

CHANUKAH RECIPES

Compiled by the CJC Chanukah Working Group in 2020

Desserts begin on pp. 7

In celebration of the oil lasting 8 nights, Jews traditionally eat deep-fried foods during Chanukah. But what these foods are varies across time and space. Below are a few recipes for you to try at home, from across the Jewish diaspora.

Latkes, a little history:

According to Jeremy Umansky at Larder, the latke's origins go back to Italy. In 1492, when Sephardi Jews were expelled from Spain, some of them settled in Rome. Around this time, Ashkenazi Jews in Rome started cooking a latke, probably influenced by their Sephardi siblings, made from ricotta and flour, fried in olive oil. A few hundred years later, in the late 18th- or early 19th- century, this ricotta latke was adapted in Eastern Europe into the potato latke many of us are more familiar with.

Below are 2 latke recipes, a ricotta latke, and a potato latke, from Jeremy Umansky. These latkes are very different from each other, but they are united

by the facts that both are shaped like a pancake and fried in fat. At Larder, Jeremy has tried to recreate what these recipes would have been originally, using ingredients that would have been available in Italy in the 15th century and in Eastern Europe in the 18th/19th centuries. He writes:

“I’ve built my career as a zymologist and chef who works to uncover and repopularize forgotten foods and the traditions surrounding them because what starts with an incorrect ingredient in a recipe can, over time, lead to more broad-reaching revisionist portrayals of peoples, places, and events. This is a dangerous road to travel, one that can ultimately belittle, degrade, and downplay our collective past.”

To read Jeremy's own description of the history and his process of recipe recreation:

<https://ediblecleveland.com/stories/winter-2018/latkes>

15th-century latkes

by Jeremy Umansky

This is the ricotta-based latke that I developed to emulate a

15th-century cook's recipe. It is easy to make, but requires at least two days to complete, since it relies on the wild yeasts in your home for fermentation. The nature of those yeasts varies, so you should plan to mix up the starter and let it sit overnight to ferment. On the second day, you'll mix the starter into a batter and allow that to continue fermenting for several hours before it's ready to be cooked into latkes.

The magical thing about working with a starter is that you can reserve a bit of the fermented batter to mix into a new starter for the next batch of latkes. Keep this bit of batter in the refrigerator until you plan to use it. This process mimics the Hanukkah story in which one small container of lamp oil, enough for one night, burned for eight days. If taken care of, this starter can last a generation or more.

Makes about 24 silver dollar-size latkes

For the starter

¼ cup durum flour*
¼–½ cup warm water
1 tablespoon honey

For the batter

2 eggs, lightly beaten
1 tablespoon honey
1 cup ricotta cheese
¼ teaspoon salt
1 cup durum flour*
½ cup warm water (or more as needed)

For frying

¼–1 cup olive oil

*Look for durum flour at your local Italian import market.

To make the starter: Place the three ingredients into a small bowl and mix well. Cover the bowl with a piece of cheesecloth and let the starter sit in a warm spot for 24 hours or more until you notice that bubbles have started to appear. You'll know the starter is ready when it smells slightly of alcohol or like a yeasty sourdough bread. If there's no aroma or bubbles, your starter might need another day to ferment. Fermentation time can vary widely from home to home due to a variety of factors such as temperature and the type of water you use.

To make the batter: Scrape the fermented starter into a mixing bowl, add the remaining batter ingredients, and mix until

thoroughly combined. Add more water as needed to make a creamy, runny batter. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let sit in a warm spot for 2–4 hours (or longer) to further ferment. You'll know the batter is ready when it smells like the starter and has tiny bubbles throughout.

To fry the latkes: Place a cast-iron or other appropriate skillet on the stovetop and add enough olive oil to completely cover the bottom of the pan to about ⅛-inch deep. Heat until oil reaches roughly 325°. Turn your oven on low and prepare a paper towel-lined plate in the oven to receive the fried latkes. Using a tablespoon, carefully drop portions of the batter into the oil to fry. Do this in batches so the latkes are not crowded. Fry on each side until golden brown, moving the cooked latkes to the plate in the oven to stay warm as fry the rest. Add more olive oil to the skillet as needed. Serve warm or let cool to reheat later.

