

My Birthright Experience-Winter 2009-QC Hillel
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Birthright is an amazing opportunity available for Jewish young adults between the ages of 18 and 27 who have never traveled with an organized peer trip to Israel. Once I decided that I wanted to participate, and found a gap in my busy schedule, the next step was to figure out how to apply. There are what seems like hundreds of “trip organizers,” each claiming to provide a unique experience on their trips. This can make the application process begin to seem a bit difficult. I went through many different websites in my attempts to narrow down my choices based on my interests. I was looking for a trip that would not be entirely focused on religion, and that would have a lot of outdoor activities with other college students like me.

I am currently a senior attending Queens College, and decided it would be easiest for me to go through the Hillel program there. My instinct served me well, and provided an approachable local source of information which really helped make it easy to arrange everything for the trip in advance. Unlike many participants from other programs, this choice allowed me to meet one of the wonderful group leaders well in advance of the trip. She was also always there to respond to emails and phone calls whenever I had a question or concern.

From its start in the airport, the trip seemed like it was getting better and better with each coming hour. From our time making new friends during the long plane rides, bus rides, and fun activities, to the hikes and time relaxing in our hotels, this trip was a blast. With a group which varied from ultra orthodox to only Jewish by birth, from 18 to 26 years old, and from people all over the country, it was not only an experience learning about Israel; it was also a chance to learn about other people, and their practices, beliefs and lives. While it was undoubtedly a completely unique experience for every single person on my trip, I can guarantee everyone’s experience was amazing and we all enjoyed Israel and our time together.