



COOKING ISRAEL
Chagim Cookbook

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Passionately Written and Compiled with personal recipes by
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For some, there is no closer connection to Israel than cooking up the incredible foods that embody its cultural and gastronomic flavors.



Adapted over centuries of Jewish migrations to and from our only ancestral land, some of the best Israeli recipes have traveled from countries near and far, evidence of the ingathering of exiles and the multicultural society we have rebuilt on the land of our heritage and our history. Every recipe is a delicacy of its own kind, each with its own story, representing some of the most inventive combinations of cheeses, produce, spices, meats and more, making the Israeli menu a glorious collection of flavorful fun.



The inclusion of first fruits and herbs native to the Land of Israel are an integral part of the Israeli cuisine. We are blessed with an abundance of vegetables, grains and herbs that provide our harvest throughout the year, allowing us to infuse the personality, history, culture and innovation of Israel in every delectable dish. The Talmud even gives precise instruction for planting and watering these herbs, an integral part of the local cuisine for the last 3000 years. These recipes are a collection of some favorites, each providing a taste of Israel you and your friends and family can enjoy as you come together to celebrate this new year.



As we welcome these special days and traditions of our Jewish calendar, we should be reminded and should remind each other of the value of Israel - our ancient homeland - and her meaningfulness in our lives.



We at The Israel Forever Foundation strive to provide ongoing Israel Engagement to help you celebrate and strengthen your personal connection to our one and only Jewish State. For centuries we have prayed for a return to Tzion, and now we live to see that dream come to life. Together, we can inspire Israel in the hearts, homes and lives of Jews around the world - and what better way than through our appetites and celebrations!

*Shanah Tovah U' Metukah from all of us at
The Israel Forever Foundation!*

Table of Contents

Rosh HaShanah: Recipes for a Sweet New Year	5
Simanim: Signs of a New Year	6-7
Apple Cinnamon Challah	8
Israeli White Bean Soup	9
Mizrahi Fish Head Soup.....	10
Simanim Salad	11
Moroccan Beet Citrus Salad	12
Pomegranate Roasted Chicken.....	13
Ethiopian Chicken Stew	14
Israeli Pumpkin Couscous	15
Leek and Onion Roasted Potatoes	16
Nuts and Honey Baked Apples.....	17
Spiced Israeli Honey Date Cake.....	18
Yom Kippur: Break the Fast with Tastes of Israel.....	19
Roasted Cauliflower with Tehina Silan Sauce	20
Zaatar Mint Israeli Salad with Feta and Olives	21
Israeli Leek Pashtida	22
Pomegranate Limonana	23
Morrocan Reifa Cookies	24
Sukkot: Celebrating the Harvest.....	25
Roasted Pepper Soup.....	26
Grilled Eggplant with Tomatoes and Tehina.....	27
Rosemary Foccacia with Herbs	28
Lemon and Garlic Chicken	29
Mimulaim: Stuffed Vegetable Medley	30
Tehina Cookies	31
Honey Baked Dates and Figs.....	32



Rosh Hashana

Called the Feast of Trumpets in the Bible, the meaning of Rosh HaShanah implies a divine appointment, a time to meet with God. The liturgy and readings from the Torah serve as reminders of our mortality and personal responsibility we each bear for our behavior, and the shofar is intended to be a “wake up call” to the human conscience.

Every year as Rosh HaShanah arrives, Jews around the world come together for their annual commemoration of the birth of the world. We contemplate how this year’s celebration will be different than the year before, who will join us at our chag table for our festive meal, who we’ll see in shul that we haven’t seen since... well, the last time we gathered as a community. We use this chag to honor our relationship with friends, family, our Jewish identity, and of course with God. We wish each other Chag Sameach and recite the same prayers, but often hope for a little something different in the coming year.

Simanim: Signs of the New Year

A beautiful custom to honor the New Year is to celebrate the *simanim* (signs) seder. Originally a Sephardi tradition, in Israel many Ashkenazi families have adopted the Rosh HaShanah *seder* of making blessings and sweet wishes on special foods connected to the New Year.