Storage: The cooked latkes can be kept for up to a week in the refrigerator or frozen for up to six months in case you want to reheat and enjoy them later.

Larder latkes

by Jeremy Umansky

These latkes are all about the potato. Our favorite to use for this recipe is the Carola, an extremely buttery-tasting potato with a creamy, waxy flesh. There are several farmers in the Cleveland area who grow Carola potatoes and sell them at the Shaker Square North Union Farmers Market, but nearly any potato could suffice should you not be able to source Carola.

At Larder, we par-cook the potatoes in the oven to gelatinize the starch inside. This makes the flesh of the potato incredibly sticky and enables you to forgo the use of flour, eggs, or other binders. We prefer to fry these latkes in either chicken or duck schmaltz, but feel free to use olive oil or any oil of your choice.

Makes approximately ten 3-inch diameter latkes

2 large Carola potatoes
1 pint schmaltz
Salt to taste

Preheat oven to 350°. Place potatoes on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove the potatoes

from the oven and allow them to cool just enough to handle, about 15 minutes. Grate the still-warm potatoes on a box grater or with a food processor, and season with salt to taste.

Heat the schmaltz over medium heat to 350° using a thermometer for accuracy. Form the shredded potatoes into patties roughly the size of your palm and no more than ½-inch thick. Fry the latkes in the schmaltz until they are golden brown on both sides. If the latkes are not completely submerged in the schmaltz, you will have to flip them.

Once they are brown on both sides, remove the latkes from the schmaltz and drain on a paper towel-lined plate before serving.

Keftes de Prassas

(Sephardi Leek Pancakes)

Adapted from "The Foods of Israel Today" by Joan Nathan

YIELD 12-16 LARGE FRITTERS

Ingredients:

6 leeks (about 2 pounds)
1 1/2 teaspoons salt, plus more to taste
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, plus 1/4 cup for frying
1 large onion, diced

4 shallots diced
6 cloves garlic, minced
1/3 cup pine nuts, lightly toasted
1/2 bunch cilantro, chopped (about 1 cup)
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
1/3 cup grated Kashkeval or Parmesan cheese
A few grinds of pepper
1/2 cup bread crumbs or matzoh meal, plus 1/3 cup for coating

Directions:

Bring a large pot of water to boil. While it is heating, slice the leeks lengthwise and wash well to remove the grit. Add 1 teaspoon salt and leeks to the boiling water, turn down the heat, and simmer for 5 minutes. Remove and cool. Dice the white and the tender, light-green part of the leeks into small pieces, about 1/2-inch thick. Drain well, pressing the leeks in a dish towel to remove any excess water. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a frying pan, and add the onions, garlic, shallots and 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Saute until soft, about 10 minutes, stirring frequently to prevent sticking.

Place the leeks, onions, garlic, shallots, pine nuts, cilantro, eggs and cheese in a mixing bowl and blend well, adding salt and pepper to taste. Add about 1/2

cup breadcrumbs, or enough to bind the ingredients together.

Take about 1/4 cup of the leek mixture, and form a thin, round patty. Coat each patty with breadcrumbs, and repeat until all the batter is used up.

Coat a nonstick frying pan evenly with some of the remaining olive oil, and fry the patties a few at a time, for 2 or 3 minutes on each side. Drain on paper towels.

Briks A L'oeuf

(Tunisian Fried Tuna "Cigars")
Adapted from "Saffron Shores:
Jewish Cooking of the Southern
Mediterranean" by Joyce
Goldstein

MAKES EIGHT

Ingredients:

1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more
for deep frying
1 onion, chopped
12 ounces canned tuna, drained
and mashed
2 tablespoons fresh flat-leaf
parsley, chopped
1 or 2 tablespoons fresh lemon
juice
Salt and freshly ground pepper to
taste
Pinch of cayenne pepper or
harissa

2 tablespoons capers, rinsed and
chopped
8 sheets square egg roll wrappers
or filo dough
8 small eggs (if small eggs are
hard to find, the yolk of a
medium egg works well)
1 egg white lightly beaten

Directions:

In a medium saucepan or skillet,
heat the 1 tablespoon olive oil
over medium heat. Saute the
onion until soft, about 10
minutes. Let cool slightly and
mix with the tuna. Add the
parsley, lemon juice, salt, pepper,
cayenne or harissa and capers.

