

= Mamilla Mall =

Mamilla Mall , also known as Alrov Mamilla Avenue , is an upscale shopping street and the only open @-@ air mall in Jerusalem , Israel . Located northwest of Jaffa Gate , the mall consists of a 2 @,@ 000 feet (610 m) pedestrian promenade called Alrov Mamilla Avenue lined by 140 stores , restaurants , and cafes , and office space on upper floors . The mall sits atop a multi @-@ story parking garage for 1 @,@ 600 cars and buses , and a bus terminal . Designed by Moshe Safdie and developed by Alrov Properties and Lodgings Ltd. of Tel Aviv , the mall incorporates the facades of 19th @-@ century buildings from the original Mamilla Street , as well as the original structures of the Convent of St. Vincent de Paul , the Stern House , and the Clark House .

The mall is part of the Alrov Mamilla Quarter , a \$ 400 million mixed @-@ use development that also includes the 28 acres (11 ha) David 's Village luxury condominium project , the David Citadel Hotel , the Alrov Mamilla Hotel , and the Karta parking lot . While the overall project was approved by the municipality in the early 1970s , and most of the condominiums and the David Citadel Hotel were completed in the 1990s , construction of the mall was delayed time and again ? first due to opposition by preservationist , environmentalist , and religious groups , and then due to bureaucratic disputes , litigation , and arbitration . The mall was finally completed and opened in stages from 2007 to 2008 , thirty @-@ seven years after its initial proposal .

= = Location = =

Mamilla Mall runs perpendicular to the Old City Walls between Jaffa Road and Yitzhak Kariv Street . It opens onto the intersection of King Solomon , King David , and Agron Streets at its northern end , and Jaffa Gate at its southern end .

= = History = =

The original Mamilla Street extended from the Mamilla Pool to Jaffa Gate . Along this street , wealthy Arabs constructed homes , offices and stores in the 1800s . Toward the end of the 19th century , and especially during the British Mandate era , the street became a fashionable commercial district . Both Arab and Jewish businessmen operated high @-@ end shops for furniture , textiles , housewares , art , photography , and automobile showrooms .

In response to the announcement of the United Nations Partition Plan , Arab mobs stormed Mamilla Street on December 2 , 1947 , ransacking and setting fire to 40 Jewish @-@ owned stores . Jewish merchants fled the area , which then came under heavy bombardment during the 1948 Arab @-@ Israeli War . With the cessation of hostilities , the area became a no man 's land dividing the Jordanian @-@ occupied Old City from Jewish West Jerusalem , until a truce was signed in 1952 . In the 1950s , poor Sephardic immigrant families and tradesmen took up occupancy in the derelict buildings , and workshops and auto @-@ repair garages replaced the former stores .

In 1970 the Jerusalem municipality proposed to overhaul the slum @-@ like area and replace it with a mixed @-@ use development of luxury housing , hotels , and shops . Mayor Teddy Kollek asked architects Moshe Safdie and Gilbert Weil to draw up a plan . The two submitted a " grandiose " scheme that called for the construction of a subterranean traffic system , over @-@ ground buildings , a pedestrian promenade , parking for 1 @,@ 000 cars , and a bus terminal . All of Mamilla 's historic buildings except for the Convent of St. Vincent de Paul would be demolished under the plan . The stated goal was to create a " living bridge " connecting the Old City with the New City of Jerusalem .

While the plan was approved by the city in 1972 , it aroused keen opposition from preservationist , environmentalist , and religious groups . In response to the outcry , the city department of town planning submitted a scaled @-@ back design calling for an above @-@ ground traffic system , a pedestrian plaza fronting Jaffa Gate , the retention of facades along Mamilla and King Solomon Streets , and the demolition of historic buildings only in the heart of the Mamilla valley . Though Safdie incorporated these suggestions into a new plan submitted in 1976 , opposition continued

unabated by such bodies as the Jerusalem District Planning Commission , the Jerusalem Merchants Association , and the Council for a Beautiful Israel . Nevertheless , in the 1970s , the city spent NIS 130 million to move over 700 families out of Mamilla to the Neve Yaakov , Pisgat Ze 'ev , Katamon , and Baka neighborhoods . Workshops and garages were relocated to Talpiot , where they formed the core of the nascent Talpiot industrial zone .

The Ladbroke Group of London , which won the original tender to develop the Mamilla project in 1989 , pulled out in the early 1990s and development was handed over to Alfred Akirov of the Alrov Group of Tel Aviv . In the 1990s , Akirov completed 120 out of a planned 200 units in the David 's Village condominium complex , and the David Citadel Hotel . But construction of the mall was delayed again and again due to bureaucratic disputes , litigation , arbitration , and political intervention by Israeli government ministers as Akirov and the government @-@ owned development firm , Karta , went head @-@ to @-@ head on building rights , responsibilities , and compensation . In the 1990s Akirov changed the approved plan for covered arcades on the pedestrian promenade to open @-@ air arches , adding 2 @,@ 000 square metres (22 @,@ 000 sq ft) of retail space ; he also pushed for an entertainment complex with nine cinemas to be installed next to the Convent of St. Vincent de Paul , an idea that the city had vetoed years earlier . (Following Orthodox Jewish protest , Akirov cancelled the cinema complex .) When the government refused to approve Akirov 's zoning changes , Akirov sued Karta and froze construction on the mall for several years , leaving a swath of half @-@ finished buildings and construction cranes in clear view of Jaffa Gate and the Old City Walls .

