

The Shamayim V' Aretz Festival Guide

A Guide to the Jewish Holidays

Written by Yossi Quint

The Shamayim V'Aretz Festival Guide
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The Shamayim V'Aretz Institute
Jewish Ethics. Heavenly Ideals. Earthly Compassion.

Holiday Greetings

The Shamayim V'Aretz Institute is proud to present our inaugural publication: A holiday guide for the Jewish festivals.

The Shamayim V'Aretz Institute is the spiritual center intertwining learning and leadership around the intersecting issues of animal welfare activism, kosher veganism, and Jewish spirituality, for those anywhere on the journey towards compassionate eating and living within Judaism.

The Institute trains leaders to address the abuse of animals, injustices in kosher slaughterhouses, and other animal welfare issues while also serving as an educational resource to help people make informed and passionate Jewish moral choices about their ethical consumption

"Shamayim V'Aretz" means "Heaven and Earth" in Hebrew. The goal of Jewish life is to bring heaven down to earth and to sanctify the world through all of our just and holy endeavors. The Midrash teaches that there is a temple located in the heavens that sits directly above the temple on earth (Genesis Rabbah 69:7). The same G-d who makes the heavens radiate also illuminates our earthly existence. We are the stewards of the earth seeking to ensure that heaven still has a place on earth by removing injustice, oppression, and suffering from our midst. The animal kingdom is the most abused of all sentient beings. By protecting the most vulnerable

creatures on earth, we return the holiness to our world by bringing Shamayim back down to the Aretz, by bringing heaven back down to earth.

There is no better time to bring the heavenly into this world than Jewish holiday season. Just about every month is an opportunity to spend time with your family and friends exploring a different part of the holiday cycle. Each holiday brings its unique foods, its special atmosphere, and acts as a time to focus on a different part of our lives.

The holidays are a perfect time to reflect on our lifestyles and to consider possible changes.

Through a thoughtful consideration of the world around us, each person can realize what needs to be fixed and how they can create that change.

Rabbi Nachman of Breslov writes in Likutei Maharan (1 5:1): "According to the Rabbis every person must say the entire world was created for me. If the world was created for me, it follows that I must always examine how I can rectify the world and fulfill its needs and pray for the world."

Each of us has a responsibility to be a steward for the planet. This responsibility includes animals and vegetation as well. We hope that this holiday guide will provide the reader with tools to actualize this change as well as some ideas for the holiday table.



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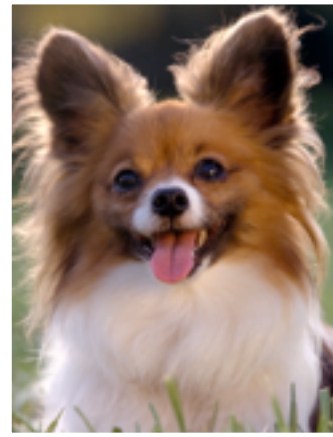
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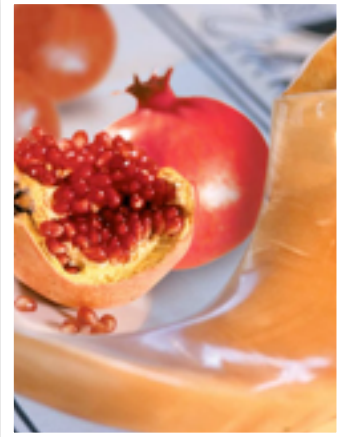
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Shabbat

A Time to Reflect



Date: Each Friday shortly before sundown until the appearance of three stars Saturday night.

Significance: “On the seventh day, Hashem finished His work.” (Bereshit 2:2) Earth and all its inhabitants were created on the first six days. “What was created on the seventh day? Tranquility, serenity, peace, and repose.” (Genesis Rabbah 10:9) Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel writes that “The seventh day is a palace in time with a kingdom for all. It is not a date but an atmosphere.” (Sabbath p. 21) The day is said to be a taste of the world to come. Shabbat has traditionally been a time where family comes together to pray, to eat, and to reflect on the past week’s endeavors.

Holiday tip: Next time you host a meal ask everyone to share one meaningful moment from the past week. Shabbat is the perfect time to reflect on the wondrous world we live in. Heschel writes “The world is full of wonders, special radiance, and marvelous secrets, but all it takes is a small hand held over the eye to hide it all.” (God in Search of Man)

Call to action: Shabbat is one of the best opportunities to introduce your friends to some yummy vegan cooking.

