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You can enjoy a virtual celebration of Israel via the Internet

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So Israel is turning 50 and you can't be there to celebrate!

No need to feel bad. You always have the option of a virtual celebration.

Web surfers can now see, read and hear all about the Jewish state from their computer desktop. Late-breaking news, Israel's history, even a bed and breakfast on a kibbutz can all be found with the click of a mouse.

One of the best places to start your virtual visit is the Jerusalem Post Internet Edition (<http://www.JPost.co.il>). Viewers can click into the Post for lead articles, photographs and other highlights from today's printed edition. The Post also publishes a special Israel at 50 Jubilee Edition. Along with an interview with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the edition includes an article about the two living signers of Israel's Declaration of Independence, who have very different visions of Israel's future.

Next stop on your virtual tour is Artificia's IsraelClub (<http://www.IsraelClub.co.il/>), which "broadcasts" live and archived Israeli radio and TV news programs from Kol Yisrael and Israel Television. These audio and video programs include news, sports, current affairs and editorials. Available via computer 24 hours a day, IsraelClub is more of a video store than a broadcast station because you get to choose which videos you want to view. If you don't like what you see, you can stop the video at any time and choose another.

Using the latest in streaming audio and video technology from Progressive Networks, IsraelClub videos are played back as you download them from the Internet. No more waiting for 20 minutes to view a one-minute video clip. IsraelClub features Hebrew and English language materials.

If you want lots of factual information, try the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (<http://www.israel.org/>) Web site. This massive government site includes an entire section devoted to the history of Israel and an overview of Israel today. History buffs and those involved in talking or teaching about the peace process will want to check out the basic reference documents section. This archive includes such important materials as the Balfour Declaration and the 1947 U.N. Partition Plan for Palestine.

Some people prefer to stay away from the hard politics of Israel. These Web surfers will enjoy a virtual stop at the "Dry Bones" Web site (<http://drybones.org.il/>) for a little satire and humor, Israeli style. There is a new cartoon online every Monday and Friday.

The Virtual Jerusalem Web site (<http://virtual.co.il/>) offers a number of information sources such as Arutz 7 and the online version of the Jerusalem Report. Virtual Jerusalem, one of the first major Jewish sites on the Internet, is much more than online news. The VJ site offers hundreds of online discussion groups, online shopping and a wide range of information archives including d'verei Torah from leading rabbis in Israel. If

you can't find what you are looking for there, visit VJ's Maven (<http://www.maven.co.il>) site and search the listings of thousands of other Jewish-Israeli sites.

Perhaps your virtual celebration would not be complete if you didn't take a closer look at the people and places of Israel.

The new Israel Interactive (<http://www.israelinteractive.com/>) site provides news links, views and information about places in Israel. The people profiles and sections on religious life and travel are particularly interesting. A "Slice of Life" section provides tips and information about Israeli culture and opportunities for working or studying there.

Looking for a nice kibbutz to visit? Try the KibbutzNet (<http://www.kibbutznet.com/>). The site lists more than 50 kibbutzim on the Internet and offers an online bulletin board where you can post messages, ask questions, or just read what others have said about kibbutz life. Many kibbutzim now publish overviews of their facilities as well as information about visiting. A few even have their own bed and breakfast inns.

If these links aren't enough to complete your celebration visit the "Guide to Selected Jewish Online Resources" which publishes an online essay on Israel at 50 (<http://www.slip.net/~bjesf/LINKS/links.html>) complete with links and explanations of the sites.

Finally, make one last stop at the Israel Web Quiz (<http://www.jcrc.org/main/50quiz.htm>). It presents 10 questions about Israel. Answer them correctly and you win a prize!

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