

Shomrei Adamah



A program of Hazon

Teva

116 Johnson Road

Falls Village, CT 06031

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Isabella Freedman
JEWISH RETREAT CENTER

Dear Parents,

Your child will soon have the opportunity to participate in an award-winning experiential Jewish environmental education program with Teva, a program of Hazon at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center. This letter answers some of the questions parents have asked us in the past. Please feel free to check out our website hazon.org/teva or contact us 860-824-5991 x401, teva@hazon.org with any additional questions or concerns you might have.

Goals: Teva integrates outdoor environmental education with Jewish concepts and values through exciting hands-on activities in a cooperative, non-competitive residential setting. Teva students develop a greater sense of responsibility, independence, and self-esteem. Students will come away from this experience excited about the natural world and more knowledgeable about what Judaism has to contribute to our understanding of the environment.

Curriculum: Over the course of four days and three nights, students participate in two types of daytime classes: *Limudei Chutz* (outdoor learning) and two *Chuggim* (electives). In *Limudei Chutz*, students study earth sciences, plant and animal life, and the connections between them that allow ecosystems to function. Through experiential activities, they will explore Jewish wisdom on humanity's role in Creation. They participate in group challenges, which promote communication, trust, and creative problem solving. In *Chuggim*, students are able to choose from electives relevant to Teva's mission. Chuggim options often include drama, music, arts and crafts, cooking, movement, survival skills, meditation, and more. In one of the two *Chuggim* slots students will create a ritual item from natural and recycled materials. Students learn that Torah is not only studied on a page but is brought to life in practical application in the world. Evening programs include a night walk and an exciting interactive presentation. New songs are taught daily and journal writing is strongly encouraged. Also, the students lead *shacharit* services, with input from the Teva educators. *Brachot* (blessings) are said before and after eating, and taught for other natural events, as a means of heightening awareness and expressing wonder and gratitude.

Facilities: Teva is based at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center, in Falls Village, CT. It offers comfortable winterized lodging and strictly kosher food. The forest, lake, and fields serve as the outdoor classroom. Isabella Freedman is also host to the Adamah program which includes a farm, goats and chickens, a pickling operation, and a farm-to-table kitchen.

Safety: All staff are first aid and CPR certified. A Teva medic will be in residence during program hours and there is a hospital within 15 minutes of the center, for any medical emergencies.

Staff: The on-site Teva administrative team includes a director, education coordinator, a medical professional, and a teaching staff of qualified field group leaders and specialists. Schools also bring teacher chaperones.

With this letter, you should receive from your school a Packing List, and a link to an online form with our Permission Slip, Medical Form, Medical Authorization and Release, and Participant Behavioral Contract. The last four items all need to be completed, signed, and returned to the school in advance of your child's attendance. We hope you are as excited about the program as we are! We look forward to meeting your child.

Best,
Arielle Aronoff
Director of Teva



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Suggested Clothing and Equipment List

Please send students with clean but old clothing. New clothing may look like old clothing when children get home. Clothing should be marked with the student's name. Students should be prepared for cool nights, and in general our **weather is unpredictable, and students should be prepared for all possible conditions.**

Clothing

- 4 t-shirts
- 1 heavy shirt*
- 1 sweater or sweatshirt*
 - 2 pairs of pants (*Jeans are not ideal because, once wet, they retain water for a long time.*)
- 6 pairs hiking socks (no ankle socks)
- 4 changes underwear
- 1 pair of long underwear
- Pajamas

Footwear

- 1 pair sneakers that can get dirty
- 1 pair sturdy, well-broken-in hiking boots (*waterproof ideal*)

Bedding

- **Warm sleeping bag or Blankets**
- **Pillow & pillowcase**
- **Sheets**

Outerwear

- Warm winter hat
- Brimmed hat or baseball cap
- Gloves
- Scarf
- Winter jacket
- Raincoat or poncho with a hood (***a must!***)
- Rain pants (*highly recommended*)

Miscellaneous

- **Two Water Bottles for the trail** (*make sure the lids close tightly – bottles with straws often leak*)
- Toiletries (incl. Toothbrush, Toothpaste, Floss, Soap, Shampoo & Conditioner)
- Towel
- Laundry bag
- Pens, pencils
- Daypack/knapsack/school book bag
- Lunch box – to pack trail lunch
- *Kippah* (Required according to your school's custom)
- **1 Empty 20 oz can****

* Wool, fleece and synthetic materials are recommended due to their ability to retain warmth while wet and dry quickly. Students will spend extended periods of time outdoors, and may not have the opportunity to change immediately after getting wet.

**Teva uses these cans to make ritual crafts. If you do not have a 20 oz can, the smaller ones will be fine.

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

- binoculars
- compass
- flashlight
- camera (*As per Teva policy, you will not be able to use your cell phone as your camera*)
- books
- games

DO NOT BRING (**very important**)

- money
- cell phones
- knives of any kind, firearms or archery equipment
- electronic games, mp3 players, or ipods
- candy, gum, soda or any food
- firecrackers, fireworks, matches, lighters
- straightening iron or blow-dryer

SOME SUGGESTED PLACES TO SHOP:

- Campmor – discount outdoor gear: 800.226.7667 www.campmor.com
- Sierra Trading Post – discount outdoor gear: 800.713.4534 www.sierratradingpost.com

- EMS, REI or other local outdoor and sporting goods stores



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