



YIDDISH NEW YORK 2020

# Memories of the Yiddish Kitchen

Curated by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett.

# Contributors

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- JENNIFER WOLLOCK** Mother's Nut Pie, Apple Rolls, The Cherry Strudel
- ISABELLE ROZENBAUMAS** Memories
- MAIA & JONATHAN BRUMBERG-KRAUS** Bobe's Apple Pie, Bobe's Gefilte Fish Recipe
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## Curator's Note

The cookbook you have before you is the result of a unique collaboration. Participants in Yiddish New York 2020 were invited to bring recipes and memories to a special session, "Memories of the Yiddish Kitchen."

This cookbook has been assembled from those materials: photographs, scribbled lists of ingredients on scraps of paper, some in English, others in Yiddish, stained recipe cards, carefully typed recipes, instructions in notebooks, and newspaper clippings - and from the memories associated with these dishes and those who made them.

Unable to gather during the pandemic, one extended family, stranded in many different locations, "shared" their beloved grandmother's apple cake on Facebook; each family baked the cake according to her recipe and posted the results on Facebook. A grandmother's cherry strudel made such an indelible impression on a young boy that, as adult, he immortalized this memory in an illustrated booklet. Recipes written in Yiddish in a recycled address book migrated with one family from the Soviet Union through Poland, Vienna, and Italy, to France and then America. Even memories of indifferent cooks and their uninspired recipes have made it into our cookbook, because what matters is the person being remembered. Some memories are connected to kitchen utensils, others to the names of dishes in Russian, Yiddish, and English.

The recipes in this cookbook have not been tested, but the memories can be trusted. They have been immortalized in the stories we tell, the dishes we cook, the meals we share, even when we are distant from one another, and in the instructions recorded on cards and in notebooks.

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett



# Feygele Jacobs



**Recipe # 1** - no instructions shown, just ingredients.  
My recollection is that Mama made this in a 9#x13" pan. She used a glass baking pan.  
Bake 350 degrees F for about 45 minutes - 1 hour, depending on size of pan

## Dough

1 cup sugar  
4 eggs  
2-3 cups flour  
2 ½ t baking powder  
1 cup oil  
Juice of one orange

## Filling

2-3 pounds apples, peeled and sliced  
2/3 cup sugar  
Juice ½ lemon  
Cinnamon



# Feygele Jacobs

## Recipe # 2 - Blanche's Apple Cake

### Dough

1 stick margarine

½ c oil

2 t vanilla

½ \* lemon juice ( \* doesn't say half of what)

1 cup sugar

3 eggs

3 cups flour

2 t baking powder

½ t salt

Mix well and put in fridge while you prepare the apples

### Filling

8 large green apples - peel, core, cut in cubes. Parboil without water (a drop)

Then add:

1 c sugar

2 t. vanilla,

Juice of ½ lemon

½ cup raisins

Little cinnamon

Mix and cool. Put some dough in a greased pan (use flour to do it, a layer apples, more dough flattened, another layer apples, then strips of dough, then add flour with a little dough to make crumbs and put on top. Bake 325 degree oven for about one hour. From the extra dough make cookies rolled out dough and bake on small flame.

# Feygele Jacobs

## Recipe #3 - Dasha's Apple Cake (no instructions shown, just ingredients)

4 eggs  
3/4 cup sugar  
1 t baking powder  
1 stick margarine  
1 cup oil  
2 1/2 cups flour  
Some orange juice

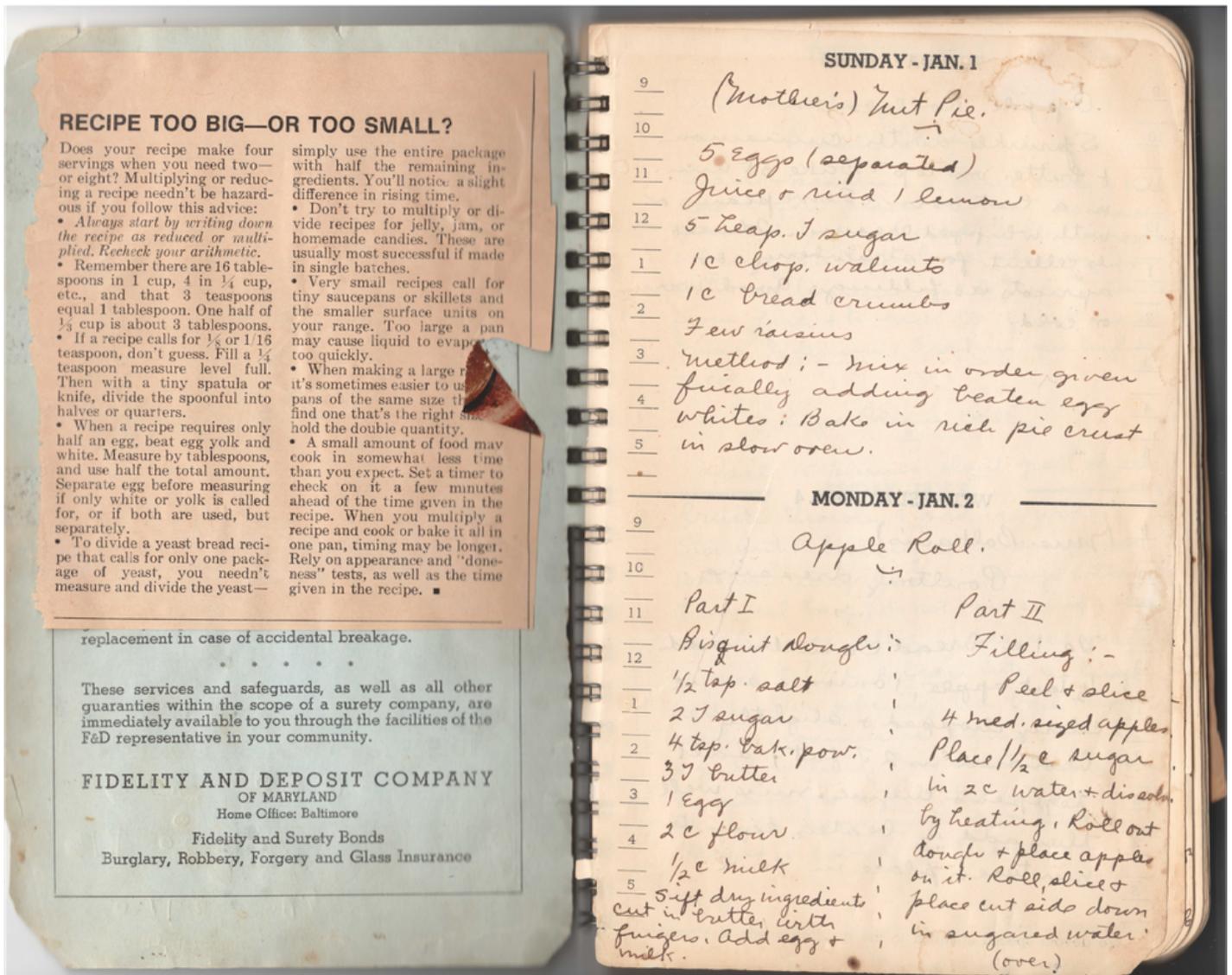
Cut 7 apples. Dust with cinnamon. (I would suspect you might need some sugar, too but it doesn't say.) Layer between dough.



