

GOLDA'S KITCHEN CABINET

Want to spice up your culinary arts program? Add a dash of za'atar or cumin, a splash of olive oil and fresh lemon juice to the menu, and introduce participants to...**Golda's Kitchen Cabinet** for authentic Israeli delicacies!

WHY "GOLDA'S KITCHEN CABINET"?

Israel's 4th Prime Minister, Golda Meir, used to meet with her closest advisors around her green formica kitchen table to cook up new policy initiatives. She also drank 12 cups of coffee every day and served her guests homemade cheesecake and apple strudel. We would have loved to share her recipes, but Golda guarded them like state secrets!

Israeli cuisine is a hot ticket these days. Documentaries and international food shows frequently feature Israel's diverse food scene. There are also hundreds of cookbooks that highlight the widest range of Israeli delicacies you could imagine!

PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Israeli food is fresh, creative, colorful, and delicious. But what makes it ideal for learning about Israel is that every dish has a story. Israeli society is a melting pot of people and cultures that embraces spicy and sweet, crunchy and soft, slow-cooked and barely-cooked...the sky's the limit!

Immigrants to Israel have contributed traditional favorites to the ever-evolving Israeli cuisine. Burekas from the Balkans, goulash from Hungary, couscous from Morocco, and a whole lot of local favorites that include chocolate spread, Bamba, and of course falafel and hummus.



Tip

*This program can have even more impact if you connect it to Jewish values that your participants may be exploring elsewhere. Here are some that may work well: **Curiosity, Creativity, Wonder, Joy, Confidence, Courage, shoes.***



Further Exploration

Jews have immigrated to Israel in many waves, starting with Aliyah to Palestine before the establishment of the state, and from dozens of countries: Yemen, Ethiopia, Former Soviet Union, India, North America, and elsewhere. Check out the [Israel Resource Cards](#) to learn more.



WAYS TO USE AND ENHANCE

We've provided a few classic recipes that you can try in your culinary program, but why not make it personal?

- > Ask Israeli friends or community members to join and bring one or two of their family's cherished recipes—remind them to keep it simple!—and begin a cooking session by letting them share a story about their family back home in Israel. Then divide participants into groups to cook or bake according to the family recipe. Be sure to leave time for everyone to sample their work!
- > Israelis aren't the only ones who have favorite Israeli food recipes. Anyone can bring a recipe they associate with Israel!
- > Encourage everyone who brings a recipe to bring photos and a story to share. This will allow participants to embrace the food they are cooking as part of a rich tradition. Some of their stories might be adapted for other uses, like storytime or creative writing.



Fun fact

In 2017, Israeli chef Michael Solomonov won the prestigious James Beard award for Outstanding Chef. His restaurants and cookbook reflect an incredible amalgamation of multiple cultures and cuisines that have merged to create a uniquely Israeli kitchen.



Taking it home

Encourage your participants to take their favorite recipes home to make with their families. Remind them that the stories they heard are stories they can share with others.



RECIPE

שקשוקה

SHAKSHUKA



INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp. olive oil
2 tsp tomato paste
2 large red peppers, diced
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp chili powder (mild)
1 tsp paprika
1/4 tsp salt
Pinch of cayenne pepper (or more to taste—spicy!)
5 large very ripe tomatoes, chopped (or 5 cups canned diced tomatoes)
4 large eggs, plus 4 egg yolks
Chopped parsley and/or thick plain yogurt for garnish



*Adapted from Jerusalem: A Cookbook,
by Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi*



Serves 4

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat the olive oil in a large frying pan over medium heat and add the tomato paste, peppers, garlic, spices, and 1/4 tsp salt.

Stir and cook over medium heat for about 8 minutes until the peppers are softened.

Add the tomatoes, bring to a gentle simmer, and cook for 10 minutes until you have a thick sauce. Taste and adjust seasoning.

Make 4 little dips in the sauce. Gently break the eggs and carefully pour each one into its own dip.

Do the same with the yolks. Use a fork to swirl the egg whites a little bit with the sauce, taking care not to break the yolks.

Simmer gently for 8–10 minutes, until the egg whites are set but the yolks are still a bit runny (you can cover the pan with a lid to hasten the process).

