Mizrahim and Sephardim is expansive and adds a colorfully rich dimension to Jewish culture and history.

Accessible to all — yet reached by few — JIMENA is here to share the rich traditions and history of Mizrahi and Sephardic Jews with Jews and non-Jews in North America.

Historical Accuracy

From 1948 — 1970 Jews from the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf Region, had their property confiscated and were systematically persecuted and victimized. Ultimately, these Jews were forced from their homes becoming the “Forgotten Refugees”. Their story of displacement, material losses, and fractured identities, has been left out of political, academic and social discourse dealing with human rights violations over the past 60 years.

JIMENA adds context to the commonly adopted and incomplete historical narrative of the Middle East and North Africa. We address this issue of Jewish displacement from Arab countries in college campuses, high schools, community centers, media, religious institutions and organizations throughout North America. Our message is loud and clear — we too were once refugees, but we have chosen a path of self-preservation, growth and tolerance.



Courtesy of Juan Carlos and Miriam Peretz



Our Programs

Speakers Bureau

JIMENA’s Speakers Bureau is composed of former Jewish refugees who share their personal story of displacement and spread the message of tolerance and respect for all. Members of the Bureau undergo intensive training and are available to visit academic institutions and organizations throughout North America.

Visual History Project

This project aims to collect the recorded personal testimonies of Jews who fled North African and Middle Eastern countries and now live in North America. These testimonies will help preserve and advance the important heritage and history of Jews indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa.

Cultural Outreach Programming

Through cultural programming such as Henna Ceremonies, Mimouna Celebrations, Mizrahi Shabbaton, Middle Eastern Cooking Classes, Film Screenings and Music Series JIMENA shares the rich culture of Mizrahi and Sephardic Jews with the general public.

Jewish Populations by Country and Year

	1948	1958	1968	1976	2001	2005
Aden	8,000	800	0	0	0	0
Algeria	140,000	130,000	3,000	1,000	0	0
Egypt	75,000	40,000	2,500	400	100	100
Iraq	135,000	6,000	2,500	350	100	60
Lebanon	5,000	6,000	3,000	400	100	~50
Libya	38,000	3,750	500	40	0	0
Morocco	265,000	200,000	50,000	18,000	5,700	3,500
Syria	30,000	5,000	4,000	4,500	100	100
Tunisia	105,000	80,000	10,000	7,000	1,500	1,100
Yemen	55,000	3,500	500	500	200	200
TOTAL	856,000	475,050	76,000	32,190	7,800	5,110

Why support JIMENA?

The modern Mizrahi and Sephardi story of displacement from Arab lands has not been properly documented and exposed. For the sake of historical accuracy and justice we must capture, document and share the modern history of Sephardic and Mizrahi displacement before it is too late.

Because JIMENA represents a living facet of Judaism that is considered exotic, lesser known and attractive we have a special appeal to younger generations, who have a growing interest in Jewish diversity and multiculturalism. Our programming on college campuses and high schools successfully attracts unaffiliated young Jews and strengthens their Jewish identity. Our work arms young Jewish activists with accurate historical information regarding the conflict in the Middle East.

With your support we are able to share our ancient Jewish culture with audiences of all backgrounds. Our lively programming warmly invites people to experience first hand the vibrant traditions and customs of Mizrahi and Sephardic Jews.

Please support us in our efforts to preserve and share a lesser known, yet critical piece of Jewish history and culture.

Visit www.jimena.org or call 415-626-5062

JIMENA is a 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt organization



Courtesy of Camille Fox



Courtesy of Punam Bean



Courtesy of Yinon Darwish



Courtesy of Bartek Kuzia



Courtesy of Punam Bean



Courtesy of Camille Fox

Our Success

Our Speakers Bureau has visited over 50 college campuses and academic institutions including; Harvard, Yale, Columbia, UC Berkeley, and Brandeis. JIMENA's message is educating and empowering thousands of young adults throughout North America. Members of JIMENA have provided testimonies, and participated in delegations, to the UN Human Rights Council, US Congress, British Parliament, European Parliament and Italian Parliament.

Our Mission

JIMENA seeks recognition for the nearly one million Jews indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa who were displaced from their country of origin. JIMENA is dedicated to the preservation of Mizrahi and Sephardic culture and history and addresses the existing gap in the historical narrative of the Middle East and North Africa by sharing the Mizrahi and Sephardi story of oppression, and displacement.

JIMENA: Jews Indigenous to the Middle East and North Africa
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BECOME A JIMENA MEMBER AND SUPPORT OUR ACTIVITIES

- \$35 – Provides general operating support to JIMENA
- \$50 – Contributes to the development of JIMENA archives and website
- \$150 – Allows one Mizrahi Jew to record their story as part of the Visual History Project
- \$400 – Provides a speaker training and advocacy course to students and JIMENA members
- \$1,000 – Co-sponsors a Mizrahi cultural event like Mimouna, Mizrahi Shabbat
- I would like to donate my time and become a volunteer
- I would like to share my story

Name(s): _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Country of interest/origin: _____



Courtesy of Punam Bean