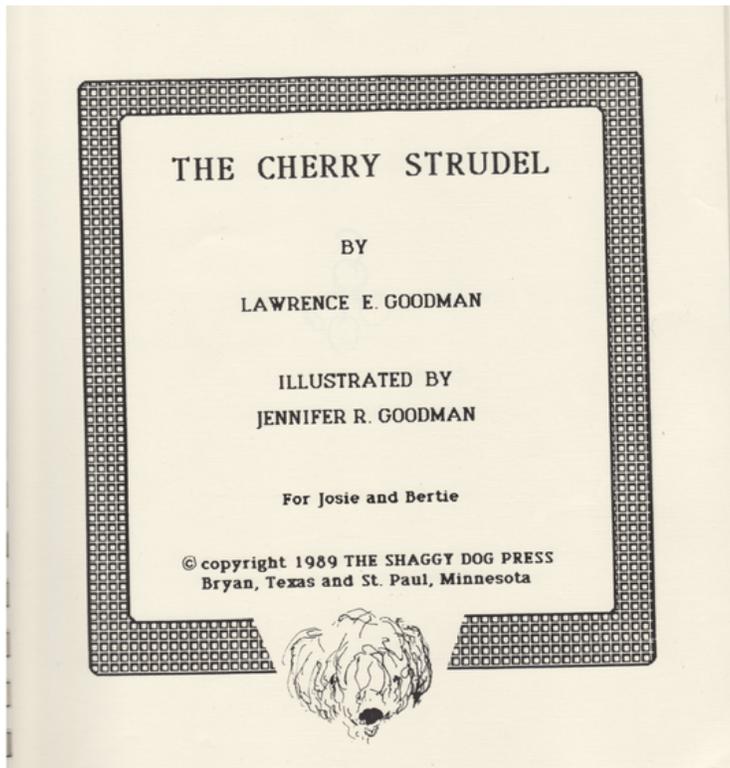
# Jennifer Wollock



The first one is from my grandmother Dora Goldberger Goodman's manuscript cookbook. "Mother" was her mother Jennie Fried Goldberger (1871-1934), whose Cherry Strudel is the subject of my father Lawrence Goodman's story: he gives a complete account of the whole experience including the process of making the strudel on the sheet-covered dining room table.



Jennifer Wollock

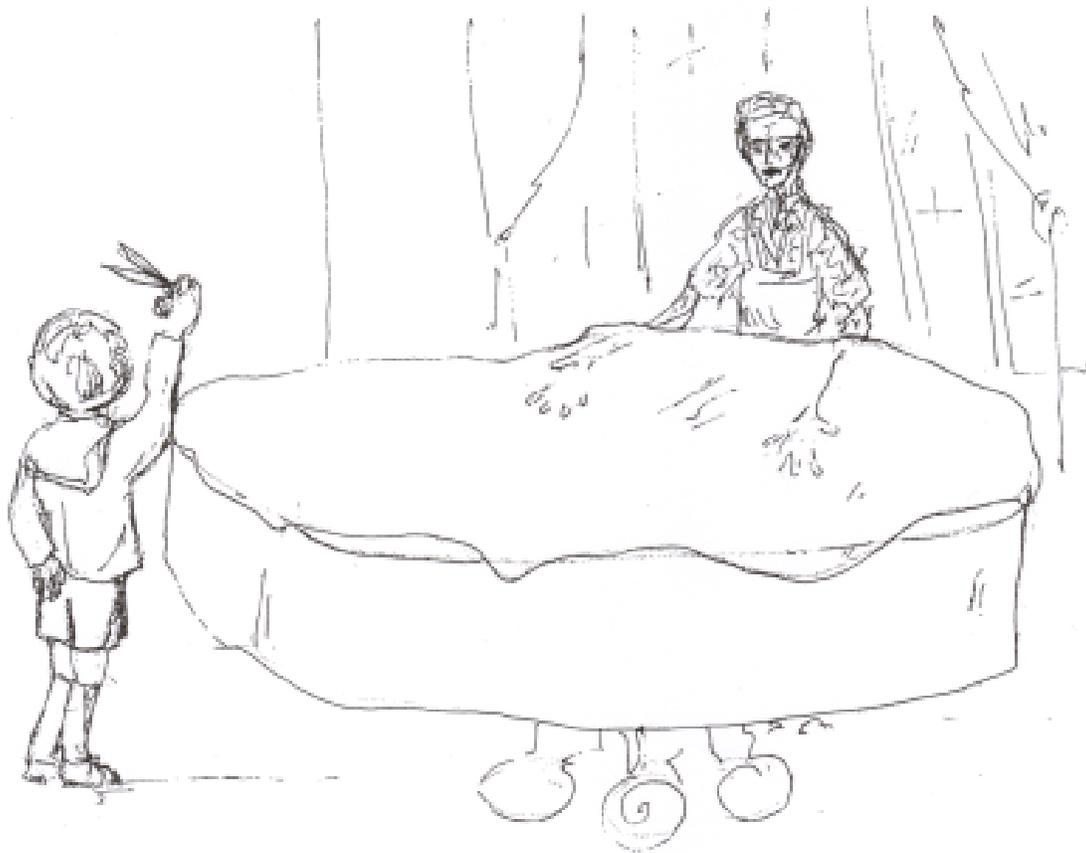


*Jennifer Wollock*

Next came the special part. Grandmother washed and dried her hands again and dusted them with flour. Then she walked around the table, carefully pulling the dough outward and stretching it. As it reached the edge of the dining room table the strudel dough became very, very thin. But it could not be allowed to have a hole in it. That would have spoiled everything! Grandfather held his breath while his grandmother let the edge of the dough rest on the back of her hands as she gently drew her hands away from the center of the table for the final stretching. When she was finished with this part of the strudel-making the dough was stretched so thin that it covered the entire table top and even drooped over the edge. All that from a lump hardly bigger than a grapefruit! That dough was stretched so thin that when grandmother put a folded page of newspaper underneath it to check, you could read the newspaper through the strudel dough. Then at last it was time for grandfather to do his part. His grandmother gave him a scissors and he went around the table cutting off the bit of dough that drooped over the edge, carefully saving it to be made into cookies

Jennifer Wollock

afterwards. Grandfather was good at this because his chin just came to the top of the table when he stood up.

