

SEPT. 15-17 VERVE RETREAT FAQ

Updated 4/15/2026

Food and Drink

What time are the meals and what is served?

Breakfast is available from 8-9:30 am; lunch from 12:30-1:30pm; and dinner from 6-7 pm. Each meal will have several options (including vegan) as well as a salad bar and dessert. Bring your appetite!

What if I have allergies/dietary needs?

BHEC can accommodate you! Please email cjacobs@shamesjcc.org by Sept. 1 with your full name and dietary restrictions.

Will alcohol be served?

The retreat is BYOB. If you would like to bring your own wine, beer, or other alcohol at mealtimes, it must be kosher certified. You can store items in the dining hall refrigerator.

Should I bring a reusable water bottle?

Yes - and we'll also be giving you one as a souvenir! Clean, potable water is available in the dining hall and in your cabins 24/7. We will not be supplying bottled water.

Will coffee or snacks be available outside of mealtimes?

Yes - drip coffee, tea, and fresh fruit will be available 24/7 in the dining hall. We'll also serve a light snack (chips + dip, hummus + veggies, etc.) each afternoon.

Can I bring my own food?

Yes, although we promise you will not go hungry! If you do bring your own food, we strongly suggest eating outside of your room to keep the ants away. Anything you bring into the dining hall must have a kosher symbol.

What if I like my fancy coffee?

You're in luck - a coffee cart will be available with all of your favorite espresso-based drinks. You can pay the vendor directly when you order. The price is \$2 per beverage (truly the deal of the century).

Housing

What is housing like?

Our group will be spread among 4 one-story buildings with ramps, all of which are in close proximity to each other and the dining hall. Each room, whether private or shared, has a private bathroom with stand-up shower (no bathtubs). The rooms are clean, modest, and rustic, and each has a door that opens to the porch where you'll find outdoor chairs for lounging. There are no TVs in the rooms; for that you'll want to use your personal electronic devices.

What towels, linens, and toiletries are provided?

BHEC will provide bed linens, blankets, and a pillow, as well as bath and hand towels. They do not provide beach towels so if you'd like something larger, please bring your own. No housekeeping service is provided but they can supply extra towels upon request.

You are responsible for bringing your own toiletries (shampoo, toothpaste, lotion, soap). Absolutely no wipes are allowed in their septic system.

Are pets allowed?

Sorry, no pets!

What else do I need to bring?

It's camp, so comfort is key! Bring any clothes or equipment you want for fitness or art activities (especially proper shoes for sports), a bathing suit, walking shoes, slippers and shower shoes, and layers/jackets for chilly nights and mornings. Don't forget bug spray, sunscreen, and your device chargers! The rooms are modest in size so we suggest limiting your luggage to one or two items.

Do I have access to a refrigerator?

Yes - in the dining hall.

Are the cabins heated?

Yes, all rooms have heat and air conditioning, which you can control. Some of the activity spaces (art room, fitness room) also have a/c.

Do the cabins have locks?

No, and there is no safe. Even though the camp is very secure (and our group will be the only group there), we strongly suggest you leave all valuables at home.

Will I have help with my luggage?

Yes. We will help anyone who needs assistance bringing their luggage from the bus into their room. Closer to the retreat, we'll be sending a tag to put on your luggage. Please make sure your tag with your full name is visible and legible on your belongings.

Activities

What is the daily schedule?

Please see the separate attachment for the daily schedule (subject to change).

Do I have to sign up for fitness classes?

No, there should be plenty of room for everyone, and art is available on a first come, first served basis. The only things you must register for are the cooking workshops and chair massages.

Do I need to bring my own mat, paddles, games etc?

BHEC provides all sports and pool equipment. They do not provide yoga mats so bring your own for yoga, meditation, or fitness classes. We will have some board games but if you're planning to play mah jongg or canasta, bring your sets. We will have supplies for the art workshops but you're welcome to bring your favorite art supplies as well.

What activities are available if I don't want to do a structured activity?

Pool swimming, kayaking, canoeing, stand up paddleboarding, tennis, pickleball, basketball, walking trails, fishing, art making, open games (canasta, mah jongg, rummikub etc.), and lots of time to relax, read a book, and enjoy the peace and quiet.

Tell me about the pool.

The heated outdoor pool is 4 feet deep and is great for lap swimming and aqua aerobics. You can also enjoy sitting in lounge chairs on the deck. Since there is no lifeguard at the pool, you are required to sign a waiver upon arriving to camp.

What is there to do at night?

There will be entertainment both evenings after dinner.

What if it rains?

Fortunately there are plenty of indoor spaces at BHEC. All fitness, cooking, yoga, Torah, art classes, and discussions will take place as usual; we'll also have the option of card and board games and possibly watching a movie.

Medication and Health

Where is the nearest clinic/hospital?

The nearest urgent care is in Copake, about 10 minutes away, and the nearest emergency room is Sharon Hospital, about a half hour drive.

Is the camp staff trained in emergencies?

Yes. We will have multiple staff certified in CPR, First Aid, and there are AEDs on site. The lake will be staffed by lifeguards.

What about medication?

Please make sure you bring any medication you need as you won't have a car to get more.

Wifi and Communication

Is there cell service?

There is no cell service at camp but there is strong wifi so you will still be able to talk, text, and use the internet on your personal devices. **Important: Make sure wifi calling is enabled before you get to camp.** (Instructions for iPhone users are [here](#)). We have found that using WhatsApp works great.

Will I have access to a television?

No - for that you'll need to use your own device (or enjoy being device-free for a few days!).

Transportation

Comprehensive busing information will be sent in August from your home JCC. If you are driving yourself, you can park on site at camp - follow the signs to "retreat" and park in the back as indicated on the map. The address is 159 Empire Rd, Copake, NY 12516. Please confirm with your local JCC that you will NOT be taking the bus.