Isaiah 58:13: “. . . and call the Shabbat an oneg (delight) . . .”

Torah Thoughts

[T]he seventh day is a Sabbath of the Lord your God: you shall not do any work – you, your son or your daughter, your male or female servant, or your cattle . . . (Genesis 24:43-44)

Know the great reality, the richness of existence that you always encounter. Contemplate its grandeur, its beauty, its precision, its harmony. Be attached to the legions of living things who are constantly bringing forth everything beautiful. (Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook)

Water Challah
Contributed by Rachel Quint

1. In very large bowl, place 2 Tbsp salt.
2. Pour in 5 lb bag of high gluten bread flour.
3. Add 2 tbsp fast acting yeast.
4. Add 1 cup of sugar. Whisk all ingredients to mix.
5. Pour in 1/2 cup safflower oil.
6. Quickly pour in 5 1/2 cups lukewarm water.
7. As quickly as possible, mix dry and wet ingredients by hand until all ingredients are wet (helps to oil hands first).
8. Cover bowl and let sit for ten minutes.
9. Uncover and knead dough.
10. When smooth, place dough in oiled bag (like a Glad garbage bag) and tie the bag very tightly to make sure that there is no air in the bag.
11. Let dough rise for one hour.
12. Open bag, punch down dough, re-close the bag, let the dough rise for another hour.
13. Take dough and remove "challah" with blessing.*
14. Cut challah into four pieces (or more) on lightly floured surface.
15. Continue to cut pieces into thirds.
16. Roll each piece into a foot long length.
17. Braid as you wish.
18. Let braided dough sit and rise.
19. Feel free to add whatever toppings you desire (sesame seeds, poppy seeds, chocolate chips, raisings, sugar + cinnamon, date honey, minced onion or garlic flakes).
20. Bake at 350 for 30-45 minutes. Check bottom of challah to make sure it is baked.

* It is customary after kneading to take hold of a piece of challah (without detaching) and recite "Boruch Atoh Ado-nay Elo-heinu Melech Ha'Olam Asher Kidshanu B'mitzvosav V'tzivanu L'hafirish Challah". After reciting the blessing detach a small piece (about the size of a golf ball). After which, it should be burnt in an oven till lightly charred and then discarded. (star-k.org)



Challah Mitzvah Meditation

Adapted from Two Rosh Hashanah Messages by R'Noach Valley

Next time you make a bracha on challah before you eat think about these ten mitzvot related to bread. With each idea put another finger on the challah till you are holding the two loaves together with all ten fingers.

[1-2 reflect the idea that we should not try to corrupt the natural order]

- 1) "You shall not plow with a ox and ass together" (Deut. 22:10)
- 2) "You shall not sow your vineyard with mix seeds" (Deut. 22:9)

[3-5 revolve around compassion for the poor]

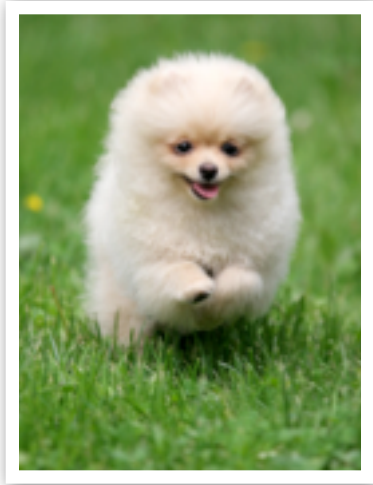
- 3) "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not gather the gleanings of your harvest" (Leviticus 19:9)
- 4) "When you reap the harvest in your field and overlook a sheaf in the field, do not turn back to get it, it shall go to the stranger, the orphan, and the widow: in order that Hashem your God may bless you in all your undertakings" (Deut. 24:10)
- 5) When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field" (Lev. 19:9)
- 6) "You shall not muzzle an ox while it is threshing" (Deut. 25:4)

[7-10 reflect on giving back to the Jewish community]

- 7) "Then it shall be when you eat the bread of the land, you shall set a portion aside as a gift to Hashem" (Num. 15:19)
- 8) "[Y]ou shall set some aside as a gift to Hashem" (Num. 15:19)
- 9+10) "From the first yield of your baking you shall set aside a loaf as a gift; like the gift from the threshing floor" (Num. 15:20)

After meditating on these ten ideas say the bracha (blessing): 'Baruch atah ado-nay elo-heinu melech ha'olam ha'motzi lechem min ha'aretz' - I thankfully praise You, Hashem our God, King of the Universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth.