In August 2006 the Jerusalem District Court upheld three earlier arbitration rulings and ordered Karta to pay Akirov NIS 100 million for project delays . Akirov resumed construction and opened the mall in stages from 2007 to 2008 , bringing closure to a 37 @-@ year project that normally should have taken five to ten years . The 194 @-@ room Alrov Mamilla Jerusalem Hotel , anchored on the north side of the mall , opened in June 2009 .

= = Architecture = =

Mamilla Mall , along with the other components of the Alrov Mamilla Quarter , was designed by Israeli architect Moshe Safdie . With an eye to the historical and archaeological importance of the area , Safdie opted to blend the mall into its surroundings rather than introduce a contemporary design . To that end , he chose materials and construction styles similar to those of the historic Mamilla neighborhood ? namely , masonry @-@ block construction and a predominance of arches . Facades removed from 19th @-@ century buildings on the original Mamilla Street were placed on new construction in the mall .

Several historic buildings were integrated into the mall design . These are :

Clark House , an 1898 structure built by American evangelists living in Jerusalem . The building stands on its original site and was renovated by the architectural firm .

Convent of St. Vincent de Paul , operated by the Daughters of Charity , an order of French nuns . Housing an orphanage , old @-@ age home , and a shelter for mentally and physically handicapped people , it was the first structure to be erected on Mamilla Street , in 1886 . It , too , occupies its original site .

Stern House , a private home in which Zionist leader Theodor Herzl had lodged overnight during his 1898 visit to Jerusalem . The house had become a Zionist shrine , with the room in which Herzl slept given over to photos and memorabilia from Herzl 's life . Though the house had been heavily damaged in the 1948 war , preservationists won a suit in the Israel Supreme Court to save it from demolition . The two @-@ story masonry @-@ block house , originally located at 18 Mamilla Street , was dismantled brick by brick and warehoused for ten years until builders were ready to reassemble it on Alrov Mamilla Avenue . Safdie left the colored numbers on the brick facades of this and other preserved houses to emphasize the preservation nature of the work . The Stern House presently houses a restaurant , bar , and Steimatzky bookstore .

Seven additional 19th @-@ century buildings were dismantled , warehoused , and reconstructed along the promenade .

The buildings along Alrov Mamilla Avenue are spaced irregularly rather than placed in a continuous line . The open areas between the buildings accommodate different types of public areas , while the spaces themselves afford views of the historic landmarks beyond the avenue , such as the Tower of David and Jaffa Gate . The buildings lining the avenue range in height from three to six stories , with the higher stories set back from the street line . There is also a two @-@ story , domed atrium housing shops and restaurants .

The mall sits atop a six @-@ story parking garage with space for 1 @,@ 600 cars and 60 buses . From the outside , the over @-@ ground structure appears as a series of tiered terraces overflowing with greenery . Skylights built into the terraces admit natural light to each parking level . Outside the entrances to the parking garage stand terminals for city buses .

At its southern end , the promenade opens onto a small , multi @-@ tiered , landscaped park facing Jaffa Gate .

= = Retail = =

Mamilla Mall contains 300 @,@ 000 square feet (28 @,@ 000 m2) of retail space . Its 140 stores appeal to all economic strata , from high @-@ end international chains Tommy Hilfiger and Abercrombie & Fitch ; to Israeli designer boutiques such as Castro , Dorin Frankfurt , and Ronen Chen ; to mid @-@ range restaurants and a " supermarket @-@ style " pharmacy . There are numerous chain stores selling fashions and cosmetics , as well as gift and souvenir stores . The Gap store , which opened in the mall in August 2009 , is the chain 's first store in Israel . Among the cafes are branches of Café Rimon , Aroma Espresso Bar , and Spaghettim .

Due to the diversity of retail establishments , the mall attracts a wide cross @-@ section of Israeli residents and tourists . These include secular and religious Jews , Christians , Muslims , Armenian monks , young couples , families , and students . At the height of the summer and tourist seasons in July and August , an estimated 20 @,@ 000 people visit the mall daily .

= = Exhibitions and events = =

To appeal to its broad consumer base , the Alrov Group presents changing exhibits of sculpture and art along the promenade . All the pieces are by local artists , and most are for sale . During the summer and Jewish holidays , the mall hosts free concerts , street performances , folk dancing , and family activities . During Hanukkah , a Chabad candle @-@ lighting ceremony takes place here nightly .

The mall has become a popular site for flash mobs , including those staged by nonprofit organizations to raise awareness for their activities .

= = Attempted terror attack = =

In August 2013 the Shin Bet uncovered a plot by Hamas members from Ramallah and Jerusalem to bomb the Mamilla Mall on Rosh Hashana ; two of the men were employed as maintenance workers at the mall .