The popularity of this ritual is growing rapidly as it is a physical expression of welcoming the New Year with hope of peace for all of Israel and to help people relate to the celebration on a more personal level.

Even better, it gives us a chance to appreciate the bounty of the Land of Israel, helping us to feel connected from our own corner of the world, while uniting us with our fellow Children of Israel around the world who share this hope for our future.

We are pleased to share these blessings for Israel with you and invite you to make them a part of your holiday celebration. Each prayer can serve as a reminder of our collective mission to protect Israel forever – her people, her history, her land and her culture.



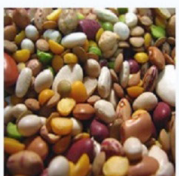
End – תם (*tam*) ----- Dates – תמר (*tamar*)

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי העץ

Blessed are You, Lord our G d, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the tree.

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו, שיתמו אויבינו ושונאינו וכל מבקשי רעתנו

May it be Your will, Lord our G d and the G d of our fathers, that there come an end to our enemies, haters and those who wish evil upon us the People of Israel.



abundance – רוביא (*rubiya*) ---- Small Beans – לוביא (*luviya*)

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו מלך העולם בורא פרי האדמה

Blessed are You, Lord our G d, King of the universe, who creates the fruit of the earth.

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו, שירבו זכיותינו ותלבבנו

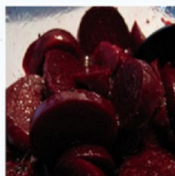
May it be Your will, Lord our G d and the G d of our fathers, that our merits as the People of Israel shall increase and that You hearten us as a united community.



to cut – כרת (kar-at)----- Leek – כְּרֶשֶׁה (*krasha*)
(chives or scallions can be used, too!)

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו, שיכרתו אויבינו ושונאינו וכל מבקשי רעתנו

May it be Your will, Lord our G d and the G d of our fathers, that our enemies, haters, and those who wish evil upon the People, the Land and the State of Israel shall be cut down [in their attempts to destroy us].



to depart – סלק ----- Beets – סלקא (*selek*)

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו, שישתלקו אויבינו ושונאינו וכל מבקשי רעתנו

May it be Your will, Lord our G d and the G d of our fathers, that our enemies, haters and those who wish evil upon Israel shall depart, be exiled, removed and invalidated.



to rip apart – קרע, to announce – קרא ----- Gourd – קרא (*karah*)
pumpkin is most people's substitute

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו, שתקרע רוע גזר דיננו, ויקראו לפניך זכיותינו

May it be Your will, Lord our G d and the G d of our fathers, that the evil of our verdicts be ripped away, and our merits [of Am Yisrael collectively and individually] be announced before you.



Pomegranate – רימון (*rimon*)

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו, שנהיה מלאים מצות כרמון

May it be Your will, Lord our G d and the G d of our fathers, that we be filled with mitzvot like a pomegranate [is filled with seeds].



Apple and Honey – חפוח דבש (*tapuach u'dvash*)

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו, שתחדש עלינו שנה טובה ומתוקה כדבש

May it be Your will, Lord our G d and the G d of our fathers, that You renew for us a year good and sweet like honey from the Land of Israel!



Fish Head – ראש דג (*rosh dag*)

יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו, שנהיה לראש ולא לזנב

May it be Your will, Lord our G d and the G d of our fathers, that we be a head and not a tail [in our efforts for peace, community, security, prosperity, and unity for Israel from every corner of the world].



Apple Cinnamon Challah

- 2 ½ Tbsp instant yeast
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 cups boiling water
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 2 tsp salt
- 6 cups flour
- 3 teaspoons cinnamon
- 4 Tbsp honey
- 1 apple, peeled and cut into small chunks
- 1 egg, beaten

In a large mixing bowl, combine yeast, sugar and hot water. Let sit for 15 minutes until bubbly. Add flour, 1 cup at a time. After 3 cups, add oil, cinnamon, and honey. Mix with hands or in mixer until sticky dough forms. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 10-12 minutes.