Rosh Hashanah for the Animals



Hebrew date: 1st of Elul

Significance: Originally animals were set aside for korbanot and given to the Beit Hamikdash (the temple). Today, it has been reinvented as a day to heal our relationships with animals. It is also the first day of Elul when we begin to blow the shofar, which is a reminder to listen to the voice of animals and take into account how domesticated animals are treated. Elul is a time to for reflecting on and improving ourselves. Thinking about animals is a great way to begin.

Holiday tip: Have a Rosh Hashanah La'Behema (New Year for Animal) seder. Have an event at your home to raise awareness about the mistreatment of animals in the factory farming industry.

Call to action: Most pets come from puppy mills, which are large scale commercial breeding operations that care more about profit than the well being of your beloved animal. Instead go to an adoption center and save an animal's life. A lot of adoption centers can't afford to keep animals that aren't being adopted, so they put them to sleep. Check out one of the many adoption websites to find family's next pet.

Torah Thought

Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi (the prince) suffered for 13 years from excruciating tooth pain, because a calf, while being led to slaughter, tried to hide behind his coat. Rabbi Yehuda sent the calf away with the words "Go, because for this you were created." Rabbi Yehuda's toothache ceased only when he prevented his housekeeper from chasing away a family of rats that were nesting in his house (13 years later). (Talmud Bavli, Bava Metzia 85a)

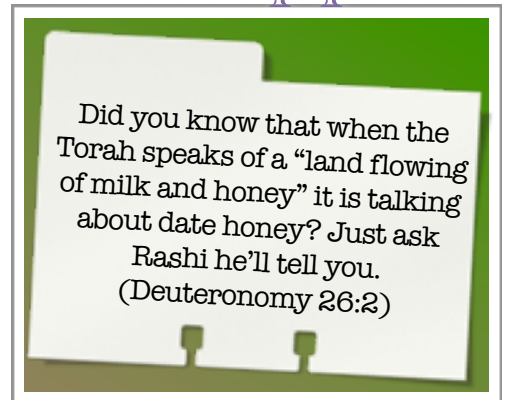
Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur

Hebrew date: R'H - 1st and 2nd of Tishrei. Y'K - 10th of Tishrei

Significance: Rosh Hashanah is the anniversary of the creation of Adam and Eve. It is a time to think about the special relationship Hashem has with people. On R"H "all inhabitants of the world pass before G-d like a flock of sheep," and it is decreed in the heavenly court "who shall live, and who shall die . . . who shall be impoverished, and who shall be enriched; who shall fall and who shall rise." Yom Kippur is a day of atonement and fasting. It is also the day when the heavenly book for the coming year is sealed.

Holiday tip: Next time you buy a shofar make sure it is from an animal that was treated ethically and died naturally .

Call to action: In the days after R"H and preceding Yom Kippur, many Jews have the practice of taking chickens and waving them around for kapparot. Unfortunately, the chickens are often kept in dire conditions and many are left to die. Speak to your Rabbi and friends about ending this practice.



Apple Crisp

Contributed by Rachel Quint

- | | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| •2 cups flour | •1 tsp cinnamon | walnuts | •1 tsp white vinegar |
| •1 1/4 cups sugar | •1/4 tsp salt | •1 cup oil | •3 Gala or Braeburn apples peeled |
| •1 tsp baking soda | •1/2 cups chopped | •1 tbsp vanilla extract | |

1. Preheat oven to 350.
2. Grease 8 or 9 inch pan.
3. Whisk together flour, sugar, baking soda, cinnamon and salt.
4. In a second bowl, whisk together oil, vanilla, and vinegar.
5. Pour wet ingredients over flour mixture and mix. Add walnuts.
6. Arrange apple slices in pan, squeeze lemon juice over apples.
7. Pour topping over apples.
8. Bake for about 30 minutes.



