

## 'Tis Berry Picking Season

### Blackberry Picking

On family vacations my clever husband has always found a way to include berry picking on the itinerary. Sometimes we would eat our hard-earned berries at the farm and the rest later on a picnic. One year, this same husband was positively brilliant and figured out a way to bring them back from Canada to Israel.

After we loaded our buckets with a few kilos worth of assorted black and red berries, he then bought pectin, sugar and some jars. You guessed it - back in our kitchenette, we made fruit jam and returned to Israel with half a dozen jars of multi-hued berry jam.

These day Israelis do not need to travel half way around the world for this particular treat. The berry season in Israel begins in mid-May at the Zak Family Farm on Moshav Sde Yaakov, continues at the Landau Farm at Moshav Ben-Ami near Nahariyya, and ends in the Golan Heights at Kibbutz El-Rom and Bustan HaGolan in mid-September.

Related Article Alert: [Berries, Talmudic Village, Ethnic Restaurant](#)

### Western Galilee Zak Family Farm

The brainchild of 3rd generation moshavnik, Nadav Zak, the Zak self-picking berry farm has 7 varieties of blackberries -- including 2 thornless varieties -- and raspberries. Berry names are posted in the rows and you can compare tastes as you fill your bucket.

Location: Moshav Sde Yaakov, 20 minutes southeast of Haifa on Route 722.

Open in the afternoons from Sunday thru Friday. Closed on Shabbat (Saturday) and Jewish holidays.

Tel: 04-983-2539; 050-297747.

Moshav Ben-Ami

At the Landau Farm on Moshav Ben-Ami the berry picking season is from the end of May until the end of July. Pick organically-grown pitango blackberries, raspberries, and mulberries. Landau, an expert and grower of exotic fruits, also offers exotic fruit picking for the pick-it-yourself crowd.

Open all day Friday and Saturday.

Mid-week, by advance reservation only.

Landau Farm on Moshav Ben-Ami west of Nahariyya on Route 89. Further north, berry season takes place from mid-June through mid-September.

Golan Heights

Kibbutz El-Rom

Kibbutz El-Rom offers blackberries, raspberries and blueberries for picking, and a winemaking workshop.

Wine-making workshop: From mid-August, make your own wine in a one-day session that is held daily until mid-September.

Families begin by picking grapes and then stomping on them in the old-fashioned way. At the end of the workshop, you take home a 3-liter jug of wine, according to Avi Gavish, program coordinator. Part of the winemaking package is a country-style meal of labane (thick yogurt), pita and olives.

When you need to cool down, see a short film about another El-Rom industry, the business of subtitling films. The air conditioned theater and coffee shop are the perfect end to a day in the fields.

Location: Kibbutz El-Rom, Route 98 in the Golan Heights.

Tel: 06-698-1294.

Kibbutz Ein Zivan

## Bustan HaGolan

In addition to blackberries, raspberries, blueberries, Bustan HaGolan also offers cherries. From June through September, pears, apricots, nectarines, peaches and apples are part of the self-picking menu. Also on the site are picnic grounds and a petting zoo with alpacas and llamas. Entrance fee. All you can eat on premises. Produce is weighed for take-away.

Open daily from 9 AM to 5 PM. Until 4 PM on Friday and Saturday.

Bustan HaGolan in Kibbutz Ein Zivan, Route 98 in the Golan Heights.

Be sure to visit Ein Zivan's chocolate factory - with handmade Belgian chocolates to taste and buy.

Tel: 050.725.4912; 04. 699.3610