



HAPPY
Passover



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DLA Piper Jewish Resource Group Passover 2024

We are so pleased to share with you this Passover e-book, which includes over 65 entries from colleagues across the firm who share their holiday memories, traditions, recipes, and good wishes. We hope this compilation inspires and strengthens all of us, and helps us to feel more connected – especially during these challenging times – to the greater DLA community.

Wishing you and your loved ones a chag kasher v'sameach, a wonderful, meaningful, and peaceful Passover.



Jeremy Lustman



Ilana Eisenstein

Jeremy Lustman

Tel Aviv



Pesach is the holiday for me which conjures up the most special of memories going back to my childhood and makes me feel like I'm in a time machine of sorts throughout the Seder.

For years growing up, the entire extended family on my Mom's side met in Ottawa, Canada, for the holiday and it was so beautiful and unique. My grandparents had a big home and most of us piled into their "dorm," occupying almost every inch of space. We stayed up late together, woke up early in our pajamas together, watched "The Ten Commandments" movie together, and it was one of the most impactful bonding experiences I had year after year from infancy through high school. I remain super close with my aunts, uncles, and cousins 30 years later, in large part because of these seminal experiences.

The smells and tastes of my grandmother's delicacies (sticky chicken, matzo ball soup, lemon meringue pie, and others); walking to shul/synagogue back and forth with my father and grandfather; sitting all around the seder singing the ma nishtana in four languages (Hebrew, English, Yiddish, and French); discussing the history of our people and tying in current events; sharing words of Torah that we learned in school (until the adults lost patience and the time to eat got earlier and earlier); stealing the afikoman/matzah from my grandfather and having my earliest sessions of negotiation with him as to what it would take to get it back (I usually started with a request for a car and we typically ended up with the full-set of baseball cards ;)); singing my paternal grandfather's songs in Yiddish at the end of the seder (from his childhood in Poland); and so many more memories that permeate the entire experience.

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Many of these customs carry forward into the seder we host with our children and extended family, along with some new initiatives...including a current event chart tied to the Ten Plagues (being able to pull current news clippings of the plagues actually happening in different forms around the world); food props throughout to keep everyone interested and engaged; some trivia games; and more recently enjoying some Chat GPT wisdom. Pesach is a holiday experience that truly epitomizes our history...past, present, and future, and it remains one of our favorite nights of the year.

Chag kasher v'sameach to all!

Ilana Eisenstein

Philadelphia



Carrying on the Passover Tradition

For nearly 50 years, my mother has been the host of our family's Passover Seder. Last year, it became my turn to carry on the Passover tradition at our home...no pressure.

Growing up, our Seder was no small affair. It was a table set for at least 20, often 25 or 30, of our aunts and uncles and cousins and now nieces, nephews, and grandchildren. All the leaves were put in the dining room table, and one, two, or three large folding tables were added. (My mom loved that our house had a dining room big enough, at least when combined with the connected living room, to accommodate everyone in one room for the Seder).

The table was set with care. The china my parents were given at their wedding and the nice crystal glasses were cleaned and set out. The silver was polished to a shine (this was always my job). My favorite pieces were the silver place-settings with a cursive M inscribed – my great-grandmother Annie Mandel's initial – one of her few fine heirlooms kept notwithstanding years of piece-work labor with my great-grandfather in the Philadelphia garment factories.

All the ingredients for the special foods had to be purchased and prepared: the matzah, of course, but also the gefilite fish, the apples and walnuts for Charoset, the red horseradish for Maror, the parsley for dipping in the salt water during the Seder. My Great Aunt Frances and then her niece, cousin Marsha, would bring the Passover sweet kugel. Who can forget dessert – my Great Aunt Sonny's famous Passover sponge cake (made with matzah meal and whipped egg whites and plenty of sugar and a dash of lemon peel).

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And dessert wouldn't be complete without the Pesach chocolates and jelly candies that I earnestly, but mostly unsuccessfully, tried to sell to my neighbors – like an off-season Girl Scout – to raise money for the synagogue.

Flowers and tall candles were placed next to the Seder plates. These joined the makeshift “plagues” and tiny baby Moses in his basket made from half a walnut shell. The Haggodot were stacked – for years the “Maxwell House” version, then later, a modified Haggadah and song sheet my brother designed for our family's traditions.

The Seder itself, with its rich stories, my Dad's inevitable “dad jokes,” the song sheet sung with gusto, the hunt for the afikomen.

Now it is my turn to host the Seder. Will I be able to make the matzoh balls fluffy like Mom? Will I remember to dry the lamb shank in time for the Seder plate? Will I mix the eggs stiff enough so the sponge cake stays firm and does not sink into a flat pile of sugar and matzoh meal? Will everyone fit in our living room stripped of chairs and sofa? Will I be able to carry it all forward...after fifty years, a millennia, two millennia of tradition? Will my children and their children do the same? ...No pressure.



Leigh Abrams

Waterman

Minneapolis



My mom wrote about our favorite family tradition years ago in Kveller (link below) – the Nachas List.

Every year at Second Seder (and also on erev Rosh Hashanah), my family dives into our favorite family ritual – the Nachas List – a short summary of milestones, achievements, or points of pride of each child in each family over the last half-year. My parents started this tradition when my brothers and I were young, with a Seder table overflowing with kids, family, and friends, and it quickly became a favorite.

Now my own children eagerly anticipate the Nachas List recitation. The Nachas List is, without a doubt, the highlight of the Seder!

<https://www.kveller.com/the-one-unique-rosh-hashanah-tradition-i-always-keep-with-my-family/>

Tal Aburos

Miami



Passover in our home is more than a holiday—it is a gathering of generations, an amalgamation of stories and laughter, and a celebration of our beautiful heritage.

Reflecting on those moments, I am immediately transported to my mother’s bustling kitchen, filled with the aromas of incredible cooking that incorporates our Yemenite tradition. Among the plethora of traditional dishes, the Yemenite Charoset (“Doukeh”) holds a special place in my heart (and palate). This delightful mixture of dates, figs, and spices is not just a recipe, but also a legacy of warmth and togetherness that I wish to share with you.

As we prepare to celebrate another Passover, albeit in different corners of the world, let us remember the power of traditions that unite us. May this holiday season bring you and your families much health, happiness, and prosperity.

Recipe:

- Toasted sesame seeds – ½ cup
- Pitted dates – 1½ cup
- Chopped raisins – 1½ cup
- Chopped almonds – 1 cup
- Ground cinnamon – 1 tsp.
- Dried cardamon – ½ tsp.
- Dried cloves – ¼ tsp.
- Ground ginger – 1 tsp.
- Diced apples – 3
- Sweet red wine – ½ cup

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor until the mixture resembles preserves.

Chag sameach!

Rachel Albanese

New York



Growing up, my family looked forward to Passover because it meant we'd get to enjoy my mom's amazing pesadich strawberry shortcake. It is just as delicious as the real thing, if not better!

"Once a year Passover STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE"

By Wendy Ehrlich

7 - 9 eggs separated (depending upon size)

1 cup sugar

Juice of 1/2 to whole lemon, depending upon size, lemon zest

1/2 cup potato starch

1/4 cup Passover cake meal

a lot of strawberries

1 quart real heavy cream (no substitutions) sugar and pure vanilla extract, to taste raspberry syrup (optional)

- In a large mixing bowl, beat the egg yolks until light colored.
- Add the sugar and lemon juice (and zest if you are ambitious) and continue beating until very fluffy.
- Combine the dry ingredients and stir into the batter.
- In a separate very large mixing bowl, beat the egg whites until stiff (unless you have a free-standing mixer, this will feel like it is taking forever).
- Carefully, completely fold them into the egg batter without deflating them.
- Bake in an untreated 10-inch tube pan in a preheated 300-degree F oven for 30 minutes.
- Increase the temperature to 325 degrees F and bake for an additional 15-25 minutes (sorry but it varies). Invert to cool.

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In a large bowl, beat the heavy cream until it starts to thicken, then add sugar and vanilla (to taste) until it peaks but doesn't become too thick.

Slice some of the strawberries and mix them with a couple tablespoons of the syrup. Gently add some of the whipped cream.

Slice the cake in half lengthwise and place bottom on platter. Spoon the sliced strawberries over the top. Place the top half of the cake over the berries. Generously cover the entire cake with the rest of the whipped cream. Decorate the cake with the remaining berries, either left whole or cut in half.



Tom Ara

Los Angeles



For Persian Jews, Passover is not the only Spring holiday, as it almost always coincides with the Persian holiday of “Nowruz” or Persian New Year (except of course in a leap year like 2024, when Passover takes place nearly a month later!). Persian customs blend ancient practices with modern adaptations coinciding with Nowruz. Some of these blended customs include Spring cleaning and renewal to remove chametz and the purchase of new clothes, a unique twist on charoset called “haleg” that contains different ingredients, “haft pialeh” which is a variation on the four cups of Passover that involves seven cups (hence the word “haft” which means seven), and “Eid Didani” which is a Passover tradition fused with Nowruz where relatives and friends are visited at their homes.

The most unique Persian Passover tradition (and one that some non-Persian Jews may previously have had the joy of experiencing!) is the scallion whipping ceremony. Yes, scallion whipping! During this ceremony Persian Jews and their guests recite Dayenu and playfully reenact the affliction of Israelite slaves by hitting each other with spring onions. It’s a joyful way to connect with the past and celebrate liberation! Of course, every Persian Passover comes complete with a lavish Persian meal (and apologies to our Ashkenazi friends, but the eating of rice at Seder is not chametz!). My mouth is already watering!

In these challenging times, may your Passover Seder be blessed. Peace be upon you and may you have a (belated) Nowruz Mobarak (Happy Persian New Year)!

Brian Benjet

Philadelphia



Our Passover tradition is that when people come for the Seder, we serve appetizers (fresh chopped liver and vegetarian chopped “liver” made from eggplant) and Slivovitz before the Seder.

We find that this makes the Seder a lot more entertaining. Also, while we bake many old family recipes, including a sponge cake that requires the beating of eggs that I am not sure how it occurred pre-electric mixers, everyone in our family looks forward to the rainbow cake.

Finally, we always finish the seder with going around the table and reciting a paragraph of the Echad Mi Yodea/Who knows one? in one breath.

Of course, the best part is having family and friends together for a wonderful celebration.

