PASSOVER 101

CONGREGATION
BETH ISRAEL
COOKS

PASSOVER 101

MARSHA GILBERT
CHAROSET

4 large apples
1 cup chopped pecans, toasted
1 Tablespoon cinnamon
¼ cup honey, or to taste
1 cup Concord grape wine

Peel, core and cut the apples into 8 pieces.

Place half of the apples in the work bowl of a food processor, and pulse until the pieces are about ¼ inch. Transfer them to a glass bowl and repeat with remaining apples.

Add the toasted pecans to the work bowl and pulse until finely chopped, or chop by hand.

Mix pecans with the apples. Add the cinnamon and honey.

Add wine and mix well.

If mixture is watery, drain off the excess liquid, adjust the cinnamon, honey and wine as desired.

Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Try using 2 or 3 types of apples – Honeycrisp, Envy, Gala, or Pink Lady
Rinse the livers and pat dry. Using a paring knife, clean livers of any fat, green spots or large veins.

In a medium stainless steel or cast iron skillet, heat schmaltz (or oil or a combination of both) over medium heat until shimmering. Add one of the onions and cook, stirring frequently, and cook until soft and just starting to brown. Remove from skillet and place in a bowl.

In the same skillet, add a little more schmaltz or oil and cook the livers on both sides until a trace of pink remains in the center. If you are unsure whether the livers are done, cut them open to check.

Drain livers on a paper towel as they come out of the skillet.

Crumble livers into the same bowl as sautéed onions. Add raw onion, and chopped hard-boiled eggs. Chop by hand. Season with salt and pepper to taste and a little schmaltz if you like.

Refrigerate chopped liver in an airtight container, with plastic pressed directly against the surface.

Allow to come to room temperature before serving.

**MOMO’S CHOPPED LIVER**

1 pound chicken livers  
¼ cup schmaltz, plus more as needed (a mild flavored oil may be substituted)  
2 medium yellow onions, finely chopped  
2 large hard-boiled eggs, peeled and rough chopped  
Kosher salt  
Ground black pepper
Have your fish store grind the fillets or grind them yourself, one at a time, in a food processor or meat grinder. Don’t puree the fish—you want some texture.

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. Grease a 12-cup Bundt pan and fill a larger pan (such as a large Pyrex dish) with 2 inches of hot water.

In a large pan over medium-high heat, sauté the diced onions in the oil until soft and transparent but not brown. Set aside to cool.

Put the fish, onions, eggs, 2 cups water, matzo meal, carrots, 4 tablespoons dill, salt, pepper, mustard, and sugar in the bowl of a standing mixer equipped with the flat beater. Beat at medium speed for 10 minutes.

Pour the mixture into the Bundt pan, then put the pan inside the larger water-filled dish (called a Bain Marie). Smooth the top with a spatula. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 1 hour or until the center is solid. Remove the Bundt pan from the water dish, then allow the terrine to cool slightly for at least 20 minutes. Slide a long knife around the outer and inner edges of the Bundt pan, then carefully invert the terrine onto a flat serving plate.
Refrigerate for several hours or overnight.

If any water accumulates on the serving dish, carefully drain it away before serving.

Slice the terrine as you would a torte and serve as an appetizer, garnished with parsley and dill and served with beet horseradish.

Leftovers keep for up to 5 days.
CHICKEN SOUP

3 5-pound chickens
3 large yellow onions, unpeeled and quartered
6 carrots, unpeeled and halved
4 stalks celery with leaves, cut into thirds
20 sprigs fresh parsley
15 sprigs fresh thyme
20 sprigs fresh dill
1 head garlic, unpeeled and cut in half crosswise
2 Tablespoons Kosher salt
2 teaspoons whole black peppercorns

To serve:
4 cups ¼-inch diced carrots
4 cups ¼-inch diced celery
¼ cup minced fresh dill
¼ cup minced fresh parsley

Place the chickens, onion, carrots, celery parsley, thyme, dill garlic and seasonings in a 16- to 20-quart stockpot.

