The name **Torres** is of Spanish origin.

The English meaning of **Torres** is A name given to a person who lived in or near a tower, from the Latin "turris"

There are many indicators that the name **Torres** may be of Jewish origin, emanating from the Jewish communities of Spain and Portugal.

When the Romans conquered the Jewish nation in 70 CE, much of the Jewish population was sent into exile throughout the Roman Empire. Many were sent to the Iberian Peninsula. The approximately 750,000 Jews living in Spain in the year 1492 were banished from the country by royal decree of Ferdinand and Isabella. The Jews of Portugal, were banished several years later. Reprieve from the banishment decrees was promised to those Jews who converted to Catholicism. Though some converted by choice, most of these New-Christian converts were called CONVERSOS or MARRANOS (a derogatory term for converts meaning pigs in Spanish), ANUSIM (meaning "coerced ones" in Hebrew) and CRYPTO-JEWS, as they secretly continued to practice the tenets of the Jewish faith.

Our research has found that the family name **Torres** is cited with respect to Jews & Crypto-Jews in at least 22 bibliographical, documentary, or electronic references:

- Sources 1 - 10 for Torres

List of (mostly) Sephardic brides from the publication, "List of 7300 Names of Jewish Brides and Grooms who married in Izmir Between the Years 1883-1901"
Dov Cohen has created an index of brides and grooms based on the organization of Ketubot (Jewish wedding contracts) from marriages within the Turkish community of Izmir. From this material we can identify the Jewish families who lived in Turkey since the Spanish expulsion in 1492 in two periods: the end of the Ottoman Empire and the beginning of the secular government of Turkish Republic. Events of these periods forced this community to emigrate to America.

From the civil records of Amsterdam, The Netherlands |

The Amsterdam Municipal Archives possess a complete set of registers of intended marriages from 1578 to 1811, the year when the present Civil Registry was started. Between 1598 and 1811, 15238 Jewish couples were entered in these books. Both the number of records and the volume of data that may be extracted from them are unprecedented.

From the records of Bevis Marks, The Spanish and Portuguese Congregation of London |
Bevis Marks is the Sephardic synagogue in London. It is over 300 years old and is the oldest still in use in Britain. The Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation of London has published several volumes of its records: they can be found in libraries such as the Cambridge University Library or the London Metropolitan Archive.

From the burial register of Bethahaim Velho Cemetery, Published by the Jewish Historical Society of England and transcribed by R. D. Barnett.

The register gives us dates for the burials in the "Bethahaim Velho" or Old Cemetery. The dates are listed as per the Jewish calendar.

Finding Our Fathers | A Guidebook to Jewish Genealogy, by Dan Rottenberg

In this work Dan Rottenberg shows how to do a successful search for probing the memories of living relatives, by examining marriage licenses, gravestones, ship passenger lists, naturalization records, birth and death certificates, and other public documents, and by looking for clues in family traditions and customs. Supplementing the "how to" instructions is a guide to some 8,000 Jewish family names, giving the origins of the names, sources of information about each family, and the names of related families whose
histories have been recorded. Other features included a country-by-country guide to tracing Jewish ancestors abroad, a list of Jewish family history books, and a guide to researching genealogy.

**The Inquisitors and the Jews in the New World, by Seymour B. Liebman.** Reports the names of people who appeared before the inquisition in the New Spain.

Except for a brief introduction, the entire book is a listing of Inquisition Records in the New World. This is a source for converso names in the New World.

**A History of the Marranos, by Cecil Roth.**

The expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492 by the infamous decree of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella was the culmination of a series of anti-Jewish persecutions throughout the 14th and 15th centuries in which thousands of Jews were massacred. Thousands of others converted in order to escape death. After the expulsion many more joined the ranks of these "new Christians" as an alternative to exile. A large number of converts, while outwardly professing Christianity, secretly continued to practice Judaism. These Marranos, as they were popularly known, were then mercilessly persecuted by the dreaded...
Inquisition which through tortures of forced confessions and auto-da-fes sent thousands to
the stake. Many others managed to escape to countries outside the reach of the Inquisition
where they created a widespread Marrano diaspora. Thousands of Marranos have
survived even into our times. This seminal work by the eminent historian traces the
tribulation of these secret Judaizers as well as the fate of those who succeeded in
escaping to other lands where many of them rose to prominence in various fields of
endeavor.

