

# A **\*Giveaway\*** because . . . **Surprise! It's My Kid's Hebrew Birthday!**



My sweet girl just one HOUR old.

Today is my daughter's first Hebrew birthday. I want to write something poetic about that fact. I'd like to connect the meaning of her Hebrew birthday with the meaning of her name, Siona, which happens to be the feminine form of Sion, Hebrew for Zion, but I can't. I can't do that because I have never celebrated a Hebrew birthday in my life; not even a little bit. In fact, I wouldn't have even known that today is my daughter's Hebrew birthday if it weren't for my very sweet and dear friend, Sharona, who told me that today is the day. I had texted her to see if she wanted to go out on a lady-date next Wednesday but she declined because that's HER daughter's first Hebrew birthday, "So", she texted me, "That means that Friday is Siona's Hebrew birthday!" (insert cricket chirps here and blank staring at text message here).

To be honest, I didn't text her back after receiving text. In

fact, I let it sit for a day or so before responding because I felt like such a farce for not even knowing my kid's Hebrew birthday. Hell, I don't even know my own Hebrew birthday!



Siona's Simchat Bat – her Jewish life is beginning.

It takes a lot for me to feel self-conscious about something; I consider myself pretty confident in most of the important

areas (i.e. competency as a wife, in my job, healthy sense of self) but my confidence levels in my Judaism have always yo-yoed. I mean, I've worked in Jewish organizations for the majority of my professional life. I've been to Israel more times than I can count. I sent myself to Yeshiva for a year when I was 28. I named my kid Siona, for crying out loud! But I didn't learn the full Birkat Hamazon until I was 29. I'm pretty sure it's been 5771 for like, 5 years now and I often get our forefathers, Joseph and Isaac confused (thank Gd for the musical, 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolored Dream Coat' because seriously, that's what I use to remember who is whom when I'm occasionally sitting with a student and walking them through Judaics homework; "Give Mrs. Fisch a moment, honey. I'm trying to recall which one had the fabulous coat."). All those gaps in my Jewish knowledge coupled with an expectation that, as a Jewish professional who keeps Shabbat and kosher and has a daughter named Siona, sometimes accumulates to me feeling "less than". "Less than" whom? I'm not sure (p.s. Gang, are you picking up how many times I used 'whom' in this post?! I'm hoping all the English majors in my life will be proud). But when I was standing there on the other end of that text, receiving the information of the fact that my daughter's Hebrew birthday is upon me from another mom, I felt like an idiot. And let me just state that later that night, when I told my husband that Siona's Hebrew birthday was 2 days away he responded, "Cool", and went about his business. Ahhh, how much simpler life might occasionally be if I were man.



What? Me worry? (2 weeks old)