Stuart Berkson

Chicago



The Orange

I heard this story once, about the orange on the seder plate. In it, the first woman to become bat mitzvah was standing on the bimah and a man in back scoffed, "A woman belongs on the bimah as much as an orange belongs on the seder plate."

I heard this story once, about the orange on the seder plate. In it, the first woman to be ordained a rabbi was standing on the bimah, and a man in back scoffed, "A woman belongs on the bimah as much as an orange belongs on a seder plate."

I heard this story once, about the orange on the seder plate. I don't know which story is true, perhaps both, perhaps neither, perhaps it's just a tale someone told when they first included an orange - a symbol of spring, of sweetness, of women - on the seder plate. But tales are important, and symbols help remind us of lessons we might forget without them -- the lesson that we belong here, women belong here, on the bimah, in the synagogue, in all of Jewish life, as much as any man. I heard this story once, about the orange on the seder plate...

Around 20 years ago we incorporated the orange to our Seder. When we first heard this story, the focus was solely on women and their place in participating in Jewish religious practices, including being Cantors and Rabbis. As parents of two daughters, it was very meaningful to us because from birth we tried to teach our girls that they should never feel that any avenue they wanted to pursue was off limits for them because they were girls. We thereafter always used the story of the orange on the Seder plate to remind our girls that they belonged any place that their male classmates and male cousins belonged, whether as part of Jewish rituals, or in life in general.

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And 20+ years later, and now with husbands and children of their own (four children in total between the two couples), we continue to recite the story of the orange, now with our grandchildren, so that our one granddaughter will never doubt her rightful place on the bimah (or in any other environment), and to ensure our three grandsons would never for a moment question that the rightful place for our granddaughter, or any other woman, is any place that our grandsons might choose to go.

Cory Bettel

Los Angeles



Before I met my wife, her grandfather curated his own Haggadah. He demystified the seder for those who had never attended one, explaining it all in plain English. In addition to the standard songs and stories that we all know (The Four Children, Ma Nishtana, Dayenu, Had Gadya, etc.), he added about 10-15 Passover song parodies, mostly based on old showtunes. Examples include: “There’s No Seder Like Our Seder” (to the tune of “There’s No Business Like Show Business”), “Afikomen ‘Round the Mountain” and, the crowd favorite, “Just a Tad of Charoset” (to the tune of “Just a Spoonful of Sugar”).

When I attended my first seder with their family, I was, naturally, embarrassed to participate. My now brother-in-law would shout-sing the words after too much Manishevitz wine, my wife’s younger cousins would giggle uncontrollably by changing the lyrics, and the group was incapable of singing in unison – or on key. So, I would just quietly hum along and avoid eye contact with anyone or everyone else at the table. “I know it’s lame, but my mom likes it,” my wife would tell me, badgering me to join in the chorus. But for those first few years, I would dread the singalong portion of the seder – and no matter how late it got, my mother-in-law always insisted that we broke out the songbook before we could call it a night.

After a few years, I became agnostic to the songs. They were kitschy and silly, but it started to feel like I was in on the joke. And then I started to actually kind of like them. I’ve realized that it’s not about the songs themselves, of course – it’s about getting everyone together, doing the same thing we did last year but with a slightly different perspective. There’s a certain joy in growing up but never growing out of your family traditions.

This is our first Passover since my wife’s grandfather passed away. And I think we’re all looking forward to this year’s seder. Because no matter what, we’ll be there together, singing “Moses Island” to the tune of “Gilligan’s Island”.

Maya Biasi-Gelb

Tel Aviv



Cinnamon Crumb Cake

Cake Ingredients:

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 Tablespoon vanilla sugar
- 1 cup oil
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup potato starch

Topping ingredients:

- 2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 cup oil (place in freezer half hour before)
- 1/2 box of lady fingers/Kosher for Pesach Wine Cookies
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup brown sugar

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 F.
- (If you want to freeze the oil for the topping do so now)
- Mix all the ingredients together until smooth.
- Pour cake batter into a 9x13 in. pan and bake for 20 minutes
- While the cake is baking, make the topping by mixing together all the ingredients.
- Pour topping onto cake and bake all together for an additional 35 minutes

Jonathan Born

Toronto



My mother (Bubby Susan) bakes Passover brownies that are such a hit that she gets requests from the grandchildren to make more even after Passover!

The recipe is:

Ingredients:

- 1 ¼ cup sugar
- 6 Tbsp. cocoa
- ½ cup vegetable oil or applesauce (or substitute with a mashed banana)
- 4 eggs
- ½ cup cake meal
- Nuts/chocolate chips, etc.

Instructions:

- Mix sugar/cocoa/oil/eggs
- Fold in cake meal
- Add nuts / chocolate chips
- 8" baking dish
- Bake at 350 degrees (F) for 35-45 minutes

Suzanna Brickman

Washington, DC



Passover has always been a favorite Jewish holiday for my family, particularly because of its universal message.

In recounting the story of the Israelites fleeing bondage and enduring suffering to live freely, our seders served as an annual reminder of our role as Jews and humans to fight injustice and defend the vulnerable in our community and around the world.

In addition, our lively seders were a ton of fun and quite delicious (with beloved Sephardic dishes), always including a diverse group of friends and family members.

Now with two young daughters of my own, I'm excited to use our seder as a way to pass on these important lessons – and invite neighbors and friends to share in our traditions.

Samantha Chaifetz

Washington, DC



Early in my legal career, I spent a year as a law clerk to a Ninth Circuit judge on the West Coast - far from my family in New York.

For the High Holidays, I found a nearby shul where I could attend services but, as Passover approached, I was at a loss for seder plans. My co-clerks, none of whom were Jewish, suggested that we have a meal together in chambers. Each asked to be assigned a dish to bring in, and I rattled off the usual holiday fare.

With no access to my mother's wine-stained Maxwell House Haggadot, I got to work cobbling together my own version from online sources. I worried that my co-clerks might balk at the length or content of the seder. I thought about using the amusing 2-minute redux of the Haggadah that was first published by Michael Rubiner in 2006. But in the end, I played it straight - keeping all the key components of the service and aiming to emphasize the universal social justice concerns and moral questions the Passover seder presents.

My anxieties were misplaced. The resulting seder was wonderfully memorable. My co-clerks' culinary contributions were inspired variations on traditional themes: matzah balls in a scallion- ginger broth, paprika-spiced deviled eggs, sriracha-braised brisket. Even more than their delicious dishes, their thoughtful and unhurried participation in the seder filled me with immense gratitude.

That was seventeen years ago. Since then, I've been fortunate to spend nearly every Pesach seder with my East Coast family. My mother's traditional recipes still rule. But each year we spend a portion of our evening reading from wine-stained photocopies of my homemade Haggadah. And there is always room at the table for someone far from home.

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My former co-clerk Liz Wang's rough recollection of her scallion-ginger broth:

In a saucepan, heat vegetable oil over medium heat. Add the sliced whites of scallions, diced ginger, and diced garlic. Stir until the scallions start to soften. Add broth and fish sauce. Bring to a boil and then reduce to a simmer and cook until the flavors blend. Garnish with lime and sliced greens of scallions. Add matzah balls.

Andrew Cooper

Washington, DC



Our family has a longstanding tradition for the Second Seder (observed here in the US, unlike in Israel) to include one or more guests who have had little or no experience with attending a Passover Seder.

We make sure that our Second Seder includes plenty of explanations, more English (but still quite a bit of Hebrew for authenticity), slower renditions where appropriate, and the opportunity to ask questions (beyond the Four Questions!) throughout.

We enjoy sharing and discussing what we are doing and why – and our Second Seders often have a somewhat different feel from our first night together.

The challenge runs both ways, of course; we get some great questions that make us think.

Naftali Dembitzer

New York



Passover is a time to reflect and discuss the messages of the holiday. There are many messages that I relay to my family at our Passover Seders, along with the messages from the Haggadah (which is the special collection of materials that we recite and discuss at the Seder). Among the Passover messages that I impart to my family are: (1) the importance of passing on the rituals and traditions from our parents and grandparents to the next generation as part of the holiday, and (2) to learn to question our role in the community and society as a central focus of our personal and professional lives.

When I speak to many friends around this time of year, they recall the special rituals and traditions of their families at the Passover holiday. I remember the hard work that my parents engaged in before the holiday to make sure that our home was clean and pristine for Passover, which was much more than a typical Spring cleaning. It demonstrated to me their complete devotion to the Passover rules and our religious practice. And I recall the special Passover foods that were served at the Seder and that we consumed the entire holiday, including the special hand-baked unleavened Matzahs that we continue to use today. Despite the many different ways that we celebrate Passover nowadays, I continue to share those wonderful traditions and memories with my children and grandchildren when we celebrate Passover together.

I also remember the pre-Passover lecture that my law school professor gave over thirty years ago to a packed room of eager law students, entitled: "Passover: Learning to Question." In his remarks, Professor Aaron Twerski highlighted the tradition at the Passover Seder for young children (and even teenagers and adults) to ask their parents and other participants the Four Questions.

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While the Four Questions focus on what is different about the various rituals that we perform on Passover from our practices during the rest of the year, Professor Twerski suggested that it also sends the critical message to each of us to learn to question our purpose in life.

He urged us to really think about what matters to us and to our families and communities when we graduate and begin to practice law. His eye-opening and frank discussion was so impactful that it moved many in the audience to tears and had a profound impact on me.

May we all cherish and pass on our family's Passover traditions and implement the many Passover messages in our daily lives.

I wish everyone a Chag Sameach and Happy Passover.

Gregory DeSantis

Washington, DC



When my grandfather (Irving Jacobs) passed, I found his latke recipe and had it printed on plates for my family.