Flatten dough out into a disk and fold in apple pieces. If using a mixer, you can add the apple pieces right in for another 2 minutes of kneading.

Place dough into well-oiled bowl and cover with a plastic wrap or damp towel. Let rise in a warm dry area for 1 hour (dough with double in size). Punch down and let rise again for 1 hour. Pre heat oven to 350 F (180 C). Punch down dough and separate into 6 or 8 even-sized pieces – depending on if you want to do a 3 or 4 strand braid. Roll out each piece into a long cylinder shape and lay side by side. Pinch the ends of the dough together and braid. Pinch the ends together tightly. And lay on baking sheet.

In a small dish beat egg and brush on top of challah after 10 minutes of additional rising. Brush on another coat after another 10 minutes and sprinkle the top with sea salt.

Bake for 30-35 minutes or until golden.



Marak Shuit - Israeli Bean Soup

- 6 cups broth or water
- 2-3 cups white or black-eyed beans
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 lg. onion, peeled and chopped
- 3 stalks celery, diced
- 3 carrots, diced
- 1 potato, small cubes
- 6 oz. tomato puree
- 1 can crushed tomatoes
- 3-4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp thyme, dried or fresh
- 1 Tbsp paprika (sweet or spicy, as preferred)
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp brown sugar
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper
- 3 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley (or cilantro if preferred)

If using dried beans: Let beans soak overnight in 6-8 cups water. Drain and rinse well. Cook beans on medium-low heat in 6 cups of water for 2-3 hrs.

In a medium skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté until transparent but not brown. Add celery, carrot and potato and 1/2 cup water and steam until softened.

Place sautéed vegetables in a soup pot with beans, crushed tomato, tomato puree, and garlic. Add broth/water, garlic, cumin, thyme, paprika, bay leaves, sugar, salt, pepper, and parsley. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring occasionally.

Reduce heat, cover kettle, and simmer for 1.5 hours (longer for richer flavors).



Mizrahi Fish Head Soup

- 2 lbs sea bass heads (or other preferred fish)
- 2 chopped onions
- 2 cup sliced carrots
- 2 cup chopped celery - in Israel we always include the celery leaves as well
- 1 chopped red pepper
- 6 mashed garlic cloves
- 1 cup cubed potatoes
- 1 cup corn
- 6 cups fish stock or fish broth
- 4 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 Tbsp paprika - sweet or spicy, as preferred
- ½ tsp oregano
- 1 tsp cumin
- 4 Tbsp tomato paste
- 2 Tbsp finely chopped parsley
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a medium saucepan, sauté onions, celery, and carrot in light olive oil over medium heat until softened. Add peppers, potatoes, garlic, spices, corn, and 2 cups of broth. Let simmer for 10-15 minutes. Sprinkle fish heads with salt and add to pot. Stir in tomato paste and rest of broth. Bring to a boil. Lower to medium heat and cook for 30 minutes. Add juice of 1 lemon juice and add parsley and fresh ground pepper. Cook for 10 more minutes and serve hot.



Simanim Salad

- 1 Granny Smith apple cut in narrow slices (with peel)
- 1 Red Delicious apple
- ½ cup chopped dates
- ½ cooked beet – cubed
- ½ butternut squash – lightly steamed and shredded/julienne
- 1 large head lettuce, ripped in small pieces
- 1 bag baby spinach
- Seeds from 1/2 a pomegranate
- ¼ cup minced scallion

Dressing:

- ¼ cup oil
- 2 tsp apple cider vinegar
- 2 tsp honey
- 1 tsp mustard
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp garlic powder
- 2 tsp pomegranate or orange juice
- pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl.

Mix dressing well in a separate bowl or shake in a container before pouring on top of salad just before serving.



Moroccan Beet Citrus Salad

- 3 large beets, cooked and cubed
- 1 red onion, minced or sliced very thin
- 1 cup Pomegranate seeds
- ½ cup orange slices (or mandarin oranges)
- 1-2 Tbsp chopped parsley
- 2 Tbsp sliced black olives
- ¼ cup chopped mint
- ½ cup walnuts or pine nuts (optional)

Dressing:

- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup lemon juice (or red wine vinegar!)
- 1 Tbsp honey
- 1 tsp paprika, sweet or spice as preferred
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 teaspoon salt (more if needed)
- 1-3 cloves garlic, crushed
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 green onions, diced

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl.

