

2024

Rite of Passage

A Year of Initiation

Devoted to creating a culture of initiation, Wilderness Torah is embarking on its own rite of passage. A culture of initiation is one in which we intentionally honor important transitions in life. Like an adult stepping into a new life stage, Wilderness Torah is transforming into its next phase — embracing its deeper organizational identity.



Embracing Our Identity

By introducing several strategic shifts, Wilderness Torah is evolving its operations and internal culture to more clearly align with its goals of village-building, healing, belonging, and resilience.

- **Rabbi Zelig Golden is now the Director of Spirituality and Education.** As co-founder and previous executive director, Rabbi Zelig will now focus on his greatest gifts, including facilitating ritual, teaching, thought leadership, and mentoring our work in creating a deep culture of initiation.
- **Collaborative Leadership.** Wilderness Torah has long envisioned a structure that aligns with values of shared leadership and inclusivity. Under the new leadership of Itamar Cohn, Senior Director of Programs & Education, and Robert Friedman, Senior Director of Marketing & Operations, Wilderness Torah is building a new circular leadership model. This structure includes Julie Wolk, a co-founder and Board of Directors leader at Wilderness Torah, and Ophir Haberer, who is leading a new JEDI Advisory Council
- **Integrating Social Justice in Our Work.** We are evolving our cultural dynamics to become a more just, equitable, diverse, and inclusive (JEDI) organization. To do this, we are establishing a new JEDI Advisory Council made up of community leaders. The council will actively contribute to organizational practices and decision-making – promoting an equitable work culture that celebrates diversity.
- **Financial Resilience: Crossing the Bridge.** In early 2023, Wilderness Torah engaged in a Bridge Funding Campaign to address an urgent financial shortfall. Thanks to your generosity, we are grateful that Wilderness Torah has recovered financial stability. As part of that, we made several tough decisions to support our restabilization: we downsized our team, paused Passover in the Desert, and began revamping our business models.
- **NEW 2024 Program Line-up!** Wilderness Torah is rolling out a new suite of innovative and immersive programs to mark this monumental year. Whether you're a family with tots, a community elder, or anyone in between, we have a special experience waiting for you!

2024 Program Schedule



Youth & Family

Nevatim Roots & Rhythms Class (Ages 2-7)

6-part interactive musical & learning series for youth 2-7 and their parents
Begins Wednesday May 1, 2024

Teen Neshama Quest Backpacking (Grades 9-12)

Tuesday, July 30 - Monday, August 5, 2024

Family Camp (Ages 3-10)

Thursday, August 8 - Sunday, August 11, 2024

Teen Shomrim Leadership (Grades 9-12)

Begins Friday, September 20, 2024

B'naiture (Grades 6-8)

Begins Sunday, October 6, 2024

B'hootz (Grades 4-5)

Begins Sunday, October 12, 2024



Community Experiences

Kabbalat Shabbat with Chochmat HaLev

April 5 & June 7, 2024

WT's Rite-of-Passage Ceremony

Ceremony and celebration honoring Wilderness Torah's transition of leadership and new organizational structure
Sunday, May 19, 2024

Adult Neshama Quest Backpacking Trip

Wednesday, June 18 - Monday, June 24

Rosh Hashanah

Thursday, October 3, 2024

Yom Kippur

Friday, October 11 - Saturday, October 12, 2024

Sukkot Festival

Friday, October 18 - Sunday, October 20, 2024



NEW: Online Courses

Medicine of the Jewish Holidays

An ongoing series exploring the medicine of the Hebrew calendar through the lens of Jewish holidays

Begins with Purim: Thursday, March 14, 2024

Judaism and the Four Elements

4-class series to ritually integrate the elements of creation
Begins April 4, 2024

Sacred Paths of Practice

4-class series to awaken your relationship to Jewish fundamentals through the power of nature-connection
Begins May 16, 2024

Introduction to Earth-Based Mysticism

6-class series exploring teachings from the Chasidic masters
Begins June 27, 2024



NEW AUDIENCES: Young Adult & Elder Programs

From Older to Elder (Ages 64+)

A 6-month rite-of-passage journey to explore elderhood
August 2024 - February 2025

Young Adult Neshama Quest Backpacking Trip (Ages 18-28)

Tuesday July 30 - Monday, Aug 5, 2024

