

Tour and Taste the Crown Heights Kosher Food Scene With Rosebud Food Tours

By Bracha Schwartz

Fern Penn lives in Greenwich Village, but when she shops for Shabbat, she goes to where it's really happening: Crown Heights, Brooklyn. Penn has started walking and tasting tours with pre-arranged stops at many of the new, innovative kosher restaurants in Crown Heights with her company, Rosebud Food Tours.

"I've been going to Crown Heights for food and flowers for Shabbos for the last three years now and the food scene is unbelievable," Penn said. "People ask me, 'Where did you get that?' and I tell them. This is amazing and it's all concentrated within a few blocks."

Penn became friendly with the owners and together they chose items to offer on the tasting tours. Starting at noon, the tour takes in 10 stops, ending at 5:30 p.m. With a minimum of five people and max of 18, the group stops at each location where Penn or the owner gives them a little background as they sample the restaurant's signature dish.

Each tour has a similar itinerary. Meet and begin the day at Bakerie, with coffee



Bakery selection at Gombo's. (CREDIT: FERN PENN)

and cookies. BenZ's, a gourmet food store is next, with herring, pickles, olives and crackers. Walking along the street, Penn points out some of the trendy housewares and clothing stores. At Basil's Pizza and Wine Bar, with the same owner as Bakerie, it's time for artisan pizza and a cold drink. Then some treats—rugelach at Gombo's Heimshe Bakery, cinnamon buns at Brooklyn Artisan Bake House and alcohol-infused ice cream at the Boozery. Next stop is a brisket sandwich at Izzy's Bar B-Q, known as being the best spot for kosher barbecue, and a chicken or pulled-beef taco at Izzy's Taqueria next door. The tour ends at Alenbi, the celebrated Israeli chef-owned restaurant, with dessert and a glass of wine. Price: \$75.

Food tours are a new venture for Penn but she's a veteran of taking women on fashion tours of Israel. A buyer for Macy's, she became interested in Israeli fashion after visiting the country in 2001, following the first intifada. She brought back a number of hats that attracted interest. Wanting to do something to help Israel, she contacted the manufacturer to sell the hats here. She opened Rosebud in Soho, before moving to Mad-



BenZ ready for Rosebud tourists. (CREDIT: FERN PENN)



Dessert at Alenbi. (CREDIT: FERN PENN)



Ice cream at the Boozery. (CREDIT: FERN PENN)



Brisket sandwiches at Izzy's Bar B-Q. (CREDIT: FERN PENN)

ison Avenue, where she sold Israeli-made fashions and home accessories until closing in 2018. Her next venture was bringing women to Israel to meet Israeli fashion designers and manufacturers. Penn also arranged tours of museums and art galleries. Penn is in the beginning stages of planning a new fashion tour of Israel in November.



Fern Penn (CREDIT: FERN PENN)

The next Rosebud Food Tour of Crown Heights takes place July 31, with tours every Wednesday in August, and Wednesdays and Sundays in September. For more information, reservations and the complete schedule of food tours, visit <https://www.rosebudfashiontour.com/rosebud-food-tour>.

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