Mix dressing well in a separate bowl or shake in a container before pouring on top of salad just before serving.

Never cooked beets before?

It's easy!

Place washed beets into a pot fully covered with water. Bring to a boil, then cover and lower heat to medium-low. Beets are ready when you can stick your fork in easily. Skins pull away with a breeze and viola, a delicious healthy snack all on its own!



Pomegranate Roasted Chicken

¼ cup olive oil
1 Tbsp minced garlic
1 chicken, quartered
1 pomegranate, halved
¼ cup dry white wine
2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
1 tsp cumin
1 tsp cardamom
½ tsp nutmeg
1 Tbsp cinnamon
2 Tbsp sugar
Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 375 F (190 C).

Place chicken in a shallow baking dish. In a cup, mix olive oil and garlic and smother over the chicken. Remove 1 tablespoon of seeds from pomegranates. Set aside for garnish. Squeeze juice from remaining pomegranate through a sieve into a small bowl.

In a small saucepan, mix pomegranate juice, wine, lemon juice, and cinnamon sugar. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low and cook 5 minutes to thicken. Season sauce with salt and pepper to taste.

Drizzle a bit of the sauce over the chicken and put in preheated oven to bake for 45 minutes, basting several times with pan juices. Add a bit more of the sauce throughout the cooking.

When the skin is browned and juices run clear when a thigh is pierced at thickest part with a fork, remove chicken from oven and cover with aluminum foil to rest for 10-15 minutes.

Combine sauce from pan and uncooked sauce. Transfer roasted chicken to a serving platter and pierce each piece several times. Pour sauce over chicken. Garnish with pomegranate seeds and serve.



Ethiopian Chicken Stew

- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken
- 8 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 Tbsp finely grated fresh ginger
- 1 cup mushrooms, chopped
- 2 Tbsp tomato paste
- 3 Tbsp creamy peanut butter
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves
- 1 ½ cup lentils, orange or brown preferred
- 8 cups Chicken Broth
- 2 ½ cups water
- ½ tsp salt and pepper

Preheat large deep skillet over medium-high heat. Season chicken with salt and pepper. Add to skillet and brown the chicken pieces for about 5 minutes, turning occasionally. Add the garlic, ginger and mushrooms. Cook for another 3 minutes. Add chicken Broth, peanut butter, tomato paste and thyme. Mix well and bring to a boil. After 10 minutes, add lentils and mix again. Cover tightly and simmer over low heat for 30-40 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.



Israeli Pumpkin Couscous

- 2 cups couscous, cooked
- 2 cups pumpkin, cubed
- ½ tsp. turmeric
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp brown sugar
- 2-3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 1 cup red pepper, diced small
- ½ tsp salt (to taste)
- 1 Tbsp chopped parsley
- ½ cup pumpkin seeds
- ½ cup pine nuts
- ½ cup dried cranberries

Cut pumpkin flesh into 1 in. cubes. Add 2 tsp. olive oil to a skillet on medium-high heat. Brown pumpkin on all sides.

Add garlic, turmeric, cumin, sugar and red pepper and simmer until pumpkin is soft, stirring.

Add to cooked couscous (preparation method will depend on the type you buy.)

Add salt, parsley, seeds, nuts, cranberries and a drizzle of olive oil



Roasted Leeks with Potatoes and Carrots

2 leeks
1 bag red baby potatoes, cut in half
5 large carrots
2 stalks celery
olive oil
3 cloves garlic, diced
2 bay leaves
¼ tsp chopped thyme
¼ tsp chopped parsley
2 tsp salt

Preheat oven to 375 F (190 C).

Cut off the hard green tips of the leeks. Slice lengthwise and cut into smaller portions and wash thoroughly. Wash potatoes and dry thoroughly for best crispiness. Wash and peel carrots. Cut carrots and celery angular slices. Mix together with leeks and potatoes.

