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Bar Mitzvah Guidebook



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Mazel Tov! Your son is growing up. He'll soon be celebrating the biggest event of his adolescent life: His Bar Mitzvah.

What is a Bar Mitzvah?

A Bar Mitzvah is a developmental stage where a child crosses the threshold from childhood into adulthood. It is also a time that the soul begins to blossom, and a deeper level of maturity and spirituality is reached. At this point, a young man is ready to begin accepting responsibility for his behavior and commit to fulfilling Mitzvot, as the name "Bar Mitzvah – son of Mitzvah" indicates.

At Chabad, the Bar Mitzvah celebrations are faithful to the beauty and authenticity of Jewish tradition. We hope that the Bar Mitzvah "journey" brings your son to a deep recognition and appreciation of his special role as a part of the Jewish nation.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

Personalized

We believe that no two children are the same and that no two families are the same. We therefore strive to personalize this most meaningful lifecycle event to make it most meaningful, enjoyable, and inspiring for your family.

Not just a ceremony, but about being Jewish

The Bar Mitzvah is much more than a ceremony; it is about who we are. Our focus is on experiencing the joy and depth of being Jewish. The ceremony is only part of that. The training and preparation for the Bar Mitzvah reflects that as well. The child is taught the meaning of being Jewish and is given time to ask questions and reflect on his becoming a Bar Mitzvah.

Enjoy the whole experience

The journey should be meaningful and enjoyable as well.

Keep stress to a minimum

It is not a contest. The preparation and ceremony are designed to allow each Bar Mitzvah to shine.

Community is very important

Through community involvement we show our children the importance of community. Making the Bar Mitzvah celebration a more communal event by inviting his Hebrew School classmates adds an important dimension to the experience.

Parental involvement is very important

Your child's Bar Mitzvah experience is greatly enhanced when the parents are involved and participate in their child's Bar Mitzvah preparation.

Ceremony Options:

Shabbat Morning Services:

The ceremony will typically last two hours, and include:

- Rabbi's intro.
- Bar Mitzvah boy reads from the Torah.
- Bar Mitzvah boy's Aliya to the Torah, candy throw, and singing of siman tov.
- Family and Friend participation blessings and prayers.
- Bar Mitzvah boy's speech, incorporating lessons from his Torah readings and Mitzvah Project.
- Family sponsors a Kiddush luncheon for Chabad members and guests.

Please bear in mind that videos and cameras are not used during this service in observance of Shabbat.

Friday eve service:

The ceremony will typically last an hour, and include:

- Rabbi's intro.
- Family and Friend participation blessings and prayers.
- Bar Mitzvah boy's speech, incorporating lessons from his Torah portion, and Mitzvah Project.
- Bar Mitzvah boy recites Kiddush and Hamotzee for all guest.
- Family sponsors a Shabbat dinner in honor of the occasion.

Please bear in mind that videos and cameras are only used prior to sundown on Friday, usually including the first part of the ceremony.

Monday or Thursday afternoon, before sundown:

In Jewish tradition, the Torah is read on Mondays, Thursdays, and Shabbat, before Sundown. The ceremony will typically last an hour, and include:

- Rabbi's intro.
- Bar Mitzvah boy leads the congregation in a short prayer service.
- Bar Mitzvah boy reads from the Torah.
- Bar Mitzvah boy's Aliya to the Torah, candy throw, and singing of siman tov.
- Family and Friend participation blessings and prayers.
- Bar Mitzvah boy's speech, incorporating lessons from his Torah readings and Mitzvah Project.
- Family sponsors lunch in honor of the occasion.

Sunday afternoon Service:

The ceremony will typically last an hour, and include the same ceremony as Monday and Thursday excluding the Torah reading and Aliya.

Preparation Timeline:

1 year before the Bar Mitzvah:

Call Chabad to book your date and to set up a time for a preliminary meeting with the Rabbi. The Bar Mitzvah date should be on or soon after your son's 13th birthday on the Hebrew calendar (see our website or speak to the Rabbi to help you determine the correct date).