Audrey Dulmage

Atlanta



Homemade Chicken Soup with Matzo Balls

INGREDIENTS:

Chicken Stock:

Bones from 1-2 chickens (if you get a rotisserie chicken or roast a chicken, save the bones in the freezer so that you'll have them for this stock)

1-2 onions, quartered

1-2 carrots, quartered

2-3 Tbsp chicken powder/chicken bouillon

2-3 Tbsp dry dill

2-3 Tbsp parsley

2-3 garlic cloves, smashed

8-10 whole peppercorns

Enough water to cover the bones

Soup:

2 quarts of chicken stock

2-3 lb. cooked and shredded chicken (you could use the chicken you used to make the stock, rotisserie chicken, or leftovers)

1 carrot, diced

1/2-1 small onion, finely diced

1-2 stalks celery, diced

4-6 sprigs dill, finely chopped

2-4 sprigs parsley, finely chopped

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Matzo Balls:

1 1/4 cup matzo meal

2 1/2 tsp kosher salt

1/2 tsp baking powder

1/2 tsp baking soda

1/2 tsp granulated garlic

5 large eggs – 2 whole, 3 separated

1/4 cup melted chicken schmaltz or vegetable oil

1/4 cup minced onion

1/2 tsp dill, dry or finely chopped fresh

INSTRUCTIONS

Chicken Stock:

- Pre-heat the oven to 350 degrees.
- Add the chicken bones, onion, and carrot to a large sheet pan. Roast for an hour.
- Transfer the ingredients from the sheet pan to a large stock pot (I used a 12-quart pot) along with the rest of the ingredients.
- Bring to a boil, then reduce to a low simmer (lowest setting on your stove).
- After about 30 minutes, skim any scum from the top with a spoon and repeat every 10-15 minutes for the first hour.
- In the second hour, check on the half hour for any additional scum.
- Let it continue to simmer for at least 4 hours, 6-8 hours is even better (add some hot water if the bones aren't submerged).
- Strain the stock to another pot, let cool, and put in the fridge overnight.
- Carefully scrape the schmaltz (chicken fat) from the top (consider saving this, it's a DELICIOUS fat to cook with).
- At this point, you can transfer to containers and put in the fridge or freezer. But for this recipe, put the pot back on the stove and bring to a simmer.

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Soup:

- Bring the chicken stock to a simmer, add the vegetables, and herbs.
- Start making the matzo balls, see below.
- Simmer about 30 minutes.
- Add the matzo balls to the soup.
- Simmer an additional 25-30 minutes depending on the size of the matzo balls you made (make sure they are cooked through).
- Add the shredded chicken and simmer another 3-5 minutes.
- Serve and enjoy!

Matzo Balls:

- In a large bowl, combine the matzo meal, salt, baking powder, baking soda, and granulated garlic.
- In another bowl, whisk the 2 whole eggs and 3 egg yolks along with the chicken fat, onion, and dill.
- In yet another bowl, whisk the 3 egg whites with an electric mixer until you get stiff peaks.
- Stir the chicken fat mixture in with the dry ingredients, mix to combine.
- Gently fold in the egg whites thoroughly - no streaks.
- Cover the mixture with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 20 minutes (you can make these ahead of time).
- Prepare a baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray.
- Remove the matzo ball mix from the refrigerator.
- Using a small scooper, scoop out enough mixture for about a 1" ball (they puff up, so be careful how big you make them).
- Repeat the scooping process until you have used all the mixture.

Judy Evans

San Diego



My family consisted of my mother, brother, two sisters, and me. This time of the year (Easter) was particularly special for me growing up because we were all together. My father passed away, and my youngest sister, who was eleven years older than me, married when I was seven, leaving only my mother and me. Also, my siblings' children were almost my age, so I had playmates.

We had the most delicious food on the planet. Menu items included Southern-style chicken and dumplings, homemade biscuits, green beans, delicious peach pie to die for, homemade peach ice cream, and sweet Southern tea.

Remembering these times together reminds me of how important the family is in our lives, although in their absence, I have discovered that wonderful friends can become a close second!

My family also placed a great emphasis on the spiritual meaning of this time and the importance of God as our divine protector. "God is my Protector – Elohim Shomri." The Lord Himself watches over me and He is my "protective shade" (Psalm 121:5). Although as a young child I did comprehend this, it has come to mean a great deal to me.

Robert Fonn

Toronto



Fonn Family Fried Matzah

My maternal grandmother, Esther Leah Orelowitz (nee Jankelowitz), was born in Lithuania and grew up in a village called Kruk.

In August 1934, at the age of 16, she travelled alone to South Africa to meet up with her brothers and extended family. Her parents and the rest of her family that remained in Lithuania perished in the Holocaust.

In 1986, my parents, my sister and I emigrated from Johannesburg to Waterloo, Ontario, Canada. In 2000, at 82 years old, Esther made the move and joined us. All of our traditional high holiday and Pesach recipes come from her (including herring prepared more ways than you can imagine).

My kids love my take on Granny Esther's fried matzah. It's simple, filling and pairs nicely with a dark roast coffee.

Ingredients:

- matzah (I'm partial to Streit's Passover Matzos)
- milk
- eggs
- butter
- kosher salt

Note: You're cooking matzah, eggs and milk – don't be shy with the butter or salt.

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Instructions:

- Break up 6 pieces of matzah into bite-sized pieces in a bowl.
- Pour milk over the matzah until there is about 2 cm of milk at the bottom of the bowl.
- Soak for 5 – 7 minutes while mixing so that all of the matzah gets wet and soft.
- Melt butter in pan on medium heat until butter starts to bubble.
- Beat 4 eggs in a small bowl.
- Pour the matzah and milk into the pan. Cook until the milk starts to bubble and then add the beaten eggs.
- Stir and continue to cook until the egg firms.
- Add salt to taste (it's matzah – so expect to add more than a pinch).
- Plate, eat immediately and then whip up another batch.

Hope you and your families get a chance to enjoy a fried matzah breakfast together this Pesach and think about the route this recipe travelled to get to you.

Wishing all of our colleagues, clients and friends in Israel and around the world a chag sameach from the Fonn Family in Toronto Canada!

Amy Friedman

New York



My mom was a Hebrew school teacher in a Conservative synagogue in Long Island for 30+ years. She taught hundreds of 8-year-olds the Ma Nish Tana over the years. She was beloved by parents and students. Many years ago, when my kids were little, she brought this to our Seder table. My mom passed seven years ago, but we still sing this at my (now all adult) Seder in place of reading that section of the Haggadah. She would be so pleased that I am sharing it with this group.

THE BALLAD OF THE FOUR SONS

The following song to the tune of "Clementine" is not included in the real Haggadah. However, the questions of each of the four sons and the answers to them found in this song are based on those given.

Said the father to his children; "At the Seder you will dine. You will eat your fill of Matzah. You will drink four cups of wine.

Now this father had no daughters, but his sons they numbered four. One was wise and one was wicked. One was simple and a bore. And the fourth was sweet and winsome, he was young, and he was small. While his brothers asked the questions, he could hardly speak at all.

WHAT DOES THE WISE SON SAY?

Said the wise son to his father,

*Would you please explain the laws? All the customs of the seder
Will you please explain their cause?"

And the father proudly answered, "As our fathers ate in speed,
Ate the pascal lamb 'ere midnight and from slavery they were freed.

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So we follow their example, and 'ere midnight must complete
The service of the seder; After twelve we may not eat.

AND WHAT DOES THE WICKED SON SAY?

Then did sneer the son so wicked, "What does all this mean to you?"
And the father's voice was bitter, as his grief and anger flew.

"If yourself you don't consider a true son of Israel,
Then for you this has no meaning, You could be a slave as well."

***AND THE SIMPLE SON; WHAT DOES HE SAY?**

Then the simple son said simply, "What is this?" and then quietly,
The good father told his offspring, "We were freed from slavery."

***AND THE SON WHO DOES NOT YET KNOW HOW TO ASK?**

But the youngest son was silent, for he could not ask at all.
His eyes were bright with wonder, as his father told them all.

Now dear children, heed the lesson, and remember evermore,
What the father told the children, told his sons that numbered four

Brandon Fuqua

Dallas



Pesach Brisket Recipe with Fennel

1 4–5-lb. piece untrimmed flat-cut beef brisket
4 Tbsp. vegetable oil, divided
1 medium onion, cut through root end into 1"-thick wedges
1 large fennel bulb, cut through root end into 1"-thick wedges
3 celery stalks, cut into 2" pieces, plus 1 cup leaves
1 head of garlic, halved crosswise
½ bunch thyme, oregano, or marjoram
¾ cup distilled white vinegar
¼ cup low-sodium soy sauce or Worcestershire sauce
2 cups mixed tender herbs (such as parsley, mint, and/or cilantro)
½ lemon
Crushed red pepper flakes
2 Tbsp Gochujang
1 Tbsp fish sauce
Flaky sea salt

Instructions:

Step 1:

Season brisket on all sides with kosher salt (about 1 tsp. Diamond Crystal or ½ tsp. Morton per lb.) and pepper and set on a rimmed baking sheet. Chill, uncovered, at least 12 hours and up to 2 days.

Step 2:

Preheat oven to 300°F. Heat 2 Tbsp. oil in a large heavy pot over medium. Cook brisket, fatty side down, until deeply browned (it might be snug at first, but the meat will shrink as it cooks), 10–12 minutes. Turn and cook until the other side is deeply browned, 8–10 minutes. Turn onto edges and brown (this isn't necessary, but it will add more flavor). Transfer to a platter.

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Step 3:

Pour off fat from pot; discard. Pour remaining 2 Tbsp. oil into pot; set over medium-high heat. Add onion and season with kosher salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until softened and beginning to brown and frizzle around the edges, about 3 minutes.

Step 4:

Add fennel, celery, garlic, and thyme and toss to coat; season with kosher salt and pepper. Add vinegar, soy sauce, gochujang, fish sauce, and 4 cups water. Place brisket in pot, arranging fatty side up; it should be submerged. (Use tongs to work it in there. If anything has to poke out of the liquid, let it be the vegetables.) Bring to a simmer, then cover and slide into the oven. Braise (without peeking) 3 hours. Check brisket; it should be very tender (the tip of a knife should easily pierce meat). If not, braise another 20 minutes or so and check again.

Step 5:

Uncover brisket and increase oven temperature to 425°F. Roast until liquid is reduced by 3/4 and top of brisket is crisp and deeply browned (it should be extremely tender), 50–60 minutes. Let cool slightly, then transfer to a cutting board. Slice with a serrated knife or shred with your hands. Skim fat from surface of braising liquid.

Step 6:

Just before meat is done, place tender herbs and celery leaves in a small bowl; squeeze some juice from lemon over and toss to coat.

Step 7:

Arrange meat on a platter. Spoon vegetables and braising liquid in pot around meat and top with herb salad. Sprinkle with red pepper flakes, if desired, and sea salt.