Add 7 quarts of water and bring to a boil. Simmer, uncovered, for 1 hour.

Remove 2 of the chickens and allow to cool slightly. Remove the breast meat from both chickens and set aside. Return the remaining chicken and carcasses to the pot and continue simmering, uncovered for 3 more hours. Strain the entire contents of the pot through a colander and chill. Remove the surface fat, then reheat the stock as follows, or pack in containers and freeze.

To serve soup, return the stock to the pot and reheat, adding the diced carrots, celery, dill and parsley. Simmer over low heat for 5 minutes to cook the vegetables. You may add the chicken if desired. Season to taste and serve as is, or ladle each serving over 2 warm matzo balls.
CHICKEN MARBELLA

½ cup olive oil
½ cup red wine vinegar
1 cup pitted prunes
1 cup dried apricots
1 14-ounce can artichoke hearts, drained and rinsed
½ cup pitted Spanish green olives
½ cup capers, with a bit of juice
6 bay leaves
1 head of garlic, peeled and puréed
½ cup fresh oregano, chopped, or 1/4 cup dried oregano
2 teaspoons of salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2 chickens, 3 1/2 to 4 pounds each, quartered
1 cup dry white wine
1 cup brown sugar
2 tablespoons finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
In a large bowl, combine the olive oil, vinegar, prunes, olives, capers and juice, bay leaves, garlic, oregano, salt and pepper. Add the chicken pieces and turn to coat. Refrigerate overnight.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Arrange the chicken in a single layer in a shallow roasting pan; spoon the marinade over it evenly. Pour in the wine and sprinkle the chicken with the brown sugar.

Baste the chicken two or three times with the pan juices once the chicken begins to brown. (When basting, do not brush off the sugar. If the chicken browns too quickly, cover lightly with foil.)

Bake until a food thermometer reaches 165° or the thigh pieces yield clear yellow juice when pricked with a fork, 50 to 60 minutes.

Transfer the chicken pieces to a warm serving platter and top with the prunes, olives and capers; keep warm. Place the roasting pan over medium heat and bring the pan juices to a boil. Reduce to about 1/2 cup. Strain into a heatproof bowl, add the parsley and pour over the chicken.

Serves 8

**Marsha's Version:**
1 cup dried apricots; 2 14-ounce can artichoke hearts, drained and rinsed;

Chicken breasts will cook faster than bone-in chicken, check temperature after 30 min.

Using chicken breasts the cooking time will be less; check at 30 min. - use a food thermometer.
WINE BRAISED BRISKET

8 lb beef brisket
3 Tablespoons salt
1 Tablespoon black pepper
1 Tablespoon celery salt
1/4 cup vegetable oil
2 white onions large, coarsely chopped
6 large carrots peeled, coarsely chopped
6 celery stalks coarsely chopped
2 cups burgundy red wine or concord grape juice
12 cloves garlic
2 tsp dried thyme
8 dried bay leaves
2 quarts beef broth

Season brisket, pressing to adhere on all sides, with kosher salt, ground pepper and celery salt mixture.

Place in pan large enough to accommodate (roasting pan) and cover tightly in plastic wrap.

Refrigerate overnight or up to 3 days.

Place a rack in lower third of oven and preheat to 275°F.

On the stove top heat oil in a large roasting pan set over 2 burners set on high.

Remove plastic wrap from brisket and sear on all sides until browned, 7-10 minutes.

Transfer to a baking sheet to rest.
Reduce heat to medium-high and add the vegetables to pan. Cook, stirring occasionally, until browned and just soft, about 15 minutes. Add the wine or juice, bring to a boil, and cook until almost evaporated, 10 minutes. Add the garlic cloves, thyme and bay leaves. Pour in broth to come halfway up side of pan, and bring to a boil. Move the vegetables to the sides of the pan and place the seared brisket into center of aromatics and cover tightly with foil. Braise in oven until meat is tender, 3 hours.