Remove from the heat, leave for a couple of minutes to settle, then spoon into individual plates, sprinkle with parsley, garnish with yogurt, and serve with bread on the side!



ABOUT אָפּוואָקש

SHAKSHUKA

NOTES

Nobody can say for sure exactly who invented shakshuka, or when. Its origins may lie in Turkey from the days of the Ottoman Empire, but Moroccans, Tunisians, Libyans, and others all insist that *their* ancestors came up with the spicy, thick, satisfying meal in a skillet.

Hundreds of thousands of Jews who immigrated to Israel from all over the Middle East in the 1950s brought their family recipes with them, and shakshuka quickly became a staple in Israeli cuisine.

Most often eaten for breakfast, it also can be a filling lunch or a light evening meal. Whether you scoop it into fresh pita or sop it up with a chunk of crusty bread, you're sure to love shakshuka.



RECIPE

לימאנענע

MINT LEMONADE



INGREDIENTS

Juice of 3–4 lemons or 10 limes

$\frac{1}{3}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar

6 cups water

3–4 sprigs of fresh mint or 1 tsp dried mint

1 lemon, sliced thin



*Adapted from Aruchot Aruchot,
by Yisrael Aharoni*



Serves 5–6

INSTRUCTIONS

Heat the sugar and 1 cup of water in a pan until the sugar is dissolved.

Place all ingredients in a large pitcher with ice cubes.

Stir well. Wait 10 minutes and serve.

TURN THIS INTO AN ICY, SLUSHY DRINK KNOWN IN ISRAEL AS LIMONANA:

Place the mixture into a blender and blend until the drink has a uniform consistency.

Serve immediately—and be ready for everyone to want seconds!



MINT LEMONADE

NOTES

Israeli summers are hot! Everywhere you go, people will remind you to drink lots of water. Water is good—but why limit yourself to straight H₂O? Mint Lemonade, or limonana, is the ideal thirst-quenching drink that will pick you up and give you energy.

Culinary sources refer to limonana as “Israel’s contribution to the world of slushy summer drinks.” Using the citrus that grows in abundance in Israel and the mint leaves that seem to grow everywhere, people whip up this drink—chilled or frozen—all summer long. You can also make it with dried mint and—if you must—powdered lemonade.



RECIPE

olm

HUMMUS



INGREDIENTS

16 oz can of chickpeas
Juice of 1½ large lemons (about ⅓ cup), more to taste
2 to 4 cloves garlic, grated
1½ tsp kosher salt, more to taste
1 cup sesame tahini paste
½ tsp ground cumin, more to taste
Sweet paprika, for garnish
Olive oil, for serving
Chopped fresh parsley, for garnish



*Adapted from Zahav,
by Michael Solomonov*



Serves 8

INSTRUCTIONS

Drain the chickpeas and place in a bowl.

Make the tahini sauce. In a blender, combine the lemon juice, garlic and ¼ teaspoon salt. Let mixture sit for 10 minutes. Add tahini, 1½ teaspoons salt and the cumin, and blend until a thick paste forms. Add ⅓ to ⅔ cup ice water while blender is running, a little at a time, until sauce is smooth. You're looking for a perfectly smooth, creamy sauce.

Add the drained chickpeas to blender with tahini mixture. Blend until perfectly smooth and not at all grainy, stopping to scrape down sides of bowl occasionally. This blending

may take upward of about 2 minutes; just keep going until the mixture is ultra-creamy and fluffy, adding a little water if you need it to make the contents of the blender move. Taste for seasonings, adding more salt, lemon juice, and/or cumin as needed.

To serve, spread the hummus on a plate, dust with sweet paprika, drizzle with olive oil, and sprinkle with parsley.



HUMMUS

Many people call hummus the national food of Israel. The country is filled with restaurants whose menus feature nothing but plates of hummus with a variety of additions. Hummus can be an appetizer, a side dish, or a meal; it all depends on how hungry you are!