Step 8:

Do Ahead: Brisket can be braised (but not roasted) one day ahead. Let cool; cover and chill. Uncover and remove fat from surface. Continue with roasting process before serving.

Mirella Goldenstein Kaufman São Paulo



Pesach has always held a special place in my heart as my favorite Jewish holiday. It's a time when we gather around the table to reflect on our history, imparting its lessons to our children, and unfortunately, also preparing them for the future.

In 2017, Pesach took on an even deeper significance for me. It marked my first visit to Israel, and on the final day of Pesach, which was also my first day in Jerusalem, I received the life-changing news that I was pregnant with my first child. The moment remains etched in my memory, stirring emotions each time I recall it.

In commemoration of this cherished memory, I'm sharing a photo taken at Mamilla Mall, capturing the very instant I learned of my pregnancy.



Additionally, I'd like to share a recipe that holds immense sentimental value for me: "Summer Borsht." Hailing from Bessarabia, my family settled in the warm Northeast region of Brazil, where we adapted the traditional Borsht to suit the climate by serving it cold, akin to Gazpacho. There are variations of the recipe, so I am sharing my family's version.

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Ingredients:

- 8 to 10 cups of water
- 1 kg of beets
- 1 large onion
- 6 tablespoons of lemon juice or vinegar
- 6 tablespoons of sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 80 ml of cold water

Instructions:

1. Peel the beets and cut them into large pieces. Chop the onion into pieces and cook them in a pot with the beets and water.
2. When the beets begin to soften, add the sugar, lemon juice or vinegar, and salt in that order. Allow them to boil.
3. Reserve 1/3 of the broth.
4. Put the remaining broth, along with the beets and onion, into a blender, then strain it and set it aside.
5. Cook the reserved broth.
6. Beat the egg yolks with the cold water until they become clear, then gradually add the boiling broth, stirring constantly.
7. Next, add the blended beet broth, adjusting the salt, sugar, and lemon juice or vinegar to taste. Refrigerate the mixture.
8. Serve cold, similar to gazpacho. If you wish, add a spoon of cream milk.

Noam Goodman

Toronto



The Passover Seder on the first night of Passover was one of the highlights of the year for me. Besides the special liturgy and traditions of the Seder, my Mom, a first-rate cook, would prepare a large turkey (we in Canada don't eat turkey on Thanksgiving, so this was a treat) and many other old-world delicacies. We had a few guests who we wouldn't normally see that often during the year, one of whom being my mother's only sibling, my Uncle Willy.

My Uncle was a bachelor who lived independently and didn't like to come over that often, but he would always join our Passover Seder. Since Passover typically occurs in April, this would almost always coincide with National Hockey League playoffs. In the 1970s, the Toronto Maple Leafs would always be in the playoffs and, every year, it seemed that an important playoff game would be scheduled for the nights of Passover.

On Shabbat and Jewish holidays, we never watched TV in our Orthodox Jewish house. My Uncle at a certain point would "excuse" himself from the table and no one paid very much attention to it except me. I somehow figured out that he would go to our basement and turn on the TV to watch the Leaf playoff game. I would also have to go to the bathroom during the meal and would join him until my father figured out what was going on and grabbed me from the basement. Every year since my Uncle passed away, I remember him during the Passover Seder meal.

Wishing everyone a Chag Sameach, with prayers for the return of all the hostages and victory for the IDF.

Orley Granot

New York



My consistent memory of Pesach seder is singing Be-tzet Yisra-el alongside my dad (and before she passed, my Savta, his mother). I went to one of the largest Jewish day schools in the diaspora: Mount Scopus Memorial College, in Melbourne, Australia. I learned all my Pesach songs from school. My dad, who was born in Israel but immigrated to Australia when he was 10, learned his Pesach songs from his mum, my Savta Batja.

When it came time to Be-tzet Yisra-el, there was always a slight competition of who got to sing their tune. Until I was about 12, I think I “won”. Since then, it has been evenly split.

Regardless, Pesach seder is always a time of joyous singing with my family – it may be a long night, but I love it!

Robbie Grossman

Toronto



As a Toronto Jew that went (well, three times a year) to a reform synagogue, my Jewish experience was more community based than religious. I was also a proud and passionate supporter of Jews and Israel for as long as I remember.

For me, I think this was partly based on how much I looked up to my grandfather, whose family escaped Russian occupied Poland in 1909 and who was the first member of his family to be born in Canada. He was the first ever Jewish cabinet minister in the Province of Ontario from the Progressive Conservative Party and in 1955, defeated the last Communist in the Ontario legislature.

My late dad, Larry Grossman, who I idolized, was the first ever Jewish leader of Ontario's Progressive Conservative Party. Not surprisingly, both faced blatant antisemitism.

Friday night family dinners and family dinners over Jewish holidays were full of talk about politics and baseball. Family dinners like Passover were also special because of my grandmother's (who we called Booms) and my mom's cooking. My favourite was always cabbage flanken beef borscht but a great dessert that everyone loved was my mom's Pavlova and the following is her recipe (with nothing intentionally removed):

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Ingredients:

- 6 egg whites
- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 tbsp. cornstarch
- 1 tsp. vinegar
- ½ pt. whipped cream
- 2 kiwis, peel and sliced
- 1 pint of strawberries, hulled

Instructions:

- Preheat oven to 500°F
- Beat egg whites until stiff then add sugar, 1 tbsp. at a time, beating continuously for about 15 minutes until mixture is thick and glossy.
- Then add 1 tsp. vanilla and cornstarch which has been dissolved in vinegar.
- Make a 7" circle of waxed paper (or freezer paper). Grease both sides and place on a cookie sheet.
- Mound meringue mixture onto circle. Place in oven and reduce oven temperature to 200°F. Bake 1½ hours.
- Cool and gently tip over and remove paper.
- Place on serving platter, fill with whipped cream.
- Decorate with kiwis and strawberries.

Serves eight.

Marcello Hallake

New York



Some of my earliest and fondest childhood memories bring me back to the Passover Seder dinners at my paternal grandparents' home in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where I was born. My grandfather, who emigrated from Aleppo, Syria to Brazil in the early 1930s, made me feel special during Passover. He gave me the honor of eating a piece of Matzah ahead of others because I was the firstborn grandchild, in remembrance of the most terrifying of the ten plagues - that of the killing of every Egyptian first born, of which the Jews were spared - and he allowed me to drink a sip of wine during the Seder ceremony.

After moving to Belgium when I was six years old, where I spent the rest of my childhood through law school, we would celebrate Passover at my maternal great uncle's apartment in Brussels, in an always lively Seder with many of my extended cousins. My maternal grandparents were Sephardic Jews from the Mediterranean island of Rhodes who emigrated to the Belgian Congo, and later from there to Brazil. My maternal grandfather left Rhodes in the 1930s before the war, but his mother and her sister who stayed were deported by the Germans from Rhodes to Auschwitz, from where they never returned, along with the rest of the island's local Jewish community.

During the Passover Seders in Brussels, my great uncle (the brother of my beloved late grandmother), who would host, would always speak proudly of Israel's scientific and military accomplishments, as every Seder ended with the proverbial hope of celebrating the next year in Jerusalem. He later made aliya (i.e., emigrated to Israel), as did my mother and sister who live in Israel today.

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This year, as we will be celebrating Passover for the first time in our new home in Westchester, New York, along with close family visiting from Israel, Brazil, Boston and New York, we will remember – as we do each year – the extraordinary flight of our ancestors from the bondage of slavery in Egypt, and we will no doubt have special thoughts for the remaining 130+ hostages still captive by Hamas today. We will pray for their prompt and safe release, as well as for peace upon Israel and all over the world.

Barry Heller

Reston



My most memorable recollection of a specific Passover occurred during our 1989 Seder.

My wife was pregnant, and we had just finished the Festive Meal when my wife went into labor. We rushed to the hospital, and when the intake nurse asked my wife what she had eaten that night in case surgery was needed (hoping it was a very light meal), my wife told her all about the gefilte fish, the matzah ball soup, the roasted chicken, the kugel, and the dessert that she had just eaten. (The nurse had a concerned look on her face.)

Our daughter was born so quickly that night that our obstetrician did not get there in time to perform the delivery, as she was (we assume) at a Seder. My daughter was delivered by a hospital resident and fortunately all went well. Given the timing of our daughter's birth, we decided to give her a name that would capture the religious significance of that night. We named her "Aliya." She is named after my Grandfather, whom I used to call up to the Torah for an honor (an "aliyah") in the synagogue where I grew up.

Each year since, when we get to the point in the Seder for the Four Questions, and we ask, "Why is this night different from all other nights?", we think back and recall how different that night was in 1989.

Stuart Hershman

Chicago



My Jewish identity has evolved over the years. I was raised in an “observant” household, kept kosher, and went to a Hebrew Day School (somewhere between a Hillel and a Yeshiva) from the first through the eleventh grades. The boys and girls were separated in the morning to learn the religious topics and came together in the afternoon for the secular topics. The boys had to be at school by 7:00 a.m. to daven. The school had a program where the kids would go to Israel for their senior year, having completed most high school graduation requirements by the end of the 11th grade. So, I lived in Israel in a Yeshiva community for roughly four months of my senior year—in the boondocks approximately an hour away from both Jerusalem and Tel Aviv—before returning to the U.S. My graduating class had a total of 17 kids.

While my observance of most Jewish traditions has waned over the years (starting when my mother passed away while I was a sophomore in college), I have concomitantly become a stronger Jew ideologically and, I believe, a better Jew and person over those same years. I am proud to be a Jew and love my heritage.

I mention this background because my strongest memories of Passover are from when I was that kid raised in an observant home. I still remember vividly how virtually my mother’s entire family (25-30 people) would go over to my great aunt’s house for the first Seder and to my grandmother’s house for the second Seder, in both cases after going to services.

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We would read through the entire Hagadah, sing every song, and eat home-made gefilte fish (of course on Pesach-specific dishes that were swapped out for the holiday). Our Seders lasted well past midnight. I remember always hiding the Afikomen with my older cousins and then having to parry my great uncle's bribes when he tried to convince me for a few shekels to rat out my cousins and tell him where we hid the Afikomen so we could continue the Seder.

One Seder was particularly memorable because, during the reading of the four questions, one of my cousins said that he had a fifth question, at which point he turned to his girlfriend and asked her if she would marry him.

