BORN YEHUDIT GOLDSTEIN IN 1928, Dita grew up on a small moshav outside Petach Tikvah. Her parents served in the Haganah, and Dita remembers her father defending the moshav from Arab assailants during the 1935 uprising.

Dita joined the Palmach, the elite force in the Haganah and the Yishuv’s underground army, in 1945, and served in clandestine operations to smuggle Jewish refugees into Palestine. British authorities arrested and imprisoned her, along with some 2,700 underground fighters, for three weeks during the Black Sabbath raid in 1946. Dita was stationed in different places during Israel’s War of Independence, at one point serving as one of future prime minister David Ben Gurion’s personal guards.

During the war, Dita met and married fellow Palmachnik Yaakov Buskila. They divorced, and in 1961 Dita moved to Seattle, married Frank Friedlander, and opened a chain of clothing stores called Dita Boutique. Dita divorced and remarried again in 1987, and was widowed in 2007. Today Dita lives on Capitol Hill. She has four children: two in Seattle, one in Arizona, and one in Tel Aviv.