

# Mp3 Divahn - World: Middle East

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Think Jewish music = Klezmer? Then you need to hear Divahn's Middle-Eastern/Sephardic groove. The all-female quartet infuses traditional songs with creative sophistication, using tabla, cello, rabel other acoustics. Lyrics in Hebrew Judeo-Spanish. 10 MP3 Songs WORLD: Middle East, WORLD: Judaica Details: Anyone who thinks Jewish music equals klezmer needs to hear Divahn's Middle Eastern and Sephardic grooves. Divahn infuses traditional songs with sophisticated harmonies and arrangements using tabla, cello, rabel, dombek, banjo and other acoustic instruments, plus vocals in Hebrew, Judeo-Spanish, Persian, Arabic, Aramaic and Turkish. Their beautiful lyricism flows through an intense rhythmic drive. The group distinguishes itself as the only all-female ensemble performing Mizrahi-influenced music (Jewish music from the Middle East and North Africa) in the US, and has performed with some of the world's most renowned master musicians, including Glen Velez and Anindo Chatterjee. Divahn, a word common to Hebrew, Persian, and Arabic, means a collection of songs or poetry. Through its music, Divahn seeks to underscore common ground shared between diverse Middle Eastern cultures and religions. The group captures the breadth and diversity of Mizrahi and Sephardi music throughout the centuries, while simultaneously creating and redefining innovative directions for the music in the present. "A stunning debut! ... Darting, stabbing rhythms, throaty, urgent vocals and intricate and intelligent arrangements, this is a flat-out thrilling record." - The Jewish Week "In combining the old and new, drawing from across the globe, and mixing their respective musical gifts, Divahn have not only a fine debut on their hands, but a new musical statement - one of craft, originality, and spirit." - Austin Chronicle "A work of deep, provocative, timeless beauty." - Seth Rogovoy "Traditional and wonderfully new at the same time... Highly recommended." - Ari Davidow's Klezmer Shack --- 1. Shabekhi Yerushalayim words: Hebrew, Psalm 147 music: Avihu Medina (1948- ) Though the text of this piece has been around quite a while, the music was written only decades ago by Avihu Medina, one of Israel's most noted composers and performers. 2. Dror Yikra words: Hebrew, Donash ben Labrat (920-990) music: traditional Mizrahi This famous zmirah (Shabbat song) relishes the freedom experienced on Shabbat as we take a break from the week's toils. 3. Yigdal words: Hebrew, Daniel ben Yehuda (14th century) music:

traditional Iranian Galeet first heard the melody for this well-known religious hymn at the Iranian synagogue of her grandparents (Yona and Hoori Dardashti) in Rishon LeTzion, Israel.

4. Ya Ribon Alam words: Aramaic, Rabbi Israel ben Moses Najara (1555-1625) music: traditional Iraqi This is a favorite zmirah, sung at Shabbat dinner. We've thrown in some of our own Southern flair to complement this Iraqi melody.

5. Duerme words: Ladino An old Sephardic lullaby sung to a lover.

6. Va'amartem Zevakh Pesakh words: Hebrew music: Iraq Many Iraqi Jews sing this traditional pizmon at the Passover seder; it praises God for rescuing the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.

7. Yodukha Rayonai words: Hebrew, Rabbi Israel ben Moses Najara music: from the Turkish folk song Katibim (skdar'a) Katibim is a well-known, light-hearted Turkish folk song in which a woman describes her man. As is common practice in the Jewish diaspora, Turkish Jews liked the music so much that they chose it for a pizmon (religious poem).

8. Cuando el Rey Nimrod words: Ladino This song is also known as "Avraham Avinu" or "Abraham our Father" as it provides a rendition of the birth of Abraham, the Patriarch. Many Sephardim have traditionally sung this song at the male infant's brit milah, or circumcision ceremony.

9. Scalerica de Oro words: Ladino The unfortunate bride-to-be in this song has no money to offer as a dowry. Friends and family, therefore, offer the couple their prayers for prosperity, happiness and good fortune ("mazal bueno").

10. Shekharkhoret words: Hebrew This song was originally "Morenica" in Ladino. In both Hebrew and Ladino, the title means "dark woman." Although the chorus refers to the magnificent beauty of the "Shekharkhoret," the speaker herself states, "I used to be fair; the summer sun made me dark," suggesting an ambiguous attitude toward beauty. The song was traditionally sung at Mizrakhi weddings as the women danced around the bride. All arrangements by Divahn: Galeet Dardashti (lead vocals, guitar, doumbek) Lauren DeAlbert (tabla, doumbek, riq, tar, castanets, zills, didgeridoo, didgeridoodle, vocals) Michal Raizen (cello, vocals) Emily Pinkerton (violin, rabel, banjo, vocals)

About the music: Divahn's songs represent the breadth of Sephardic and Mizrakhi-influenced Jewish music throughout the centuries. While the terms Sephardic and Mizrakhi are often used synonymously, this is not always accurate. The Sephardic or "Spanish Jews" flourished in Spain for several centuries. They spoke Ladino, or Judeo-Spanish (a Hebrew-flavored dialect of Spanish), amongst themselves and, of course, composed songs in Ladino. Their music reflected the Spanish as well as the Moorish influences to which they were exposed. When the Sephardim were expelled from Spain in 1492, many of them settled throughout the Mediterranean, the Middle East and North Africa, which is why Sephardic music and culture is so often

linked to the Middle East. Aside from the Sephardim, however, Jews have had a strong presence in the Middle East in the areas of countries such as Iran, Iraq, and Syria since the destruction of the first Temple in 586 BCE. Due to Islamic restrictions on music in many periods, Jews were the primary group permitted to serve as professional musicians. Throughout history, therefore, Mizрахim (Middle Eastern and North African Jews) played an important role in perpetuating the musical traditions in their respective countries, influencing and being influenced by the cultures with which they resided for thousands of years.

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