Add spices, garlic and salt. Drizzle with olive oil until fully covered.

Bake for 30-40 minutes. For last five minutes, set oven on broil to crisp everything up!



Nuts and Honey Baked Apples

- 5 – 6 apples
- 2 cups of nut variety - cedar, hazelnuts, walnuts, pine nuts, pecan
- 4 tsp sugar
- 5 tsp of sweet liqueur
- ½ cup butter/margarine, room temperature and cubed
- 2 Tbsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- ½ tsp cardamom
- 1 ¼ cups of honey
- ½ glass of red Israeli wine

Preheat oven to 325 F (160 C)

Extract the apple core of each apple and place apples on a well-buttered cookie-sheet. For pareve meals, use margarine or spray pan with canola oil. Chop or smash nuts for a rough texture. Mix with sugar and liqueur and stuff inside each apple. Combine cinnamon, nutmeg and cardamom with margarine cubes and slather on top of each apple. Mix honey with wine and pour over the top of the stuffed apples. Bake for 25-30 minutes.

Can be served with ice cream or whipped cream, or delicious all on its own!



Spiced Israeli Honey Date Cake with Caramel Sauce

2 cups Israeli dates -- pitted and chopped
1 1/4 cups water
1 tsp baking soda
1/4 cup margarine, cut into pieces
2 large eggs
2 tsp vanilla extract
1 1/4 cup self-rising flour
1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1/2 cup honey
1 tsp cardamom
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp nutmeg
1 tsp ground ginger

Caramel Sauce

3/4 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1 cup heavy cream or non-dairy creamer
1 Tbsp corn syrup
1/4 cup butter
1 tsp cinnamon
1/2 tsp nutmeg

Grease 8-inch spring form baking pan (or pan of choice). Preheat oven to 350 F (180 C). Place chopped dates and water in small saucepan. Stir and bring to a boil over high heat. Remove from heat and stir in baking soda and butter. The baking soda will get a bit foamy and butter will melt. Set aside for about 25 minutes to cool. In a medium bowl, mix flour and brown sugar. Add eggs, vanilla and spices to cooled date mixture and blend until smooth. Combine wet and dry ingredients, folding together until just combined. Pour into pan and bake for about 40-45 minutes.

For sauce, put all ingredients in a small saucepot and stir well. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until sauce comes to a simmer. Lower heat to low and continue to cook, stirring as needed, for 5 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside. Using a skewer, randomly pierce cake in multiple places. Pour 1/2 cup of the sauce over cake and allow to sit for 5 minutes. Remove cake from pan and put on desired serving tray. Drizzle with remaining sauce, or add to each slice as you serve it for the gorgeous dripping effect that makes you want to lick your fingers.



Yom Kippur

There is a strong common thread among all Israelis on Yom Kippur; a feeling of connecting to others and being part of a community. The fast ends and normal life resumes at sundown after 25 hours of this blessed peace with a blast of the shofar and the immediate singing of Next Year in Jerusalem. And then, the return to the hubub of the daily reality with a glimmer of hope that the People of Israel, and the State of Israel as a whole, has been sealed in the Book of Life.

So as you enter into this unique and special day on our Jewish calendar, think about how lucky we are to have a place where our daily life is in sync with our faith and identity, where Jews of every background and practice feel the peace that emanates from our land, and where we can all accept our misgivings and differences of opinion and say “for this I am grateful.”



Roasted Cauliflower with Tehina Silan Sauce

1 head cauliflower, cut into florets
3 Tbsp olive oil
1/2 tsp salt

Sauce:

2 Tbsp olive oil
1/2 cup tahina
2 Tbsp silan (date honey) or pomegranate molasses
1/2 Tbsp sumac
2 cloves garlic, pressed
1 Tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
3 Tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
salt and pepper to taste
1 Tbsp sesame seeds

Preheat oven to 400 F (200 C) Drizzle oil and sprinkle salt over cauliflower florets. Arrange in a single layer on a baking sheet. Roast until golden, about 20 minutes. Lay out on serving dish to cool.

