

Bar Bahar (In Between)

Movie Guide

Bar Bahar (In Between)

Director: Maysaloun Hamoud

Release Date: 2016

Run time: 1h 42m

Content Warnings: Sexual Assault, Racism, Mentions of Violence, Homophobia, Use of Drugs, Consumption of Alcohol, Smoking.

Accessing the Movie

Bar Bahar (In Between) is available on [Prime Video](#) with a Film Movement Plus subscription and can be rented from major streaming platforms.



Movie Guide

This guide provides content that may be helpful in understanding the film and additional interesting information. We also recommend reviewing IATF and iCenter's worksheet [Exploring the Topics of Arab Citizens and Jewish-Arab Relations in Israel](#) for introductory background information on Arab Citizens of Israel. The source sheet companion is [here](#).

Movie Information



[Maysaloun Hamoud](#) is a Palestinian Israeli filmmaker. *Bar Bahar* (2016) was her first feature film and debuted to critical acclaim. She has received recognition for her projects exploring Palestinian identity and taboo topics.



Bar Bahar experienced backlash from the city of Umm al-Fahm. Its municipal government campaigned against the film with the Islamic Council (Israel's senior Muslim body) and called for residents to [boycott the film](#). The Higher Islamic Council issued a fatwa against Hamoud, alleging the film harmed Islam, leading to [death threats](#).

Language

- In the film, the characters switch between Arabic and Hebrew. Hebrew is Israel's official language. However, Arabic was an official language until the passage of Israel's 2018 "[Jewish Nation-State Law](#)", 2 years after the film was released.
- Most Arab citizens learn Hebrew as a second language, and few Jews speak Arabic fluently. In a Hebrew-speaking economy, limited Hebrew abilities creates barriers to socio-economic mobility [for many Arab citizens](#).



About the Characters



Salma, a secular Muslim is from Ma'alot Tarshiha and Nour's cousin **Rafif** is from Haifa.



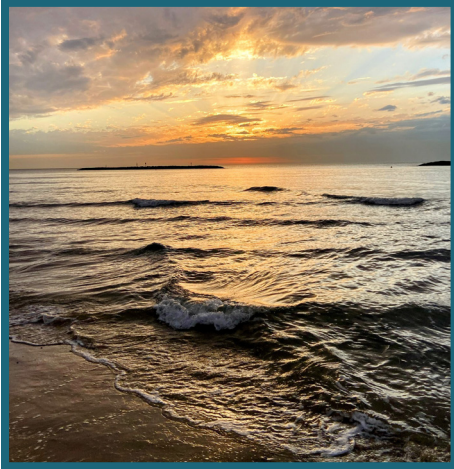
Laila, is a Christian from **Nazareth**, one of the 2 largest Arab cities in Israel. 7% of Arab citizens [are Christian](#), many of whom live in and around Nazareth.



Nour, an observant Muslim, is from **Umm al-Fahm**, a large Arab city in the more conservative triangle region.



The protagonists share an apartment in **Tel Aviv**, which is considered a liberal city with a thriving party scene.



Tel Aviv Beach



Haifa



Nazareth

Mixed Cities

Ma'alot Tarshiha, and Haifa are considered “mixed cities,” a term used to refer to 8 cities with a large minority of Arab residents. About a quarter of Israel's Arab population lives in “mixed cities,” a number that is [rising](#).

Discussion Questions

1. What is one image, moment or quote that stuck out to you from the film? Why?
2. Did anything the characters experience feel familiar to you or people in your life? What felt different?
3. What languages were spoken in the film? When and why do characters switch languages?
4. What diversity within Arab society did you see in the film? What identities (gender, religion, sexual orientation, class, etc.) are explored in this film? Did this reflect your expectations or challenge them?
5. What role(s) do humor and satire play in *Bar Bahar*?
6. How do different forms of violence appear in the film? How is violence treated?
7. How did the film relate to other experiences you have had learning about Arab citizens of Israel? How did this compare?
8. Regarding her film, director Maysaloun Hamoud [said](#), “We will never be considered as equal, so we are in between, out of the society that we came from, and not really part of the Israeli society in equal ways in the places we live.” Do you agree? Why or why not?

Further Resources

- [Maysaloun Hamoud's In Between Is a Palestinian Feminist Revenge Fantasy - Vogue - Julia Felenthal - 1.5.2018](#)
- [What It Really Means to Be Queer and Palestinian in Israel and the West Bank - Haaretz - Sheren Falah Saab - 6.9.2022](#)
- ['We're the New Arab Mainstream': This Is the Arab Alternative to Tel Aviv's Party Scene - Haaretz - Nadin Abou Laban - 2.10.2023](#)