

Yankl Dudakas With His Wife Sophia Dudakene



This is me, Yankl Dudakas, and my wife Sophia in Tel Aviv, Israel. This photo was taken during our walk at the seaside in 2005. My private life happened to be very successful. In 1964 I went to visit my distant relatives in Vilnius where I met a Jewish girl. She became my wife some short time later. Her name is Sophia. I always wanted to live in Israel, but each time there was something preventing my dream from coming true. When Jews were leaving Lithuania after the war, I was just a boy and was not in the position to make decisions for myself. I've always taken the situation in Israel close to my heart, particularly during the Six-Day-War and the Judgment Day War. It was particularly hard considering the bluntly negative attitude of Soviet authorities and the Party to Israel, and sitting at meetings I had to listen to the flow of lies about the country that was my dream. My daughters must have taken in this love of Israel and implemented what I've failed to do. They both live in Israel. I've visited Israel three times. I went there to my grandson's bar mitzvah for the first time. My daughter was in a pretty tough situation, and I stayed in Israel for almost a year helping her about the house and looking after her son. I admire Israel, its people, the atmosphere of freedom and independence, its nature, the sea and the sun. Each time, when coming to Israel, I am thinking of staying there for good, but when I come back to Lithuania, I know that this is my motherland, and it's hard to leave it.