While the cauliflower is roasting, combine tahina, silan (or preferred substitute), garlic, sumac, lemon juice, and sesame seeds in a small bowl. Whisk to combine. Drizzle sauce over cauliflower and an extra dash of olive oil. Add the finishing touch of a sprinkle of parsley, salt and pepper. Serve warm or at room temperature.



Zaatar Mint Israeli Salad with Feta and Olives

4 cucumbers
4 large tomatoes
1 medium red onion, diced small
2 tsp fresh mint, chopped
2 tsp fresh parsley, chopped
Feta cheese, cubed
Black Israeli-style olives

Dressing:

2-3 Tbsp olive oil
Juice of ½ lemon
1 tsp sea salt
1 tsp za'atar

Cut cucumbers and tomatoes into small cubes. Add diced red onion, mint, parsley, olives and feta and mix gently. Cover with dressing and enjoy!



Israeli Leek Pashtida

Crust:

- 1 3/4 cup (180 grams) all-purpose flour
- 4 oz (120 grams) butter/margarine, cold and cubed
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 2 tsp garlic powder
- 2 -3 Tbsp cold water

Filling:

- 1 large leek, washed and cut into slices
- 1 large onion
- 2-3 cloves garlic
- 1 8-oz. (250 gram) container sweet cream
- 2 eggs, slightly beaten
- 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- 2 Tbsp fresh thyme leaves
- 1/s tsp nutmeg
- 2 Tbsp mozzarella cheese, shredded
- Salt and freshly ground pepper, according to taste

For the crust: Add flour, salt and garlic powder to your food processor, and then drop in the chunks of cold butter. Pulse on low/medium until you get a crumbly mixture. Slowly add the water while pulsing just until dough forms. Take out and wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 20 minutes.

Filling: Preheat the oven to 350 F (180 C). In a skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add the leeks, onion and garlic and sauté until golden. Spice with salt and pepper. Set aside to cool.

In a separate bowl, mix together the cream, eggs, mustard and thyme. Season with salt and pepper. Spray a 9 inch (22 cm) round pan with non-stick cooking spray. Flatten out the dough on the bottom and up the sides of the pan. Arrange the cooled cooked leeks on top of the dough. Pour the creamy-egg mixture on top of the leeks. Sprinkle Mozzarella on top. Bake, uncovered, at 350 F (180 C) for 30 minutes, or until golden brown.



Post-Fast Pomegranate Limonana

2 cups fresh pomegranate juice
1 cup fresh lemon juice
1 cup sugar
7 cups water or sparkling water
½ cup fresh nana (mint) leaves
ice cubes

Make Simple Syrup:

Boil sugar in 1 cup water until thickens.

Pour into large pitcher with pomegranate and lemon juice and stir well. Fill pitcher with remaining water, or sparkling water if preferred, and mix well. Add mint leaves and refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving.

***If not sweet enough for you, melt additional sugar in boiling water and add to pitcher.



Moroccan Reifa Cookies

A healthy post-fast treat – Courtesy of Haaretz

- ¼ cup of oil
- ¼ cup of water
- 1 Tbsp of anise seeds, washed well
- 1 egg
- zest of half a lemon
- ¼ cup of sugar
- ½ tsp of baking powder
- 250 grams of flour

Mix oil, water, egg, lemon shavings and anise seeds in a bowl.

Add in dry ingredients (sugar, baking powder and flour) gradually until dough forms.

Roll out dough until approximately ½ centimeter thick. Cut out cookies to desired shape and make design using fork tines.

Bake at 325 F (160 C) 12-15 min or until golden.



Sukkot

In so many ways, Sukkot offers us the opportunity to connect with the Land in which we were destined to thrive as a people. Every year, we take ourselves out of the comforts of our home to relive an experience that spans the generations and helps us connect with the memory of our ancestors and the journey they traveled to reach the land promised to the Children of Israel. So much meaning has been placed on these temporary dwellings, wherein families gather, guests are welcomed, and delicious dishes concocted to celebrate the abundance of the Land of Israel.