I felt safe and secure in that environment (this was back in suburban Detroit) and certainly did not experience the range and types of emotions and anger all of us are feeling now.

I recently visited my daughters, both of whom live in New York, and saw for myself the defaced and ripped posters of the Israeli hostages. It is so sad to see what is happening in the world. But I am prouder than ever to be a Jew.

Eran Hingaly

Boston



Around my family table at the Passover Seder in Israel, the most exciting moment is when we are singing “What makes this night different from all other nights (“מה נשתנה הלילה הזה מכל הלילות?”). It is not just the younger cousins leaping on their chairs to pose the questions – and age doesn’t excuse anyone – but rather, it entails a full-fledged performance complete with designated roles and meticulously rehearsed choreography.

This time, however, this seemingly jovial question carries a weighty significance. Much has changed this night, this year. From the war in Israel to the alarming surge of antisemitism worldwide, reaching forms and intensities unseen for decades, to the 133 men and women, grandparents and grandchildren, whose “holiday of freedom” yearns for the simple gift of life.

For that reason, this year, more than any other year, I am going to cherish the holiday and its spirit. When I read in the Seder about the story of the liberation of our people and the miracles that happened to us back then, I will reflect on the miracles that are happening at present. They may be as humble as my ability to be with my loved ones and do what I love, or as grand as witnessing the inspiring revival of Jewish initiatives and collaborative endeavors such as this one. For the miracles happening now and those we believe are yet to come, there is much to celebrate this Passover.

I would like to share a poem by Yehuda Amichai, one of the founders of modern Hebrew poetry during the establishment of the State of Israel, who addresses this theme better than I could.

Wishing you a joyous and profoundly meaningful Passover!

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Miracles by Yehuda Amichai

From a distance everything looks like a miracle but up close even a miracle doesn't look like one.

Even someone who crossed the Red Sea when it split
only saw the sweating back of the man in front of him
and the swaying of his big thighs,
or at best, in a hasty glance to one side,
fish in a riot of colors inside the wall of water,
as in a marine observatory behind panels of glass.

The real miracles happen at the next table of a restaurant in
Albuquerque:

two women sat there, one with a diagonal zipper, altogether lovely,
and the other said, "I kept it together and didn't cry."

And after, in the red corridors of the foreign hotel, I saw
boys and girls who held in their arms tiny children born of them,
and they also held sweet little dolls.

(translated from Hebrew by Robert Alter)

Marc Horwitz

Chicago



Growing up Ashkenazi, I always celebrated Pesach with my relatives in the Chicago suburbs. My grandmother, who lived almost 107 years, made the Matzo ball soup and gefilte fish.

When my wife joined the Seder over 20 years ago, she added this Charoset recipe from her Sephardic and Israeli heritage. It has been a beloved staple of our Seder ever since.

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups (355ml) dry red wine, such as Merlot
- 1 pound raisins (454g; about 3 cups)
- 8 ounces (1 packed cup) pitted Medjool dates (227g; about 12 dates), chopped
- 4 ounces dried apricots (113g; 2/3 cup), chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- Kosher salt
- 8 ounces roasted, unsalted almonds (227g; 1 1/2 cups)
- 1 teaspoon orange blossom water (optional)

Serve with small pieces of matzah.

Katie Jacobson

Birmingham & London



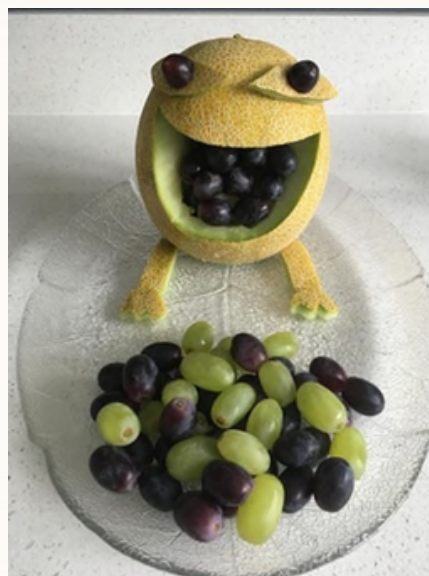
Each year, in the weeks preceding Pesach when I am thinking about how I'm going to engage the children at our family Seder (the feast at the beginning of the festival that recounts the journey of the Jewish people from slavery to freedom), I marvel at the wonder of Jewish continuity. Our family tradition is to dress the seder table in a different, engaging way each year and this is evolving as our children are growing up (photos below show the fish tanks, fruit art, and sand and 'blood' water ideas from recent years). Preparing for Pesach, I try to focus on the idea of Jewish continuity through the appreciation of Jewish history, Torah concepts and ideals, and the will and enthusiasm to impart all of that to our children.

The Haggadah (the text recited at the Seder) tells us that in every generation, one is obliged to see oneself as if we had personally come out from Egypt 3000+ years ago. Pesach and the Seder represent for me the conjunction of past and present. As a child, I sat at my grandfather's Seder, at which my grandfather recalled his own childhood experiences with his grandfather, a man who could remember his great teachers of the 19th century. At our Seder this year, I will sit with my children who will be able, in due course and G-d willing, to share stories about their great-grandfather with their own grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I think it is magical to consider that at one current Seder, we can see an experience potentially spanning several generations. It follows that there are very few seder structures needed to bridge the gap between the exodus itself and the present day.

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We often muse at the cross-generational differences these days and speak of our grandchildren's grandchildren inhabiting a future unimaginably different from our present world. The spirit of Pesach and the creation of intergenerational shared experiences allows us to link our past and helps to assure our future. I hope that celebrating our Judaism, engaging our children, and exploring the ideas and experiences of our redemption from bondage to freedom steers us along the path to true Jewish continuity.



Paul Jayson

London



The language of hope

The eclectic nature of the text of the haggadah is the structure from which so many Pesach traditions derive. A seemingly haphazard compilation of biblical exegesis, stories connecting the past to the future, experiential rituals to “live the experience” combine with a schizophrenic remembering the slavery and celebrating the redemption to provide rick pickings for rich family traditions and customs.

The Four Questions, encapsulate the themes of the whole evening. Scoping out the differences between the Pesach Seder and other festive or celebratory meals, at surface level they pick up on the bitter herbs, the reclining whilst eating and drinking, the unleavened matzah and the dipping of the bitter herbs in salt water. However, in addition to signposting the evening, at their centre they remind participants of the need to communicate, tell over and remember the story of the Egypt exodus - Jewish law stating that in the absence of a child to ask the questions, one even asks oneself.

This focus of communication and language is the foundation of one of our cherished family customs. In Chabad, the custom is for the person leading the seder to repeat back the four questions in Yiddish, evidencing that they are for of all ages, not just the youngest present to recite in Hebrew and then in English. My mother in law was born and lived her youth in Baghdad, so she then recites the four questions in the Jewish dialect of Arabic, my brother in law who travelled extensively in Brazil then recounts the questions in Portuguese, followed by my mother using her best remembered school girl French. There is always a “guest” language, last year being Mandarin Chinese, capped off with my two boys rapping the four questions to the accompaniment of everyone clapping.

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Many of the commentaries on the Seder service point out that when we ask “Why is this night different from all other nights ?”, this ask why is this exile (being a time of darkness) different from other all other exiles ? For example, we state that on all other nights we may eat leavened bread or unleavened bread, but on this night we only eat unleavened bread. Allegorically, this is a plea and a request to the Almighty, stating that whilst in previous exiles of the Jewish people there we were a mixture of people and personalities of fluffy, leavened and risen bread (represented by the character traits of hot air, boasting and pride) and leavened bread (symbolic of humility and selflessness), in this exile, we are all matzah, all unleavened (all humble and worthy of redemption).

The journey of the seder, and the journey of Pesach shifts gear, midway through from backward looking exile to forward looking redemptive hope. May this Pesach signify a gear shift from so much collective sadness and bitterness of the past 6 months, to a time of freedom for our hostages, wellbeing for our soldiers, peace for our Israeli brothers and sisters and our homeland and to a time where we can all leave our own personal limitations and strictures, to feel truly free and to support and lift each other up and know only goodness and happiness.

Daniel Jonas

Philadelphia



What I remember most about Passover growing up was spending time with my extended family – with cousins, sometimes on both sides of the family, aunts and uncles and my grandparents, and the service itself.

I grew up in an era when both sets of grandparents lived within a mile of my parents. So, I was close to my grandparents, and especially my one grandfather, who presided over the Passover service. He was one of five brothers, four of whom lived in Philadelphia and all of whom spoke fluent Yiddish. He presided over the ceremony, and walked us through the service, including the four questions. It was a time in our lives when, as the young children, we had no real responsibilities; it was only about school (going to it, a little pressure about doing well in school, but so much before college applications that performance was measured only in comments, not in grades – so, no pressure.). Every year, my grandfather would lead us through the service, and there was a true sense of family. I miss this, to a degree now, since we did not raise our children close to their grandparents, or their aunts and uncles, as much as we tried to recreate this sense of family.

The other specific memory I have of Passover was the part of the service where the Red Sea collapses on the Egyptians, and in the service conducted at our Passover, God did not celebrate when the Egyptians died; they were his children, too. There was a sense that prosperity for the Jews and Judaism did not have to be at the expense of another group or religion. Joy and success for one group was not a zero-sum game where one side's prosperity had to come at the expense of another's. That was a great message, especially in the context of a holiday so focused on the suffering and persecution of the Jews.

David Josefovits

Philadelphia



At my childhood Seder, the Holocaust's shadow was always with us. My grandfather, seated at the head of the table, would don his white Seder cap—a symbol of tradition and survival. As he began the tale of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, I would eagerly wait for the narrative to seamlessly shift into his own story of endurance and survival through Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen.

Looking towards him, I saw the embodiment of resilience. The darkness of the past, still so recent, might have once made him doubt a future for himself or his lineage. Yet there he was, leading our family's Seder, just as his parents and ancestors did before him, sharing a modern tale of redemption with those who knew him as father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. With the Haggadah's final pages turned, the notes of “vehi sheamda” lingered in the air, not merely as history, but as a lesson that the same fierce spirit that carried our ancestors will carry us. And as my grandfather closed the Haggadah, his eyes shimmered with a quiet triumph, a silent declaration of “Look at me now.”

