

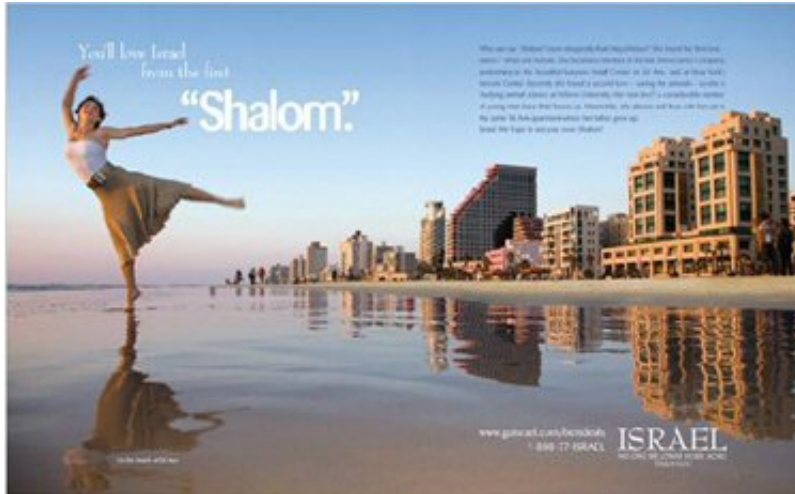
## Israel Launches Largest Ever Tourism Advertising Campaign

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Israel's Ministry of Tourism has launched a multi-million dollar advertising campaign in North America, designed to boost tourism to Israel from the United States and Canada.

The budget for the campaign is an unprecedented \$11 million to be spent through December 2007, says Arie Sommer, Israel Tourism Commissioner, North and South America. The campaign will be spread over a variety of media types, including network television, cable TV, national magazines, newspaper travel sections, professional and religious media, billboards and New York City bus shelters. The campaign is planned to continue through 2008 and has been produced by New York advertising agency, Christy MacDougall Mitchell Bodden.

### **You'll love Israel from the first 'Shalom.'**



"Our goal," explains Sommer, "is to deflect the constant barrage of negative news images of Israel, and to show the country as it really is: sophisticated, hip, ancient, modern, friendly, spiritual and beautiful."

Instead of showing merely sites, the print campaign is based around people, with the headline, "You'll love Israel from the first 'Shalom.'" "We realized that over and above the extraordinary sights and experiences Israel has to offer, our prime asset is our people," explains Sommer, "so we searched for a series of Israelis with interesting professions and hobbies and hired one of Israel's most creative photographers, Gilad Benari, to photograph them in their favorite places; these are not models, but real people so that we tell a story that goes beyond views and monuments."

Print advertisements include depictions of a dancer on the beach in Tel Aviv, a chef in Jerusalem, a cowboy on the Golan Heights, a Tel Aviv high-tech expert whose hobby is building guitars, and an archeologist atop Masada.

The Ministry's television campaign will be concentrated in New York, Los Angeles and south Florida. "The 30-second spots show a mélange of sights and visions that people might not normally associate with Israel," says Sommer, "and close with the question, "This is Israel. Who knew?" Tourism is Israel's major source of foreign currency income.

Some 600,000 North Americans visited Israel in 2006, almost 30% of the total, and representing the largest single source of tourism to the country. "This is a highly unusual phenomenon," observes Sommer, "because most countries' chief source of tourism is nearby...while ours is 6,000 miles away." The Ministry's goal is to double North American tourism to Israel by 2010.

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