



Sarajevo and Mostar

October 8th - 11th 2015

With Jeremy Leigh

'Jews in the eye of the storm'

In the minds of some, Sarajevo has a very severe branding problem, a city associated almost entirely with war and conflict. It was here that the twentieth century 'opened' in June 1914 with the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne, Archduke Ferdinand. Thirty seven days later, the continent was plunged into a war that went far beyond the confines of this captivating Balkan city and transformed the whole of history. Yet it was in Sarajevo too that the century 'ended', in the years 1992-5, with the longest siege anywhere in Europe throughout the whole century, in a war that reminded all who chose to look just how deadly inter-ethnic strife can be.

Yet, such dramas notwithstanding, Sarajevo has many attractions for the intrepid Jewish traveller! For a start, it was a place of safety for refugees departing Spain in 1492, creating a new central Sephardi diaspora where they lived for centuries under Muslim protection.

Throughout, Jews have lived constantly navigating the challenge of being a minority in a four-part ethnic jigsaw. Indeed, one can stand at the junction of two of Sarajevo's main streets where all points of the ethnic-religious compass are visible – Catholic and Orthodox churches, mosques and synagogues - a small reminder of the close proximity of life that has been a hallmark of this city. Jews were good Ottomans, good Yugoslavs (probably tried harder than most to make that tortuous identity work!) and today try to keep their heads above water in a new independent and complex Muslim state. Jews lived on both sides of Mostar's famous bridge across the Drina.

This is a fascinating and complex Jewish journey, set in some of the most beautiful yet battle-scarred landscapes of the Balkans. The stories of conflict and how Jews cope with it, are sobering and also life-affirming.

***Price will be £495 for double occupancy with a single supplement of £75. The price excludes flights and is based on a minimum of 25 participants. We reserve the right to add a surcharge if there is a significant devaluation of the pound against the destination currency. A non-refundable deposit of £75 per person is payable with your booking form. Final payment will be required by 20 July 2015 2014. To book please contact Debbi Arnold or Kirsty Pegg at Colletts Travel on 020 8202 2233 or download booking form [here](#)
<http://www.jewishjourneys.info>***