If using egg roll wrappers, place
equal parts of filling on each one,
spoon a depression into the
filling and break an egg into each
depression. Brush the edges of
the wrapper with egg white, and
fold the top flap down over the
filling. Then fold in the left and
right flaps, and finally, the
bottom flap, making sure to
overlap edges. If using filo, brush
each sheet with oil, place the
filling in the middle, and then
fold in half, leaving one inch on
either side. Brush the edges with
egg white. Fold the left side and
then the right, and then fold up
the bottom third to cover.

In a deep saucepan or a wok, heat 3 inches of oil to 365 degrees. Deep fry briks in small batches until crisp and golden. Using a slotted spoon or wire skimmer, transfer to paper towels to drain. Serve hot.

Lift Meh'lee

(Syrian Fried Turnips)

Adapted from "A Fistful of Lentils: Syrian Jewish Recipes from Grandma Fritzie's Kitchen," by Jennifer Felicia Abadi

SERVES FOUR

Ingredients:

4 large turnips, peeled
Salt
3-4 tablespoons olive oil, as needed
6 pita breads, cut into wedges

Directions:

Cut off the stems of the turnips and discard. Cut each turnip in half lengthwise and then into slices about 1/8-inch thick to resemble semicircles. Place in a colander and sprinkle with an even layer of salt. Let drain over a bowl for 1 hour. Blot on paper towels to remove excess moisture.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat for 1 minute, and then add a single layer of the

turnip slices. Cook, turning turnip pieces occasionally, until the turnips are fork tender and mahogany brown around the edges. Drain on paper towels. Add more oil if necessary, and fry the remaining turnips. Serve in pita bread wedges.

Sephardi Fried Artichokes

From Andree Levy Abramoff

Ingredients:

8 medium artichokes
1 lemon
4 cloves garlic, very finely minced
1 teaspoon hot red pepper flakes
1/2 cup chopped parsley (packed)
2 tablespoons kosher salt
Oil for deep frying
1/2 cup red wine vinegar

Directions:

1. Cut off stems flush with each artichoke and trim off coarse outer leaves. With sharp knife slice off about 1 inch of top of each artichoke and, using scissors, snip prickly points off leaves. Rub cut areas with half the lemon. Then juice lemon.

2. Bring kettle of salted water to boil. Add lemon juice and artichokes. When water returns to boil, cover and cook over

medium heat 20 to 25 minutes, until artichokes are tender and a leaf can be removed easily. Drain artichokes upside down until cool.

3. Combine garlic, hot pepper, parsley and salt.

4. When artichokes have cooled remove fuzzy choke and center leaves from each by gently spreading center of artichoke open and pulling out choke or scooping it out with spoon.

5. Fill each artichoke with parsley mixture, tucking it between the leaves and in center. Set aside or refrigerate until 1/2 hour before serving.

6. Heat oil for deep frying to depth of 2 or 3 inches in deep saucepan, deep fryer or wok. When oil has reached 375 degrees fry artichokes for 30 seconds each, until leaves begin to curl. Drain briefly on paper towels.

7. Sprinkle each with tablespoon of red wine vinegar and serve.

Sufganiyot (Hebrew) / **Pontshke** (Yiddish)

From Barbara Rolek

These donuts originated in Germany in the late 15th century. Now popular in Israel, they are the same as the Polish donut called *Pączki* (punch-ky) eaten on Mardi Gras.

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups milk (warm, about 110 F)

2 packages active dry yeast

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup butter

1 large egg

3 large egg yolks

1 tablespoon brandy (or rum)

1 teaspoon salt

4 1/2 to 5 cups all-purpose flour

1 gallon oil (for deep frying)

Optional: confectioners' sugar

Optional: fruit paste (or jam, for filling)

Directions:

Add yeast to warm milk. Stir to dissolve and set aside.