Jews in Colonial Brazil, by Arnold
Wiznitzer |

Professor Wiznitzer gathered detailed information about individual Jewish settlers in
colonial Brazil and about cases where they were brought before the Inquisition at Lisbon,
and his study throws new light on some phases of Brazilian colonial history. Many Jews
fled to Brazil and others were deported to the colony as convicted heretics after the King of
Portugal attempted to compel all of his Jewish subjects to accept Christianity in 1497. They
were active in the establishment of the sugar industry and in trade, and they maintained
close relations with another large group of exiles who had taken refuge in Amsterdam. Most
of the "new Christians" continued to practice the old religion secretly.
Precious Stones of the Jews in Curaçao; Curaçaon Jewry 1656-1957, by Isaac Samuel Emmanuel (1957) |

Names taken from 225 tombstones of 2536 persons, 1668 - 1859, men, women and some Rabbis. Includes cemetery history and plan, biographies including family histories, chronological list of names, alphabetical list of family names + number of members + eldest tombstone year, large bibliography, general alphabetical index, 15 genealogies.

From the publication, "Los
When the Romans conquered the Jewish nation in 70 CE, much of the Jewish population was sent into exile throughout the Roman Empire. Many were sent to the Iberian peninsula. The area became known by the Hebrew word "Sepharad". The JEWS in SPAIN and PORTUGAL became known as "Sephardim" or and those things associated with the SEPHARDIM including names, customs, genealogy and religious rituals, became known as SEPHARDIC.

The Jews of the Balkans, The Judeo-Spanish Community, 15th to 20th Centuries, by Esther Benbassa and Aron Rodrigue

This volume is a history of the Sephardi diaspora in the Balkans. The two principal axes of the study are the formation and features of the Judeo-Spanish culture area in South-
Eastern Europe and around the Aegean littoral, and the disintegration of this community in the modern period. The great majority of the Jews expelled from Spain in 1492 eventually went to the Ottoman Empire. With their command of Western trades and skills, they represented a new economic force in the Levant. In the Ottoman Balkans, the Jews came to reconstitute the bases of their existence in the semi-autonomous spheres allowed to them by their new rulers. This segment of the Jewish diaspora came to form a certain unity, based on a commonality of the Judeo-Spanish language, culture and communal life. The changing geopolitics of the Balkans and the growth of European influence in the 19th century inaugurated a period of westernization. European influence manifested itself in the realm of education, especially in the French education, dispensed in the schools of the Alliance Israelite Universelle with its headquarters in Paris. Other European cultures and languages came to the scene through similar means. Cultural movements such as the Jewish Enlightenment (haskalah) also came to exert a distinct influence, hence building bridges between the Ashkenazi and Sephardi worlds.

The Sephardic Jews of Bordeaux, by Frances Malino

Describing the tensions that existed between the Sephardic community of Bordeaux and the Ashkenazic Jews of France, the author also depicts their role in the relation of the Jews with Napoleon and the forming of the Grand Sanhedrin.
Sangre Judia (Jewish Blood) by Pere Bonnin. Flor de Viento, Barcelona, 2006. A list of 3,500 names used by Jews, or assigned to Jews by the Holy Office (la Santo Oficio) of Spain. The list is a result of a census of Jewish communities of Spain by the Catholic Church and as found in Inquisition records. |

Pere Bonnin, a philosopher, journalist and writer from Sa Pobla (Mallorca), a descendant of converted Jews, settles with this work a debt "owed to his ancestors", in his own words. The book, written in a personal and accessible style and based on numerous sources, includes a review of basic Jewish concepts, Jewish history in Spain, and Christian Anti-Semitism. There is also a section that focuses on the reconciliation between the Church and Monarchy and the Jews, which took place in the 20th Century. In this study, Bonnin deals in depth with the issue of surnames of Jewish origin. In the prologue, the author explains the rules he followed in the phonetic transcription of surnames of Hebrew origin that are mentioned in the book. The researcher cites the Jewish origin, sometimes recognized and other times controversial, of historically prominent figures (like Cristobal Colon, Hernan Cortes, Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra and many others) and links
between surnames of Jewish origin with some concepts in Judaism. The book also includes an appendix with more than three thousands surnames "suspected" of being Jewish, because they appear in censuses of the Jewish communities and on the Inquisitorial lists of suspected practitioners of Judaism, as well as in other sources. In the chapter "Una historia de desencuentro", the author elaborates on surnames of Jewish origin of the royalty, nobility, aristocracy, clergy, and also of writers, educators and university teachers during the Inquisition. Special attention is given to the "Chuetas" of Mallorca, the birthplace of the author.

Raizes Judaicas No Brasil,(Jewish Roots in Brazil) by Flavio Mendes de Carvalho. | This book contains names of New Christians or Brazilians living in Brazil condemned by the Inquisition in the 17th and 18th centuries, as taken from the archives of Torre do Tombo in Lisbon. Many times details including date of birth, occupation, name of parents, age, and location of domicile are also included. The list also includes the names of the relatives of the victims. There are several cases in which many members of the same family were tortured and sentenced so some family lines may end here.

Sephardic names from the magazine "ETSI". Most of the names are from (but not limited to) France and North Africa.
Published by Laurence Abensur-Hazan and Philip Abensur.

