

Golda Salamon On The Beach At The River Tisza



That's me, Golda Salamon, on the beach at the river Tisza, in Maramarossziget, in 1946. It's written on the back the 8th of October.

We, the young used to go bathing to the Tisza or Iza rivers in the summer.

I went to the Tisza to bath in swimsuit, back then there was a canal which is no longer there.

An old woman visits me sometimes, she keeps telling me even today:

'Galdika, we always took delight in watching you, you were such a beautiful girl, you went to the Tisza in swimsuit.' It was a beautiful swimsuit, an American one, dark-blue with nice white flowers.

And I didn't get sunburn, so that my skin would peel, but I got a creole-like dark skin.

'Your blue eyes - she always says - were so shining. We always looked at you with my husband, what a beautiful girl you were.'

'Oh dear - I say to her - Irenke, it was so long ago. It might not even have been true.'

However we used to go to the central bath too, especially after I got married, we had to go once in a month.

It was a big bath, there were about 12 bathtubs - there were rooms with two, respectively with one bathtub -, and there was a mikveh, a kind of lake, you had to go down some stairs to it.

First we washed ourselves thoroughly in the bath, and then we had to go into that lake.

There was a woman responsible for the bath, as mikveh wasn't only about going in and taking a bath.

They cut your nails, as you mustn't have long nails, and one had to go down the three stairs to that lake [basin], and had to dive completely three times; then the woman responsible for bathing said a prayer - she was out [on the verge of the basin] - and one had to say after her, if she didn't know it.

I hated diving, when I was married, my coiffure got always spoiled.

Before getting married the bride is taken to the baths, where she is being taught about religion and how she should observe it.

It is a Jewish woman's duty to light a candle every Friday evening [at sunset] - I light four candles myself even today, two for the dead, and other two because I'm married -, and she has to say a certain prayer.

The other duty is to go once in a month to the ritual bath, after her menses ends.

Back then challah was baked at every Jewish family for Sabbath - they called it 'koldec's' or 'barhesz'; they took out a little from the dough they would make the challah of, they said a prayer and throw it into the fire, no matter if it was baked in a stove or in an oven. These three things have to be known by a Jewish woman when she gets married. She went to the mikveh with her mother-in-law, her mother or sister-in-law, so that she would learn her duties and how to behave. She went to the mikveh for the first time when married, before that she just took a bath, like today in the bathroom, but she wasn't allowed before to go in the mikveh.