When
Passover begins at sundown on Friday, April 19, 2019. It lasts for eight days (Reform and Israeli Jews observe the first seven), ending at sunset on Saturday, April 27. With its theme of freedom, Passover is one of the most popular holidays on the Jewish calendar. Special foods are central to this holiday.

What
The holiday of Passover marks the redemption of the Jewish people from Egyptian slavery. During the Passover Seder, the festive home service at the beginning of Passover, we read that in every generation, each of us must view ourselves as having personally left Egypt. It is at the Seder that we retell the story of our people. In essence, we relive the experience of slavery, and going from enslavement to freedom.

We read about lives made bitter by slavery, about the ten plagues that befell the Egyptians, and about how these plagues led to the Exodus. Then we praise God for the miracle of freedom.

How
Throughout the week, we eat special foods that remind us that our ancestors left Egypt without time to bake bread.

Your residents will probably miss family Seders and want to reminisce about unique customs, games, foods, and special times that may only partially be replicated.

Helping your Resident Celebrate Passover

One year while making Passover visits, a rabbi visited a nursing home resident who made a sad statement about the holiday and her life in the home. The resident was eating lunch and was served a (non-Passover) dessert. She looked at the rabbi and said, “I used to be a Jew, but now I’m a goy (an outsider).”

Passover is one of the most celebrated Jewish holidays. For a person accustomed to eating the special Passover foods and refraining from prohibited ones, eating everyday food at Passover is jarring. It may give a person the sense that he or she is no longer a part of the Jewish community.

Because so much of the Passover celebration involves special foods, providing these foods is an important part of connecting your residents with their faith community.

Prohibited on Passover
Here are some foods that are prohibited on Passover unless they have proper certification:

- Beer
- Bread
- Cakes
- Cereal
- Cookies
- Corn
- Crackers
- Margarine
- Pasta
- Peas
- Rice
- Salad dressings
- Soda
- Vinegar
- Ketchup

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Passover Seder Foods—What do they Mean?

The foods we eat during the Seder service reflect the themes of redemption and freedom. We eat matzah—the poor bread, the bread of affliction—and we remember our ancestors leaving so quickly that there was not time for their bread to rise. The charoset (hach-RÖ), a sweet mixture of apples, nuts, cinnamon, and wine (or dates, figs, raisins, and wine), resembles the mortar used to hold bricks together as the slaves built mighty cities. The maror (mah-ROH), or bitter herb, has the taste of the bitterness of slavery, and the salt water reminds us of the tears shed by the slaves. The karpas, usually celery or parsley, is a symbol of the return of spring and life. Life is also symbolized by the roasted egg, which is not eaten, and the egg reminds us of the festival offering brought to the ancient Temple in Jerusalem.

We also remember the cost of our freedom at the Seder. While we drink four cups of wine or grape juice, which represent God’s promises to us, we recall the ten plagues. In doing this, we remove ten drops of wine from our cups, diminishing our joy as we remember that others had to die for our freedom.

What is Kosher—and not Kosher—for Passover?

What food is NOT kosher for Passover?

1. All leavened food where flour and water have been mixed together and left standing for longer than 18 minutes before baking (e.g., bread and pasta).
2. Food made from fermented grain (grain wine, ketchup, salad dressings).
3. Jews from Eastern Europe avoid leguminous vegetables, as well as rice and corn.

For more information about what may and may not be eaten on Passover, contact the Vaad HaKashrut of the Capital District, 518-489-1530. The Vaad provides a guide to Passover food every year. If you wish to buy Passover food, you can find the basics at many area supermarkets. The most complete selection can be found at Price Chopper, 1892 Central Avenue, Colonie. You may also order complete Kosher-for-Passover meals from there. You can buy soups, entrees, side dishes, complete Seder meals for six, and just Seder plate items. For an order form, contact John Piccolo, Kosher@244@pricechopper.com (518-456-9314, then push 8 and 3). Orders MUST be in by Tuesday, April 9. You may also be able to order them from your local food supplier. You must specify that you want Kosher-for-Passover meals.

