

# PASSOVER CUSTOMS

## Unleavened bread

***Exodus 12:15-20** For seven days you are to eat bread made without yeast. On the first day remove the yeast from your houses, for whoever eats anything with yeast in it from the first day through the seventh must be cut off from Israel. On the first day hold a sacred assembly, and another one on the seventh day. Do no work at all on these days, except to prepare food for everyone to eat--that is all you may do. "Celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread, because it was on this very day that I brought your divisions out of Egypt. Celebrate this day as a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. In the first month you are to eat bread made without yeast, from the evening of the fourteenth day until the evening of the twenty-first day. For seven days no yeast is to be found in your houses. And whoever eats anything with yeast in it must be cut off from the community of Israel, whether he is an alien or native-born. Eat nothing made with yeast. Wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread."*

Evening: same as the above definition

***Exodus 13:6-7** For seven days eat bread made without yeast and on the seventh day hold a festival to the LORD. Eat unleavened bread during those seven days; nothing with yeast in it is to be seen among you, nor shall any yeast be seen anywhere within your borders.*



Bedikot Chametz

## The Search for Chametz (Leaven):

The evening of Nisan 14:

On the night of 14 Nisan, the night before the Pesach Seder, the search for chametz (leaven) is made. It should be done with a candle as soon as possible after nightfall, in a darkened house. Remember that leaven is a “type” for sin. Removing leaven is the “external” that represents the “internal” of removing sin from our lives. **Do NOT neglect to remove the sin!**

***When the first seder is on Saturday night, the search is conducted on Thursday night, Nisan 13.***

Traditionally, a candle (for young children try using flashlights to imitate the “Light of the World”), wooden spoon, feather, and a bag are used to facilitate the complete removal of chametz (leaven). There is a custom to tie the festivals together. Some people form the remnants of their Chanukah candles into the candle for the search. Some also use a leaf of the lulav from Succoth in place of the feather, and then burn the lulav with the chametz on the following morning. The house should be darkened.

## Nisan 14 before 9:30am

Ten pieces of bread should be placed in different parts of the house. Don't forget where you put them!

The following supplication is then recited:

**Behold, I am prepared and ready to perform the positive and negative commandments of removing chametz. For the sake of the unification of the Holy One, Blessed is He, and His Presence, through Him Who is hidden and inscrutable - I pray in the name of all Israel. May the pleasantness of my Lord, our God, be upon us. May He establish our handiwork for us; our handiwork may He establish.**

The following blessing is said before the search commences:

**Blessed art Thou, Yahveh our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us by Your commandments and instructed us concerning the removal of leaven.**

The search begins! Every place where chametz could be found, should be searched out. Minimally, of course, the ten pieces of bread should be found and collected. All of the chametz should be collected in the bag. After all chametz has been found and collected, the following declaration should be recited:

**May all leaven in my possession which I have not seen or removed, be regarded as mere dust of the earth.**

**May it be your will, Yahveh, our God and the God of our forefathers, that You enable us to explore and search out our spiritual maladies, which we have acquired by following the advice of our Evil Inclination; that You enable us to return in complete repentance before You; and may You, in Your abundant beneficence have mercy upon us. Assist us, O God of our salvation, for the sake of Your Name's glory, and rescue us from transgressing the prohibition of chametz in the slightest degree, this year and every year, for all the days of our lives. Amen.**

The following morning after breakfast (on Friday morning if the first day of pesach is Sunday), the leaven is burned, and the following final declaration is recited:

**May it be Your will, Yahveh, our God and the God of our forefathers, that just as I have removed the chametz from my house and my property, so may You, Yahveh, our God and the God of our forefathers, remove all the external influences, and the spirit of defilement from the earth; cause our Evil Inclination to leave us, and give us a heart of flesh to serve You with sincerity; may all the forces of the "Other Side" and all evil evaporate like smoke; may the realm of wantonness pass from the earth; and may You remove, in the spirit of justice, all that impede the Divine Presence; just as You removed Egypt and its idols in those days at this season. Amen.**

