



Like Mama Used to Make was a cook book I received shortly after I was married in 1958 to my husband of fifty nine years, Lou Mervis Z"L. My mother's younger sister, Doris Hulman (nee Miller), gave it to me. Doris was born in Dayton, Ohio in 1923. Her parents, my grandparents immigrated from Lithuania. My grandmother arrived by ship in 1904 when she was only sixteen. She brought three of her younger siblings with her by herself. My grandfather came over sometime during the first decade of the twentieth century, but we do not know exactly when or where from. As a child we used to visit my family in Dayton twice a year. The 286 miles separating Bloomington, IL, when I grew up and Dayton, OH, took about eight hours in the car. It felt like it was a million miles away.

I often use the cookbook to make the delicious chopped liver. It is one of my favorites. I made it twice last week for Jewish friends, who were coming to stay at our summer house. When I make gefilte fish for Passover I use the recipe from this book and combine it with my mother's. It is impossible to obtain the right fish from which to make the gefilte fish in Danville, IL, my home town. I usually order it from a store in Indianapolis. Recently I had a special delivery made from Cincinnati.

I love **Like Mama Used to Make It**. It is a nice and handy Jewish cookbook, with simple instructions that make it easy to follow. I cherish the fact that it was given to me by my aunt, and feel it is helping me carry on my family traditions. It has recipes for dishes my mother and grandmother used to make, and I feel like a 'proper' Jewish woman when making something out of it.

Other than the chopped liver and gefilte fish I also make blintzes for Shavuot, latkes for Hanukkah and kreplach. I hope you enjoy these recipes as much as I do, as well as embracing the long standing food culture and traditions of so many of our parents and grandparent.

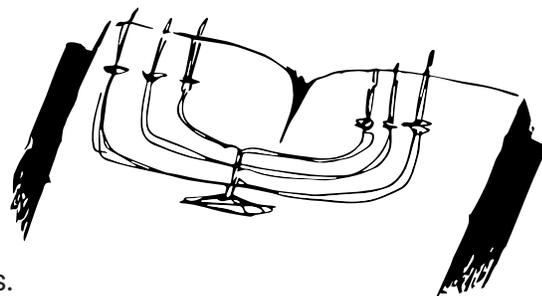
L'Shana Tova
Sybil Stern Mervis



ROSH HASHANAH On the New Year, it is customary to serve apple slices dipped in a bowl of honey, signifying hope for a sweet and happy year. Carrots are served in various forms. They are appropriate because they are sweet and because of the play on words; the Yiddish for carrot, merin, also means to increase or multiply. Thus, they symbolize the wish for prosperity in the ensuing year. They may be used either in tzimmes or a carrot pudding. The Prophet Nehemiah is said to have introduced the Persian custom of eating sweets on this holiday saying, "Eat the fat and drink the sweet." From the Babylonians, the ancient Hebrews borrowed the custom of serving a sheep's head for the main course of the meal, signifying a year at the beginning, the head of the events to come. Another interpretation of this custom is that it commemorates Abraham's sacrifice of the ram instead of his son Isaac.

The Hallah is baked especially in a round shape symbolic of life without end -- a complete year in which there will be no break or interruption. At no time during this holiday are any bitter or sour foods included in the menu. The Rosh Hashanah dinner usually consists of the traditional Jewish holiday delicacies.

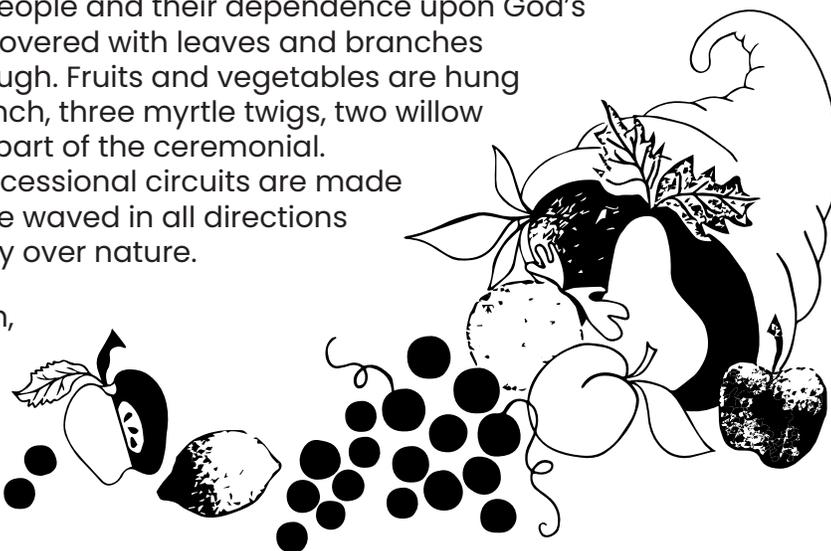
YOM KIPPUR This is the Day of Atonement, the High Holy Day of the year. Fasting is continuous for 24 hours from sundown on the eve of the holiday to sundown on Yom Kippur day. Therefore, on the evening before, it is wise to serve no highly spiced foods. The meal at the end of the fast may be composed of customary Sabbath or holiday dishes.



