

[United States](#)

TikToker arrested for ripping down NJ restaurant's Greek flags she thought were Israeli

Amber Matthews accosted the staff of Efi's Gyro back in March, but was only caught after posting the video this month.



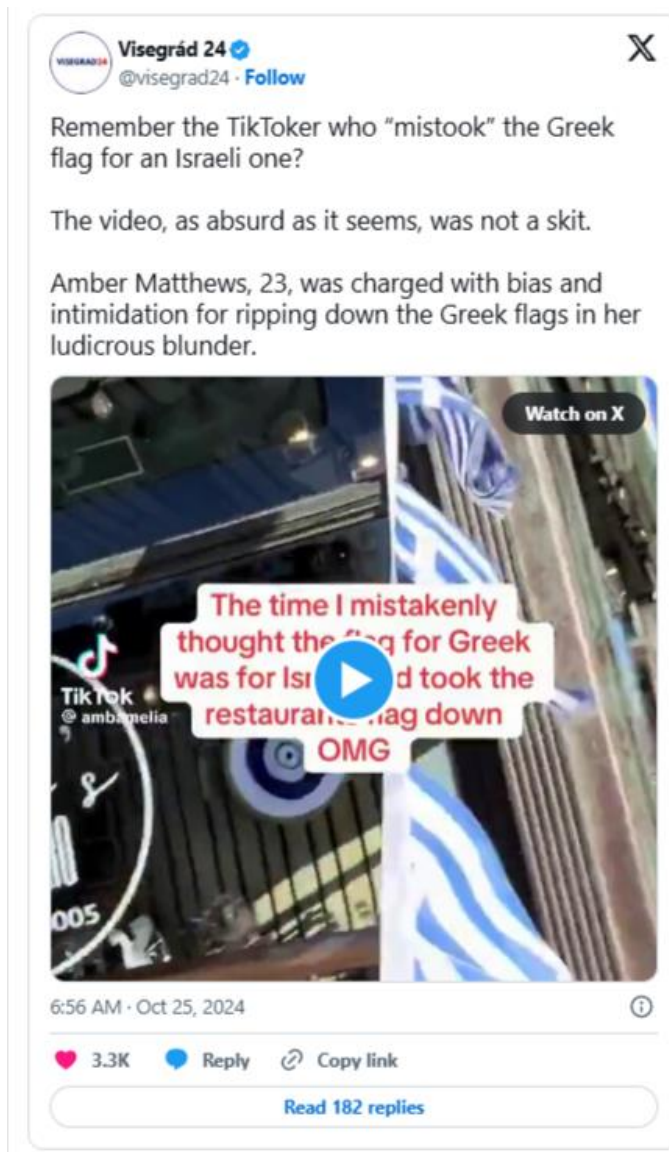
TikTok user Amber Matthews (not pictured) accosted employees at Efi's Gyro in Montclair, New Jersey, over Greek flags she thought were Israeli flags. (Screenshot from X)

By [Jacob Gurvis](#) October 28, 2024

A 23-year-old woman has been arrested after she posted on social media about having gotten away with ripping down

Greek flags at a New Jersey restaurant that she believed were Israeli.

The incident at Efi's Gyro in Montclair, New Jersey, occurred March 11, but it wasn't until Amber Matthews posted the video to TikTok on Oct. 15 that police were able to identify her. She was arrested on Tuesday and charged with bias intimidation and harassment.



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Remember the TikToker who "mistook" the Greek flag for an Israeli one?

The video, as absurd as it seems, was not a skit.

Amber Matthews, 23, was charged with bias and intimidation for ripping down the Greek flags in her ludicrous blunder.

The time I mistakenly thought the flag for Greek was for Israeli and took the restaurant flag down
OMG

6:56 AM · Oct 25, 2024

3.3K Reply Copy link

[Read 182 replies](#)

In the video, Matthews, who went by the name “Ambamelia” on her now-removed TikTok account, can be heard berating employees about the “genocide” in Gaza. She posted the video with the text “The time I mistakenly thought the flag for Greece was for Israel and took the restaurants flag down OMG.”

Both Greece and Israel have blue and white flags.

The video received millions of views on TikTok and on X, where it can still be seen.

In the video, Matthews repeatedly says “Free Palestine” and accuses Israel of committing genocide. “There’s genocide, and I don’t stand for Zionism in Montclair,” Matthews says in the clip. “I don’t support it.”

When restaurant employees approach her, she asks them: “There’s a genocide, you know that, right? They’re killing children.”

“There’s nothing against people who are Jewish, but this is not OK,” Matthews says, while the two employees look on, seemingly perplexed by the situation.

When the employees inform Matthews that the flags are in fact the flags of Greece, she responds, “Oh I thought it was Israel, my bad.”

Matthews' video is the latest in a string of viral incidents where social media posts have documented harassment — often followed by support — at Jewish and Israeli restaurants since the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war on Oct. 7, 2023.

In February, an Israeli-Druze restaurant in Manhattan served [large crowds who showed up to show support](#) after the restaurant had been vandalized with “Free Palestine” graffiti and was targeted with harassing phone calls and negative internet reviews. Another restaurant named Effy's, a kosher Israeli cafe in Manhattan, [also experienced a wave of support](#) after being targeted with pro-Palestinian graffiti.

In contrast, the incident at Efi's did not draw attention at the time, even though restaurant owner Efi Mihalis said she [reported the incident to police](#). Heading off potential criticism that the video was a setup aimed at drumming up support, Mihalis told the [New York Post](#) the video was “not planned nor was it calculated in any way” and that “the young woman destroyed my property.”

Natali Lee, the owner of Mikki & Al's Noshery, a kosher deli in Montclair, told the Post that Matthews made herself “look like one of the dumbest people on earth.”

“If you're going to make that kind of statement, at least know your flag,” Lee said. “I cannot imagine that someone is that uneducated that they don't know the difference. What she

did ... you made people believing in their cause look like idiots. It clearly was done for likes, that's it.”

Montclair Police Chief Todd Conforti said in a statement that he hoped the investigation “sends a clear message that our agency will not tolerate any form of harassment or discrimination, and offenders will be held accountable for their actions.”

“Montclair is a community that strives to treat all individuals with dignity and respect,” Conforti said.