ETSI (a Paris-based, bilingual French-English periodical) is devoted exclusively to Sephardic genealogy and is published by the Sephardi Genealogical and Historical Society (SGHS). It was founded by Dr. Philip Abensur, and his professional genealogist wife, Laurence Abensur-Hazan. ETSI's worldwide base of authors publish articles identifying a broad spectrum of archival material of importance to the Sephardic genealogist. A useful feature of ETSI is the listing, on the back cover, of all Sephardic family names, and places of origin, cited in the articles contained in each issue.

A Origem Judaica dos Brasileiros (The Origin of The Brazilian Jews), by Jose Geraldo Rodrigues de Alckmin Filho

This publication contains a list of 517 Sephardic families punished by the inquisition in Portugal and Brazil.

The Circumcision Register of Isaac and Abraham De Paiba (1715-1775) from the Archives of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation of Bevis Marks (London. England).
This register is from the manuscript record preserved in the Archives of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation of London named "Sahar Asamaim" transcribed, translated and edited by the late R.D. Barnett, with the assistance of Alan Rose, I.D. Duque and others; There is also a supplement with a record of circumcisions 1679-1699, marriages 1679-1689 and some female births 1679-1699, compiled by Miriam Rodrigues-Pereira. The register includes surnames of those circumsized as well as the names of their Godfathers & Godmothers.

The Abarbanel Foundation Website, "Reintegrating the Lost Jews of Spain & Portugal" |

List of names of forcibly converted Jews who were tried by the Spanish Inquisition for practicing Judaism in Mexico in the years 1528 - 1815

Ruth Reyes, "Sephardic Family Names from Puerto Rico", The Casa Shalom Journal, Volume 10, Published by The Institute for Marrano-Anusim Studies, Gan Yavneh, Israel 2008 |

This list is compiled from a catalogue the author found on a visit to Puerto Rico in the Museum of San Juan.

The Jews of Jamaica, by Richard D.

The product of many years of painstaking research by two late scholars, Richard D. Barnett and Philip Wright, this volume presents the texts or summaries of 1456 tombstone inscriptions of Jews who lived in Jamaica between 1663, when the British ousted the Spanish, and 1880, when systematic registration of deaths was introduced. Jewish families who had fled the Inquisition in Spain and Portugal settled in Jamaica in increasing numbers during that time. Ashkenazic Jews also settled there in the eighteenth century. The Jews played a significant part in developing the island's natural resources and its international trade. Featuring detailed indexes by name, date and language, The Jews of Jamaica is a valuable tool for the study of immigration to the Americas, the surnames, given names and genealogy of Sephardi Jews. The texts of the inscriptions, many of them in three languages (Hebrew, English and Portuguese or Spanish), are of cultural interest and sometimes refer to dramatic events in the lives of the Jewish residents of Jamaica during a turbulent period.

+ Sources 21 - 22 for Torres

The Jews of New Spain, by Seymour B. Liebman

Professor Liebman endeavors to discover why, beginning in 1521, Jews migrated from Old Spain to New Spain. He then proceeds to document the persistence of Jewish life in the face of a new Spanish Inquisition and formalized suppression including forced conversion
and exclusion from citizenship. The author concludes it was the religious, cultural and personal vitality of Jews that caused their cherished and proud identity to persist, even though most of the earliest Jewish migrants eventually did assimilate into Mexican society.

Conversos on Trial, by Haim Bienart. The Hebrew University Magnes Press Ltd. 1981.

The third volume in the Hispania Judaica Series, this well written story of the converso community of Ciudad Real in Spain, based on the Inquisition trials of the mid 15th century. The book was written by Haim Beinart (1917-2010), Professor at Hebrew University in Jerusalem and an expert on this subject, and contains a list of names, sometimes also providing the names of relatives, house locations, and professions. Based on the Inquisition’s records, it is a portrait of the Conversos’ deep yearning for their Jewish past and the ultimate sacrifice they were prepared to offer for their continued adherence to their ancestral faith.

Around the 12th century, surnames started to become common in Iberia. In Spain, where Arab-Jewish influence was significant, these new names retained their old original structure, so that many of the Jewish surnames were of Hebrew derivation. Others were directly related to geographical locations and were acquired due to the forced wanderings caused by exile and persecution. Other family names were a result of conversion, when the family accepted the name of their Christian sponsor. In many cases, the Portuguese Jews bear surnames of pure Iberian/Christian origin. Many names have been changed in the course of migration from country to country. In yet other cases “aliases”, or totally new
names, were adopted due to fear of persecution by the Inquisition.

Some interesting facts about the name this name are:

• **Torres** is the 50th most popular surname in the United States and the 11th most popular Spanish surname • There were at least seven New Christians (converted Jews) who sailed with Columbus in his first voyage including Luis De Torres, the interpreter who spoke Hebrew and Arabic which it was believed would be helpful in the Orient.

Some common variations of **Torres** are **Torrez, Tores, Torez, de Torres, and della Torra.**