Arab cuisine also features hummus, and Israel and neighboring Arab countries have long tussled over who makes the best hummus. Lebanon even asked the European Union to recognize hummus as a uniquely Lebanese dish—but that hasn't stopped Israeli chefs from competing to win the Guinness Book of World Records' recognition as the makers of the largest platter of hummus. In 2010, 50 Israeli chefs—Jews and Arabs—worked together to win the title with 9000 pounds of hummus. A few months later, a group of Lebanese chefs regained the title with 23,000 pounds of the stuff!

NOTES



RECIPE

סביח

SABICH



INGREDIENTS

2 large eggplants
1¼ cups sunflower oil
4 slices of white bread, toasted; or mini pita
1 cup tahini sauce
4 large eggs, hard boiled, peeled, and cut into thin slices or quartered
Salt and freshly ground pepper
Za'atar, to taste
Israeli salad (see *Israeli salad recipe card*)



*Adapted from Jerusalem: A Cookbook,
by Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi*



Serves 4

INSTRUCTIONS

Cut both eggplants widthwise into 1 inch slices.

Sprinkle them on both sides with salt, then spread them out on a baking sheet and let them stand for at least 30 minutes to remove some water. After 30 minutes, use paper towels to wipe them dry.

Heat the sunflower oil in a wide frying pan over medium heat. Carefully fry the eggplant slices in batches until nice and dark, turning once, 6–8 minutes total. Add oil if needed as you cook the batches.

When done, the eggplant pieces should be tender in the center. Remove from the pan and drain on paper towels.

Just before serving, place 1 slice of bread or pita on each plate. Spoon 1 tbsp of tahini sauce over each slice, then arrange the eggplant slices on top, overlapping.

Drizzle over some more tahini without completely covering the eggplant slices.

Season hard boiled egg slices with salt and pepper and arrange over eggplant.

Sprinkle with za'atar, add Israeli salad on top, and serve!



SABICH

NOTES

When Iraqi Jews immigrated to Israel soon after the establishment of the state, they brought a traditional recipe for a breakfast sandwich called sabich—and somehow they kept it a secret for decades. More than 50 years later, sabich burst onto the Israeli culinary scene as the hottest alternative to falafel.

It's not clear where the name comes from. Writing in Tablet Magazine, Adeena Sussman explains that it's related to the Arabic word for "morning," which makes sense when you realize that Iraqi Jews traditionally enjoy sabich on Shabbat morning. She adds that others insist it's a purely Israeli name coming from the Hebrew *salat, beitz, hatzili*—salad, egg, eggplant. Wherever the name came from, sabich is delicious, and you've got to try it!



RECIPE

פיתה

PITA



INGREDIENTS

1 package dried yeast

1 tsp sugar

1 cup warm water

2½ cups flour

1 tsp salt

1-2 tbsp olive oil

Za'atar, to taste



*Adapted from Olive Oil & Lemons,
by Dina*



Serves 8–10

INSTRUCTIONS

Mix the yeast and sugar with the warm water, and let it sit for ten minutes. The water will dissolve the dry coating around the granules of yeast, releasing the active yeast inside. A bubbly foam will start to form on the surface, which is proof that the yeast is active.

Place a pizza stone or cookie sheet in the oven and heat it up to its highest temperature, about 500°. The oven should be at that temperature for at least 30 minutes before you bake the pita.

Place 2 cups of the flour and the salt in a food processor and pulse a few times to aerate the flour.

When the yeast is ready, pour the liquid over the flour in the food processor and add a tbsp or two of olive oil.

Begin blending the dough just until it is mixed. Add the remaining flour and continue mixing only until it begins to pull together into a mass.

Scrape the sticky dough onto a lightly floured parchment sheet on the counter and bring it together, adding just a little bit of flour as necessary. The dough will be somewhat sticky, but should come together into a soft dough nicely. Knead it a little, gathering it into a soft and shiny ball. Drizzle a little olive oil into a ceramic or glass bowl and place the ball of dough in

it, rolling it around to coat with the oil. Cover with a towel or plastic and let the dough rise until it doubles in size.

When the dough is ready, turn it onto the floured parchment and press to deflate.

Roll the dough with your hands into a cylinder and cut into 8–10 equal portions. No worries if they are not exactly even, a few different size pitas are just fine.

