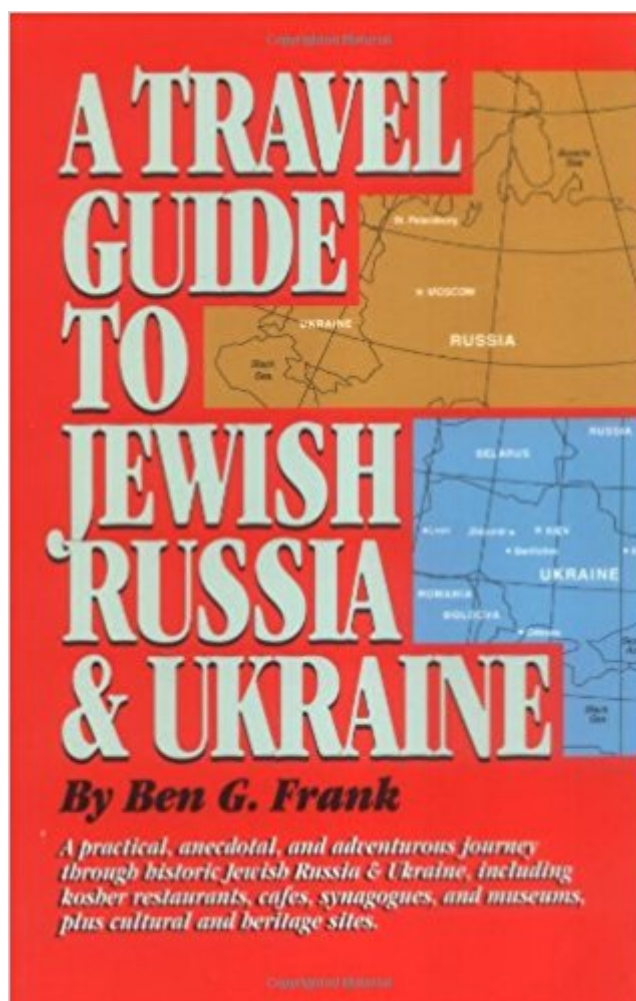


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# Travel Guide To Jewish Russia & Ukraine, A



## Synopsis

"A priceless asset to any traveler whose goal is to explore the Jewish past of these two historical countries." --The Jewish Advocate

The author follows in the footsteps of his namesake, the rabbi explorer of the twelfth century, Benjamin of Tudela, to create the first all-encompassing guide to Jewish Russia and Ukraine, with stops in Bulgaria and Romania. Until Communism fell, the Jews of Russia and Ukraine had been suppressed and denied human and religious rights. Today, not only are they reborn, but they are rebuilding a new, vibrant community for the twenty-first century. Frank explores this rebirth and guides both first-time and experienced travelers to Jewish and historical sites. He profiles synagogues, monuments, and schools that can be found in such cities as St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Odessa, and even Kishinev in Moldavia. Approximately 120 years ago, the majority of the world's Jews lived in what was called the "Pale of Settlement" in the Russian Empire. Most American Jews today trace their ancestry to Russia and the surrounding territories, especially Ukraine. A Travel Guide to Jewish Russia & Ukraine will aid those visiting places where relatives once lived, as well as those simply in search of history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"&#x85;a priceless asset to any traveler whose goal is to explore the Jewish past of these two historical countries." -- The Jewish Advocate

"An excellent guide. . . . You can travel emotionally to a great past and the reborn present of Jewish life."--Yaffa Eliach Ph.D., author, *There Once Was a World: A Nine-Hundred-Year Chronicle of the*

Shtetle of Eishyshok"An engrossing guide to a world that should fascinate Jews and non-Jews alike. No understanding of contemporary Russia is complete without recognizing the history and contributions of the country's Jewish communities."--Christopher Hunt, former executive editor, Travel & Leisure "I have read with fascination [Ben Frank's] new travel book on Russia and Ukraine. It is a welcome addition to my library of indispensable travel books."--Gabriel Levinson, travel editor, The Jewish Week"I, myself, visited Russia twice last year . . . without ever having left my armchair. Whether you actually journey to Russia or the Ukraine or only choose to read about it like me, Ben Frank is the guide you want to take along."--Lewis Burke Frumkes, director, Marymount Manhattan College Writing Center