**May all leaven in my possession, whether I have seen it or not, or whether I have removed it or not, be regarded as non-existent and considered as mere dust of the earth.**

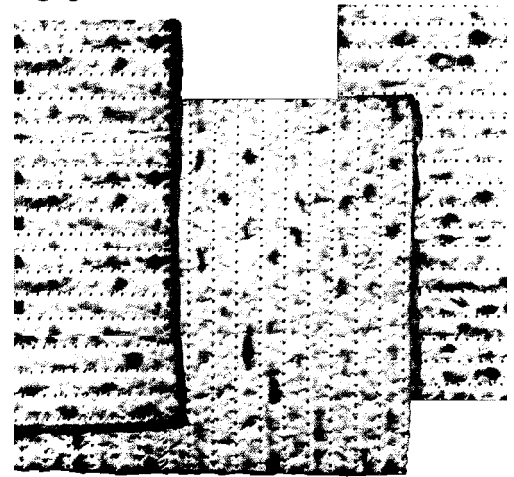
**May it be your will, Yahveh, our God and the God of our forefathers, that You be merciful with us and rescue us from transgressing the prohibition of chametz even in the slightest degree - us, our entire household, and all of Israel - this year and every year, for all the days of our lives. And just as we have removed the chametz from our houses and burnt it, so may You enable us to remove the Evil Inclination from within us eternally, all the days of our lives; may You enable us to cleave to You, to Your Torah, and to Your love, and to cleave to the Good Inclination eternally - us, our children, and our children's children - from now and forever. So may it be. Amen.**

Since the prescription regarding the eating of matzah in place of chametz is repeated several times in the Torah (see Exodus 12), it has come to be observed with extreme strictness - particularly on the first two nights - the seder nights. There are several types of matzah, varying in their strictness:

1. Shemurah (watched). Hand made. The wheat is watched from the time of harvesting until the final baking to insure that no water, heat, or other natural processes cause it to begin fermentation. It is hand made, constantly observed, and the utensils used for making it are washed every eighteen minutes - the time when fermentation begins.
2. Shemurah (machine baked). Same as above but baked by mechanical processes. Although this is kosher in all ways, some have questions as to whether the introduction of machinery necessitates revision in the laws.
3. Not shemurah. This is the supermarket matzah. It is only watched from the time of grinding (as opposed to the time of harvesting). Although this is also kosher, many people prefer to use the shemurah matzah to fulfill the mitzvah during the Seder, and use this for regular consumption during Passover.
4. Egg matzah. Matzah baked with egg, milk, wine, or fruit extracts. It is called "unleavened bread prepared in a rich manner." Eating this will not fulfill the obligation of eating matzah at the Seder because the Torah says that this should be the bread of affliction. This is sometimes used by the old, the young, and the infirm to fulfill the Seder mitzvah.

## **How to make Matzah**

## Ingredients and Tools:



Special Passover Flour, or Whole Grain Wheat  
Cold Spring Water  
A Glass or Marble working surface  
Kneading Tub  
Rolling Pin  
Sand Paper  
Matzah-perforating machine (it looks like a rolling pin with spikes)  
Long Wooden Poles

### The Basic Problem:

Chametz, which is forbidden during the entire festival of Pesach, is defined as any fermented grain product, specifically from one of the "five grains" mentioned in the Mishna - Pesachim 2:5:

**Wheat**  
**Spelt**  
**Barley**  
**Oats**  
**Rye**

While not explicitly forbidden, in the Mishna, the following are not usually eaten because they undergo a process similar to fermentation:

**Rice**  
**Millet**  
**Beans**

Fermentation is presumed to take place within eighteen (18) minutes after the exposure of the cut grain to moisture. Matzah, which is required as one of the central elements at the Seder and which is the staple food throughout Passover week, is defined as:

**Matzah: The bread made from grain and water dough without fermentation.**

The problem is how to make such a dough without causing fermentation. This is accomplished by three means:

1. Protecting the ingredients from moisture and heat prior to mixing.
2. Preparing the dough very rapidly.
3. Baking at extremely high temperatures.