What DO You Serve on Passover?

- Matzah or Egg Matzah spread with margarine (and sprinkled with garlic salt or cinnamon-sugar), apple butter, jam, farmer’s cheese, or charoset.
- Gefilte fish with ground horseradish
- Passover macaroons
- Passover borscht with sour cream
- Recipes from: http://www.jewishfood-list.com/recipes/pesach/ &k/p_main_index.html

https://www.mrfood.com/Editors-Picks/16-Traditional-Passover-Favorites

Passover Music and Other Resources

Music has always been an important part of a Passover Seder. Many parts are sung together, and there are traditional songs at the end as well. Of course, melodies varied in different parts of the world, and families have their own traditions. The familiar words, and some of the well-known melodies, will enrich your Passover celebrations. You can find tapes, CDs, and sheet music in a number of places. I recommend Paul Zim’s Passover Seder Sing-A-Long, which is available at Amazon.com. Some of the local synagogue gift shops have tapes and DVDs.

Reminiscing about Passover

Passover is a lonely time for Jewish residents in care facilities. This is especially true for people who will never be home for Seder again. Passover is the quintessential home holiday. Almost every Jew had some type of feast and many had Seders.

The loneliness is real, and no one can change it. What we can do is help give them the support of memory. As you talk to your residents, ask them to tell you about Seder when they were children or younger adults. Who led the Seder? Who asked the Four Questions? (Usually asked by the youngest). What were their favorite foods? How did they help? Then be an active listener.

We are sometimes afraid that those whom we visit will contrast Seder with their present situation. Although this may often be the case, we must remember that they know their situations best. However, they will derive pleasure from reliving a good memory and by having an appreciative audience who understands the meaning of the story and the Jewish messages.

Chaplaincy Seders & Matzah

Rabbi Magidson, Chaplaincy Outreach Staff, and volunteers will be leading model Seders in as many facilities as possible during Passover and the weeks before.

You may also have family members who are able to do this themselves with some help. We have simplified, large-print Haggadahs (books with the Seder service) that we can send out for you to use if this is the case.

Contact Rabbi Magidson: 518-783-7800 or bmagidson@jewishfedny.org
She will be happy to arrange these for you.

WE WILL ONCE AGAIN BE DELIVERING A BOX OF EGG MATZAH FOR EVERY JEWISH RESIDENT. PLEASE FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS CONTAINED IN THE LETTER THAT COMES WITH THE MATZAH.

The first and last two days of Passover are special Holy Days (first and seventh for Reform Jews, who observe a seven-day holiday). Special prayers are said in synagogue and nice meals are eaten.

On the last day, the Yizkor Memorial Prayer is recited. Very traditional Jews stay home from work.

The best video is Elie Wiesel: https://shop.pbs.org/a-taste-of-passover-dvd/product/TPAS601. Also available on Amazon.com.

Perhaps the best local selection is at Hadar, Temple Israel’s gift shop (open limited hours, as is any synagogue gift shop, so call first, 518-438-7858, before you take a trip). Temple Israel is in Albany, next to St. Peter’s Hospital. Agudat Achim, a synagogue in Niskayuna, has also produced an excellent kosher cookbook with Passover recipes. (Call: 518-393-9211.)

There are some YouTube videos available. However, many of them bring in Christian theology, which is inappropriate and will be unwelcome at a Jewish Seder. Here are two recommendations:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvAytKBp73I
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2G7t-o-MeHA

AVOID anything with “Yeshua,” “Messianic,” and “Ministries,” along with any mention of Jesus or Christ. If you have questions, contact Rabbi Bev.
Instructions for Hosting a Passover Seder at your Facility

Thank you for hosting a Passover Seder for your Jewish residents. It is an important religious obligation for a Jew to be at a Passover Seder. Almost all Jews in the United States grew up with some sort of Seder in their youth, and the prayers, songs, and traditional ritual foods will evoke wonderful memories and spiritual connections for them. (For explanations of the symbolism, see page 2 of the Jewish Life Passover Newsletter.)