Date Honey

Contributed by Leah Koenig

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| •8 dates – make sure you buy the fat, sticky Medjool dates (The smaller, harder Delget | dates won't work) | •1/4 cup Agave syrup (don't worry, this is easy to find at Whole Foods or health food stores) | •4 pieces crystallized ginger, finely chopped |
| | •Juice of 1/2 a lemon, remove the seeds | | |
| | •1/2 cup water | | |

1. Remove the pit from the dates and quarter them.
2. Mash the dates with a fork into a paste-like consistency.
3. Add the date mash to a small sauce pan.
4. Add the lemon juice and 1/4 cup of water and heat over a low flame, stirring frequently with a whisk or wooden spoon (about 3 minutes).
5. After the water is absorbed, add the remaining water, agave syrup and crystallized ginger. The mash should take on a slightly more liquid quality, like apple butter.
6. Continue stirring, adding small amounts of additional water and Agave syrup as necessary until you reach the taste and consistency you like.
7. Let cool and serve with slices of Ginger Gold, Honey Crisp apples, or any apple you like.

Sukkot



Hebrew date: 15th of Tishrei until 22nd of Tishrei (in Israel it ends on the 21st)

Significance: Historically, Sukkot is a time to remember the wandering of the Nation of Israel after they left Egypt and before they came to Israel. Sukkot also has an agricultural significance as a harvest festival. The holiday's name comes from the Hebrew word for 'booths,' since we are supposed to dwell in temporary houses, or sukkahs, during the holiday period. Immediately following Sukkot are two more festivals - Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah. In addition to dwelling in the sukkah, many people wave four species known as the *Arba Minim*. The *Arba Minim* consist of a 'lulav' (palm branch), an 'etrog,' willow leaves, and myrtle leaves.

Holiday tip: This year decorate your sukkah with natural decorations: wildflowers, dried corn, twigs . . .

Call to action: Join your local community supported agriculture (CSA) group. Today there are CSAs in almost every city. CSAs are a great way to eat delicious fresh from the farm fruits and vegetables that are sustainably grown. Who doesn't love freshly picked fruit? Check out localharvest.org to find CSAs near you.

Stuffed Peppers

Contributed by Rachel Quint

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|-------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|
| •large can tomato puree | •1/4 tsp salt | •1/2 - 1 tsp sour salt | •2 large onions |
| •1 1/2 cups water | •1 apple, peeled and | •6 green peppers | •1/4 cup oil |
| •1/2 cup sugar | •grated | •1 1/2 cups rice | •1/4 tsp pepper |

1. Combine puree, water, sugar, salt, apple and sour salt. Simmer for 30 minutes.
2. Cut tops off of peppers and clean out inside. Place in pan, close together.
3. Cook rice. Saute onions in 1/4 cup of oil.
4. Mix rice and onions and pepper.
5. Stuff peppers with rice mixture. Spoon sauce over peppers.
6. Cover pan. Bake in oven, covered, at 350 for one hour.

Torah Thought

The Rabbis said: Even though you may think superfluous in the world things such as fleas, gnats, and flies, even they are included in the creation of the world. The Holy One has a purpose for everything including the snakes, scorpion, gnats, and frogs. (Midrash Rabbah, Genesis 10:7:)

Chanukah



Hebrew date: Begins 25th of Kislev and lasts eight days until the 2nd or 3rd of Tevet (depends if Kislev has 29 or 30 days)

Significance: Chanukah commemorates the rededication of the Temple, the miracle of one day's worth of oil lasting eight days, and the successful rebellion of the Maccabees. The festival is observed through lighting a Hanukkah Menorah each night. On the first night one candle is lit, on the second night two candles are lit, and so on until the eighth night when all eight candles are lit. In tefillah, the hallel prayer is recited.

Vegan holiday tip: 'Chanukah foods' often have a lot of oil. Chanukah is a good time to look into healthier alternatives.

Call to action: On Chanukah, we remember how one jug of oil lasted eight times longer than it should have. Chanukah is a great time to think about unnecessary waste. Look for more recycling options both within and outside the house, think about starting a compost in your backyard, and buy a reusable water bottle.