Matzot (plural of Matzah) can also be purchased at Brenner Brothers in Belevue and, more expensively, at QFC at the corner of Kent-DeMoines road and Pacific. To make you own Matzah:

The flour must be absolutely dry, and stored in a cool dark place. According to the strictest interpretation, it should be watched from the time of reaping to ascertain that it was never exposed to moisture. Such flour, known as shemurah flour, may be purchased from one of the shemurah matzah bakeries in New York. According to a more lenient view, it is sufficient if the flour was watched from the time of milling. In the latter case, you may purchase whole grain for matzah at any grain store and mill it yourself, making sure that your mill is kosher-for-Passover before you start.

The water must be drawn from a spring and allowed to settle overnight in a cool, dark, place. This is done so the water will not be warm. The vessel in which it is stored should be perfectly clean and kosher-for-Passover. Tap water or bottled spring water may not be used.

### **To Knead:**

Before starting, make certain that the boards, rolling pins, etc., which you are using are kosher-for-Passover. Everyone who will be handling dough should wash his/her hands in cold water before beginning to work, and between each batch of dough he handles, and then dry his hands thoroughly.

### **The flour and water are mixed in a tub at a ratio of 3.25 to 1.**

The maximum amount of flour to be used at any one time is 3 pounds, but, unless one has a small army of people working together it's advisable to use much less. Once the dough is made, it should be cut into small pieces, no bigger than the palm of your hand, and distributed for kneading. Each piece should be worked continuously - it may not sit on the table, even for a brief period. Kneading prevents the dough from rising. The small teyglekh, or balls of dough, should be kneaded until they are of uniform consistency - perhaps for 60 or 90 seconds - and then rolled out into a pancake shape. While the matzot are being rolled they should be constantly picked up, to make certain that the dough does not stick to the table. One reason that this is important is that, unlike kneading bread, one may not sprinkle additional flour on the kneading board. Once the dough has become very thin, and has reached a diameter of 6 to 8 inches, it should be carried on the rolling pin to a special place where the matzah is perforated with holes by means of a special machine. From here the dough is taken to the oven.

Between batches of dough, several people should be assigned to clean off each work spot and every rolling pin. Because water might produce chametz, sandpaper is probably best for this purpose.

### **The Baking:**

It is probably necessary to use a baker's oven to make matzah, in order to reach temperatures of 600 to 800 degrees Fahrenheit. The oven should be stoked up from 2 to 4 hours or more before baking begins. The perforated matzot are placed in the oven with long wooden poles and should bake within 2 to 3 minutes. The total elapsed time, from the beginning of the kneading till the matzot are placed in the oven, should be no more than 18 minutes.

After baking is completed, a small portion is separated, using the following blessing:

**Blessed are You, Yahveh our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments, and instructed us to separate challah.**

After this blessing the small portion is burnt up.

### **The Result:**

Brown, crisp matzot, suitable for eating at the Seder and celebrating true freedom. Amen

# Charoet

These recipes should yield a coarse paste with the look and feel of the cement used in Egypt for building.

- 1 APPLE
- 1/2 Cup Walnuts ground up fine
- 1 Tart Apple
- 1 Tbls. Grape Juice.
- 1 Tsp. Honey
- 1/2 Tsp. Cinnamon

Pare, core, peel, and "food process" the apples till they are ALMOST applesauce. Add the other ingredients. Mix well. Refrigerate for several hours.

## DATE-APRICOT CHAROSET

- 1/2 Cup pitted DATES
- 2 Cups APPLES, peeled and diced
- 1 Cup dried APRICOTS
- 1/2 Cup chopped WALNUTS
- 1/4 Cup sweet WINE or GRAPE JUICE

Cook the dates, apples, and apricots together in water to cover for 15 minutes. Remove the fruits from the water and drain well.

