

The Family Charoset

by Francesca Kuehlers

as featured in *On All Other Nights, In All Other Places*

This is a recipe for charoset, a delicious, sweet condiment. Prepared as written, it produces about 1 ½ C, enough for roughly 8-12 servings. It will last in the refrigerator for 4-5 days in an airtight container.

Note that this recipe needs to be prepared at least 1 day in advance.

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Ingredients

- 3 tart or semi-tart apples, like Granny Smith or Elstar
 - 1 ½ tsp ground cinnamon
 - 1 Tbsp honey
 - ½ C sweet kosher wine or grape juice
 - ½ C walnuts
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Instructions

Prep

- Wash, peel, and roughly chop the apples.

Step One

Chop everything up. Use a knife or a food processor to chop the apples and nuts as small as you like. Some families keep the apples in long matchsticks, reminiscent of straw; you can also blitz the apples until they resemble chunky applesauce, and knife-chop the walnuts relatively finely.

Step Two

Mix in the other ingredients. Let sit, covered and refrigerated, for at least 24 hours before serving.

Serve

Generously. Spread it on your matzah, mix it with yogurt, eat it plain.

Charoset is a symbolic seder food—but it doesn't have to carry that meaning. When you eat it outside the context of a seder, charoset can be just a delicious condiment. Feel free to make this recipe whether you observe Passover or not.

Recommended substitutions and modifications

- **A note from Francesca.** This recipe is my family's version of an Ashkenazi charoset. Ashkenazi Jews have roots in Eastern Europe; our recipes and traditions are based on ingredients found in those regions. Sephardi Jews, meanwhile, have roots around the Mediterranean. Sephardi charosets are based on dried fruits like dates or raisins, and might use almonds or other nuts. Jews around the world all have their own fruit-and-nut mixes that make the most of what's local, and they're all just as "right" as mine.
 - **Level up.** Toast your walnuts in a dry pan until fragrant, 1-2 minutes.
 - **Less sugar.** To reduce the sugar content of your charoset, leave out the honey and use apples that are naturally sweeter, rather than tart apples. You can also substitute in a ripe pear for one of the apples to enhance the sweetness of the recipe. Reduced-sugar grape juice is also available at most grocery stores.
 - **Vary the spices.** Try cloves, nutmeg, allspice, or cardamom.
 - **Scale it up or down** according to your needs.
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Don't forget: care for yourself and the people around you. Believe that the world can be better than it is now. Never give up.