Latkes

thesweetestvegan.com/vegan-potato-latkes-recipe

•1-1/2 pounds russet potatoes
•1 small yellow onion

•1 tablespoon fresh parsley, minced
•1/4 cup flour

•1/2 teaspoon baking powder
•1 teaspoon salt

•1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
•safflower oil, for frying

1. Peel and grate potatoes, then place in a colander and set over a large bowl. Using your hands, squeeze out excess liquid from the potatoes. Pour off liquid and place potatoes in bowl.
2. Grate onion and add to potatoes along with parsley, flour, baking powder, salt, and pepper, and mix well.
3. Preheat oven to 275 degrees. In a large skillet over medium heat, heat a thin layer of oil. Take a heaping tablespoon of batter and flatten it before gently placing it in hot oil.
4. Fry until golden brown on both sides, turning once, about 8 minutes total.
5. Repeat with remaining potato mixture, adding more oil as necessary. Remove cooked potato pancakes to paper towels to drain, then transfer to an ovenproof platter and keep warm in oven until all pancakes are cooked.

Torah Thought

When you besiege a city for many days to wage war against it to seize it, do not destroy its trees by swinging an axe against them, for from it you will eat, and you shall not cut it down; is the tree of a field a man that it should enter the siege before you? Only a tree that you know is not a food tree, it you may destroy and cut down . . . (Deuteronomy 20:19-20)

Tu B'Shvat



Hebrew date: 15th of Shvat

Significance: Tu B'Shvat is the new year for the trees. Originally it was the date when fruits were set aside for the Beit HaMikdash (the temple). In the Middle Ages, it was instituted as a day to celebrate the fruits. Today, it is celebrated through having a seder (special meal) with the seven species of Israel. In Israel it has also become a day to plant trees.

Vegan holiday tip: Sit back and enjoy. Finally a holiday centered around plants!

Call to action: Invite your friends for a Tu B'Shvat Seder.

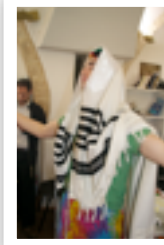
Oder of a Tu B'Shvat Seder

- 1) Drink a cup of white wine and eat fruits and nuts with a hard outside and an edible inside
The world of Asiyah (actualization) - We too often judge people through labels and simplistic views. These fruits show us that even things that appear hard and inedible often have something beautiful inside.
- 2) Drink a cup with a few drops of red wine and the rest white and eat fruits with pits at their center
The world of Yetzirah (formation) - The few drops of red wine are able to change the complexion of an entire cup, which reminds us that we have the potential for tremendous change. The pits remind us not to overlook the potential for growth even in the barest of places.
- 3) Drink a cup of half red and half white wine and eat fruits that are entirely edible
The world of Beriah (creation) - Even though the trees are blooming, they are still growing. The mixture of wine reminds us that we are in the middle of the process even though it may seem complete. The fruits remind us of the wholeness of the world where everything has a purpose.
- 4) Drink a cup with a few drops of white wine and the rest red
The world of Atzilut (presence, emanation, birth) - The drops of wine remind us the beginning of the seder and the cyclical nature, yet the white wine remains invisible. There is much in the world that we cannot but that we gain from.

Torah Thought

Praised are You, Our Hashem, Ruler of the universe, Former of light, Creator of darkness, Maker of peace and the Creator of all things. In Your mercy light shines over the earth and upon all who inhabit it. Through Your goodness the work of the creation is daily renewed. How great are Your works, O Hashem, in wisdom You have made all of them. The earth is filled with Your creations. (Siddur, Yotzer Or)

Purim



Hebrew date: 14th of Adar (15th in certain walled cities)

Significance: On the 14th of Adar, the Jews were supposed to be murdered instead as a result of a series of events, they were able to fight back and survived. Today, Purim is celebrated by listening to *Megillat* (scroll) Esther, sending *mishloach manot* (food packages to friends), giving charity, and dressing up.

Vegan holiday tip: Attach a note to your *mishloach manot* explaining why all the food contained in the package is vegan. The gift of *mishloach manot* is a great time to share your passion for animals/the environment/healthy living with others. It is also a great opportunity to show your friends how great vegan food can taste.

Call to action: *Midrashim* (homilies) claim that Esther was a vegetarian during her time in Achashverosh's palace. Esther's vegetarianism was most likely a result of the lack of kosher meat, but nevertheless it is clear that Esther gave up meat for a higher good. Purim is a great time to think about what animal products we are still using and ask whether we really need them in our lives.