Here is a list of the ritual foods that you need:

- Kosher grape juice/kosher sweet wine (available in the kosher section of many local supermarkets)
  Make sure there’s enough for each participant to have four small cups (2-3 oz cups).
- Bite-size pieces of parsley or celery for every participant
- A jar of ground horseradish (red or white)
  Make sure it’s Kosher for Passover, since most vinegar (a common additive) is not Kosher for Passover.
- Passover matzah (Avoid matzah that says “Not for Passover Use.”); egg matzah is fine for those who are frail.
- A bowl of salt water (1/4 teaspoon to a cup of tap water should do it)
- Charoset (Mix together 2 cups shredded, peeled apple; 2 cups finely chopped walnuts; 1 tablespoon cinnamon; 1/4 cup purple sweet wine or grape juice; and optional 2-3 tablespoons honey.)
- A roasted shankbone (a lamb shank or a chicken/turkey neck or wing)
  If you can’t get that, xerox a picture of a roasted neck or wing.
- A hardboiled egg. After boiling the egg, leave the shell on and put it under the broiler for a couple of minutes. Also, each guest should get a half hardboiled egg that has been peeled.

The parsley/celery, horseradish, charoset, shankbone, and egg should be on one plate; three whole matzahs should be on another plate. Cover the matzahs with a nice napkin or cloth.

Set the table nicely with tablecloths, plates, and wine cups, even if you’re not going to serve a meal. Put an extra wine cup in the middle of the table.

Setting for a group: If you’re going to have more than four people, fill some small bowls with extra horseradish, charoset, parsley/celery, and salt water for the other end of the table. Put some matzahs down there, too, to make serving easier. For every four participants, it’s useful to have a “serving station.”

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please be aware that it is inappropriate to serve conventional bread, pasta, cake, pork products, or shellfish at a Seder. It is also inappropriate to serve dairy and meat products together (e.g., chicken parmigiana). If you are serving a meal, chicken soup, plain roast chicken, potatoes, and a nice carrot dish are appropriate. Fruit and Passover macaroons are good desserts. Gefilte fish as an appetizer will be a special treat for your residents!

Please call me if you have any questions: Rabbi Beverly W. Magidson (518) 783-7800, ext. 228 or (518) 724-3310

Special Passover Information

For Food Service Directors

What is Kosher and Not Kosher for Passover?

- **What food is NOT Kosher for Passover?**
  - All leavened food where flour and water have been mixed together and left standing for longer than 18 minutes before baking.
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  - Jews from Eastern Europe avoid leguminous vegetables, as well as rice and corn.

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Prohibited on Passover

Here are some foods that are prohibited on Passover unless they have proper certification:
- Beer
- Bread (unlikely that this would exist)
- Cakes
- Cereal
- Cookies
- Corn
- Crackers
- Ketchup
- Margarine
- Pasta
- Peas
- Rice
- Salad dressings
- Soda
- Vinegar

What Do You Serve People on Passover?

- Eggs
- Salad (no pea pods)
- Vegetables other than leguminous ones
- Potatoes
- Fruit
- Cottage cheese
- Meat and fish without breadings
- Matzah or Egg Matzah spread with margarine (and sprinkled with garlic salt or cinnamon sugar), apple butter, jam, farmer’s cheese, or charoset
- Gefilte fish with horseradish
- Passover macaroons
- Passover borsht with sour cream

Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York
I. Traditional Dishes

Charoset for Seder (Eastern European version)
2 cups shredded apples
2 cups chopped walnuts
1 tablespoon cinnamon
1/4 cup wine or grape juice
2-3 tablespoons honey (optional)
Mix everything together and enjoy.
Charoset is used at the Seder to represent the mortar used by the Israelite slaves. It’s tasty enough to be used for snacks during the rest of the holiday.

