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A guide to Jewish London By June Sawyers, Special to Tribune Newspapers

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"Jewish London: A Comprehensive Guidebook for Visitors and Londoners"

London has had a strong Jewish presence since the 11th century. In this evocative and richly illustrated guide to Jewish London, authors Rachel Kolsky and Roslyn Rawson offer a fascinating look at Jewish London today. The Jewish population hovers around 196,000; by contrast, the Jewish population of the entire United Kingdom is slightly less than 300,000. Whether visiting the bagel and falafel bars of Golders Green or the Orthodox community of [Stamford Hill](#), Kolsky and Rawson offer smart and thoughtful observations.

The guide features a series of walking tours based on Kolsky's experience as a Blue Badge London Tourist Guide with an emphasis on the East End (the Jewish Whitechapel Walk contains everything from historic murals to the site of former settlement houses), Central London and Hampstead. The authors describe synagogues; Jewish or Jewish-themed museums (from the Freud Museum to the Jewish Museum); and kosher cafes, restaurants and shops.

The illustrations are especially noteworthy. The wonderful mural "Story of East End" by Beverley-Jane Stewart is a marvel in its own right, while the contemporary photographs place Jewish London in a historical context. All chronicle the changes that have occurred over the centuries. The historic community of Brick Lane, for example, has been transformed from a 20th-century Jewish neighborhood into the well-known center of London's Bangladeshi neighborhood.

In addition, wonderful sections explore aspects of Jewish London in more detail, including a portrait of Disraeli's London (Benjamin Disraeli, the noted 19th-century British prime minister), Holocaust memorials (such as [the Holocaust](#) Exhibition at the Imperial War Museum and the Holocaust Memorial Garden in Hyde Park) and Jewish cemeteries. The guide concludes with a glossary of Jewish terms.

The book is a must for anyone interested in exploring Jewish life in London past and present.