

# Recipes: Around the world on a magic charoset ride

BY [JUDY ZEIDLER](#) | [MAR 30, 2017](#) | [PASSOVER FOOD](#)

One of the mainstays of the seder plate is charoset, usually a mixture of fruit, nuts, wine and spices. This mixture is chopped and ground together to resemble the mortar that was used by the Jews when we were slaves in Egypt.

Depending on the ingredients available, it is prepared differently in Jewish communities all over the world. Many people are familiar with the central European version, which consists of apples, walnuts, raisins, cinnamon and wine. Israeli charoset, on the other hand, may include peanuts, bananas, apples, dates, wine and a little matzo meal.

During a recent trip to Cuba, we discovered that... Cuban Jews [use] a simple mixture of matzo and wine for their charoset. Yemenite charoset is made with dates and dried figs and is spiced with coriander and chilies.

## *YEMENITE CHAROSET*

- 1 cup pitted dates, chopped
- 1/2 cup dried figs, chopped
- 1/3 cup sweet Passover wine
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- Pinch of coriander
- 1 small red chili pepper, seeded and minced, or pinch of cayenne
- 2 tablespoons matzo meal
- 3 tablespoons sesame seeds

In a large bowl, combine the dates, figs and wine. Add the ginger, coriander, minced red chili pepper and matzo meal and blend thoroughly. Add sesame seeds and roll into 1-inch balls. *Makes about 1 1/2 cups or 20 balls.*

## *GREEK CHAROSET*

- 2 cups pitted dates
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup sweet Passover wine
- 1 cup walnuts, ground
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

Place the dates and raisins in a bowl and blend with the wine. Add the walnuts and ginger and blend well. Shape into a pyramid. *Makes 2 1/2 to 3 cups.*

## *TURKISH CHAROSET*

- 1/2 cup dried apricots
- 2 cups apples, peeled, cored and sliced
- 1/2 cup pitted dates
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 cup walnuts, chopped

In a small saucepan, combine the apricots, apples, dates, lemon juice and enough water to cover the mixture. Cook until tender, about 10 to 15 minutes. Drain and mash with a fork, blending thoroughly. Mix in the walnuts. Spoon into a serving bowl or roll into balls. *Makes about 2 cups or 24 balls.*

## *CENTRAL EUROPEAN CHAROSET*

- 2 apples, unpeeled, cored and finely chopped
- 1 cup walnuts, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 cup sweet Passover wine

Combine the apples, walnuts, honey and cinnamon in a bowl and mix well. Add enough wine to bind the mixture. Serve in a bowl or roll into 1-inch balls and arrange on a serving plate. *Makes about 2 1/2 cups or about 20 balls.*

## *ISRAELI CHAROSET*

- 2 apples, peeled, cored and chopped
- 2 bananas, chopped
- Juice and zest of 1/2 lemon
- Juice and zest of 1/2 orange
- 15 dates, pitted and chopped
- 1/2 cup peanuts or pistachio nuts, ground
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 cup sweet Passover wine
- 5 tablespoons matzo meal

In a large bowl, combine the apples, bananas, lemon and orange juice and zests, dates and peanuts and mix well. Add the cinnamon, wine and matzo meal and blend thoroughly.     *Makes 3 1/2 cups.*

## *CALIFORNIA CHAROSET*

- 1 large avocado, peeled, pit removed and diced
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- 1/2 cup sliced almonds
- 1/3 cup raisins
- 4 seedless dates
- 2 figs or prunes
- 1 whole orange, zest and sections

- 2 tablespoons apple juice
- 2 tablespoons matzo meal

Toss the avocado and lemon juice in a bowl; set aside.

In a processor or blender, place the almonds, raisins, dates and figs. Process until coarsely chopped. Add the orange zest and orange sections and process briefly to combine. Add the avocado and process 1 or 2 seconds more. Transfer the mixture to a glass bowl and gently fold in the apple juice and matzo meal. Cover with plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator. *Makes about 3 cups.*

## ***SEPHARDIC CHAROSET*** ***(Island of Rhodes)***

- 1/2 cup dates, pitted
- 2 cups apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup dried apricots
- 1/2 cup walnuts, chopped

In medium saucepan, combine the dates, apples and dried apricots. Add enough water to cover. Over high heat, bring the mixture to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer until the mixture is tender enough to mash with a fork. Place the mixture in a processor and process, turning on and off the processor until the mixture is blended. Do not puree. Just before serving, fold in the walnuts. *Makes about 2 1/2 cups.*

## *ITALIAN CHAROSET*

- 2 apples, unpeeled, cored and coarsely chopped
- 6 dates, finely chopped
- 1 hard-boiled egg, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup almonds, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup walnuts, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup raisins, finely chopped
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 to 2 tablespoons matzo meal

In a large bowl, combine the apples, dates, egg, almonds, walnuts and raisins and blend thoroughly. Add the lemon juice and enough matzo meal to bind the mixture. Mound the charoset in a bowl or roll it into 1-inch balls and arrange on a plate.   *Makes about 2 1/2 cups or 20 balls.*

## *PERSIAN CHAROSET*

- 1 pear, unpeeled, cored and finely chopped
- 1 apple, unpeeled, cored and finely chopped
- 1 cup walnuts, finely chopped
- 1 cup almonds, finely chopped
- 1 cup hazelnuts, finely chopped
- 1 cup pistachio nuts, finely chopped
- 1 cup dates, chopped
- 1 cup raisins, chopped
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger

- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 to 2 tablespoons sweet Passover wine

In a large bowl, combine the pear, apple, walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, pistachio nuts, dates and raisins. Mix well. Add the ginger, cinnamon, vinegar and enough wine to bind the mixture. Transfer to a platter, shape into a pyramid, cover with plastic wrap and chill well.

*Makes 5 cups*

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