Mishloach Manot Ideas

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Wine/grape juice | 8. Salt & vinegar chickpeas |
| 2. Baked vegan goodies | 9. Hummus & chips |
| 3. Kale chips | 10. Guacamole & chips |
| 4. Raisins | 11. Vegetable chips |
| 5. Craisins | 12. Vegan protein/energy bars |
| 6. Fresh fruit | 13. Rescue chocolate bars (yum) |
| 7. Paskez makes a lot of great
(but not so healthy) vegan
candy bars | 14. Assorted nuts |
| | 15. Your favorite vegan recipe
and the ingredients needed |

Torah Thought

After the Maggid's death, his disciples came together and talked about the things he had done. When it was Rabbi Schneur Zalman's turn, he asked them 'Do you know why your master went to the pond every day at dawn and stayed there for a while before coming home again?' They did not know why. Rabbi Zalman continued, 'He was learning the song with which the frogs praise G-d. It takes a very long time to learn that song.' (Tales of Hasidim, Early Masters p.111)

Pesach



Hebrew date: 15th of Nissan until 22nd of Nissan (in Israel it ends on the 21st)

Significance: Pesach, one of three biblically ordained holidays, is a time to remember the Exodus from Egypt. For hundreds of years, Jews were enslaved in Egypt until Hashem took us out with “a strong hand”. We mark the exodus by having a special dinner - the seder - where we recount the story using the set text of the haggadah. On this holiday, we celebrate Jewish freedom, but we also remember that we were once oppressed and the need to help those who are still oppressed.

Holiday tip: Instead of using a shankbone and an egg on your seder plate try a beet and a mushroom instead.

Call to action: There is no better time to contact those in power and ask them what they are doing to alleviate animal torture and mistreatment in the food industry. Ask your congressperson what bills he or she is working on. Ask your rabbi if he is involved in the food industry or a kashrut organization and if so what is he doing to alleviate the pain. Ask your community supermarket and restaurant to carry more vegan options and to only buy meat and dairy products from farms that treat their animals humanely.

Check out The Haggadah for the Liberated Lamb for some seder thoughts and ideas

Torah Thought

While our teacher Moshe was tending the sheep of Jethro in the wilderness a lamb ran away from him. He ran after her until she reached Hasuah. Upon reaching Hasuah she came upon a pool of water [whereupon] the lamb stopped to drink. When Moshe reached her he said, "I did not know that you were running because [you were] thirsty. You must be tired." He placed her on his shoulder and began to walk. The Holy One, blessed be He, said, "You are compassionate in leading flocks belonging to mortals; I swear you will similarly shepherd my flock, Israel." (Exodus Rabbah 2:2)

Pesach Recipes

Macaroons

Contributed by Allyson Schwartz

- 1 cup unsweetened coconut shreds
 - 1 tbs matzo meal
 - 1/2 cup light canned coconut milk
 - 3 tbs agave
 - 1 tsp raw sugar or stevia
 - 1 tsp vanilla extract
 - a few grinds of salt
1. Mix everything together
 2. Cook in a pot for around 5 minutes until the mixture is firm enough to roll into balls.
 3. Place balls on greased cookie sheet.
 4. Bake for 15 minutes.



Unstuffed Cabbage

Contributed by Rachel Quint

- 1 head green cabbage
 - 1 large onion
 - 1 apple
 - 14 oz. can stewed tomatoes
 - 3/4 cups brown sugar
 - 1 tsp sour salt
 - 1/3 cup raisins
 - 1/2 cup sweet red wine
1. Chop one head of green cabbage, place in pot.
 2. Chop one large onion, add to pot.
 3. Peel and grate one apple, add to pot.
 4. Add one 14 oz. can stewed tomatoes or whole tomatoes, 3/4 cups brown sugar, 1 tsp. sour salt, 1/3 cup of raisins, enough water to cover all.
 5. Cover pan tightly, cook over low flame for about two hours. Add 1/2 cup sweet red wine.
 6. Check while cooking that has enough liquid.

Pesach Tips (continued..)

Ten Vegan Passover Survival Tips

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|---|--|
| 1. Guacamole tastes great on matzah! | 7. Various configurations of vegetables - esp. onions, carrots, potatoes, zucchini, squash, mushrooms - either oven-roasted with spices, or in a stew with tomato sauce - served over quinoa |
| 2. Indian food. Sag paneer [spinach and vegan cheese] and aloo gobi [cauliflower and potatoes]! These can definitely be made in advance and served over quinoa. Paneer tikka masala works well too. | 8. Stuffed vegetables - tomato, or zucchini, or cabbage -- stuffed with quinoa, or with farfel stuffing |
| 3. Ratatouille - onions, tomatoes, eggplant, mushrooms, zucchini, etc | 9. Matzoh ball soup in veggie broth |
| 4. Whole artichokes, with a variety of dips | 10. Quinoa and roasted cauliflower/ broccoli with brown butter |
| 5. Many soups are easily pesach-appropriate | |
| 6. Potato kugel | |

Common Vegan Pesach Questions

Answers provided by R'Shmuly Yanklowitz, Founder and CEO of Shamayim V'Aretz

Q: Is it permissible to replace the shankbone and egg on the seder plate with something more vegan friendly?