Let the dough rest for 10 minutes to relax the gluten, then with a rolling pin roll out each ball into a circle. The smaller the circle, the puffer the pita. About ⅓ inch thick would make a nice fluffy pita. Let the dough circles rest now until they begin to rise and puff, about 10–15 minutes.

Sprinkle some za'atar on the pita before you bake it. Using your hands—or better yet, a pizza peel—place the pita rounds, two at a time, in the oven and close the door. Within a minute you should see them puff up.

Turn them over once. These pitas are not meant to be golden brown, they remain white with a couple of dark spots here and there. If you over-bake them, they will be dry.

As soon as they are ready, remove from oven, place on a cooling rack, and cover with a damp towel. Repeat with remaining dough.

PITA

Israelis use pita as a holder for just about anything you'd like to eat. Of course, you can fill it with falafel or hummus, but it's also often stuffed with grilled meats, a variety of salads—and even French fries! Restaurants that serve a *mezze*—huge array of tiny plates with salads, spreads, dips, and vegetable delicacies—generally offer bottomless baskets of hot fresh pita, which diners use to scoop up the appetizers.

Baking pita is an adventure, highlighted by watching the round mounds of dough rise up like balloons in the oven. Sometimes they get so big you're sure they're going to pop—but then they don't. Less complicated pita can be baked on a campfire using a traditional *saj*, a sort of upside down wok that is placed over the campfire: flatten a piece of dough and toss it on the *saj* for a couple of minutes till it starts to brown. Dip in olive oil, sprinkle with za'atar and sumac, and eat it while it's hot!

NOTES



RECIPE

סלט ישראלי

ISRAELI SALAD



INGREDIENTS

2–3 mini cucumbers, diced
1 red bell pepper, seeded, veins removed, diced
10 grape tomatoes, quartered, or 1 beefsteak tomato, diced
1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
1 tbsp olive oil
1 tsp dried parsley or 1 tbsp fresh minced parsley
½ tsp salt
½ tsp black pepper
Sumac or Za'atar, to taste
Fresh cilantro or additional parsley, for garnish (optional)



*Adapted from Joy of Kosher,
by Jamie Geller*



Serves 4

INSTRUCTIONS

Combine cucumbers, bell pepper, tomatoes, lemon juice, oil, parsley, salt, and pepper in a medium-sized salad bowl and mix well. Chill for 1 hour.

Just before serving, sprinkle with sumac or za'atar, and garnish with fresh cilantro or parsley, if desired.



ABOUT סלט ישראלי

ISRAELI SALAD

NOTES

In Israel, this fresh delicacy is most often called simply “salad” or “chopped salad.” It’s a close relative of many other traditional salads served throughout the Middle East, and when Jews immigrated to Israel, many brought their own version from Turkey, Iran, and other places. The secret is to chop very fresh tomatoes and cucumbers as finely as possible. In kibbutzim, a salad comprised of tiny pieces is the sign of an accomplished chef, but some people prefer larger chunks. Everybody loves it with a splash of olive oil and a bit of lemon juice.

Israelis eat this salad at any time of day. At breakfast it may be accompanied by a yogurt sauce, while later in the day many like to serve it with sesame-based tahini sauce. A dash of sumac brings out the vegetables’ natural flavors, and this salad is a key ingredient in a wide range of pita-based sandwiches such as falafel, sabich, and shawarma.



RECIPE

מרק חרירה מרוקאי

MOROCCAN HARIRA SOUP



INGREDIENTS

3 yellow onions, finely chopped
1 bunch celery, finely chopped
2 tbsp garlic, finely chopped
2 cups extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp turmeric
1 tbsp paprika
1 tbsp cumin
1 tbsp ginger powder
1 tbsp crushed chili flakes
1 pinch of saffron
Salt and pepper to taste
3 pounds lentils, uncooked
2 gallons vegetable/parve soup stock
1 pound garbanzo beans (chickpeas), cooked firm or 1 can, rinsed and drained
3 cups fresh tomatoes, peeled and chopped
Fresh lemon and chopped cilantro for garnish



Adapted from thekosherkitchen.com:
[http://jewishfoodexperience.com/
recipes/moroccan-harira-soup/](http://jewishfoodexperience.com/recipes/moroccan-harira-soup/)



Serves 50

INSTRUCTIONS

In a large soup pot, sauté onions, celery and garlic in olive oil until onions and garlic soften. Add all the spices, lentils and stock, and stir well. Cook covered on medium heat until tender (about 30 minutes).