Matzah Brei (supper dish)
(Brei rhymes with fry)
Many Jewish homes serve this year-round, but it’s always a treat on Passover!
2 matzahs
2 eggs, beaten
Splash of milk
Salt
Wet matzah under running water. (The wetter the matzah, the softer the result.) Egg matzah also produces a softer result.
Break matzah up into small pieces; mix with rest of the ingredients.
Method #1: Make either small pancakes or a large pancake the size of your frying pan. Fry in frying pan in oil or butter. This can be cut into wedges or served to one hungry individual. Sprinkle with sugar or cinnamon and sugar, pour on honey or syrup, or spread with jam.
Method #2: Mix and fry the egg-matzah mixture as you would scrambled eggs in butter or oil. Serve with salt and pepper or cinnamon and sugar.

Matzah Balls for Soup
After much thought and discussion in our office, we have concluded that the matzah balls made from the boxed mix are very good. Be sure to follow the instructions on the back of the box.

II. Side Dishes

Since pasta of all kinds is prohibited on Passover, one of the challenges to the cook is what to serve with your main dish of meat or fish. Besides potatoes, here are some other options. Your dietary staff should be aware that matzah is binding on the digestive tract.

Dried or stewed fruits and salad are useful balances.

Apple Matzah Kugel (Pudding)
4 matzahs
2 teaspoons salt
1/4 cup Passover margarine
2 cups chopped nuts (not peanuts)
2-3 apples, cored and chopped
additional margarine as needed
3 eggs
2 cups sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
2 cups raisins
Preheat oven to 350°.
Break matzah and soak in water until soft.
Drain, but do not squeeze dry.
Beat eggs with salt, sugar, margarine, and cinnamon.
Add matzah. Stir in chopped nuts, apples, and raisins.
Pour mixture into a greased casserole dish. Dot top with additional margarine. Bake for about 45 minutes.

Potato Kugel (Pudding) - a traditional favorite!
2 onions
3 large potatoes
1/4 cup oil
2 eggs
1/4 cup matzah meal
2 teaspoons Kosher-for-Passover baking powder or potato starch
1 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
Preheat oven to 350 °.
Mince onions and sauté until golden and soft. Blend potatoes in blender. Mix together potatoes, oil, onion, and eggs. Add dry ingredients and mix thoroughly. Pour into greased 8 X 8 square pan. Bake for 1 hour.
Serves 6-8

Sweet Potato and Prune Casserole
6 medium sweet potatoes
1 jar stewed prunes
3/4 cup honey
3/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons prune juice
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1/4 cup melted margarine
Preheat oven to 350 °.
Cook potatoes until tender. Skin and cut into 1/4 inch slices. Cut prunes in half. Make mixture of remaining ingredients. In a 2-quart casserole dish, arrange alternate layers of sweet potatoes and prunes, pouring the honey mixture over each layer. Bake uncovered, basting occasionally, for 45 minutes. Serves more than 4.

(OPTIONAL) Add Kosher-for-Passover marshmallows on top during the last five minutes of baking.

Kosher-for-Passover Rolls
2 cups of matzah meal
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon sugar
1 cup water
1/2 cup oil
4 eggs
Combine matzah meal with salt and sugar. Bring oil and water to a boil. Add to matzah-meal mixture and mix well. Beat in eggs thoroughly, one at a time. Allow to stand 15 minutes. With oiled hands, shape into rolls and place on a well-greased cookie sheet. (Optional: Press thumb into center of each roll to give it more of a donut shape.) Bake at 375° for 50 minutes or until golden brown. Makes 12–13 rolls

Eggplant Casserole
3 tablespoons oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 medium eggplant, peeled and cubed
1/2 cup diced green pepper
1 1-oz. can tomato mushroom sauce (buy in Kosher-for-Passover aisle)
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
28-oz. can diced tomatoes
1/2 cups matzah farfel (buy matzah farfel where you buy matzah, or break up matzah into coin-sized pieces)
Sauté onions in oil until tender. Combine onions, eggplant, green pepper, tomato sauce, and seasoning. Cook covered for 15 minutes or until eggplant is tender. Stir in diced tomatoes.

Find more great recipes at:
www.jewishfoodlist.com/recipes/pesach/
&amp;klp_main_index.html
https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/passover-recipes/