Transfer brisket to a tray, cover with foil and keep warm. Remove and discard the fat from surface of braising liquid. Strain braising liquid and discard cooked vegetables. Cook braising liquid over high heat until reduced by half, about 20 minutes.

Transfer brisket to a cutting board and slice against the grain. Arrange on platter and pour reduced braising liquid over and serve immediately.

**Storage and reheating:**

Because the flavors will continue to mingle the longer they sit, this meal is a great make-ahead option! Or, just enjoy plenty of delicious leftovers by yourself.

Transfer to an airtight container with the braising liquid and refrigerate for up to a week. Reheat in the roasting pan at 300°F. for 30-40 minutes or until warmed through.

**How to freeze brisket:**

Lay the slices of meat in a large freezer bag and pour the sauce over the top. Squeeze out as much air as you can before freezing for up to 3 months.

Thaw in the refrigerator before reheating. Keep in mind that it may take a day or two for the meat to fully defrost.
ROASTING THE SHANK BONE

Clean as much meat as possible off the shank bone.

Turn the oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.

Place the shank bone in a roasting pan and place it in the preheated oven. Roast the shank bone for 40 to 60 minutes.

Remove the shank bone from the oven and let it cool. Wrap it up completely and store it in the refrigerator until you're ready to place it on the seder plate.

ROASTING THE EGG

The key to roasting the egg for the seder meal is to start by hard-boiling it. If you try to roast a raw egg, it will explode!

Now it's time to roast the egg: you can hold it with tongs above (not in) the flame on your stove, you can place it directly on the rack of a preheated 350 degree oven, place it in the toaster oven, where the heating unit is closer to the egg than in the oven, or you can use a kitchen torch.

Whichever way you choose, subject the egg to the heat until it just begins to get brown markings and a few cracks.
PASSOVER POTATO KUGEL

1 large or 2 small yellow onions
3 pounds or about 5 large Russet or Idaho potatoes, peeled
1/3 cup potato starch*
2 teaspoons kosher salt
Lots of freshly ground black pepper
3 large eggs
5 tablespoons olive oil, schmaltz or another oil of your choice

Heat oven to 350°F.

By hand: Chop onions very finely and coarsely grate potatoes.
With a food processor: Blend onions in food processor with regular blade until finely ground. Switch to grating blade and grate potatoes — I like to do this one their sides, for the longest strands.

Both methods: Place onions and potatoes in a large bowl. Sprinkle salt, pepper and starch evenly over potatoes and toss together with two forks or, as I do it, your very clean hands, evenly coating strands. Break the eggs right on top and again use forks or your fingers to work them into the strands, evenly coating the mixture.

Heat a 1/4 cup oil or fat in a 10-inch cast-iron skillet** over high heat until very hot. Pour potato-egg mixture into pan carefully (it’s going to splatter) and spread evenly in pan. Drizzle with last tablespoon of oil.

Bake in heated oven for 75 to 80 minutes, until browned on top and tender in the middle. If top browns too quickly, before center is baked, cover with foil for all but the last two minutes of baking time.
Serve in squares, either right from the skillet or unmolded onto a platter.

Kugel reheats exceptionally well in a warm oven. It keeps in the refrigerator for up to 4 days, and much longer in the freezer. I like to defrost it in the fridge overnight before rewarming it in the oven.

*Matzo meal is traditional. I like to use potato starch as it makes it a little lighter.

**If you do not want to use a cast iron skillet, use a 9” x 13” casserole baking dish. Heat the oil in the dish so it’s hot when the potato mixture lands in it.

Kugel reheats exceptionally well in a warm oven. It keeps in the fridge for up to 4 days, and much longer (months, even) in the freezer. I like to defrost it in the fridge before rewarming it in an oven.

*Matzo meal is traditional. I like potato starch because it’s the least distracting and lightest. I buy mine from Bob’s Red Mill; usually in a section with other BRM products at just about any store these days.