In a large bowl or stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream together the sugar and butter until fluffy.

Beat in egg, egg yolks, brandy or rum, and salt until well incorporated.

Still using the paddle attachment, add 4 1/2 cups flour alternately with the milk-yeast mixture and beat for 5 or more minutes by machine and longer by hand until smooth. (Old-fashioned directions call for beating the dough with a wooden spoon until it blisters.) The dough will be very slack. If it's too soft, add remaining 1/2 cup flour, but no more.

Place dough in a greased bowl. Turn to grease the other side. Cover and let rise until doubled in bulk, anywhere from 1 to 2 1/2 hours.

Punch down and let rise again. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Pat or roll to 1/2-inch thickness. Cut rounds with a 3-inch biscuit cutter close together so you will have fewer scraps. Remove scraps, and re-roll and re-cut.

Cover and let rounds rise until doubled in bulk, 30 minutes or longer, before frying.

In a large skillet or Dutch oven, heat oil to 350 F. Place the risen donuts top-side down (the dry side) in the oil a few at a time and fry 2 to 3 minutes or until bottom is golden brown.

Flip them over and fry another 1 to 2 minutes or until golden brown. Make sure the oil doesn't get too hot so the exterior doesn't brown before the interior is done. Test a cool one to make sure it's cooked through. Adjust cooking time and oil heat accordingly.

Drain donuts on paper towels or brown paper bags.

Roll in confectioners' sugar while still warm. If you want to fill them, poke a hole in the side of the donuts and, using a pastry bag, squeeze in a generous dollop of the filling of choice. Then dust filled donuts with confectioners' sugar.

Pontshke don't keep well, so be sure to gobble them up the same day you make them for the best taste, or freeze them. Enjoy!

Loukoumades (Λουκουμάδες)
(Greek Honey Donuts)

Equipment:

oil thermometer (it's okay if you don't have one, just be mindful of not making the oil too hot)
deep pot
slotted metal spoon

Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp salt
2 tbsp sugar
1 tsp active dry yeast
8 ounces water plus 1 tablespoon water
vegetable oil for frying
1/2 cup vegetable oil or olive oil for dipping spoon into
For the topping:
1/2 cup honey you can also use more
ground cinnamon, to taste
chopped walnuts, to taste
optional

Instructions:

In a large bowl whisk together the flour, salt and sugar and set aside.

In a medium sized bowl combine the warm water and the yeast. Stir and set aside for approximately 5 - 10 minutes. You will see bubbling on the surface indicating that your yeast is still active.

Slowly pour the yeast and water mixture into the bowl with the flour and use your hands to mix everything together. The dough will be very sticky. Mix just enough to ensure that there is no dry flour left in the bowl and that the dough is uniform; do not

over mix. Cover with plastic wrap and cover with a clean towel. Set aside in a warm place for about 2 hours, until the dough has more than doubled in size.

When your dough is ready heat a good amount of vegetable oil in a deep but not too large pot. Your oil should be about 3 - 4 inches deep.

Use an oil thermometer to ensure that your oil reaches, but does not surpass, 325 degrees Fahrenheit.

Now you are ready to shape your loukoumades. Take a teaspoon and dip it into a small container filled with either vegetable oil or olive oil.

With your non-dominant hand grab a fist full of dough and squeeze some dough through the space created by your thumb and forefinger (also called first or index finger).

With your dominant hand use the teaspoon to cut off a piece of that dough and drop it into the hot oil. Repeat, dipping your spoon into the oil each time. Do not overcrowd your pot; your loukoumades need space to cook as you stir them around with a

slotted spoon and you also don't want to reduce your oil temperature too much by adding in too many loukoumades at a time.

Stir your loukoumades around with a slotted spoon for several minutes until they are golden brown all over.

When done, transfer to a paper towel lined plate or bowl and repeat until all the dough has been used.

When the loukoumades are all done, heat the honey in the microwave or a small pot until it is easy to pour. Pour over the loukoumades (use as much honey as you like) and then sprinkle them with ground cinnamon and chopped walnuts if desired.