Add chickpeas and tomatoes. Simmer on low heat for another 30 minutes or so. Always taste to make sure not to over/under cook. Finish with chopped cilantro and a squeeze of fresh lemon juice.



ABOUT מרק חרירה מרוקאי

MOROCCAN HARIRA SOUP

NOTES

When hundreds of thousands of Jews left Morocco to immigrate to Israel in the late 1940s and 1950s, they brought their traditional recipes for harira soup with them. Actually, it seems like nobody actually had written versions of the recipe; this rich, thick, satisfying soup seems always to be based on insider knowledge passed from generation to generation. Typically made with beef or lamb, this recipe can be adapted to taste, and you can be sure that any Moroccan Jew who sees it will have suggestions about how to make it more like their own!

Harira is a staple for Jews and Arabs in Morocco, and it features in traditional holiday meals for both groups. Jews often eat it to end the Yom Kippur fast, and Muslims enjoy it at the end of each day's fast during Ramadan. In Israel, it has entered the canon of popular foods, often served with a twist that may include a liberal dash of sumac, the juice of fresh limes, and other additions that add an acidic spark. However you make it, you're sure to enjoy it, and be warned: It's so filling that it's a meal in itself.



RECIPE

בורקס

BUREKAS



INGREDIENTS

2 sheets puff pastry
½ cup crumbled feta cheese
⅓ cup grated kashkaval cheese (or substitute another ⅓ cup feta)
⅓ cup ricotta cheese
1 egg
Salt and pepper
1 egg yolk
1 tbsp sesame or poppy seeds for topping (optional)
Nonstick cooking oil spray



Serves 8–10

INSTRUCTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°. Mix feta, kashkaval, ricotta, egg, a pinch of salt and a pinch of black pepper in a large bowl until they are blended (if you're using only feta cheese, don't add salt).

Spread one sheet of puff pastry on a clean, lightly floured surface, and use a rolling pin to roll out the sheet to a 12x12 inch square. Cut it into 9 equal-sized squares, each about 4"x4".

Drop a tbsp of the cheese mix in the center of each dough square. Fold the dough into triangles, and pinch the outer edges to seal. If the dough won't stick, dip your fingers in water and slide it along the edge of the square before folding. It's important that each triangle be sealed tightly.

Do the same with each additional sheet of puff pastry (if you want more than 18 burekas, you can easily double or triple the recipe).

Spray baking sheets with nonstick cooking spray or line with

parchment paper. Place 9 burekas on each sheet, evenly spaced, allowing room for them to expand during baking.

In a small bowl, whisk together the egg yolk and 2 tsp of water. Use a brush to spread a light layer of the egg wash onto the surface of each triangle.

Sprinkle the burekas with sesame or poppy seeds, if desired.

Bake the burekas for about 30 minutes, until golden brown. While you can store them and reheat or eat at room temperature, they'll be best when eaten fresh.



ABOUT בורקס

BUREKAS

NOTES

The Israeli newspaper Ha'aretz compares burekas in Israel to bagels and cream cheese in North American Jewish communities: they're served everywhere and everybody loves them! These flaky pastries were long popular throughout the Ottoman Empire, and Jews who came to Israel from Turkey and Bulgaria introduced them to the Israeli palate. Connoisseurs can tell what burekas are filled with by the shape of the pastry: triangles are filled with cheese; rectangles are filled with potato; crescents are made of a different kind of dough and filled with a different blend of cheeses; and so on.

Israelis eat burekas at any time of day. They're a popular breakfast staple, a favorite on-the-run snack, and they can even be "dressed-up" as an appetizer at weddings and other celebratory meals. Feel free to experiment with them: Add olives and tomato paste and they taste like pizza; a bit of spinach and you'll be convinced they're a health food. Use phyllo dough instead of puff pastry and they become upscale. However you eat them—you'll always enjoy!