The Exodus story, an enduring symbol of resilience and liberation, resonates with us deeply through time, particularly when we face new challenges to our identity. But we can find strength in our legacy. We are the living testament to our ancestors' dreams, carrying not only their memories but also their indomitable will. May this year's Seder of generations and friends be a powerful affirmation that despite the darkest of times, our spirit remains unbroken.

Melanie Kaufman

Boston



When I think of Passover, I think of my mom's charoset. I remember sitting at the seder counting how many pages were left in the Haggadah before I could start making my matzah sandwiches.

When I called my mom to ask for the recipe she said, "What recipe...let me make it today and then I can tell you."

I hope you all enjoy it as much as I do. Wishing you all a happy Passover!

Charoset:

- ½ cup of pecans
- ½ cup almonds
- ½ cup roasted sesame seeds
- ½ cup of roasted peanuts
- 20-25 seedless dates
- 1 teaspoon of ground cinnamon (or a little more if you're like me)
- ½-1 teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ cup Manischewitz wine

Put the dates in a food processor first.

Once processed, add the nuts, seeds and spices to the food processor and continue to blend.

Last, add the Manischewitz and process until fully combined.

Bonus – shape the charoset into one-inch balls and roll in shredded coconut.

Joshua Kaye

Miami



Playing Deal or No Deal Afikomen Style is one of my favorite Passover family memories. During the pandemic, we reluctantly hosted a small gathering of family and close friends. Everyone was a little on edge given the masks and social distancing. When it came time to find the Afikomen, I lined up 20 shoeboxes (sorry, Angelina), each filled with a small toy or prize but only ONE AFIKOMEN. Each child from youngest to oldest would take their turn selecting a box and either make a deal or trade it to the next child. When it came down to the last two boxes, the Afikomen (and its grand prize) had yet to be found. The suspense was overwhelming as family and friends leaned in for the final showdown. Nerves and apprehension of gathering that evening were replaced with an overwhelming sense of comfort that coming together and experiencing some joy and humor can be found and celebrated even in challenging times.

Favorite Passover Tradition: The night before Passover in the search for unleavened bread with the traditional feather and spoon. Kids still enjoy walking around in the dark only aided by candlelight finding hidden breadcrumbs to cleanse our home and our spirits.

Favorite Passover Dish: Carrot Souffle (sans gluten).
A true family secret recipe passed down over generations.
The Rosh Hashanah version is even better!

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Since those darkest moments of the October 7th attacks and the wave of antisemitism that has followed, I have been in a constant state of restlessness and unease. As we prepare to celebrate the Story of the Exodus, I am reminded not only of Passover's importance in celebrating my Jewish faith, but also of my gratitude to the vast number of people from around the world, especially within the DLA Piper community, so many of whom I had never met, who have been so incredibly supportive. It is incredible how the simple gesture of just being acknowledged can help bring a sense of peace. I only hope to be mindful of these unselfish and righteous acts of kindness and find ways to comfort, help heal, and uplift others who may feel isolated or downtrodden in the future. After all, isn't that part of the true essence of being Jewish.

Wishing each of our family, friends, colleagues, and clients a Chag Sameach.

Sydney Kert

Toronto



This year's Seder will bring an exciting addition: our four-year-old, the first grandchild on all sides, will recite the four questions. This will mark her first time actively participating in our celebration.

As parents, my partner and I take pride in passing down the rituals and stories of Jewish holidays and our family traditions to our child.

In the days leading up to Passover, we are practicing together, ensuring our child feels confident and learns an appreciation of why these family moments are so important. Through the simple act of reciting the four questions, we hope that she will not only connect with Jewish traditions but also proudly carry on our family's Passover celebration.

Fred Klein

Washington, DC



Our son Sam was about 8 years old when we asked him to open the front door to our home for Elijah during the seder.

Sam, who took things very literally as an 8-year-old, dutifully opened the front door, and then went outside to look around to see if there were any signs of Elijah.

Sure enough, about a minute later, Sam returned to the seder table and reported, “I don’t see Elijah, but I think I see his car parked across the street. He should be here soon.”

Helena Lawrence

Reston



Passover for me is about grandparents and family.

When I was young, my mom's parents used to fly from Florida to California to join us. My grandmother helped with the cooking. I remember her chicken soup and matzah balls and when we would go on outings, she would pack us Passover lunches. My grandfather, who generally did not cook, got joy from making homemade horseradish (while grafting the root, his eyes teared) and matzah brie. No matter who found the Afikomen (a piece of matzah that is traditionally hidden during the Passover seder and a prize is given to the child who finds it), my grandfather wanted all the children to get a prize; that was his nature. He passed away shortly after Passover, so those are my last memories of him; we still had his horseradish in the fridge.

After moving to the east coast as a young adult, I went to Florida to join my aunt and uncle and two grandmothers for Passover. My aunt and uncle prepared for days to create a delicious meal. They would drive my grandmothers to their house. My aunt's parents would be there too. Her father had owned a delicatessen and would help my aunt, especially with carving the turkey. In Jewish families, any family by marriage is your family, too, and is included.

As my adult years continued and I became an aunt, I traveled out west to join my parents and my sister's family for Passover. Now my parents are grandparents to my nephews. After the afikomen is found, my dad gives each of my nephews a prize; granddads are like that. My mother gets much joy out of cooking and baking for her family. The cycle of family, togetherness and traditions continues.

Mark Lindemann

Atlanta



Matzo Brittle
(makes about 15 pieces)

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 6.5 inch matzo squares
- 16 tablespoons (2 sticks) margarine, cut into 16 pieces
- 1 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 0.5 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 cup slivered almonds, toasted

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 375 degrees F. Line 13x9 inch metal baking pan with aluminum foil, allowing foil to hang over pan edges. Spray foil with cooking spray. Place 2 matzo squares in bottom of pan. Cut remaining matzo into 2 separate 6.5 x 2.5 inch rectangles and fit into empty space of pan.
2. Bring margarine and brown sugar to boil in medium saucepan over medium heat and cook, stirring constantly, until thickened (usually about 3 minutes). Turn off heat and stir in vanilla. Pour caramel over matzo, coating entire surface area. Put pan with matzo and caramel in the oven, close the door, and reduce temperature to 350 degrees F. Bake until deep golden brown; check after 10 minutes. If needed, continue for 1-minute increments, continuously checking (as caramel may burn quickly) until desired color is reached. Desired color should take no longer than 15 minutes.

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3. Remove pan from oven and let cool for 5 minutes. Sprinkle chocolate chips over caramel and let sit for 5 minutes. Spread chocolate in even layer and sprinkle with salt and almonds. Refrigerate until firm, at least 30 minutes. Invert brittle onto cutting board, discard foil, and break into large pieces.

This is the recipe for matzo brittle that my family makes every year for Passover. As a kid during Passover, I often envied my friends at school as their lunch consisted of the usual sandwiches, pizza and other not-kosher-for-Passover items. However, when I pulled out the matzo brittle from my lunch bag, the tables turned. Matzo brittle was the most sought-after item at the lunch table. We make it every year and it's one of the few food items I actively look forward to making and eating during Passover.



Tanya Livshits

San Diego



My family emigrated to the United States after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, over the generations under Soviet rule, they lost a lot of the traditions and religious and cultural practices of Judaism due to fear of prosecution. The one thing they never lost are the traditional Jewish recipes and values. This is my grandmother's gefilte fish recipe that currently lives exclusively in my mother's head and all measurements are her "best estimate". Learning to make the family recipes is always a challenge because no one ever wrote them down.

For the Gefilte Fish, you will need the following ingredients:

- 1 carp or 1 mackerel pike (entire fish with head on)
- 1 tilapia or 1 trout (entire fish with head on)
- 1 large yellow onion
- 1 cup matza meal (we use a gluten free one)
- Salt
- Black pepper
- Sugar
- 1 beet
- 1 carrot

1. Skin and debone the fish. Preserve the head, skin and bones.
2. Grind the fish.
3. Dice and sauté the yellow onion, preserve the skin.
4. Add the onion, matza meal, 1 teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon black pepper into the ground fish.
5. Make the fish into balls and wrap in the fish skin preserved earlier. Also stuff the fish heads.
6. In a Dutch Oven or any other heavy large pot, layer the onion skin and the fish bones. Cover with the stuffed fish heads and chopped beets and carrots.

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7. Fill the pot with water. Add salt, pepper and sugar to taste.
8. Bring to a boil. Regularly remove the foam off the top.
9. Once it comes to a boil, add the fish balls. Make sure to distribute the already cooking beets and carrots around and on top of the fish balls.
10. Bring to a boil and remove foam until it stops producing.
11. Lower the heat and let cook for 90 minutes to two hours.

Jill Mandelblatt

Philadelphia



When I was a young girl, I always dreaded our seder. I loved the Passover foods, but the seder was so long and so boring to my young mind. The only way I was engaged in the seder was as all eyes focused on me when the wicked child was described. Although we were reformed Jews, our Haggadah was very old, very long, and with tiny writing and a spine that was falling off.

As an adult with young children of my own, I was determined to make Passover more engaging for my own daughters. Since they were both going to Temple, they knew the basics of the Passover story and had made their own seder plates out of plastic plates and tissue paper. But I wanted the seder itself to be special.

The first thing I did was get rid of the Maxwell House Haggadahs and purchase family Haggadahs with our family name on it that had pictures and was appropriate for their age group (our temple offered these). When they were two and five, we had seder with our Jewish neighbors who had two- and five-year-old boys. I placed a special bag at each child's place setting which contained all 10 plagues:

- Blood-water with food coloring
- Frogs-small rubber frogs
- Lice-grains of rice
- Flies-rubber flies
- Livestock pestilence-plastic cows with small band-aids on them
- Boils-small red pom poms
- Hail-white pom poms
- Locusts-small clickers with an inset on top that made noise
- Darkness-black sunglasses
- Firstborn child-plastic babies

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When each plague was recited, they removed each plague and “gently tossed” the plagues out. They were so engaged, their enthusiasm lasted the entire holiday.

As time went on, the children got more and more into the story of Passover. One year they created a play that they performed during the seder. Another year they created a song. They started to help with all the preparation and cooking (when they weren't rehearsing or writing their seder parts). When they went off to college, they still created a seder with their friends (Jewish or not).

