

# On-Line Genealogy Research – Specializing in Sephardic Genealogy of the Ottoman Empire

By Victor Alkana

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Bio: **Victor Alkana** has been researching Sephardic genealogy on-line since 1997. He has compiled more than 160,000 people with Sephardic roots to the Ottoman Empire; especially, Rhodes, Turkey and Greece with some families from Syria, Lebanon, Israel/Palestine, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco and North Africa. He started researching his Rhodeslie roots and found that by compiling other families, he would often learn more about his own family. Soon his file expanded enough to show connections of many families. He will share how he does almost all his research on-line using mainly free sites, as well as, certain paid sites. He'll explain how to team up with other people researching their roots. He had, at one time, 20 Rhodeslie descendants working together to build their trees. He has compiled a lot of data from various sites which are not easily available on-line. You'll learn from his experiences.

## Handy Online Research Sites

<https://familysearch.org/search> is giving me some new info. They have some collections which may be useful that other places don't have and it's free!

California Marriages 1850-1952 have images. Look at it as it is often the marriage license and has more data about the people and their parents. Some records are more than one page or extra-long, so look at all of it. Key things which can be useful:

- Place of birth for each person being married and their parents.
- If first marriage or remarriage of the person, says how many times they have been married.
- Occupation
- Town they live in

New York Births 1640-1962

Oregon Births 1868-1929

Oregon Deaths 1903-1998

- Spouse

Washington Death Certificates 1907-1960 (no image)

- Names of Spouse, Father and Mother

Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, Immigration Cards, 1900-1965

- Place and date of birth
- Names of Father and Mother, with where they were born
- Picture of person
- List of children accompanying person
- If tourist or permanent visa.
- Where they lived before visiting Brazil

<http://www.italiengen.org/> has some nice collection of marriage and death records for NYC. There is a lot of misspelling, but it is still very helpful. I haven't explored what else they have, though.

<http://www.findagrave.com/> has a nice collection of cemetery data. Sometimes they even have the tombstones. Besides the USA, I have started seeing stuff for other countries.

<http://www.ancestry.com/> has a lot of USA records that are free through local libraries and NARA branches. If you pay for their premium annual membership, you can access world records.

Searching <http://www.geni.com/> can be helpful.

<https://www.intelius.com/> is good for finding age and connections of people living in the USA.

<http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov> great for people residing in Washington

- Marriage Records (with images)
- Death Records (unless part of SSDI it is very helpful)

**America's Obituaries & Death Notices** via Multnomah County Library

<http://catalog.multcolib.org/search~S1?/Yobituaries+and+death&searchscope=1&SORT=D/Yobituaries+and+death&searchscope=1&SORT=D&SUBKEY=obituaries+and+death/1%2C15%2C15%2CB/frameset&FF=Yobituaries+and+death&searchscope=1&SORT=D&2%2C2%2C> A collection of obituaries and death notices taken from newspapers throughout the United States. Dates of inclusion vary from newspaper to newspaper. However, online access is restricted to Multnomah County Library card holders which is free and easy to get.

<http://www.jewishgen.org/Sephardic/> sponsored by JewishGen Sephardic SIG (Special Interest Group) and Jeff Malka. Offers links to many Sephardic websites, archives, historical documents, news lists, family trees and name search (for countries of origins like Caribbean, Egypt, France, Greece, Holland, Iraq & Syria, Israel, Italy Mexico, Morocco, Turkey, North Africa, Asia and South America) to highlight a few available Sephardic related resources. Also provides a translator directory, genealogy forms, "How To" and Sephardic Discussion Group.

[http://www.americansephardifederation.org/syn\\_us.html](http://www.americansephardifederation.org/syn_us.html) provides contact information for Sephardic Congregations in the USA.

## Tools for Successful Research

Excel (Works)  
Family Tree Maker  
Email  
Message Boards  
Mozilla Fire Fox compared to Internet Explorer & Chrome  
Facebook

## My Special Collections Which I'm Happy to Share

Istanbul Marriages  
1920's Rhodes Census  
1938 Rhodes Census

### **Key Places Researched People Lived**

Rhodes

Turkey (Istanbul, Izmir, Bodrum, Marmara, Tekirdag, others)  
Greece (Salonika, Ioannina, Monastir, others)  
Bulgaria (Sofia)  
Syria (Aleppo, Bagdad)  
Palestine (Jerusalem)  
Egypt (Cairo, Alexandria)  
Lebanon  
Algeria  
Morocco  
N Africa  
Italy (Milano, Livorno, Rome)  
Austria (Vienna)  
Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) (Salisbury/Harare, others)  
Belgian Congo (Zaire/Congo) (Elizabethville)  
South Africa (Cape Town, others)  
Belgium (Brussels)  
England (London, Manchester, others)  
France (Paris, Marseille, others)  
Argentina (Buenos Aires)  
Bolivia (Montevideo)  
Brazil (Rio, Sao Palo)  
Chile  
Peru (Lima)  
Mexico (Mexico City)  
Cuba (Havana)  
Canada (Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver)  
US: (key towns)  
    New York City, NY  
    Rochester, NY  
    New Jersey  
    Atlanta, Savannah, GA  
    Montgomery, AL  
    Florida  
    Texas  
    California (Los Angeles, San Francisco area, Orange County, San Diego, Santa Barbara)  
    Portland, OR  
    Vancouver, WA  
    Seattle, WA  
    Indianapolis, IN  
    Chicago, IL

## **Synagogues**

[http://www.americansephardifederation.org/syn\\_us.html](http://www.americansephardifederation.org/syn_us.html)

Seattle - Ezra Bessaroth, Sephardic Bikur Holim  
Los Angeles - Sephardic Temple Tifereth Israel  
Atlanta - Or VeShalom  
Portland, OR - Ahavath Achim  
Montgomery, AL - Agudath Israel Etz Ahayem

## **Mount Hebron Cemetery, New York City**

<http://www.mounthebroncemetery.com/search.asp>