A: The zeroa (shankbone) and the beitzah (egg) represent the Pesach offering and the Chagigah offering respectively. But they are only symbolic and need not be used. Most vegans replace the shankbone with beets (based on the Gemarrah Pesachim 114b) and the egg with a mushroom. I've been told that others use dry unfermented barley, olives, and grapes on their seder plates. Establishing seder customs to represent concern for animal welfare is a beautiful way to celebrate how we actualize our freedom!

Q: What are some good protein sources if I don't eat kitniyot on Pesach?

A: While we often get into food routines, it's important to remember that we can get protein from a number of sources. Vegetables, such as broccoli, spinach and kale, are packed with protein. Nuts are also a great place to find protein during Pesach. With the extra restrictions Pesach brings, we may not be able to enjoy many of the vegan dishes that make up our normal diet but it is a great time to experiment with new vegetable dishes.

Also, strict vegans should be aware that Rav Moshe Feinstein held that if needed one could be lenient on certain products that most treat as kitniyot but need not be considered kitniyot arguing that we don't add to the list of kitniyot unless the minhag is indisputable (Igrot Moshe O.C. 3:63). This can include peanuts, SOY, and quinoa. Also some poskim have allowed oil that was derived (before Pesach) from kitniyot (Bamareh Habazak). I'd still inspect the ingredients in these products closely to be sure there is nothing problematic in them or be sure there was a Sephardic kosher for Passover certification on them. We intend to buy kosher almond milk this year for Pesach and some soy products should be available as well. Here is a list of good [soy and almond milks](#) to buy that don't have any chometz in them.

Shavout



Hebrew date: 6th and 7th of Sivan (in Israel it is only the 6th)

Significance: On Shavout, we commemorate the day that Bnei Yisrael (the children of Israel) got the Torah. It also commemorates the end of a seven week period starting with Pesach. The holiday also has agricultural significance as it marks the wheat harvest.

Vegan holiday tip: Cooking with whole grains is an easy way to gain nutrients, have healthier arteries, and a healthier body mass index.

Call to action: Start a community learning initiative centered around Jewish sources on animal welfare, the environment, and our health. Check out http://shamayimvaretz.org/jewish_curricula_sources.html for prepared source sheets with guiding questions.

Strawberry Soup Contributed by Rachel Quint

1 pint strawberries, stems removed
1 ripe peach, peeled and chopped
1 1/2 cups pineapple or orange juice
1 tsp. vanilla extract
5 tbsp. sugar
4 oz. soy yogurt (optional)

1. Place all ingredients in blender and puree on high until smooth. Serve chilled.

Torah Thought

A good, sound body, which does not disturb the equilibrium in man, is a divine gift . . . But it is not impossible to conquer a bad constitution by training . . . The well-being of the soul can be obtained only after that of the body has been secured. (Maimonides, Guide for the Perplexed 3:8,27)

Commonly Asked Questions

Answers provided by R'Shmuly Yanklowitz

Founder & CEO of Shamayim V'Aretz

Q: Don't you need to eat meat on Shabbat and Holidays?

A: Some have claimed that even if one chooses to be a vegetarian during the week, one may not refrain from eating meat on Jewish festivals since we are obligated in simha (joy) and "ein simha ela basar veYayin" (there is no joy without meat and wine).

To treat this approach as conclusive is incorrect. Halakha takes the notion of simha (joy) very seriously and does not enforce practices that individuals do not find joyous. Furthermore, for many poskim (rabbinic authorities), the consumption of meat as a fulfillment of the mitzvah to be joyous on holidays existed only in a historical context.