Now as adults (26 and 30), they still come home for Passover. This year will be my granddaughter's first Passover and we can't wait to get her engaged!

Lauren Manton

New York



Every few years, my birthday falls during Passover and this year it is the day of the second seder.

As a child, I did not like having a Passover birthday because it limited what I could do with my friends for my birthday and the cake was never as good. But now I really enjoy it, because I get to spend my birthday with my immediate and extended family and they will all sing happy birthday to me.

Hopefully it will be the start of a wonderful year for all!

Naomi Maryles

Tel Aviv



My childhood was spent running back and forth between my house and my best friend Sari's house, which was just down the block. Every Pesach, Sari's mother baked delicious "oatmeal raisin" cookies, which became one of the traditions in my own family. Our Pesach is not complete without these special cookies. I hope you enjoy them as much as we do!

2 C matzoh meal
2 C matzoh farfel
1.5 C sugar
1 C raisins
1 tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp salt
2/3 C oil
4 eggs

Preheat oven at 350 degrees F.

Combine matzoh meal and matzoh farfel together with the sugar, cinnamon, and salt.

Beat the oil and eggs together and then add to the matzoh mixture.

Fold in the raisins.

Drop by teaspoonfuls onto either a greased cookie sheet or a cookie sheet lined with baking paper.

Bake for 25-30 minutes.

Keith Medansky

Chicago



Passover is my favorite holiday.

As a child we celebrated Pesach at my maternal grandparents' house. My grandfather was a tailor from Russia and my grandmother was a seamstress from a shtetl called Drahichyn in what is now Belarus. When I think of Passover, I first think of them. I remember my grandmother in full matriarch mode preparing for the holiday, cleaning with a feather, burning the crumbs, and selling the chametz (leavened bread). I remember her cooking. She hand chopped the liver for the chopped liver with a hand chopper (no Cuisinart) and mixed in real schmaltz. She hand ground the horseradish and mumbled in Yiddish that her eyes were burning. She lovingly skimmed the fat from the top of the pot of soup until the broth was crystal clear and she hand formed the matzoh balls like a sculptor. Everything was made from scratch, all from recipes she knew by heart (a bissel of this, a bissel of that).

While she cooked the Passover meal, my grandmother told me vivid stories about her childhood and how her parents, siblings, and extended family escaped the antisemitism of the Pale – all in accent tinged “Yinglish.” My childhood memories are filled with these stories which inspired my lifelong love of history and our peoplehood. I can almost hear her today. Her words resonate as we face the recent surge of antisemitism and terrorism.

I still remember all the sounds, scents, and tastes of the seder. One thing that stands out is how seriously my grandfather took the reading of the “classic” Maxwell House Haggadah to the end. He never said so, but no doubt he took the commandment to tell the Passover story seriously. That said, our seders were fun. They were a mix of tradition and the chaos of more than 20 or 25 of the immediate and extended family attending.

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I did not realize it as a child, but at the seders, Grandpa taught us our history and linked us to a tradition of resilience in the face of centuries of adversity – generation to generation. The stories Grandma told were really the story of her “Exodus” from the awful circumstances of her childhood in Drahichyn. As the sages instructed, I learned to see myself – through them – as if I too had been delivered from Egypt.

I am certain I learned more about Yiddishkeit while watching my grandparents prepare for and lead our Passover celebration than I ever learned in Hebrew School.

Today, my family does our best to recreate the spirit of the 1960s Passover. The Maxwell House Haggadah and the dinner menu are mostly the same (without the schmaltz). We have added a few enhancements such as watching the Rugrats Passover video. While my wife and I could never do as good a job “teaching” as my grandparents, I hope we have shared a little bit of the family traditions with our now adult children.

And, I hope I have shared a little bit of my family’s treasured traditions with each of you. Chag Sameach!

לשנה הבאה בירושלים!

Zisse Mueller

Tel Aviv



This is a great cookie recipe for Pesach that will leave your family wanting more! Chewy on the inside but sturdy enough to dunk in a glass of milk.

Ingredients:

1/2 c unsalted margarine + 1/4 c oil
2 eggs
3/4 c of brown sugar
1/4 c white sugar
2 tsp vanilla sugar
1 packet of vanilla pudding
1/2 tsp sea salt
1/2 tsp baking soda
3 c almond flour
1 bag of chocolate chips

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
Cream margarine, oil, sugar, eggs and pudding together
Once combined, add baking soda, salt, and flour
Add in one bag of chocolate chips
Bake 10-12 minutes

Happy Holiday!

Rachel Portman

Atlanta



During the Passover seder we recite Vehi She'amda – a paragraph in the Haggadah that tells the story of the Jewish people and their survival. The song reads that “it is not one enemy that has stood up against us, rather, in each generation, there is an enemy that stands up and tries to destroy us, but God saves us from their hands.”

These words feel particularly poignant this year at the first Passover following the brutal attacks of October 7th and the subsequent war we continue to fight. For those of us born in a post-1948 world, all we know is a world in which Israel exists. However, the existence of the State of Israel is not something we can take for granted. As a granddaughter of two Israelis, I grew up hearing stories from my grandmother, who was born in Israel under the British Mandate prior to the establishment of the State and has memories of dancing in the streets on Israel's Independence Day in May 1948 and planting trees along the side of the road in one of Israel's first cities. And the stories of my grandfather, who would recall visiting Jerusalem prior to the Six Day War, when the city was divided and Jews could not access their holiest sites, including the Western Wall and Temple Mount. Growing up hearing these first-hand accounts of modern-day Israel's infancy have given me a lifetime of gratitude and deep appreciation for what the Jewish people have gone through to continuously fight for a Jewish homeland.

Vehi She'amda serves as a call to action – a reminder to all Jews that they are not alone in fighting the enemy of their generation. Previous Jewish generations faced similar circumstances and prevailed. The Jewish people, though relatively small, are mighty and tenacious. We must continue to exercise the generational strength against the adversity that exists today, to carry on that legacy to our future generations.

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As Jews around the world sing Vehi She'amda at their Passover seders, may God continue to heed His promise and protect us in the war against this generation's enemy – may He protect the hostages and return them safely to their families and homes. May He walk with and among our IDF soldiers, shield them and protect them as they defend Israel and Jews around the world. Wishing everyone a meaningful and peaceful Passover.

Next year in Jerusalem.

Daniel Rosenberg

Washington, DC



Ever since I was young, my parents have hosted a Passover seder for friends and family. It has become a tradition for those who regularly attend. We host relatives from across the East Coast and the Midwest and close family friends from the Philadelphia area. My parents are so generous to include people who they are friendly with in the community and who do not have a place to go for Passover. I have met and become friendly with some wonderful people over the years because of my parents' willingness to invite so many people. In short, when Passover rolls around, everyone knows that it's time to go to the Rosenbergs.

Growing up and still now, I love these seders because I get to see and spend time with my loved ones (some of whom I don't see too often during the year), and everyone is always so happy to be together. My Mom works and cooks for days in advance to prepare the Seder, including filling the Seder table with all sorts of props to enhance the Seder experience, and my Dad is fantastic at leading the Seder and making sure that everyone plays an active role. My parents' example inspired me to help lead Seder at Hillel when I was an undergrad and to help organize the Seder for students who were not able to go home when I was in law school. It has also inspired me host a seder of my own when I have a family someday, and to invite family, close friends and others in the community who might not have a place to go for Seder, just as my parents do.

Deborah Samenow

Washington, DC



For years, my mother cooked this recipe near the end of every Passover. I know many families have variations of this recipe/tradition. But now that I'm older and have kids of my own, I can understand the value – it helps us get rid of all the extra matzah and is an option for a 'special' breakfast. My kids love this – although only once per Passover and we save it for the last day or so. As this has become our tradition now, it really signals the near end of the holiday for us.

Matzah Brie:

Leftover matzah

Eggs – (as many as you would want to make scrambled eggs plus 1 additional egg per sheet of matzah)

Salt

Pepper

Break up matzah into bite size pieces.

Rinse matzah with water (do not soak).

Mix eggs until desired consistency for scrambled eggs.

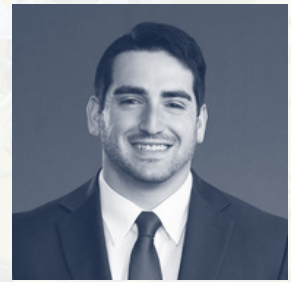
Combine with rinsed matzah pieces.

Prepare scrambled eggs (with matzah pieces) as you normally would.

Season to taste. We serve with maple syrup and berries.

Enjoy!

Matthew Sarna Wilmington



It was seven or eight years ago during the first night of Passover. My Grandpa Harry was 94 and this, unfortunately, would be one of his last seders. Both he and his wife, who passed when I was young, were survivors of Auschwitz. Growing up, he never really spoke to me or my brother about his time at the camps—my dad said he rarely ever spoke about it to him or his brother about it either. He developed dementia at around 85 or so, and my family and I just hoped from what he did remember about his life, it would be only the happy memories and not the horrors he endured.

During this last seder, he started humming/chanting along to the tunes of the songs. He rarely would remember who I was, but his memory of these songs and prayers must have been so vivid in the moment. We laughed and sang along with him and celebrated our Jewish faith and culture together.

It's a small memory, but it still makes me tear up with both sadness and joy when I think of it.

Russell Sass

Miami



For me, the spirit of Passover and so many memories are captured by one simple, relatively unknown dish known as the “bomwello” (or belly bombers). This dish seems to be unique to my family since I have not come across anyone who has heard of it prior to attending one of my family’s seders.

A bomwello is a sweet and savory treat that can be best described as a fried matzah ball and is quite similar to an Italian zeppole. My great-grandfather immigrated to the US from Turkey when he was about 18 years old, by way of Ellis Island. He was a cook by trade and when I was growing up, he prepared the Seder with my grandmother. The bomwello was always a staple and a crowd favorite. Papoo told the story of Passover and led the Seder in a mix of Hebrew and Ladino. The treat for enduring through the Passover story was getting to feast on the bomwellos, which are dipped in sugar and served as an appetizer.

Over the years, my family has continued the tradition. My grandmother, parents and aunt, and now my cousins and I all make sure that bomwellos are part of the festive meal. Not only do we all still love and enjoy the dish, but it also brings back so many wonderful Passover memories.