Indeed, it was once said that "One should concentrate on being part of the entire people of Israel, with intense love and peace, until it may be considered as if all of Israel dwells together in one sukkah." While we may not all be together in the land to fulfill the mitzvah of dwelling in the land, we can unite in our mitzvah of inspiring Israel by combining something temporary with something permanent: our commitment and belonging to Israel.



Roasted Pepper Soup

*Courtesy of Puzzle Israel
(Makes 6 servings)*

6 red peppers
1 red onion
1 Tbsp chopped ginger
1 Tbsp chopped garlic
½ cup olive oil
2-3 cups of water
½ cup coconut milk
2-3 Tbsp honey
½ cup roasted almonds
touch of salt and pepper according to your tastes

Heat up the oven to 500 F (250 C). Sprinkle a little oil on the peppers and roast them until charred. Remove pan from oven and place the red peppers into a plastic bag, sealing the bag well. Let the peppers cool for 20 minutes. Heat up a frying pan with 3-4 tablespoons of oil. Chop the onion and cook it until it begins to brown. Add the chopped ginger and garlic into the onion and cook for 2-3 minutes. Peel the roasted peppers and chop them. Add to the chopped onions, etc. in the pan and cook for 2-3 minutes. Add 1 cup of water and bring to a boil.

Use a hand blender to blend it all together until you have a smooth pepper puree. Add the coconut milk, salt and pepper. Bring to a second boil and add water as needed. Sprinkle some of the almonds before serving and add a sprig of fresh basil.



Grilled Eggplant with Tomatoes and Tehina

- 1 large eggplant
- 1 lemon or lime, halved
- 4 Tbsp tahini
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 2 Tbsp silan (date honey)
- 2 large tomato
- 2 Tbsp feta cheese
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 teaspoons fresh za'atar, oregano, or basil
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Fresh basil

Grill the eggplant over a flame or in your oven, till soft and the peel is charred – about 40 minutes. If grilling in oven, cut a slit into the side of the vegetable to prevent its bursting open. Cut in half horizontally and spread out on plate. Scrape flesh with a fork to loosen and sprinkle salt and pepper.

Mix Tehina, silan, garlic and spices and pour over the flesh. Top with tomatoes and feta. Drizzle olive oil over everything and top with pine nuts

Eat hot or cool, with fresh pita or baguette.



Rosemary Focaccia

Makes 6 servings

3 cups white flour
3 cups whole wheat flour
3 Tbsp sugar
1 Tbsp dry yeast
4 Tbsp olive oil
2 Tbsp kosher salt
2 ½ cups cold water
rosemary, finely chopped (fresh or dried)

Heat up the oven to 450 F (230 C).

Mix the dry ingredients (except the salt) in a bowl. Add the water and start mixing with one hand in the center of the bowl. After 3 minutes of mixing, add the olive oil, salt and chopped rosemary and Continue mixing from the center out, filling the dough with air for 5-10 minutes. Cover with a plastic bag for 1 hour.

Add three tablespoons of chopped rosemary to three tablespoons of flour and knead the dough for 3 minutes. Cover for 1 more hour.

Shape 6-8 balls of dough using a good amount of flour so the dough does not stick to your hands. Roll out each ball of dough, 2-3 cm thick. Sprinkle some olive oil and salt. Place dough on a pan and put in the oven until brown and crispy.



Lemon and Garlic Herb Chicken

8 chicken breasts, boneless
¼ cup olive oil
5 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup dry white wine
1 lemon, zested and squeezed
1 lemon, cut into 8 wedges
1 tsp dried rosemary
1 ½ tsp dried oregano
2 sprigs fresh thyme, finely chopped
1 Tbsp fresh parsley, finely chopped
1 Tbsp capers, optional
kosher salt
black pepper, freshly ground

Preheat oven to 400 F (200 C).

In a small saucepan over medium low heat, heat the olive oil. Add garlic and cook for just about a minute - don't let the garlic burn! Add white wine, lemon zest, lemon juice, herbs, ½ teaspoon of kosher salt and ½ teaspoon of pepper and stir gently for 2-3 minutes. Set aside.