The Gemara (Pesachim 109a) reads: "R. Judah ben Beteira declared, 'During the time that the Temple existed there was no 'rejoicing' other than with meat as it is said, 'and you shall slaughter peace-offerings and you shall eat there; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God.'" R. Judah ben Beteira goes on to conclude "but now that the temple does not exist there is no rejoicing other than wine." Another Gemara (Pesachim 71a; Baba Batra 60b) explains that the obligation to be joyous on festivals was not fulfilled through the consumption of meat but through the wearing of clean clothes and drinking of wine.

Medieval Jewish legal authorities held that there is no longer any obligation to consume meat on festivals. Some Rishonim go even further to argue that eating meat was not even an obligation in the times when the temple stood! Based upon these sources, the Bet Yosef questions those who suggested that one must eat meat on festivals. In the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 529:1,3) when discussing the obligation to honor yom tov, R'Yosef Karo does not require meat. He writes "One is required to honor Yom Tov and enjoy it . . . One is obligated to break bread on two loaves at every base meal and on the drinking of wine . . . A person should eat and drink and be joyous on holidays. However, he should not protract the feasting on meat and wine."

R'Aryeh Gunzberg, The Shaagas Aryeh, writes "It seems to me that since the mitzva of simcha which we were commanded to fulfill on the festival isn't a specific mitzva, but rather a general mitzva that one is obligated to be happy on Yom Tov in all ways that he is able to rejoice, it is not similar to other mitzvot, regarding which all people are equal, i.e. the rich person should not increase and the poor person should not reduce. For this simcha, each and every person is obligated to rejoice according to his means."

The Magen Avraham explains explicitly that there is no obligation to eat meat on festivals since the temple was destroyed. Although there are poskim who require the eating of meat on festivals (most famously the Rambam), there is ample basis to refrain, especially if one will not get enjoyment and spiritual satisfaction.

Q: Is all vegan food kosher?

A: Many Jews eat at vegan restaurants with or without kosher certification. However there are a number of reasons many Jews choose to eat only at vegan restaurants that also hold kosher certification.

Commonly Asked Questions (cont.)

According to traditional Judaism, there is a Torah prohibition against eating bugs. Vegetables are known to have bugs hidden in their crevices. Restaurants with kosher certification ensure that all vegetables are washed and examined to ensure no bugs are found. (If this sounds strange to you, try soaking organic Kale in soapy water, you'll be amazed at the number of bugs you find!)

Another reason is that restaurants with kosher certification use formal inspection and oversight to ensure that all products used are consistent with the values of the establishment. This prevents any items from being replaced during the rush of the day with a product that does not uphold the same standards.

Additionally, there is a concern about the use of non-kosher wine or grape juice which traditionally requires kosher handling and certification (yyin nesech) and that certain food be ceremonially cooked by Jews (bishul akum). Lastly, many restaurants buy previously used non-kosher utensils that they then use for cooking and many establishments use the same cooking utensils to prepare their personal non-vegan and non-kosher food when not working. These Jewish laws and customs are complex and are resolved when a restaurant has a kosher certification.

Q: How does a kosher lifestyle honor Judaic values and traditions?

A: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, the Chief Rabbi of Efrat, wrote that "The dietary laws are intended to teach us compassion and lead us gently to vegetarianism." Compassion is a core value in Judaism. Our role is to emulate the Divine (halakhta b'drakhav) and the Rabbis teach that we primarily do this by acting compassionately like G-d does.

The Gemara (Bava Metsia 32) teaches us that avoiding the suffering of animals is a biblical law that pushes off rabbinic law. The Rambam teaches us here of the importance of animal welfare via a radical suggestion that the suffering of the animal takes precedence, at times, over the burden of a fellow human being!

In addition to showing compassion to animals, eating healthfully (also a mitzvah), and taking care of our planet, reducing meat intake is also a response to global hunger. Over 200 million Americans are eating enough food, much of which is grain-fed livestock that could feed over one billion people in developing countries. Jean Mayer, a Harvard nutritionist, claims that 60 million hungry individuals could be fed if people reduced their meat intake by just 10 percent.

The commandments and values concerning animal welfare are all over the Torah in various contexts to ensure that we progress individually and collectively toward a no-harm diet (i.e. vegan diets).

**If you have other questions feel free to contact us at info@shamayimvaretz.org
Or visit our website at shamayimvaretz.org and submit a question to the Rabbi**

If you have any ideas for future additions to the Holiday Guide or for a different Shamayim V'Aretz project email us at info@shamayimvaretz.org