Author Ben G. Frank follows in the footsteps of his namesake, the much-traveled rabbi of the twelfth century, Benjamin of Tudela, as he ventures eastward from Jewish Europe with this first-ever guide to Jewish Russia and Ukraine. No longer suppressed or denied religious and human rights by Communists, Russian and Ukrainian Jews are rebuilding. They welcome visitors to witness their steps to the future and to explore the richness of their past. From the Piskaryovskoye Cemetery in St. Petersburg to the quaint Museum of Modern Jewish Art in Moscow, and the somber Babi Yar Monument in Kiev, Russia and Ukraine offer a multitude of sites of Jewish interest for visitors. One of the reasons for this vast number of historical attractions is that, a century ago, this area was home to the largest Jewish community in the world. Today, the United States holds that distinction, and the majority of American Jews can trace their ancestry to this area. This guide points to these roots, while simultaneously assisting others in exploring the rich history of the region. Ben G. Frank, a journalist and a consultant to airlines and tourist offices, is president of the Frank Promotion Group. He has frequently traveled to Russia and has spent years researching this book. A member of numerous international press organizations, he has published articles in magazines and newspapers worldwide and is known as one of the most authoritative travel writers on Jewish communities and culture. Frank also is the author of Pelican's A Travel Guide to Jewish Europe, which has been called "full of of interesting tidbits" by the New York Times.

Nicely detailed and informative. I learned a great deal and I am sad to see the remains of Jewish history in the area are disappearing.

Most of the information is basic and outdated and you can find more by searching topics on the internet or certainly from Trip Advisor

Approximately 120 years ago the majority of the world's Jews lived in what was called the "Pale of

Settlement" in the Russian Empire of the Czar. Most American Jews today trace their ancestry to Russia, the Ukraine, and the surrounding territories and provinces of the old empire. Until Communism fell, the Jews of Russia and Ukraine had been suppressed and denied human and religious rights. With the collapse of the Communists, Judaism has emerged from centuries old persecution and pogrom and the synagogues, monuments, schools and other Jewish historical sites are available and accessible to the western visitor. Ben Frank's A Travel Guide To Jewish Russia & Ukraine is an invaluable, highly recommended travel guide for planning and implementing a trip in search of their family heritage and religious roots throughout Russian and the Ukraine.

As a part of a Jewish community in Western Ukraine I am well aware of the problems the citizens of Ukraine are facing be they Ukrainians, Russians or Jews. I found this book worth of interest -- unfortunately it has too many minor factual and other mistakes that make it not applicable for the purposes I needed it for. The entire Ukrainian part should be reworked if the author ever plans to publish it again -- to make Ukrainians less bloodthirsty and a little bit closer to what they are in reality (if they were that bloodthirsty as the author portrays them to be how possibly could Jews have survived living side by side with Ukrainians for one thousand years?) A consultation with a specialist in Ukrainian history will be a must as well as a thorough fact-checking. Petliura was never a bandit. As a matter of fact he heavily prosecuted any demonstrations of anti-Semitism in the army he was in charge of. The guy who killed him just ate too much of Soviet propaganda. Besides, the author who meticulously mentions participation of Ukrainians in the Holocaust fails to mention that among Ukrainians there were a lot of those who risked their lives and lives of their families to rescue Jews. When talking about Babi Yar, he never mentions that exterminations were held there for 2 years -- and the Jews were killed there during the first week. After that it was prisoners of war, Ukrainian nationalists, Gypsies, gays and lesbians, and a lot of other people. If he wants to write the story of Jews in Ukraine he has to be better informed. What would be also nice is consistent spelling of names of the cities -- in compliance with Ukrainian tradition, not with Russian. Also the author could have better harnessed his anti-Ukrainian stance: for example, when he is writing about the Jewish memorial in Babi Yar he writes: [I am giving an exact quote] p.335 Only in 1991, when the menorah memorial was erected [...] did the Ukrainian government dedicate and recognize the spot as the area where Jews were killed and buried. Just for reference: Ukraine regained its independence on August 24, 1991. It was not able to recognize it earlier officially because it did not have its own government. The last but not the least: the author fails to learn the difference between the Russian and the Soviet. When writing about history of the 20th century it is indeed a major

difference.

This is a response to an earlier review that contained a major, major Big Lie. Specifically, "daryoush" from Seattle, in the course of commenting upon this book and expressing interest in a book about "recent Jewish history" in Lebanon, West bank and the Gaza strip, says the following: "I like to better understand the Israeli massacres in the refugee camps." He/she also goes on to make several other specious statements including usage of the term "concentration camps." Daryoush's statement is a Big Lie masquerading as a review. I have serious reservations about his/her agenda, but setting that aside for a second, the deaths in the refugee camps (that I assume he refers to, related to the 1982 war in Lebanon) were not "Israeli massacres." They were carried out, by all credible accounts, by Lebanese militiamen arguably under Israel's influence. This is not to excuse the killings, nor even Sharon's alleged negligence or complicity, but even in the worst case terming them "Israeli massacres" is simply inaccurate. One has to wonder about the mindset of someone who would use such a term. The need to respond to such garbage is a sad commentary upon the state of discourse on Israel and our times generally.- Ezra in Minnesota

Not only informative but terrific reading. It will keep you on the edge of your seat. A travel log that's enjoyable to read whether you visit the places or not. Put on your seatbelt because this is a journey well worth taking!

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