Zengoula with Lemon Syrup (Iraqi Funnel Cake)

From Amelia Saltsman's cookbook *The Seasonal Jewish Kitchen*

Amelia writes in her book: "Also known as jalabi, these crisp fritters, or funnel cakes, were adopted by Iraqi Jews centuries ago as the perfect fried food to celebrate the miracle of

Hanukkah. Traditionally soaked in sugar syrup, they are infinitely more wonderful when infused with a tangy lemon syrup (in spring or summer, dip them in Rose Geranium Syrup). It takes only a few minutes to whisk together the forgiving batter the night before you want to serve zengoula, and the pastries can be fried early in the day you want to serve them. Or, make the frying a Hanukkah party activity. My cousin Elan Garonzik has vivid memories of our grandmother turning out perfect coils, which is how they're sold at Arab bakeries like Moutran in Nazareth and Jaffa. That takes a bit of practice. Free-form Rorschach-like shapes—seahorses, dolphins, geese—that magically appear as they bubble up in the hot oil are just as delicious. You will need to begin this recipe at least six hours before you want to serve the zengoula."

Ingredients:

For the syrup:

2 to 3 lemons

1/2 cup (120 milliliters) water

1 cup (200 grams) sugar

For the dough and for frying:

1 1/8 teaspoons (1/2 package)

active dry yeast

1 1/4 cups (300 milliliters) warm water (100° F to 110° F), divided
1 cup (125 grams) all-purpose flour
3/4 cup (95 grams) cornstarch
Scant 1/2 teaspoon salt
2 quarts mild oil with medium-high smoke point, such as grapeseed, sunflower, or avocado, for deep-frying

Directions:

For the syrup:

Using a five-hole zester, remove the zest from 1 of the lemons in long strands. Halve and squeeze enough lemons to yield 1/3 cup (75 milliliters) juice.

In a small pot, stir together the lemon juice and zest, water, and sugar over medium heat. Bring to a boil and cook, stirring frequently, until the sugar is completely dissolved and clear, about 1 minute. Pour into a pie pan and let cool.

The syrup can be made 1 day ahead, covered, and refrigerated.

For the dough and for frying:

In a small bowl, stir together the yeast and 1/4 cup (60 milliliters) of the warm water and let stand in a warm place until the mixture bubbles, about 10 minutes.

In a medium bowl, using a fork, stir together the flour, cornstarch, and salt. Stir in 1/2 cup (120 milliliters) of the warm water and the yeast mixture. Then slowly stir in enough of the remaining 1/2 cup (120 milliliters) warm water until the dough is lump-free and the consistency of thick pancake batter. You should have 1 1/2 to 2 cups (360 to 480 milliliters) batter.

Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate until doubled in bulk, at least 6 hours and up to 24 hours. The dough will be loose and spongy and have a yeasty aroma.

To make the fritters: Scrape the dough into a 1-gallon (4-liter) resealable plastic bag or large pastry bag fitted with a 1/4-inch (6-millimeter) plain pastry tip and set the bag in a bowl for support. Let the dough stand for about 30 minutes before frying. Line a large plate with paper towels. Place the prepared plate, tongs, a small spider or slotted spoon, the syrup, and a tray to hold the finished fritters near the stove.

Pour the oil to a depth of 3 1/2 inches (8 1/2 centimeters) into a 4- or 5-quart (4- or 5-liter) pot,

wok, or electric fryer and heat to 375° F. If using a plastic bag for the dough, snip 1/4 inch (6 millimeters) off one of the bottom corners, cutting on the diagonal, to create a piping tip. Roll the top of the pastry bag closed to move the batter toward the opening. Don't worry about air pockets.

Pipe a bit of the batter into the hot oil. The oil should bubble around the batter immediately. If it does not, continue heating the oil and try again.

Pipe the dough into the hot oil, creating 3- to 4-inch (7 1/2- to 10-centimeter) coils or squiggles, letting gravity help push the batter out. Be careful not to crowd the pan. Fry the dough, turning over at the halfway point, until bubbled, golden, and crisp, 4 to 5 minutes total.