Process the fruits with the wine, very briefly, in a food processor until coarsely chopped. Add the chopped nuts.

# MIDDLE EASTERN CHICKEN

- 2 Tbsp. BUTTER
- 2 Tbsp. OLIVE OIL
- 2 Frying CHICKENS (about 2.5 pounds each) cut up
- 18 Small ONIONS
- 2 Inch CINNAMON STICK
- 8 Whole CLOVES
- 1/2 Cup seedless GRAPES
- 1 Cup RED WINE
- 2 Tbsp. WINE VINEGAR
- 1 Tsp. CUMIN
- 1 Tsp. FENUGREEK (optional)
- 1 Clove GARLIC crushed
- 1 Can (6 oz.) TOMATO PASTE
- SALT and PEPPER to taste

In a large skillet, heat butter and oil, then brown the chicken in it. Season with salt and pepper and then remove the chicken. Glaze the onions in the remaining fat, stirring to coat well.

Place chicken and onions in a casserole pan. Add cinnamon and cloves. Sprinkle the grapes on top.

Combine the remaining ingredients; stirring to blend well and pour over the chicken. Bake covered, in a preheated 350 degree oven, for one hour, or till tender.

NOTE: The tomato paste and wine cook to a smooth sauce. In preparing this dish, occasionally spoon the sauce over the other ingredients to keep them moist.

# PINEAPPLE - HORSERADISH SALAD

- 3 CELERY STALKS
- 2 Large APPLES
- 1 Can CHUNK PINEAPPLE
- 1 Cup WALNUTS
- 1/2 Cup MAYONNAISE
- 2 Tbsp. LEMON JUICE
- 2 Tbsp. SUGAR
- 2 Tbsp. HORSERADISH

Dice the celery and the apples and mix the ingredients. Chill and serve in wine goblets.



# LAMB CHOPS in PRUNES and ONIONS

Serves 8

- 3 Lbs. shoulder LAMB CHOPS
- 1/2 Large ONION
- 1 Cup RAISINS
- 1/2 Lb. PRUNES
- 1 Tbsp. HONEY
- 1/2 Tsp. SALT
- 1 Cup HOT WATER

Chop the onions coarsely. Arrange the chops in an oven-proof dish. On top of the chops and in between them, put the onions, raisins, and the prunes.

Mix the water with the honey and the salt and pour over the meat, fruits, and vegetables.

Cover the dish with aluminum foil and bake in a 350 degree oven for an hour.

Remove the foil and bake for another 40 minutes or until the chops are glazed and tender. Baste frequently.

Transfer the chops to a serving dish, arrange the prunes on the sides, heat the sauce briefly and pour over the chops.

## HONEYED CARROTS

- 6 Tbsp. BUTTER
- 1/2 Cup ORANGE JUICE
- 1/2 Cup HONEY
- 1 1/2 Tsp SALT
- 1/2 Tsp. GINGER
- 1 Tsp. dried MINT FLAKES
- 8 Cups sliced CARROTS

Melt the butter in a pot. Stir in mixture of next five ingredients. Bring to a boil, add carrots, cover tightly, and cook slowly over low heat until the carrots are tender, stirring occasionally.

# KUGEL

8 Oz. package of MEDIUM NOODLES  
6 EGGS well beaten  
1 1/2 Lb. COTTAGE CHEESE  
1/2 Lb. CREAM CHEESE  
1/2 Cup SUGAR  
2 Cups whole MILK  
1 Cup SOUR CREAM  
2 Tsp. VANILLA  
6 Tbsp. melted BUTTER  
CINNAMON SUGAR TOPPING

Cook noodles 5 minutes; drain and set aside.

Mash softened cream cheese until smooth; combine with rest of ingredients except the butter.

Melt the butter in a 13 X 9 X 2 pan and swirl around. Pour excess butter into the pudding mixture. Add noodles last.

Bake in a 325 degree oven for one hour.

Remove from the oven and sprinkle with the cinnamon sugar mixture. Continue baking for an additional 15 minutes.