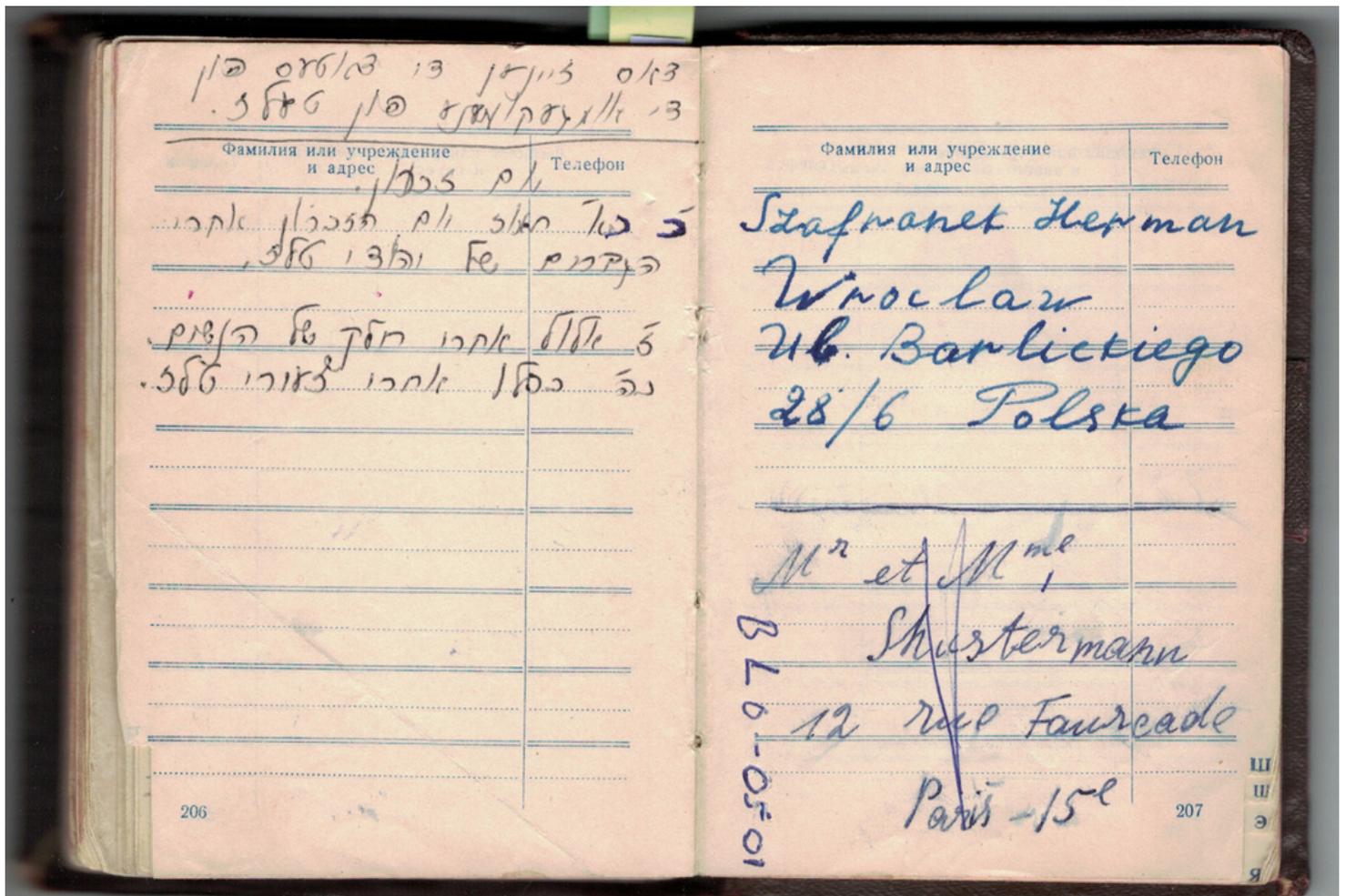


# Isabelle Rozenbaumas



A few context points: we emigrated - antloyft - from the USSR at night during 1956-1957 and arrived in France after four months in Poyln and an odyssey travelling to Vienna, Italy, and then Paris. The booklet has accompanied my mother, Rosa Portnoi Rozenbaumas, during this journey and probably during her first years in Paris. In 1958 she studied French for six months at the Alliance Française. I can spot some French words transcribed into Yiddish. Intuitively. I have read the bikhl from right to left, and the information inside seem to confirm that it was used so. On p. 5 of the PDF of the document, my mother has noted the dates of the Telzer khurbn. On the page facing it is probably the address of their contact in Wroclaw, where we stayed for two months (see my father's book, The Odyssey of an Apple Thief, p. 168). On p. 9 is an address that my parents used for "shikn peklekh.

Mostly the recipes are for kukhn, leykekh, teygelekh, and tort, with chocolate or not. I suppose when an address or a recipe was crossed out, it means it was copied elsewhere.





# Maia & Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus



Recipes from my bobe, Raike Lipshitz.

My bobe was the consummate Jewish cook and balebosteh. No matter what time of day, no matter how many people, she was ready with every 'maichl' one could imagine- chicken soup with kneidlech or even better, fleishedik blintzes; gefilte fish; maybe a lukshen kugel, and to finish up- Bobe's apple pie, sponge cake and cookies.



# Maia & Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus

(Here's the Facebook exchange from my extended family for Rosh Hashanah, Pandemic 2020. Family members are all over the globe: Israel, Czech Republic, New York, Providence, Washington DC, St. Paul, Minn. and Austin, Texas.)

*Maia Brumberg-Kraus*

"Who in the Brumberg/Lazar/ Feldman family is making Bobe's apple pie for yomtov? If you are, share a picture on facebook for us to see: Ours is in the oven as we speak."

*Mark Lazar:*



*Alice Lazar to Mark Lazar:* looks wonderful. Eat a piece for me.

*Mark Lazar to Alice:* or two!

*Tommi Lazar Schon to Mark Lazar :* yum! Eat one for me too!

*Rhea Feldman to Mark Lazar:* please send the recipe, Allan wants to make it during the week.

*Maia Brumberg-Kraus to Rhea:* will do. It was quite an event getting that recipe from Bobe

*Laurie MacDonald Brumberg:* please send to me too. I can't find where I stashed it

*Mark Lazar to Rhea Feldman:* sent it to you via email. Got the recipe from Maia.

*Tommi Lazar Schon to Mark Lazar:* can you send me a piece? Bobe sent me a pie in college

*Mark Lazar:* Love that she did that. Reminds me of Maia's story that when she was a child, bobbe would cook a whole dinner in nyc and take it to the bus station and give it to driver and then dad would pick up in DC.

*My friend Lynda wrote:* I remember that story, too. I wonder if the passengers could smell it? That would have been lovely.

*Maia Brumberg-Kraus:* They put the suitcase in the luggage section of the bus.

*Rhea Feldman to Maia Brumberg-Kraus:* If she found a bargain Alexander's, some piece of clothing that she knew Slice would like, she sent it Trailways. Not just food. The best story is the roast beef she brought us to Israel.

# Maia & Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus

Max Brumberg-Kraus: THE pie!



Maia Brumberg-Kraus to Max Brumberg-Kraus:  
yummy yummmmm

Max Brumberg-Kraus: i'm not making it tonight, but probably sometime in the next week

Alice Lazar to Max Brumberg-Kraus: If mark eats a piece for me tonight, pls eat one later in week

Tomi Lazar Schon to Max: me too

Max Brumberg-Kraus: I accept this solemn duty

Maia Brumberg-Kraus: Jon and I made different parts. Here it is.