Use a spider or slotted spoon to fish the fritters out of the oil, drain them briefly on the towel-lined plate, and then drop them into the syrup for a moment or two, turning them to coat evenly. Lift them out of the syrup and transfer them to the tray in a single layer to cool.

Repeat with the remaining batter, skimming any loose bits of dough from the hot oil between batches to prevent burning. Scrape any batter that escaped into the bowl back into the pastry bag to make more pastries.

The cooled pastries can be piled on a platter. Pour any remaining syrup over the top.

The fritters taste best served the same day they are made, although they will hold their crispness overnight. Store loosely covered at room temperature.

Zoulbia with Rose Cardamom Sauce

(Iranian Crispy Funnel Cake)
From Tannaz Sassooni

This is a yeast-based batter, so allow time for it to rise. If you are working with children, take great care in the frying step, as the hot oil may spatter. You can buy plastic squeeze bottles from restaurant supply stores, or even from stores like Target, but in a pinch, an empty plastic shampoo, dish soap, or ketchup bottle with a narrow opening, thoroughly cleaned, works fine. Leave out the yogurt for a non-dairy version of this dessert.

The batter is very tangy – from the combination of yogurt and baking powder, the latter of which also imparts a distinct saltiness. All of this balances the sweetness of the syrup.

Batter:

1 cup flour
1 cup water
1 Tbs baking powder
2 Tbs yogurt (optional)
1 package active dry yeast

Syrup:

1 cup water
2 cup sugar
1 Tbs honey
dash cardamom
1/4 C rosewater

Vegetable, corn, or canola oil to fry

Mix together batter ingredients. Let sit for 1 hour.

To make syrup, combine first four ingredients in a small saucepan over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar is completely dissolved. Remove from heat and stir in rosewater

Fill squeeze bottle with batter.

Fill a large pan with a 1-inch layer of oil. Heat over medium-high

heat until a drop of water dropped into the oil sizzles. Squeeze out batter into hot oil, creating spirals and free-form designs, but maintaining a generally circular shape. The end result should be lacy and not too heavy, so try to squeeze out enough batter to maintain the zoulbia's structure, but not too much to make a solid mass. Fry for a few minutes, flipping or submerging to fry both sides, until deep golden brown. Using tongs or two forks, carefully remove zoulbia from pan and shake off excess oil. Lower gently into syrup, quickly submerge and remove. Continue making zoulbia with remaining batter, adding oil as necessary. Cool on a rack in a single layer.

**Burmuelos/Buñuelos/
Bimuelos with Honey**

(Sephardi Donuts)

Recipe from Leni Lamarche

SERVES EIGHT TO TWELVE

Ingredients:

1 package/2 teaspoons dried yeast
2 1/4 cups warm water
1/2 teaspoon sugar
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 cups flour
1 tablespoon canola or vegetable oil, plus more for frying

3/4 cup honey
3 tablespoons water

Directions:

Dissolve the yeast and the sugar in 1/2 cup of warm water. Let rest and then check to make sure the yeast is active - it should have developed small bubbles on its surface. If so, mix in the remaining water, and then stir in salt and the flour 1/2 cup at a time. Stir in the oil and continue stirring by hand until the mixture is smooth. The dough will be wobbly and sticky. Cover the bowl and let it rest in a warm, draft-free spot for at least 1 hour, or until the dough has doubled in volume.

Heat 3-4 inches of oil to 365 degrees in an electric fryer or a heavy-bottomed saucepan. (A piece of dough tossed into the oil should bubble furiously and develop a little within 30 seconds.) Have ready a small bowl of water. Dip hands into the water, shake off the excess and grab a piece of dough, approximately 2 tablespoons in volume. Work the dough into a ball. If you want, poke a hole through the center. Don't worry about making the shape perfect. Carefully lay it in the oil. Repeat 2 or 3 times, making sure not to

crowd the fritters. Cook about 1 1/2 minutes on each side, until the fritters are light amber brown all around. Remove to paper towels to drain. Finish cooking the rest of the dough in this manner.

Heat the honey and the water until they are blended and hot. Arrange the fritters on a plate, and drizzle honey generously on them all, or dip individual fritters into the honey sauce. Serve immediately.