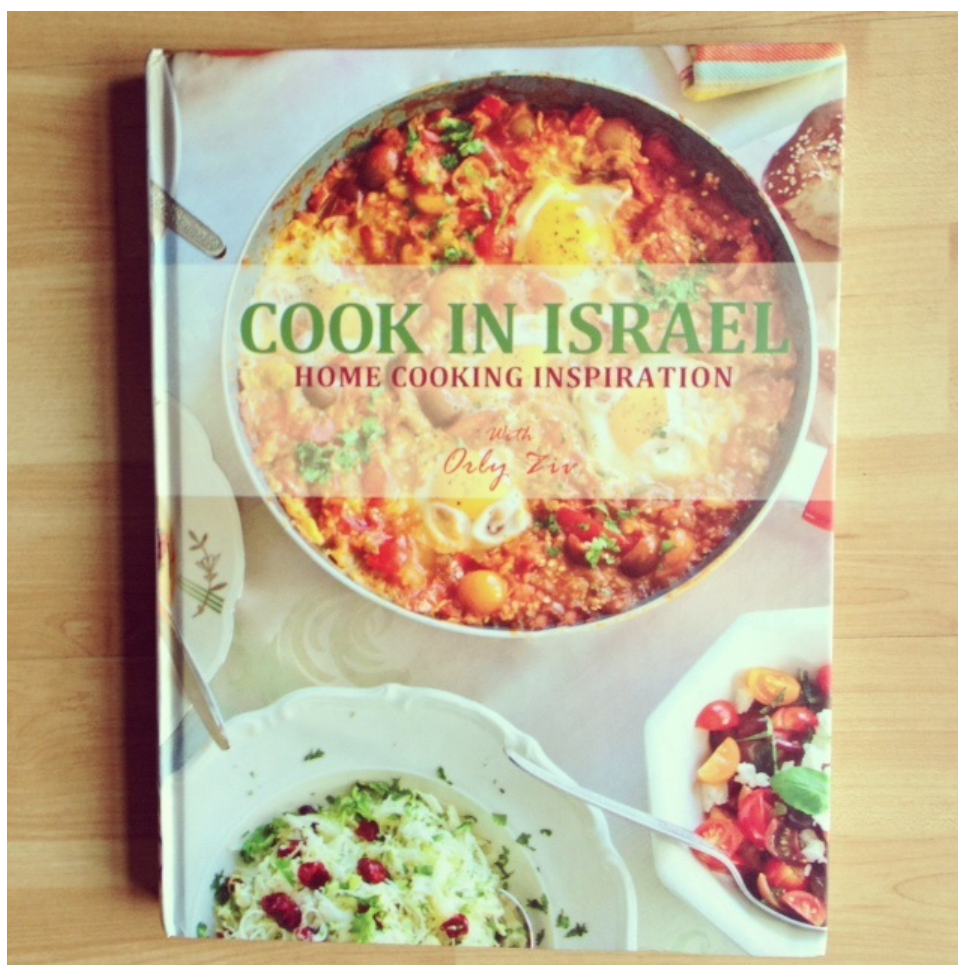


Playing in the sand in Montanan- 11 1/2 months old. Where does the time go!?

I'm not sure what we'll do to celebrate our daughter's day, if anything. I've been eyes-deep in Pinterest, doing menu - planning and decoration-planning for her 1st English birthday. But I've come up with nothing to celebrate today or to make it something special for her or for us as a family. But, she'll be one so she will have the same memories of this birthday as she will have of her English birthday, which is to say she'll have no memories. Yet, I'm huge into positive family traditions of all kinds so I'd like to do something. I'm very curious as to what you have done to celebrate your or your child's Hebrew birthday? What are some traditions you've incorporated into your family to celebrate this day? *I'd really love to hear from you so if you don't mind taking the time and jotting down a few ideas/traditions in the comments portion of this post, I'd be very grateful.*

I'm not sure if our child will attend Jewish Day School but I do know that whatever we can do in the home to build positive associations/feelings/connection to our children's Judaism will do more for them than anything else done Jewishly outside of the home. Plus, I mean, I ~~am deeply obsessed with~~ like birthdays so any excuse to celebrate a loved one's birthday

more than once is always a good thing in my book.



A free trip to Israel via the pages of this gorgeous book.



Orly's traditional shakshuka – my idea of Sunday morning brunch heaven.

So, because it's my daughter's surprise Hebrew birthday, I'd thought I'd give YOU, my dear readers, a chance at receiving a beautiful gift. I was blessed to have Orly Ziv's stunning new Israeli cookbook, *Cook in Israel: Home Cooking Inspiration*, sent to me by the cookbook's talented photographer, Katherine Martinelli. Orly is a talented nutritionist, cooking instructor, and culinary tour guide in Israel. *Cook in Israel*, her first cookbook, is filled with 100 kosher, mostly vegetarian recipes accompanied by beautiful color photographs (including many step-by-step illustrations). The cookbook shows that healthy and delicious home cooking doesn't need to be time-consuming or complicated. Flipping through the pages of this cookbook is like being transported to Jerusalem's famous shuk (market). I swear, all it needs is a scratch-and-sniff za'atar sticker and you are IN Israel. The book is available for \$35 plus shipping OR you could simply click on

the Rafflecopter link below for up to 6 ways to up your chances of winning your own copy. The giveaway will run until, Friday, August 9th, at midnight and the winner will be announced on Monday, August 12th.

## **a Rafflecopter giveaway**

Go to Cook In Israel to find out more about Orly, her culinary tours, cooking classes and how to purchase this book, which you can do here. BUT, if you want to SAVE yourself \$35 plus shipping, enter into the giveaway via the link above and remember, **some options you can do daily so come back often**. Also, note that **this giveaway is open to those living in Israel too!!!**

Good luck and . . . Yom Huledet Sameach, Siona!