Marjorie Schaffner

Chicago



My favorite memories of the holidays are of my maternal grandparents, Sara (Sorkie) and William Levin, emigrants from Poland around 1917, and their holiday feasts. Aside from setting a beautiful table with her crystal glassware, gold rimmed dishes and silver, my grandmother was a great cook – the best matzo balls – light and fluffy. I recently came across her recipe, which I had regrettably not looked at more carefully because it explains how she got her matzah balls so light. Below is a copy with a literal translation. When Grandma wrote her recipes, they were often in broken English and missing some ingredients.

Knadlach:

2 eggs

salt & pepper

½ cup matzo meal

[missing ingredient – the chicken fat – 2 Tbsp?]

Beat egg whites with salt until stiff

Add beaten yolks & pepper

Fold in matzo meal

Let stand 5 minutes

Form in balls. Drop in boiling water 45 min.

Today, Grandma's legacy lives on. I emulate her table (using her dishes and flatware) and try to achieve her culinary success! Thank you for the memories and for making a beautiful life here in America for us.

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Knadlach —
2 eggs — Salt & pepper
1/2 cup Matzo meal
Beat egg whites with salt
until stiff.
add beaten yolks + pepper
fold in Matzo meal.
Let stand 5 minutes.
Form in balls Drop in
boiling water 45 min.

Erica Sitkoff

Chicago



Passover Memories

When I was growing up, my aunt and uncle always hosted the first Seder at their home in Atlanta. It was always a huge gathering, first in their basement and then once the crowd was too big for the basement, to tables set up in and outside their garage. As kids, we were always most excited to get to the page in the Haggadah that said, “Eat the festive meal,” both because we were hungry by then, and because we knew that was coming up next was the hunt for the Afikomen.

Rather than a simple piece of matzah wrapped in a napkin and hidden around the house, the hunt for the Afikomen at my aunt and uncle’s Seder was a huge scavenger hunt, with packs of kids running all over, inside and out, to find and solve the clues that would lead us eventually to the Afikomen, and even a prize!

The tradition of the Afikomen scavenger hunt continues even today, but instead of me and my cousins, it is now the next generation of cousins and second cousins who can’t wait for the matzah ball soup, gefilte fish, and chicken to be done so that they can be part of this amazing annual tradition.

Alexander Steinberg

New York



Having family spread throughout the United States means that we may not be able to be together as much as we'd like. However, Passover is the exception. No matter what is going on, my family makes sure to get together for Passover seder to keep the family traditions going – most importantly, the various dishes that we each love to cook. It would not be a Passover seder without my mother acting as the conductor of the orchestra in the kitchen, providing tips on how to perfect her famous brisket or her matzoh ball soup.

When I met my wife Bari, she introduced “MomMom’s Sweet Noodle Kuggle” which has been a staple on our table ever since. I’ve shared the recipe below for you all to share. Recently, the Seders have become even more lively with my two young children, Ari and Hallie, joining in on the festivities, as well as my nephew James.

MomMom’s Sweet Noodle Kuggle:

12 oz of medium sized egg noodles (buy 16oz. bag & try to measure $\frac{3}{4}$ of it)

1 tsp. of salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ pound of cottage cheese (full fat)

$\frac{1}{4}$ pound of margarine (heat it up and melt it)

1 teaspoon of vanilla

5 eggs

8 oz of milk (whole milk)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ pound of cream cheese (bar of Philadelphia cream cheese)

1 pint of sour cream

Plain breadcrumbs

$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup margarine

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Cooking:

- Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F
- Cook and drain noodles (boil water; keep in for 3-4 mins and then take out)
- Combine everything but noodles and hand beat it all together for 2 minutes.
- Place the noodles in a 9 X 12 pan and then pour the mixture over it
- Spray pan with butter or non-stick spray
- Put kugle in oven with aluminum foil over it for 45 minutes - Prepare topping in the meantime (see below)
- Take foil off.
- Place topping on kugle and cook for 5 minutes without foil.

Topping: Melt ½ pound of margarine and the plain breadcrumbs on the stovetop, put on the kugel the last five minutes and cook uncovered.

Dawn Stern

Washington, DC



The idea that we can come together learn about a holiday in our homes rather than in a large service has always made Passover a special holiday for me. We generally think of this in terms of teaching the story of Passover to our children. However, one special memory I have is when we took this idea to a new level. We invited many of our non-Jewish family friends to our home for a seder. Most of those who joined us were from South America and a number did not speak English. All of us, including my children who speak Spanish, had to take extra time to explain the various parts of the seder, what we were eating, the meaning of matzah, and more. Our seder that year was not about making sure to read the words in the Haggadah; it was about being together with the people close to us and sharing this part of our culture and religion with others in whatever language or way they needed.

The true spirit of Passover.

Brian Thoryn

Tampa



I always loved Pesach. Growing up it was my favorite holiday, not only because of the delicious food and the fun traditions, but also because of the family and friends. Every year, we would gather at my Bubbie's house for the seder, the ritual meal commemorating the Exodus from Egypt. My Bubbie was a wonderful cook, and she would prepare everything from scratch, using recipes that she inherited from her family, who came from Russia. She would make chicken soup with matzo balls, roast beef with potatoes and carrots, and serve gefilte fish, the heavenly charoset – a mixture of chopped nuts and wine. She would also bake her famous angel food cake, which was light and fluffy and served with whipped cream. It was a feast for the senses, and I always looked forward to it.

But the seder was not only about the food. It was also about the story, the story of our ancestors who were enslaved by Pharaoh and freed by G-d with signs and wonders. We would read the Haggadah, the book that tells the story, and follow the rituals and symbols that remind us of our history and identity. When it came time for the four questions, which explain the meaning of the seder, I was always the youngest, so I had the task of asking the questions, and I would recite them in Hebrew and English, as my papa taught me. I was proud of my role and never wanted to pass it down to anyone.

The seder was also a time for laughter and joy. My papa was a master of hiding the afikomen, and he would always find the most clever and unexpected places to stash it. One year, he hid it inside a pillowcase; another year, he hid it behind a painting; and another year, he hid it behind a vent cover. Finding it was always challenging; the reward was a dollar bill and a chocolate coin. After dinner, one of my uncles would tell jokes and stories, and we would all laugh and enjoy his humor. He had a knack for making us laugh, even when the jokes were corny or old. We would also sing some more traditional and modern songs, and we would end with the hope of next year in Israel.

Rachel Toker

Washington, DC



Pesach is always a time I associate with rebirth and resilience. A fresh start. Picking oneself up, dusting oneself off, and trying anew.

For me, it has always been a time to remember to clean out the cobwebs, clear out the “breadcrumbs” that have gathered in nooks and crannies, make space for what is important in life, and remember our true purpose. It has also been a time to dream great dreams and to remember that very little of true worth is out of reach when many stand together as one.

Yoni Tuchman

Los Angeles



Though I'm middle aged (yikes!) and have been "making Pesach" with my wife, for our own family, for many years, when I try to put my finger on a single Passover memory, thought, taste, or idea, I can't help my mind from wandering back to my own childhood and adolescence.

My grandparents, who passed away decades ago but whose memory remains so clear in my mind's eye, would make the trip up from Virginia, or across the bridge from Brooklyn, to join us for the holiday. There was something so special in the air. You could almost touch it. The whole house was changed. The smells of the horseradish and the charoset, the radiant table – the round matzas and sparkling goblets of red wine transforming an ordinary, suburban dining room into a banquet hall for majesty, fit for a truly free people.

And the songs. So many songs, and such joyous songs. I can hear them still. And the laughter. And the stories. My grandfather's voice would tremble every year, telling us (again) of that Pesach night in the Warsaw ghetto when the saintly Rabbi Menachem Zemba was killed by the Nazis while bringing matzah to the "secular," "socialist" fighters of the Jewish underground. (Later I would learn the true story of Rabbi Zemba's murder in the Ghetto; it wasn't exactly as Grandpa described it, but it was close enough.) My grandfather's message was not lost on us for a moment: All Jews – across the vast religious and ideological spectrums – have a shared history, a common destiny. We are one people. One family.

And I think of my own Seder table, the one my wife and I make for our daughters and sons. And I hope and pray that the magic my brothers and I experienced growing up around our parents' table – where our place within the chain of Jewish history and destiny became clear and vital – is being transmitted to my own kids. And that their hearts too will pulse with a keen sense of belonging, and of longing, for Next Year in Jerusalem.

Richard Woolich

London



Pesach for me is all about keeping and strengthening the link in the chain since the Children of Israel left Egypt, nourishing the children with the depth of the religion, and the enjoyment of keeping the Mitzvot and adhering to the details and linking the generations at the Seder table.

I remember fondly several years ago when the children were blasting out the traditional songs at the end of the Seder at the tops of their voices, with their great-grandmother with her eyes closed dozing in the middle of them, with a faint smile on her lips. Her hearing was not so great, so her doze was not disturbed by them notwithstanding the volume.

Lovely family moment.

Richard Zelichov

Los Angeles



I am a secular Jew. We did not keep kosher growing up and I do not keep kosher now. We did, however, and I do currently keep kosher for Passover, because Passover is core to our connection to Israel and to empathy for those less fortunate (“remember that you were slaves in Egypt” was also particularly poignant as my maternal grandparents left Egypt in 1948).

We did not (and I do not) keep kosher for Passover in a sense that any observant Jew would recognize. We did not clean the house of chametz. We did not make sure that every food item we ate had been appropriately designated. We would eat non-kosher food. As a particularly funny example, my maternal grandparents visited us in Los Angeles during Passover when I was about 11 years old, and we went on a day trip to Tijuana in Mexico. Most of the readily available food was not appropriate for Passover as tortillas are made of flour. We ordered shrimp because we would eat shrimp normally and it was not chametz. Of course, we were back at square one when it turned out that the shrimp was breaded. I do not remember what we ate in the end.

Anyway, by keeping kosher for Passover in the way described above, we had to and I still consider dietary restrictions with every meal during the holiday. It made and makes me appreciate, acknowledge, and consider my religious and ethnic affiliations at least twice a day for 8 days in a way that carried and carries over to the rest of the year. In many ways (and until recently with the October 7 attack), keeping kosher for Passover served as a cornerstone of my Jewish identity connecting me and my family to Jews around the world.

Chag sameach.



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