Zoya Brumberg:



Maia Brumberg-Kraus: Gluten-free bobe's apple pie. Wonder what she would have made of that!

Mark Lazar to Maia: "So you are gluten-free, you can't have a little wheat...?"

Maia Brumberg-Kraus: Zoya is. Not I, thank God!

Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus: Our version, unsheathed.



Mark Lazar to Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus: looks great. I didn't use enough apples, but still tasted great.

Tomi Lazar Schon to Jonathan: Looks great

Rhea Feldman: Mark, thanks for the recipe. Came out great. Just have to learn how much brown sugar and cinnamon (to taste).



Max Brumberg-Kraus: We don't have margarine , so it's as much a butter pie as apple



# Maia & Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus

*Max Brumberg-Kraus to Zoya Brumberg:* for ur blog

*Rhea Feldman to Max:* we also made our pie with butter

*Max Brumberg-Kraus:* this pie is such a jet setter

*Maia Brumberg-Kraus:* Jon used Earth's Balance. He thinks it made it cakier. It is really a pake- pie and cake in one. Bobe would get such a kick out of this. Rhea- Did bobe use Crisco? I remember she had a lot of it in stuff.

*Rhea Feldman to Maia:* I told Allan I thought she used Crisco, yes.

*Mark Lazar:* I used Crisco this time. Think it makes for flakier more pie like crust. I also feel it is better on 2nd or 3rd day when it settles a little

*Zoya Brumberg to Maia:* also the original recipe you sent us last year had one egg, this one had two. I used one egg and mine was more cookie than cakey

*Maia Brumberg-Kraus to Zoya:* bobe said, one or two eggs. It was hard to follow. When I make it I use 1 ½ eggs. Depends on the size of the eggs.

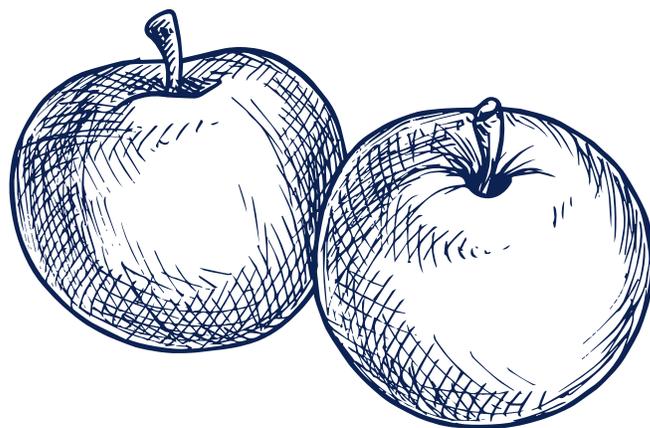
*Max Brumberg-Kraus:* oh, i think that might be it. maybe i only did one egg the previous years

*Max Brumberg-Kraus to Maia:* "depends on the size of the eggs" how very Great-British-Baking-Show-we-measure-our-eggs of you

*Zoya Brumberg:* schmaltz is a good natural Kosher substitute for crisco. Sounds a little gross but lard makes excellent crust so

*Max Brumberg-Kraus to Zoya:* lol, i'm surprised you didn't use lard, knowing your pork proclivity

*Zoya Brumberg to Max:* That would be a shanda.



# Maia & Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus

## **Bobbe's Apple Pie**

(The one, the only, except for similar recipes I've seen for Polish apple cake/pie)

### Ingredients

3/4-1 cup sugar, to taste

2/3 cup margarine (Bobbe, I think, used Crisco, but not good for you so..)

2 eggs

1/3 cup cornstarch

1/4 cup orange juice

1 tsp. vanilla

3 1/2 cups flour (may need more)

2 tsp. baking powder

8 or so apples. (Maybe a few raisins, ...I recall sometimes dried apricots?)

About 1/2 cup sugar and 1/4 cup cornstarch or flour for the apples.

A little milk for the top

### Directions

1. Cream sugar and margarine. Add the eggs, mixing in each one at a time.

2. Add the vanilla and cornstarch. Mix well.

3. Add the juice.

4. Add the flour and baking powder. Mix well, first with the mixer, then knead with your hands. Wrap it or put it in a bowl and cover the bowl.

5. Refrigerate for several hours.

6. Peel and slice the apples. Sprinkle with lemon juice to keep from turning brown.

7. Roll out a bit more than half the dough. I usually put it in a springform cake pan, cuz that's usually what Bobbe did. Layer the apples. Sprinkle with sugar, about 1/4 cup flour or cornstarch, and, if you want, the raisins.

8. Roll out the rest of the dough. Cover the pie. Pat it with a bit of milk.

Bake for about 20 minutes on the top rack. Move it down to a lower rack and finish baking, I'd say about 20 more minutes. If it's oozing yummy appley goodness, it's probably done.

Our daughter Zoya Brumberg has a lovely post about it in her food blog "Kimchi and Kishke" with her recipe for a gluten free version, in keeping with the great Jewish tradition of "culinary midrash."

<https://www.kimchiandkishke.com/post/bobe-s-apple-pie-gluten-free>

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# Maia & Jonathan Brumberg-Kraus

## **Bobé's Gefilte Fish Recipe**

Now about the gefilte fish. Bobé Raiké's daughters all went to the Sholem Aleichem shule in the Bronx. My grandmother's task, each Pesah was to make the gefilte fish for the community seder. She ground the carp with her old fashioned grinder and made hundreds of little cakes for the occasion.

Prior to our wedding, my fiancé Jonathan Kraus and I brought all the mechtunim together for the first time at a seder. My bobé, in her mid eighties by now, was not to be deterred from making the gefilte fish. She took two buses to and purchased the fish. Then she set up her grinder- in the closet of her tiny assisted living apartment. (It was the only place with a shelf that she would work.) She made enough fish for 25 or so people, and it was delicious.

Large carp with roe. Filet it and throw away the skin but keep bones and grind fish. Or, use: 4 lbs of white fish and 2 lb. yellow pike and a piece (1/2 carp) of carp, if you want.

In 4 qt. pot,

cut up 5 onions (large pieces),

slice carrots (2 small) in rounds

add salt, pepper, & qt. of water

put all the bones in

boil & then simmer (3/4 of an hour) and then take out bones

Put fish in bowl

Add: salt (2 1/2-3 Tbs.)

1 tsp. pepper

1 tsp. sugar

4 eggs

1 1/2 glasses water (she didn't say what size glass...)

3/4 C matzo meal

2 Lg. onions minced

Mix very well (more the better) until thickens. Taste soup and spice accordingly. Boil. Use lg. spoon (so get equal portions), wet hands with water, make patties. When soup boils, add fish to soup. Cook on medium fire, covered, for 1 1/2-2 hours. If necessary, to add water to soup, add boiling water. If freeze, boil over again.

# Deborah Berman



My mother's name was Gloria Bernstein Berman. Born 1924, died 2011. Her mother came from Delatin, in Yiddish, which was in Poland before the Second World War (Pol: Delatyn) and is in Ukraine today (Ukr: Delyatyn).