** Without a cast-iron – Use a casserole baking dish. Just heat the oil first so it’s hot when the potato mixture lands in it. (You can do this in the oven, but it will take a good 5 minutes to get very hot. Might as well do it in 60 seconds on the stove to do this but it would be so much easier. thanks!
Preheat oven to 375°.

In a large bowl, combine carrots, fennel, onion and lemon. Mix oil, coriander, cumin, salt and pepper; drizzle over carrot mixture and toss to coat.

Place vegetables on 2 15x10x1 foil lined sheet pans.

Roast 40-50 minutes or until vegetables are tender, stirring occasionally.

Sprinkle with basil just before serving.
Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with heavy duty aluminum foil, making sure the foil goes up and over the edges, and top with a sheet of parchment paper.

Cover the baking sheet with the matzos, cutting and piecing them together as necessary to fill the entire pan.

Make the toffee: Combine butter and brown sugar in a medium saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly with a whisk, until the mixture comes to a boil. (If it looks like it’s separating, just keep stirring; it will come together.) Once the mixture comes to a boil, continue cooking and stirring for another 3 minutes until foamy and thickened. (Be extra careful -- the toffee will be very hot!) Immediately pour the toffee over the matzos and, using a spatula, spread into an even layer.

Put the pan into the oven and bake for 8 to 10 minutes, or until the toffee topping is crackled and bubbling all over. Remove the pan from the oven and place on wire cooling rack on the counter. Immediately scatter the chocolate chips evenly over top. Wait 3 to 5 minutes for the chips to soften, then use an offset spatula to spread the chocolate into an even layer. Sprinkle with the pecans and sea salt. Refrigerate until the chocolate is firm, about 45 minutes. Don't leave it in the fridge too much longer, otherwise it will be hard to cut.

Lift the foil overhang to transfer the matzo crack onto a large cutting board. Using a large sharp knife, cut into 2-inch squares. Store in an airtight container in the fridge and serve cold.

The toffee can be frozen for up to 3 months: Place the toffee in an airtight container. It can be eaten directly from the freezer or, if you’d like, remove the toffee from the container and let it come to room temperature.
**DARK CHOCOLATE PUDDING SHOOTERS**

1 cup dark chocolate chips  
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips  
2 teaspoons espresso powder  
4 eggs  
¼ teaspoon salt  
2 teaspoons vanilla extract  
1½ cups heavy cream, divided  
¼ cup Kahlua (optional)  
Chocolate bar

Combine both kinds of chocolate chips, espresso powder, eggs, salt and vanilla extract in a blender. Puree for 2-3 minutes or until chocolate is finely chopped and combined well with the other ingredients.

Heat 1 cup of the heavy cream in a small saucepan over medium heat just until bubbles start to form around the edges. Immediately pour hot cream into the blender with chocolate. You want the cream to be hot to cook the eggs and melt the chocolate. Cover and puree for 3 minutes, until pudding is smooth and silky.

Add the Kahlua, if using, and puree for 30 seconds.

Divide pudding into shot glasses.

Whip remaining ½ cup of cream until it doubles in volumes and holds stiff peaks. Top each shot glass with a dollop of whipped cream.

Pudding shooters can be served immediately, or covered and held in the refrigerator for 24 hours. They will thicken when cool, and served that way, or let come back to room temperature for an hour before serving for a softer pudding. Either way, wait until just before serving to add the whipped cream. Grate chocolate bar over whipped cream.

This can also be poured into a pie pan and cut into wedges. Garnish with whipped cream and raspberries for garnish.

For a dairy free version, use full-fat coconut milk and coconut cream whipped cream.
FLOURLESS ORANGE AND ALMOND CAKES

2 oranges
5 eggs
1¼ cups super fine sugar
2½ cups almond meal
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Optional: powdered sugar

Preheat oven to 340 degrees.

Grease 2 12-cup muffin tins or a spring form pan to make a cake.

