

Out-Of-Towners Guide

If you expect guests from out-of-town to share the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's special moments, consider the following:

Design a travel packet for your out-of-town guests with directions, maps, car rental information, sights to see, etc. to make their visit even more enjoyable.

Hotels

- * Hotel rooms are usually reserved in blocks. Some charge fees to reserve. This can be especially helpful if you have a number of guests arriving during a period when hotels are busy. Consider reserving rooms at two or more hotels for convenience at different price levels.
- * Welcome baskets delivered to the hotel rooms of your out-of-town guests from the host family is a nice touch to make them feel at home. Contents can include snacks, kosher foods, home baked goods, fruits, mementos, etc. Flowers for the room are also a nice touch.
- * A shuttle service is a convenient way to transport guests unfamiliar with local roads to the synagogue or simcha site. Check with hotels for airport shuttles. Check into transportation for packages or hourly rates.

Invitations

- * Send a "save the date" postcard to out-of-towners 6-8 months in advance to assure that other plans won't conflict with your child's special day.
- * Include a map and directions for all activities during the day or weekend. Directions should cover from the hotel(s) to the synagogue, and, if applicable, to the function facility. Create or photocopy a local map to locate the synagogue with location circled. *Mapquest.com* and *Travelocity.com* are helpful websites.
- * An agenda of the weekend's schedule of activities sent with the invitations will help guests schedule flights or travel plans, help them plan what to pack and add to the excitement of traveling.

Family Activities

Additional activities add to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience and allow opportunities to enjoy relatives and friends that you may not see frequently. Consider the following:

- * If your child is becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah on Saturday morning, invite guests to synagogue Friday night to enjoy the service and Oneg Shabbat.
- * Family portraits can be arranged at home or at synagogue.
- * You may wish to schedule appointments for manicures, hair and make-up appointments for your guests who will not be familiar with the area.
- * A "morning after" brunch is a delightful way to wrap up the simcha and allow families and friends to be together one more time.