My mother makes the connection in her little narrative, which I included with the newspaper clipping. She remembers going to Guss's pickles when she was a girl. I think the bar owned by her uncle was in the same building as Guss's Pickles. The article tells how one can now live in this building, and my mother remembers getting pickles there. No recipe, but a lot about food and Yiddish life.

He used to go to the East Side to eat in a bar called The Welcome Inn. This bar was owned by my uncle Sam, a former waiter. Sam was the husband of my mother's mother's husband. It's all can see he was very fat. He also bought pickles at Guss's, I bet out of barrels by the dozens.



Vinegar was de off infection. Lunch was eaten in a dairy restaurant. Huge bowls of soup, giant slices of bread. In the back of the benches the local politicians argued in Yiddish. Later we bought very long Hebrew material.

## POSTINGS

### Rentals on the Site of Pickle History

**I**N this era of real estate reincarnation, it is now possible to live at the former site of the Lower East Side's most celebrated pickle purveyor: Guss's Pickles.

Furthermore, Mendel Guttman, the developer of the site, who is proud of the pickle connection — despite the fact that he evicted Guss's in 2001 — said the building at 35 Essex Street also has ties to Isaac Gellis, the deli meat producer.

"Isaac Gellis smoked meat in ovens in people's rooms," he said, referring to the years when large immigrant Jewish families packed the premises.

With its brick facade and black fire escapes, the exterior of the building looks more or less as it did a century ago. "I could have done a completely new front, but I wanted to keep the old facade, so on one building we washed the old bricks and on the other replaced the bricks altogether," said Mr. Guttman, who acquired the property in 1983 and put \$2.5 million into the renovation.

It is a structure with a very public face: Guss's Pickles, which occupied the ground floor, was used for the pickle-store scenes in the 1988 movie "Crossing Delancey," a love story about an uptown bookshop employee and a downtown pickle merchant.

(The real Guss's Pickles had a less than perfect ending: after a bitter court battle with Tim Baker, owner of Guss's, Mr. Guttman evicted him. Mr. Guttman claimed

the store owed back rent, a charge Mr. Baker denies vehemently. Guss's Pickles is now on Orchard Street and in Cedarhurst on Long Island.)

In any case, the building, two blocks south of Delancey Street and named Delancey Crossing, contains 30 apartments ranging in size from 550 to 1,000 square feet, with most falling into the 650-to-850-square-foot range. Monthly rents for one-bedroom units start at \$2,100 and rise to \$3,500 for a penthouse with private terrace, a Jacuzzi and views. Two-bedrooms range from \$2,650 to \$4,400 for a duplex penthouse with an internal spiral staircase connecting to the roof deck.

Four apartments are already taken, according to George Arana, a vice president at Halstead Property and agent for the project; the first one went to a professor at New York University School of Law School.

It was once a family building, but Mr. Guttman does not expect that to be its new persona. "People with children no longer come to the Lower East Side," he said, adding that he expected to rent mainly to singles, couples and shares.

There is some possibility that rents will be stabilized if Mr. Guttman succeeds in getting tax abatements, but he is not advertising that until it is granted.

Though there is nothing unusual about the layouts — kitchens opening into living-dining areas — there are touches of luxury in the apartments, including marble countertops, ceramic tile bathrooms, hardwood floors and washers and dryers.

Asked why he was swimming against the construction tide — the overwhelming majority of conversions and new construction are condos, not rentals — Mr. Guttman said: "It is better if I own it. If I want to do another building, the bank would make a loan against this."

NADINE BROZAN

### CORRECTION

A picture in the On the Market listing last Sunday with the "Living In ..." article, about Waccabuc, N.Y., was published in error. It showed the house at 3 Powder Hill Road. The one that is for sale is at 4 Powder Hill Road, as the caption said.

# Karen Loeb



## **Potatonik**

Potatonik is like a potato kugel, but not as dense. It tastes like the inside of a potato knish, but, without the thick dough. The first time I had it was on a breakfast buffet in a hotel in Jerusalem. I didn't know what it was, but, I had to find out. I researched and finally found one recipe; others started appearing I tried them all and came up with one of my own.

## Sponge

1 cup warm water (110-115° F.)

1 1/2 T. active dry yeast

1 1/2 cups bread flour (or add 1 T. wheat gluten)

## Dough

3/4 pound red potatoes, skin on, cleaned well

1 1/2 cups chopped white or yellow onions

1 small stale roll or (or 1 stale onion roll)

1/2 cup bread or all-purpose unbleached flour

1 1/2 tsp. salt

scant 1/2 tsp. baking powder

1/3 tsp. or more freshly ground black pepper

1/2 cup neutral oil (I use avocado oil)

2 large eggs

Parboil potatoes until still firm but you can barely stick a fork through. In a medium bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water, and mix in flour for sponge. Let sit (covered) for 20 minutes. Fry onions until soft in duck, chicken fat, oil or butter. Process the potatoes, onion, and stale roll into a coarse chop in food processor. Stir the sponge into this mixture with quick pulses.

Add flour, salt, baking powder, pepper, and pulse until mixed. Add oil and egg and mix well. Put into large frying pre-heated, preferably cast-iron pan that can then be put into oven later, and fry until browned on the bottom. Turn over and Bake at 360° until the crust is brown and feels firm when gently pressed in the center (about 20 minutes, but watch the bottom so it shouldn't burn). Let cool, covered with a cloth on a wire rack for 5 minutes. Serve warm. You can freeze or refrigerate and then reheat at 350° until crusty and warm (15-30 minutes).

# Reva Falk



This recipe came from my late mother-in-law, Muriel Falk (Malka Frima) 1924-2006. She was a Galitzaner who lived in Norwalk, CT. Her parents, who were first cousins, came from the countryside near Kolomea, which is in western Ukraine. Muriel's father came over in 1909, and her mother came over later. They married around 1916 or 1917. Muriel had an older sister and brother. She loved to bake, but her cooking was not very tasty!

## **POTATONIK**

1 package of dry or cake yeast (1 package is 2 1/4 teaspoons) dissolved in 1/4 cup lukewarm water. Add 1/2 cup of flour and let rise in a warm place. When flour mixture is almost double, grate 3 large potatoes. (Sprinkle with a little flour to keep the potatoes from turning black until ready to use). After flour mixture has risen to double in bulk, add potatoes, 1 egg, 1 1/2 t. salt, 1 cup flour, 2 T. oil. Stir this mixture and let it rise 30 minutes. Grease a round cake pan or a cast iron skillet sparingly and put this in a preheated oven at 300 Fahrenheit. When the potato mixture has risen, pour this into the heated tin or skillet and bake at this temperature for 15 minutes, and then increase the temperature to 375 for 45 minutes. It should look like a potato kugel. If not quite brown enough after 1 hour, let it bake until you feel it's done, but 1 hour should be enough time.