8 months before:

Meet with the rabbi to discuss the possibilities and guidelines for your ceremony. You will be given a list of possible family and friends participation prayers and blessings for the Bar Mitzvah service.

At this time you will also:

- Begin BAR MITZVAH LESSONS (45 min/lesson).
- Join Shabbat morning services with family (10:30am-12:30pm).
- Purchase a personal pair of Talit & Tefillin (approx. \$500).

One of the most special mitzvot a bar mitzvah boy begins to do is the mitzvah of Tallit and Tefillin. During the Bar Mitzvah Preparation Course, your son will learn their significance and how they are made.

This mitzvah helps instill in children discipline, purpose, and gives them a meaningful way to connect with G-d. Purchasing a new pair teaches your son the value of a mitzvah. *Bring your Tallit and Tefillin to all Bar Mitzvah lessons.*

- Bar Mitzvah boy chooses a Mitzvah project in honor of his Bar Mitzvah.
- Bar Mitzvah boy chooses a ritual mitzvah in honor of his Bar mitzvah (e.g., Keep a level of kosher, put on Tefillin, say a blessing before and after eating, say the Shema morning and evening, study Torah, observe a level of Shabbat. etc.).
- Parents are encouraged to join one of our ongoing adult education Torah courses. (This makes the exploration of Judaism a family experience).

3 weeks before:

Meet with the rabbi to finalize details. The template of the service booklet will be emailed to you. Please make sure the copies are printed and at Chabad in time for the Bar Mitzvah ceremony.

Actual day of the Bar Mitzvah:

Regardless of when you schedule your ceremony and party, the actual "Bar Mitzvah Day" is your son's thirteenth birthday on the Jewish Calendar. Check out the Hebrew Date Calculator on our website to identify the date.

Please make arrangements to meet the rabbi at Chabad so that your son can lay Tefillin, a special mitzvah that heralds this beautiful new era in his life.

Fees: Bar Mitzvah package - \$1800

Includes:

- Private Training with the Rabbi (Approx. 25 lessons).
- Bar Mitzvah Service Fee.
- Custodian Cleanup Fee.
- Services Booklets set up and printing.
- Candies to throw, and wine for service.

Payments may be made at once, or in installments.

All payments are due prior to the bar mitzvah ceremony.

Please bear in mind that if the Bar Mitzvah ceremony is on Friday evening or Saturday morning, everything must be brought to Chabad prior to sundown on Friday.

Catering Options:

All food and liquor served must meet the kosher standards of the Chabad Jewish Center. Here is a list of some of the establishments we have used in the past:

Hava Java - Dairy

59 Route 59
Monsey, NY 10952
845-371-5282

www.havajavaonline.com

5683 Riverdale Ave # 100,
Bronx, NY 10471
(718) 884-2222
www.riverdalekoshermarket.com

Evergreen Kosher Market:

59 NY-59, Monsey, NY 10952
(845) 352-4400
www.evergreenkosher.com
(they also do cakes)

Riki's Kitchen - Kosher Catering:

Yonkers, NY
(917) 806-8152
www.rikiskitchen.com

Seasons Kosher Market

1104 Wilmot Road
Scarsdale, NY 10583
914-472-2240
scarsdale@seasonskosher.com
seasonskosher.com

Eden Wok Chinese Restaurant:

1327 North Ave,
New Rochelle, NY 10804
www.edenwoknr.com
(914) 637-9363

Pomp N Platters (& party planner)

201-650-5530.
info@PompCaterers.com
PompCaterers.com

Glauber's Bakery & Catering:

126 Maple Ave,
Spring Valley, NY 10977
(845) 352-4683

Riverdale Kosher Market:

Bagels Delox
421 NY-59
Monsey, NY 10952
bageldlox@gmail.com
(845) 356-4700