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SPAEL.

The country and its people come to life in the spring, and visitors flock in to enjoy the sunshine

THE ADVENT of spring in Israel has inspired a lyrical response for thousands of years, from the time of biblical kings to latter-day kibbutzniks. Versatile King Solomon composed the most famous Spring Song of them all.

Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.

For, lo, the winter is past, and the rain is over and gone...

And today, on the shores of harp-shaped Lake Kinneret, the kibbutzniks of Ein Gev annually welcome the season with an international music festival featuring world-renowned artists and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

Adding their melodious notes to the rhapsody of spring are tens of thousands of songbirds, who arrive in Israel on their



Picnic on a Galilean peak

northward flight from Africa to Europe.

Meanwhile, on the wild tracts of the Negev, the hillsides of Galilee, and in the greening valleys of Sharon and Jezreel, blankets of Wild-flowers — anemones, tulips, irises, hyacinths, and buttercups — rise from the earth in another kind of crescendo, a crescendo of colour.

Those other springtime wayfarers, the tourists, likewise
flock into the country in impressive numbers. So much so
that April is now the second
highest month for tourist traffic
volume (after July). Understandable, as there is so much
to attract the springtime visitor.

Not only is the weather at its pleasantest, and the landscape at its loveliest, but a festive spirit is abroad in the land. Spring is the season of joyous holidays: Purim with its gay street crowds and masquerade parties, Pesach's accent on freedom and family get-togethers, Yom Ha'atzmaut, the day of rejoicing for Independence, yet recalling the heroism and sacrifice, and Shavuot, the celebration of Nature's fruitfulness and a counting of divine blessings.

On these holidays many Israelis gather at their favourite springtime resort areas, now

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Your guide to the new Jerusalem Hilton

ISRAEL—continued

well-frequented by foreign visitors also. Elath, Tiberias, Ein Bokek, and Arad are the four most popular haunts. The first three have the special lure of being on the water, while Arad appeals with its bracing dry mountain air.

Elath's March temperatures, averaging 75 degrees, provide hosts of holidaymakers with a foretaste of summer. By April water sports, notably diving, are in full swing. Pesach week is an especially appropriate time for excursions into Sinai and along the Red Sea to Sharm-el-Sheikh.

The charming historical town of Tiberias on the green shores of Kinneret offers warm spring days as well as aquatic activities of every kind. Famed as a health resort. Tiberias is the emerald of Galilee. Galilee. where Nature's promise springtime is most richly fulfilled. The Galilean orchards, apple, pear, pomegranate, fig. and cherry trees, are a mass of white, pink, red, and brown blossoms whose fragrant scents envelop the terrain for miles around.

Ein Bokek, the thermal springs resort on the Dead Sea, is open all year. Its modern hotels and complete curative facilities attract an increasing flow of visitors from Europe. where most spas are still closed

in the spring

Arad has the exciting atmosphere of a young pioneer town. and serves as a convenient base for trips to Masada, Ein Gedi, sites more comand Sdom. fortably enjoyed in the mild spring.

The spell of spring generates a crowded agenda of events and activities throughout the country. Musical formances—concerts. chamber ensembles, opera, folk-lore even-



ings of dance and song-are at

a peak. In Haifa, the annual flower

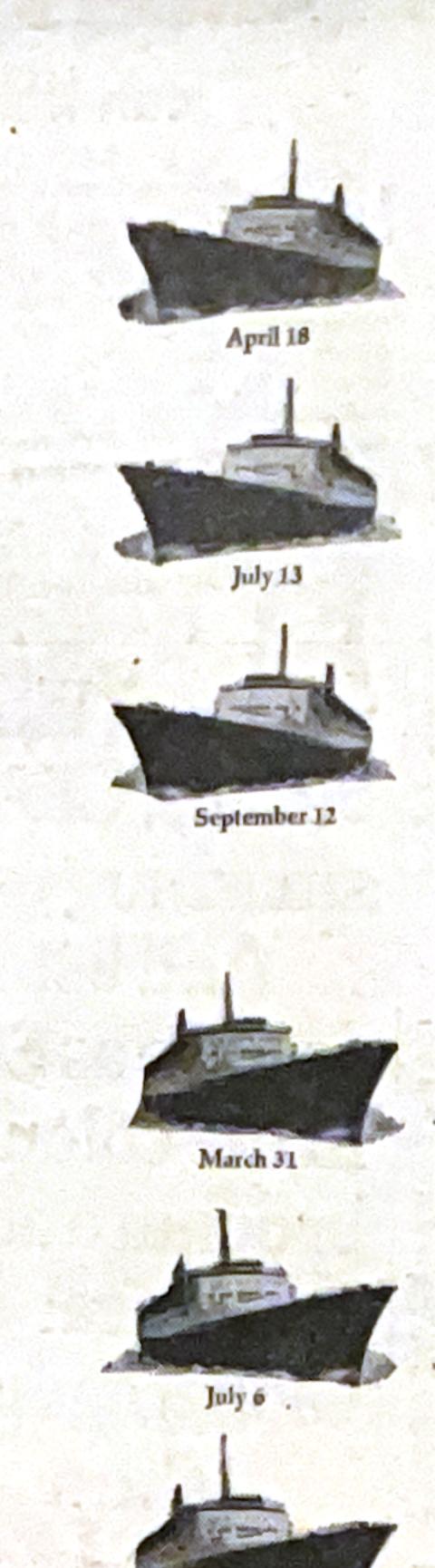
show dazzles with its profusion of imaginative displays, scores of them flown in from abroad. Theatres, art exhibitions, and cultural lectures flourish. In the sunny outdoors, organised hikes, marathon runs

and nature societies' treks invite winter sluggards to get out, stretch their hibernated legs, and rediscover the land. For those who prefer their exploration with less exertion cars, boats, and horses are for hire. Even an inter-city bus ride through the countryside affords a front row seat for the pageant of spring. For Israel there is a unique reason "wherefore this season

different from all seasons. As Chaim Klein, director of the Israel Government Tourist Office in London, points out, "Israelis strongly feel the similarity between the rebirth of their nation and the renascence of spring. The analogy becomes even more meaningful when it is remembered that two momentous experiences in Jewish history.

emergence from bondage and modern independence, both oc-

curred in the spring." JACK GOLDFARB



This year, Queen Eliz crossings. So if you're trave you've got a few days to sp.

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