# Suzanne Schwimmer



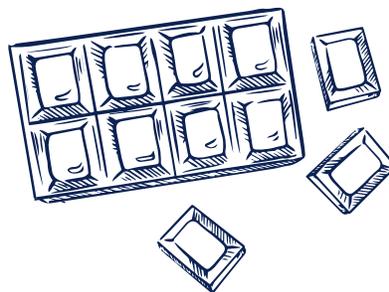
My mother, Sari Schwimmer, was an adequate Hungarian Jewish cook but an extraordinary baker. She was of Romanian birth, but orphaned at age eight, and was the foster child of two Hungarian women, one Christian with a Jewish husband, Mrs. Zala, the other Jewish, Mrs Weiss, so the cooking she learned was Hungarian.

The Hungarian Christian, Mrs. Zala, was a character. She was a fabulous cook who, in her 60's, discovered her husband's multiple affairs, left him, went out to Hollywood, and earned a living cooking for various movie stars. She went on to marry four other men. As a practicing Christian Scientist, she wouldn't allow any of her elderly husbands to go to the doctor when sick, so she was widowed several times.

Back to my mother's baking. Three recipes were reasonably heritage recipes. Two versions of rugelach, the first, a cream cheese dough apricot tart, the second, a yeast dough a ground walnuts rugela, and third, a magnificent Hungarian nut sponge. The nut sponge was truly heart attack on a plate, but incredibly scrumptious.

The recipes as told to me are seriously non-specific: how many ounces in a glass, what size chocolate bar, what oven setting? My mother and I assumed a common kitchen vocabulary, her standard glasses, the Menier bar commercially available, baking at 350 degrees.

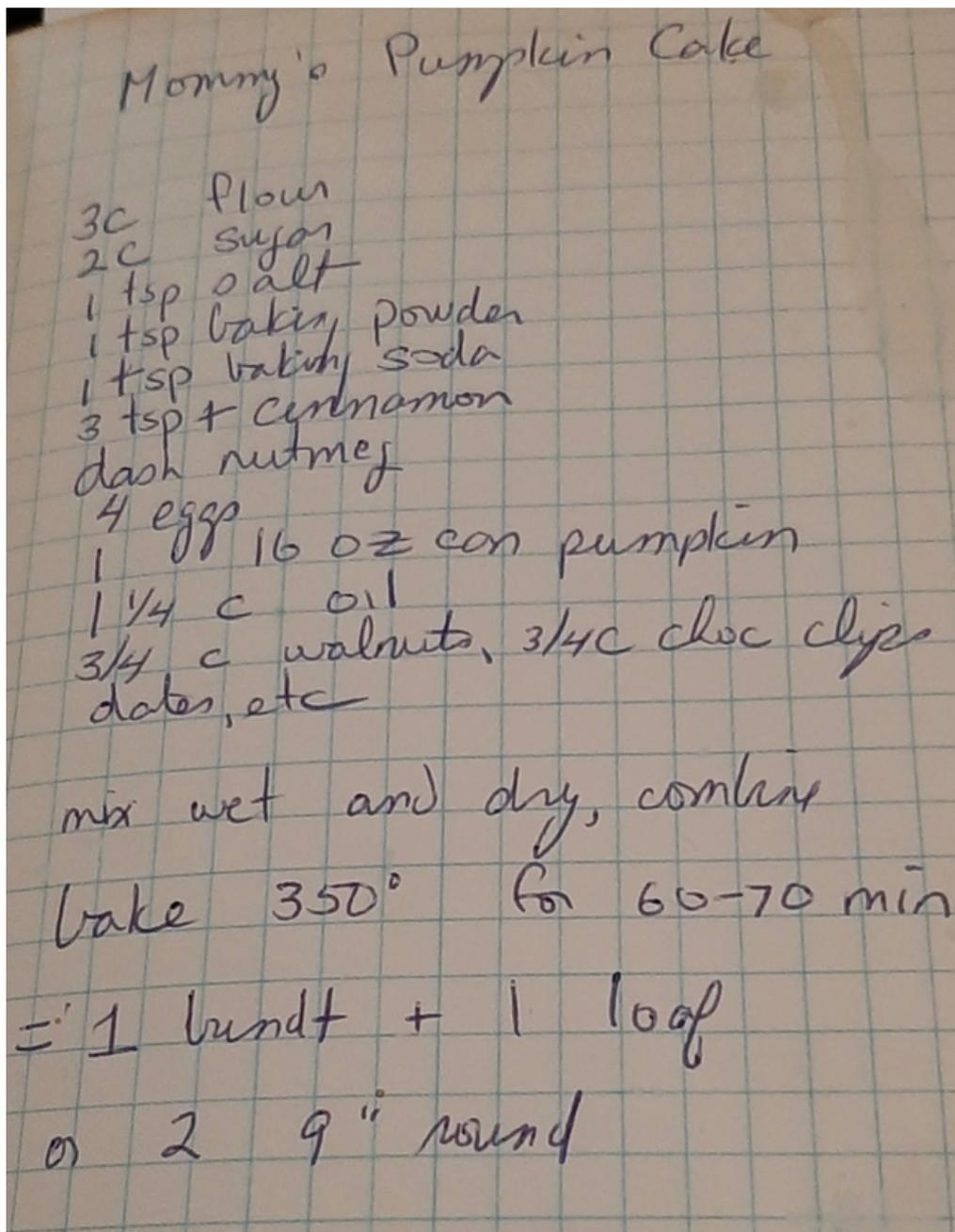
I copied her recipes from an older book and transcribed them into a book at least thirty years ago...



# Suzanne Schwimmer

This recipe 1960s attached is a riff on carrot Cakes and zucchini cakes and utterly delicious.

