

About

Wednesday, 17 October 2007

A Little Bit about Ariel

Amidst terraced hills and age-old olive trees in the heartland of Biblical Israel, is the blossoming city of Ariel. Established in 1978, it has taken Ariel just under thirty years to emerge as a city that demands to be noticed. A quick look around reveals the vitality of the city. It is unclear what makes her unique, whether it's the dynamic, unstoppable mayor, the high percentage of successful Russian aliyah, or the home-town feeling with the offerings of a city.

Though strategically located in the center of the country, Ariel's success surpassed its wildest dreams. Today known as the Capital of Samaria, and home to the largest college in Israel, her unprecedented growth, and the undeniable declaration that Ariel is in the consensus, all point to the fact that she is here to stay. Ariel is all about vision, built with every step planned. Its newest step, that of formally opening its doors to North American aliyah, is another dimension of that unbridled vision. We invite you to become a part of it, and to both share in the fruits and to plant your own.

Location

The capital of Samaria, Ariel is located in the heart of Israel, 40 km (25 miles) east of Tel Aviv, 40 km west of the Jordan River and 60 km north of Jerusalem. The city stretches 12 km (8 miles) in length and is situated over 600 meters (almost 2000 feet) above sea level.

Ariel residents enjoy dry, clean air and gentle mountain breezes.

How to get to Ariel:

By car:

Ariel is located on highway number 5 that runs from Tel Aviv eastward across the center of the country straight to Ariel.

By public transportation:

Dan buses 186 and 286 travel between Tel Aviv and Ariel frequently. Bus schedule can be found at <http://www.dan.co.il/english/default.asp> or by calling Dan information at +(972)-3-6394444.

Eged's 148 bus travels between Jerusalem and Ariel throughout the day. The Eged bus schedule can be found at <http://www.egged.co.il/> or by calling Eged information at +(972)-3-694-8888.

Ariel is a microcosm of Israel. Home to almost 20,000 residents and another 10,000 students, the city's population includes all walks of life. Every age group is represented; approximately 10-20% of the residents are religious, 50% traditional and the rest secular, every origin of Israelis and immigrants join together to make up the population. Over ten years ago the city saw an influx of a large Russian aliyah, today representing over half of the residents. This aliyah was highly successful, adding much to the cultural and educational levels of the city. In the many different neighborhoods that make up Ariel, there is a keen sense of interaction and harmony. The city's strong point is without a doubt the emphasis on community. **Religious Life**

Aiming to do everything to its maximum, Ariel is no longer satisfied simply to meet the needs of her religious population. Now she wants it to thrive. Presently there are over thirteen synagogues of different congregations, three mikvaot, a number of local shiurim, a Hesder yeshiva, two Kollels and a Bnei Akiva youth group. In the past few years, Ariel began to feel the winds of change in the religious community life. Recently the community benefited from an influx of families from the religious community of Netzarim (formerly of Gush Katif) and their community rabbi. An additional group of young religious families arrived in the past few years to integrate into the Ariel community and to add Torani support. With this serving as a viable base, Ariel is now opening its arms to attract and welcome religious communities, individuals and families. The community offers opportunities not found in many enclaves of North American olim. This includes a chance for real connection and involvement with Israeli society and a full expression of the concept of Achdut, unity. One of her stronger selling points is the heterogeneous nature of the community, based on mutual respect. The key word here is integration, offering the North American olah the opportunity to build a community within a community, a chance to enjoy the benefits of a city, the pleasures of a small community and the idealism of being part of its growth. **Education**

Primed as a primary priority, the educational system of Ariel reflects that focus. Ariel incorporates not only daycare, pre-schools, 4 elementary schools, 3 junior highs, and a comprehensive high school, but academic studies as well. For families looking for a religious education, the State Religious Elementary School (Mamad) is interested, together with the municipality, in meeting the growing demands of the observant residents, and offering them educational solutions to fit their needs. Religious families with older children or those interested in a more intense Torah-immersive educational experience, can join the many established religious communities in the general area, offering many educational options for elementary and middle school, yeshivot and ulpanot.

The Ariel University Center, one of the fastest growing academic institutions in the country, offers Bachelor degrees in

many fields (architecture, civil engineering, chemistry, electronics, biology, physics, social work, physical therapy and management to name just a few), as well as a number of master degree programs. Housing

As a result of the rapid and sustained growth of Ariel, and the constant development of building projects, there is a large choice of housing – apartments, cottages and private villas at competitive prices. Despite its proximity to the coastal region of Tel Aviv, prices for sales and rentals are significantly lower in Ariel, and those who invest in the city receive far more for their money than they would in most other areas. Employment

Due to its prime location, Ariel residents enjoy the flexibility of easy access to many employment centers. Situated in close proximity to where two major thoroughfares of the country intersect, nothing is really very far away. A 45-minute drive to Jerusalem and 40 minutes to Tel Aviv, Ariel is a perfect bedroom community for access to a variety of locations including Herzliya, Petach Tikva and Rosh Ha'ayin. There is an advanced industrial center in Ariel with over 150 plants and factories providing employment for thousands. A regular and frequent bus service runs to all the above-mentioned areas and 50-65% of Ariel's residents commute daily to the Tel Aviv area. In any discussion on employment in Ariel, The University Center must be mentioned. With over 10,000 students and faculty, many undergraduate programs and a variety of academic and research departments, there is always a need for quality academics and professionals that may find their place within the Center. Additionally, Ariel maintains a first-class hotel with many local tourist attractions for both Jewish and Christian audiences, and thriving municipal, educational and commercial services. Culture and Services

Ariel's Community and Cultural Center offers dozens of extracurricular leisure and cultural activities for residents of all ages. This includes assorted sports, creative and performing arts programs, youth entertainment groups, concerts, competitions, theater, a Municipal library and clubs for the elderly.

In the constantly growing range of recreational activities, the year of 2008 offers even more. Projects scheduled for completion include a Center for the Performing Arts, a Major Park facility with a water element, a Youth Leadership Adventure Park and a Sports Recreation Complex. If Ariel wasn't already in the focus, her extensive facilities and cultural offerings would put her there.

The city provides all governmental and consumer services, as well as several commercial centers. There are a large range of social and health services, including four health clinics and their full network of medical services. An Emergency Medical Center operated by Magen David Adom, and a twenty-four hour ambulance service provide ongoing medical care. The city is clean and nicely maintained, with flowers adorning sidewalks and traffic circles, with parks and greenery complimenting the rich natural beauty of the area. Media Center

Ariel has its own community radio and television station. This station, which can be heard online by clicking on the icon in the frame to the left, is run by volunteer broadcasters from the community who have taken part in the communications and broadcasting courses offered by the station.