SUKKOS Sukkos comes next to Passover in the richness of its symbolism. It is the Jewish period of Thanksgiving which occurs during the first harvest in Palestine. During this seven day period Jews also commemorate the forty years wandering of the children of Israel in the wilderness after their deliverance from Egypt. Therefore, they eat, and when possible, sleep in a Sukkah, a temporary shelter, built for this occasion.

The Sukkah symbolizes the exile of Jewish people and their dependence upon God's protection. In place of a roof the Sukkah is covered with leaves and branches sparsely laid to allow the stars to shine through. Fruits and vegetables are hung from the roof. The four species (a palm branch, three myrtle twigs, two willow branches, and a citron) form an important part of the ceremonial. Benedictions are recited over them and processional circuits are made with them in the synagogue. The species are waved in all directions as an acknowledgment of God's sovereignty over nature.

In addition to fruits and vegetables, taiglach, shtrudel, and hot tea are appropriate refreshments. East European Jews include at least one meal of holishkes (stuffed cabbage). This dish is called galutzte in Russia.



HONEY CAKE

Hannah Zwerdling

3 C. flour
1 1/2 t. baking powder
1 t. baking soda
1 t. cinnamon
1/2 t. mixed spices

1/2 t. ginger
1/4 t. salt
1 C. strong coffee
1 C. honey

1 C. shortening
4 eggs separated
1 C. brown sugar
1/2 lemon juice and rind

Sift dry ingredients. Cream shortening and sugar. Add four egg yolks and honey and mix well. Then add flour and coffee alternating. Add juice of the lemon and a little rind and beat well. Beat egg whites until stiff and fold in.

Put into 2 greased loaf pans which have been sprinkled with flour. Bake at 350° for one hour.

MOTHER'S HALLAH

Ethel Benjamin

This recipe makes two medium sized loaves. It can also be used for other breads and rolls.

5 heaping C. flour
1 cake yeast
3 Tb. sugar
1/2 C. lukewarm water
2 Tb. oil

1/2 Tb. salt
1 egg
1 C. water
*sprinkle of nutmeg and
ginger (optional)

Make a well in the flour. Crumble yeast into well with 1 Tb. of sugar and the 1/2 C. lukewarm water. Sprinkle some of the flour lightly over the ingredients in the well. and let stand to rise for a couple of hours. After first rising, add 2 Tb. of oil and the salt. Sprinkle with nutmeg and ginger, if desired. Add egg and remaining sugar. Mix thoroughly and add approximately 1 C. of water until flour mixture is completely absorbed. Mix well and let rise again for 1/2 hour.

Flour a board and knead dough until fairly hard. Shape into loaf or braid and place in a pan floured on the bottom only. Brush tops with melted butter or beaten egg before baking. Bake at 350° until medium brown.

Hallah is literally that portion of dough used in baking which according to the law was to be separated and dedicated to God. During the time when the Temple was in existence it was given to the Priest. Afterwards the custom developed of throwing a piece of raw dough into the fire to symbolize what formerly went to the Priest. Since the kneading of the dough was done by a woman, it was one of the few duties which developed upon them exclusively, such as lighting the Sabbath lamps. It was a frequent custom to accompany the separation of the Hallah by making a gift for this purpose "Hallah boxes" were often placed in Jewish kitchens and the money collected in them generally sent to Palestine. From its connection with the piece of dough, the term Hallah has come to be applied to the Sabbath or holiday loaf of bread.