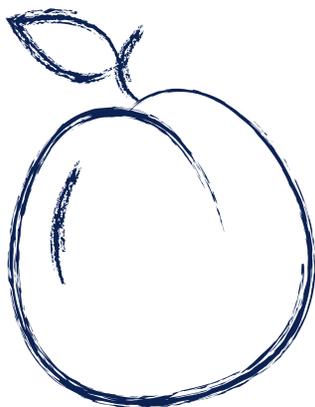
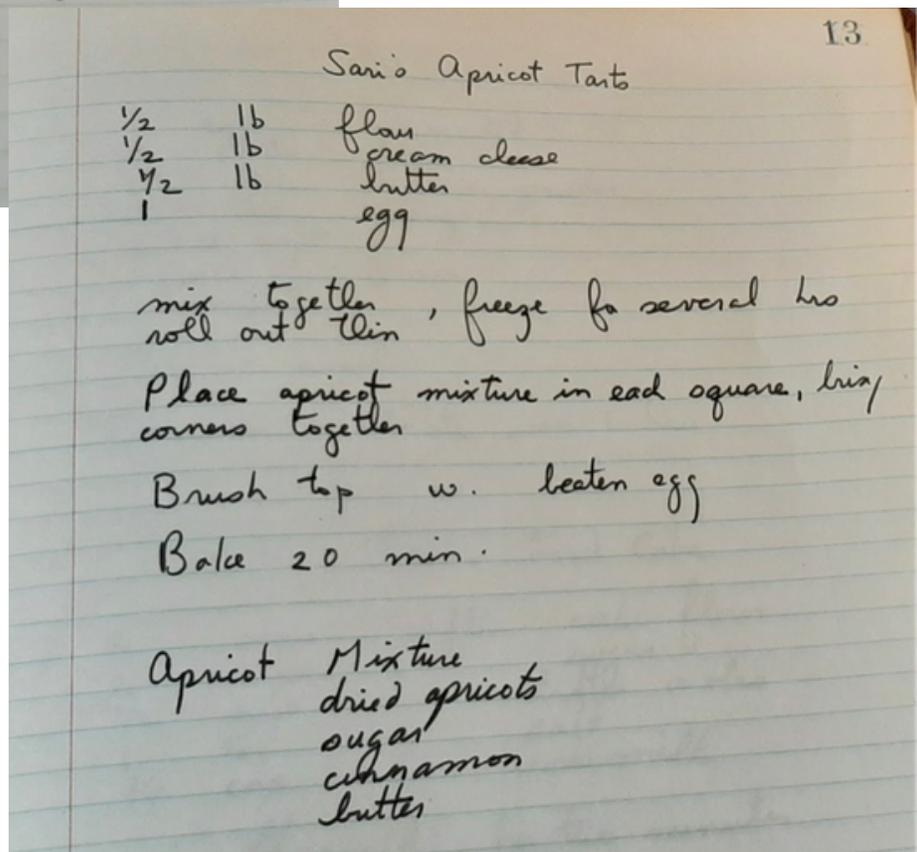
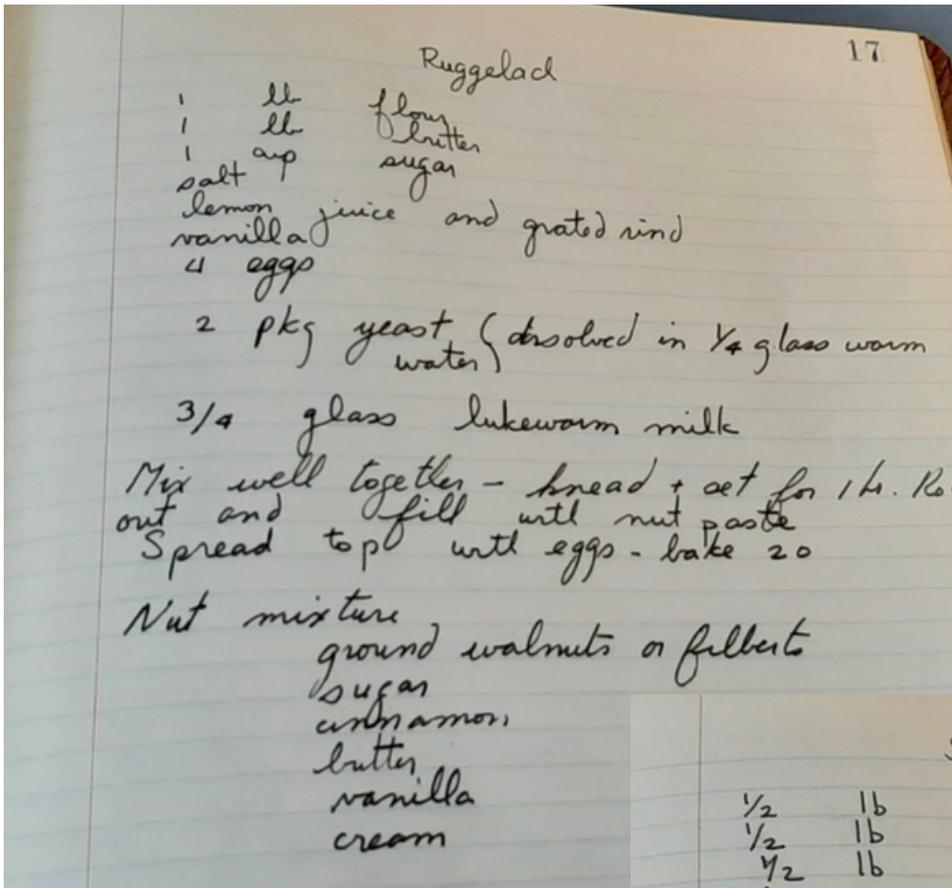
My mother said most of the ingredients except for the can of pumpkin are likely in the house. The cake is extremely forgiving as I found out one year when I made it and my oven died. I boxed the cake pan and carried it to my neighbor and finish baking it in her oven. A brown cake one can sprinkle with confectioners sugar to decorate and I like to bake it in a bundt pan. The more dates nuts and chocolate chips you add to the batter the more fun the cake.



# Suzanne Schwimmer

The recipes as I wrote them down are 1940s through 1960.

Attached here is the rugala and apricot tart recipes. Notably they are the only recipes I have of hers where the measurements are in weights and not in volume which tells me they come from an older source or an older time.



# Suzanne Schwimmer

## **Cream Cheese Apricot Jam Rugelach**

1/2 lb each flour, cream cheese, butter, 1 egg. Mix together and freeze several hours (I think she meant cold refrigeration not freeze). Roll out thin, score squares about 2 inches on side. Spoon of apricot jam. Bring up corners to make four cornered tarts. Brush top with beaten egg. Bake 20 minutes. Apricot mixture: dried apricots, sugar, cinnamon, butter.

## **Rugelach**

1lb each flour, butter, sugar

salt

lemon

juice and zest

vanilla

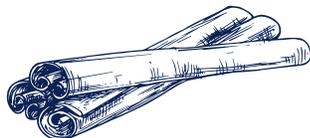
4 eggs

2 pkg yeast dissolved in 1/4 glass warm water

3/4 glass lukewarm milk

Mix well together, knead and set for 1 hour, Roll out reasonably thin, cut in triangles. Fill with nut paste, roll into crescents, wash top with egg. Bake 20 minutes.

Nut mixture: ground walnuts or filberts / sugar / cinnamon / butter / vanilla / cream



There are many dishes for which nobody wrote down the recipe, the cooks just seemed to know it or learned the how to from watching mother's cook. We are talking beginning 1940's in Washington Heights when I was born. We lived on the same street my mother's two Hungarian foster mothers lived and were much in contact with these women, probably born in Hungary ca. 1880-1900.

Homemade gefilte fish. We had, as many families had, a grinder that screwed onto a table or wooden board to grind the fish, onions for gefilte fish. My mother told me her first gefilte fish as a bride in Washington Heights. She went to the fish store, owned by the Kaminskys, cousins of Danny Kaye. She bought the three fish species. The carp was fresh killed. She left with her fish package. The deceased carp was still wriggling and my mother freaked and dropped the entire package into the garbage can on the street.

## Suzanne Schwimmer

Potato latkes: grated potatoes on a box grater, always including a bit of blood from a finger scraped while grating.

Two types of blintzes: cheese filled and potato/onion mix filled.

Hungarian sweet and sour stuffed cabbage. Cabbage rolls cooked with tomato sauce, brown sugar, lemon, raisins. Rice was precooked, meat not, stuffed green peppers similarly cooked.

