

CANAAN COMMUNITY

July/August 2008
Volume 2, Issue 6

NOTES FROM THE LAND OF MILK AND HONEY

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Visit Palestine! Join us on the Fair Olive Harvest Tour

Would you like to pick the olives that you enjoy in your CFT olive oil? Meet the farmers who grow the organic olives? See how olive oil is produced from tree to press? The Palestine Fair Trade Association (PFTA) and Global Exchange have collaborated on a Fair Olive Harvest tour in Palestine November 6–16, 2008.

“On the top of a hill, as the sun is setting and the first stars come out, you see the gnarly silhouettes of olive trees against the violet sky, well-tilled fields below, twinkling village lights in the distance. You feel the warm breeze in your face, and the sweet, subtle scent of fig trees fills your nostrils.”

The quoted words on these pages are from Rebeccah Kaufmann, a Swede working at the PFTA between masters studies at the U. of Stockholm and a UN internship, but as anyone who has been to Palestine can attest, once you experience the splendor of Palestine and the genuine hospitality of the Palestinian people, you want to come back again and again. Read about our tour and see if this November might be your next visit.

Tour highlights

We will spend a day in Nablus, one of the oldest cities in the world and the home of the delicious sweet pastry *konafa*. We will walk the old Casbah (market), visit ancient spice and tahini mills, a nut roasting house, and a traditional bakery.

Dinner will be at an outdoor restaurant overlooking the ancient Roman ruins at Sebastiya, northwest of Nablus, in the middle of olive country. After dinner we will meet the farm families we will stay with the next two nights. Then it's a harvest day...we pick olives, have a light lunch in the field, observe traditional food preparation with our family, and share in their lives. After dinner, our host families will take us to the old stone press in town. During the olive

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“We invite you to visit our country and learn about our traditional bonds with the land, our history and our current political situation. If you take the time to travel to us, we will welcome you into our homes and make your stay something to remember for a lifetime.”

harvest, the press runs all night and the whole village is there!

Then it is on to Jenin, in the northernmost tip of the West Bank. “Jenin is one of the most important agricultural districts of the West Bank and a center for organic farming and the Fair Trade Movement of Palestine. Jenin is the perfect place for experiencing traditional Palestinian village life; the beautiful Palestinian nature; the political reality farmers face close to the Israeli Wall. Jenin also has a sliver of Palestine's vast history—there are olive orchards planted by the Romans; Stone Age olive oil and wine presses up in the mountains; and a church that is said to be the third oldest in the world.” (continued)

Canaan Recipe of the Month – Musakhan

No festival in Palestine is complete without a meal of epic proportions, and Musakhan is the festive harvest meal. Traditionally Musakhan is made with thin flat bread called 'taboon' which is baked in a traditional stone hearth, but it can be made with whole wheat pita bread. Serves 8.

1 chicken cut into 8 pieces
4 large pita bread loaves (pocketless best)
3 Tbsp ground sumac
1 lemon, juiced
1 Tbsp of mixed spices (salt, pepper, nutmeg, cinnamon, allspice)
2 large onions, sliced thin
½ cup roasted almonds
2 Tbsp pine nuts
¾ cup olive oil
½ cup water

Preheat the oven to 350. Mix the onion slices with ½ cup of olive oil, lemon juice, sumac and spices. Spread a thin layer of onion on the bottom of a large baking dish. Arrange the chicken pieces on top. Cover the chicken with the remaining onions. Add water and bake for 45 minutes, until the chicken is golden.



Then grease a separate baking dish with the remaining olive oil. Place pita loaves on bottom, top with baked chicken, onions and 2 tablespoons of chicken juice. Bake for an additional 20 minutes. Garnish with roasted almonds and pine nuts. Serve hot.

From Ibtisam Barakat, *Tasting the Sky, A Palestinian Childhood*. This recipe and much more – songs, photos, and the sound and story of the Palestinian olive harvest, can be found on the NPR website in an article by award winning journalist Sandy Tolan that aired last Thanksgiving, November 22, 2007, as “Olive Oil Season: A West Bank Kitchen Story”. Appropriately, the olive harvest IS a Palestinian thanksgiving. You can find a link to the story on our website, www.canaanfairtrade.com. This is highly recommended reading/listening for anyone interested in the Fair Olive Harvest tour this November with Global Exchange and the PFTA!

Tour highlights (con't)

We will tour the new Canaan facility and learn about the Fair Trade movement in Palestine, tour an organic farm in Burqin, and hike to ancient stone age presses in olive orchards. The Jenin Refugee camp and exciting Jenin Freedom Theater are also on the agenda. Weather permitting, we will grill dinner outdoors in an olive orchard, and meet our Jenin/'Anin area farm families, our hosts for the next three nights. Two days will be spent harvesting olives with our families, and then it's the Jaru'a, the traditional Harvest Festival, “where farmers, workers, international volunteers and visitors celebrate the abundance of Palestine. The festival starts at noon, and there is folk music and traditional dancing, stories passed down from generation to generation, and of course the traditional harvest meal with lots of fresh, fresh olive oil.”

The Fair Olive Harvest Tour will start in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah and end in the Negev, and include meetings on land and water rights and occupation issues with Palestinian and Israeli peace groups, fair trade and environmental programs, and tours of the historic sites in Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

Find a link to the tour on the Global Exchange website, with details and prices, at www.globalexchange.org/tours.

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Photo in this issue courtesy of Joy Ellison.