Place the oranges in a sauce pan and cover with cold water. Place lid on pan and bring to a boil, then uncover and simmer for 15 minutes. Drain the water, then repeat once more.

Drain the cooking water from the oranges, then place the oranges on a cutting board. Cut oranges into quarters and remove the rind from one orange, and leave the rind on the other orange. Remove the pith and any seeds, then place in a blender or food processor and blend until smooth.

Next, place the eggs and sugar in a large mixing bowl and beat until pale, fluffy and doubled in size.

Add the orange mixture, vanilla, baking powder and almond meal into the bowl and mix well.

Spoon the mixture into the muffin tins filling 2/3 of the way. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden with springy tops and a toothpick comes out clean.

Leave in the pan for 15 minutes, then move to a rack to cool.

Serve as is or dust with powdered sugar.

Store in an air-tight container in the refrigerator for a few days or in the freezer for a few months.
Preheat oven to 350°F.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, beat eggs until light; gradually beat in ¼ cup sugar and continue beating until fluffy.

Soak the farfel in cold water; squeeze out excess water. Add farfel, cottage cheese, sour cream, butter or margarine, raisins and preserves to egg mixture; blend well.

Pour into a 9” x 13” baking pan. Mix nuts, sugar and cinnamon. Sprinkle on farfel mixture.

Bake for 40-45 minutes.

Serve warm or cold.
In the bowl of an electric mixer, blend the oil and sugar until light. Add the eggs and blend thoroughly.

In a bowl combine matzo cake meal, matzo meal, potato starch, salt and 1½ teaspoons of the cinnamon. Add into the oil mixture alternately with the juice and zest. Fold in the almonds. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour for easier handling.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Divide dough into 3 or 4 portions. With lightly oiled hands, shape each portion into an oval load, 2 inches wide and 1 inch high. Place the loaves 2 inches apart on parchment lined sheet pan. Bake for 30 minutes, or until golden brown.

In a small bowl, combine the remaining 2 Tablespoons of sugar and cinnamon.

Remove the loaves from the oven and use a spatula to transfer them to a cutting board; cut into ½ inch thick slices.

Put the slices, cut side up, on the same sheet pan and sprinkle with the cinnamon sugar mixture. Turn off the heat and return the slices to the oven. Leave the mandlebread in the oven for 10 minutes a side, or until lightly browned and crisp. Transfer to racks to cool.
GETTING READY FOR PASSOVER

First remove all of the leavening products in your house. One solution is to “sell” the products to a non-Jew for the duration of the holiday, then “repurchase” at the end of Passover.

Many people just remove leavening products from their kitchen and keep them in a separate closet during Passover.

Plan your Passover meal and prepare detailed shopping lists

From our Passover menu: (adjust to your own menu)

**These items can be made and frozen 3 to 4 weeks before Passover**
- Chicken Soup
- Matzo Balls
- Chocolate Toffee Matzo Crack
- Passover Mandlebread
- Flourless Orange and Almond Cakes
- Potato Kugel

**3 to 4 days before**
- Make salmon gefilte fish
- Set your table
- 2 days before
- Make chopped liver
- Boil eggs
- Roast lamb shank
- Roast egg
- Make Passover Farfel Pudding
- Season brisket
- Marinate Chicken Marbella
- Make charoset
- Make Dark Chocolate Pudding Shooters or pie (do not garnish with whipped cream)
Day before:
Braise the brisket
Cook the chicken
Take soup out of the freezer and thaw in refrigerator
Take kugel out of the freezer and thaw in refrigerator
Take desserts out of the freezer and thaw in refrigerator

Day of
Prep carrots, fennel, onions and lemon in the morning
Heat soup
Drop frozen matzo balls in the soup
Heat brisket
Heat chicken (can also be served warm or at room temperature)
Heat kugel
Late in the afternoon finish Carrots and Fennel.
Late in the afternoon whip the cream. Pipe whipped cream on the chocolate shooters and return to the fridge.

Day after – RELAX!!