Wash and dry chicken well and place in the dish. Cover with sauce and coat all sides. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt and some pepper and scatter lemon wedges around and under the breasts. If using capers, scatter on top.

Bake chicken for 30-35 minutes. After removing from oven, baste in juices and then cover with foil. Allow to rest for ten minutes before serving. Serve with its own juices and fresh lemon slices. Goes great with rice, orzo, or Israeli couscous.



Mimoulaim-Stuffed Vegetable Medley

6-8 vegetables for filling: peppers, zucchini, acorn squash, tomatoes, artichoke bottoms
1 pound ground beef
2 onion, diced small
½ cup uncooked rice
½ cup water or broth
½ cup tomato paste
1 egg
¼ cup pine nuts
4 cloves garlic, diced or minced
1 Tbsp cumin
1 Tbsp parsley, chopped
1 tsp thyme, chopped
1-2 tsp salt
¼ tsp black pepper
2 Tbsp oil
20 oz can tomatoes (chopped if possible)
4 Tbsp lemon juice
4 Tbsp sugar

In a saucepan, brown the chopped onion in the oil. Add tomatoes, tomato paste, sugar, cumin, garlic, lemon juice and salt and pepper. Let simmer while preparing vegetables.

Cut the top off the peppers, zucchini and squash and scoop out the insides. Chop the flesh of the zucchini and mix in a bowl with meat, onion, rice, nuts, herbs and egg with water and 3-4 Tbsp of tomato sauce. Stuff vegetables with the filling and place in a roasting pan. Pour remaining sauce over and around the vegetables. (For decoration, cover with the tops of the peppers/squash.) Cover with aluminum foil and bake 1 hour at 350 F (180 C), basting once or twice.



Tehina Cookies

- 1 cup (140 g) all-purpose flour
- 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (140 g) whole wheat flour
- 5 1/2 oz (150 g) cold unsalted butter or margarine, cut into cubes
- 2 1/2 oz (70 g) ground almonds
- 3/4 cup (150 g) sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt
- 2 Tbsp water
- 1 cup raw tehina

Preheat oven to 350 F (175 C) degrees.

In a food processor, blend the all-purpose flour, whole wheat flour, ground almonds, butter, sugar, vanilla and salt, and process until the mixture looks crumbly.

Add water and tehina and process until a smooth dough begins to form. Remove the dough from the food processor bowl and knead it a few times on the counter until smooth. Create small balls of the dough, place them on the baking sheet, then flatten each one slightly with your fingers.

Bake for about 12-14 minutes, or until golden brown.

Cool completely and serve.



Honey Baked Dates and Figs

- 12 fresh figs
- 12 fresh dates
- 24 blanched almonds
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground allspice
- Juice of 1 lemons
- 1/3 cup Israeli honey

Preheat the oven to 430 F (220 C). Grease a shallow baking dish. Make an X in the top of each fig with a knife. Holding the fig from the bottom, squeeze and the quarters will fan out like leaves. Place 1 almond in the center of each fig.

Slice the dates in half lengthways and remove the pits. Place almond inside and close back up. Arrange the dates and figs alternately in the dish. Combine spices, lemon juice and honey and pour over the top. Bake for 20 minutes or until the honey starts to bubble.



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There are a million cookbooks out there, by world renowned chefs and based on Jewish tradition. Our goal is to help people add a particular focus on Israel as we celebrate this season of reconnecting, repentance, redemption. After all, every one of the Jewish holidays has its own unique relationship with the land and history that are linked with Israel in a positive and inspiring way. Now more people can get excited about incorporating them into their holiday meals.

These recipes are a diverse collection of dairy, meat and vegetarian dishes, each providing a taste of Israel you and your friends and family can enjoy as you come together to celebrate this new year. Just as we seek to reconnect in so many ways over the holidays, so, too, should we be reminded of our connection to Israel – our ancient homeland - and her meaningfulness in our lives.

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