Hungarian noodle pudding: Apricots, poppy seeds and walnuts made it Hungarian. The poppy seeds came from Paprikas Weiss store, upper east side Manhattan which was also German (not Jewish). The store smelled amazing from the hanging salamis drying.

War time rationing. People used to give my mother their sugar rations in return for one of her apple pies, particularly Mr. Lieberman, the kosher butcher on the corner. Mr. Lieberman also gave my mother some sort of kosher fatty meat to use in her baked beans in return for a pot of beans.

My father's family background was Hungarian from Munkacs. So my mother's Hungarian cooking training matched what my father knew and wanted. Some of the dishes he craved were shliskes, fried potato dumplings; a dessert with a plum wrapped in a potato dough and boiled, then breadcrumbed and fried, gedempte goose.

Suzanne's Father's Pan and Family Kitchen Tools



## *Suzanne Schwimmer*

The Friday night shabbas dinner (my father, myself, and my brother all knew how to set it up and cook it as my mother went back to work, and arrived home minutes before shabbas):

Friday night dinner, first an "entree" we called chicken fricasee which was the chicken wings and mini meat balls sauteed in some chicken broth, paprika, onions, salt and pepper. Then the soup, then chicken, probably with a baked potato and my father liked to have canned chickpeas he called arbes on Friday night. When I was younger circa the 40's, the chicken was the boiled out one from the soup, which was essentially tasteless by the time it had cooked down to make soup. When we revolted, my mother tried to season it with spices, and bake it a bit, but it was still a hard sell to us children. Then when there was more money, she got two chickens, one for the soup, one to roast. I remember in the 40's going to the live chicken market which scared me, and needing to do some more feather plucking with tweezers when we got the chickens home.

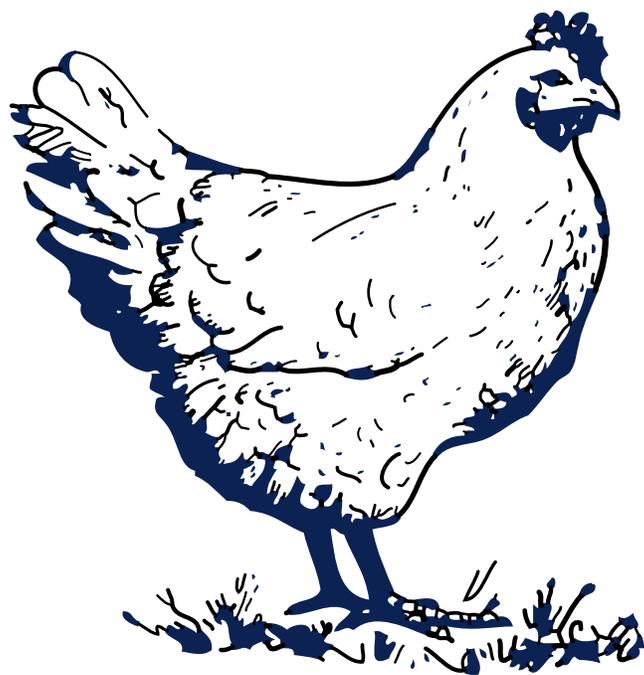
Another memory from Passover. My father made an expedition to the lower east side to buy his wine from Ganeles Lenger, a basement oak cask wine distributor, where he could have them mix sweet and not so sweet wine in his four gallons (two for his brother). Trip was always accompanied by buying two dozen full sour pickles out of the barrel and eating them all in the car ride home. My father, brother, and I continued this tradition with him until about 1963 when David and I left home. My parents were both first generation Americans, born and raised in NYC. My father was born in the Lower East Side 1897 and lived there until 1940. My mother was born 1917 and largely raised in Washington Heights, by Hungarian women. My mother's parents were Roumanians from Bucharest but she was an orphan fostered by Hungarians. My father's parents were from Munkacs (mitnagadim, not hasidic) and they lived on the same streets as other Munkascers. I think not enough is being done to document the mores, practices, etc of this group who came to adulthood in the 20's and 30's. come out of the lower east side, went thru the depressions of the 20's and 30's, and the WWII years. If my family was typical WWII aftermath added an americanized convenience cookery to the kitchen repertoire when mothers became working women. Tuna casserole, Campbell's canned soups. For some reason I don't know, what we ate each night of the week was routinized. Monday and Thursday were dairy meals, Friday was shabbas, and Sunday night might be store bought delicatessen meats. All dinner meals had a soup and a fresh daily rye loaf of bread. The dairy meal also had an "appetizer" course, such as sour cream with vegetables or cottage cheese. The dairy soups and main courses were indifferent in being tasty but they were de rigeur. Vegetables were nondescript, overcooked and not interesting, except for the use of garlic and onions and also cabbage and green peppers. Spicing limited to salt pepper and Paprika for meats, cinnamon for apple pies.

# Deborah Ugoretz



My Bobie was a classic Eastern European cook who made all traditional foods from Białystok. Chicken soup with chicken feet, which the cousins fought over, and kreplakh that were like clouds. We craved them until it was revealed that they were stuffed with beef lung. That was the end of that relationship.

A few years ago after a trip to Brighton Beach, I got it into my head that we used to eat Tongue during Hanukah. I decided to make it. After a search to procure a kosher one in Brooklyn ( which is a story in itself) I went to Kalustyan and bought spices and pickled me a tongue. Then I cooked it to death in a slow cooker and served it to my family and Eleanor Reissa. It was delicious. A few weeks later, a Roz Chwast cartoon appeared in the New Yorker about tongue. It's brilliant.



# Yakov Pechersky



The photos are of the gefilte fish my grandma makes for special occasions - I have gone with her to Chinese groceries according to her guidelines to buy carp. She says these grocers sell smaller carp than other fish mongers, which make it easier to prepare (our family is only 3 people). She asks the grocer to cut it into large rounds with skin on. There are also photos of a "pelmenitsa" which is an aluminum mold used to make Russian-style dumplings, most usually with ground beef filling. More recently, we've purchased new molds of more oblong hexagon shape (pictured) and have used those to make "vareniki", which are cherry dumplings. The process by which they're made is pictured -- laying out the dough on the mold, adding filling to each cavity, then more dough on top. This allows quick and uniform dumplings to be made. There is also a picture of teyglekh that she makes still. Nothing except dough, honey, and poppy seed. I have made this myself too, from her recipes. She laments that the honey in the USA is much more liquid than back in Russia or Soviet Union, so the teyglekh don't hold together as well. I think the humidity of a NYC apartment also has to do with this.



Yakov Pechersky



## *Yakov Pechersky*

Regarding the food and recipes, she's always had those address books filled with recipes and annotations with sources. Most recently, she has been experimenting with variations on classic dishes using recipes she gets from Russian language food recipe websites -- the Russian equivalents of "allrecipes.com". These website have way more Ashkenazi recipes (and in what I would call "authentic" style) than I have seen on English language websites. Additionally, the recipes there are more akin to our traditional Ashkenazi foodways, which are from Eastern Belarus -- so, teyglekh, khremzlekh, etc (as listed in the lexicon).



My poorly researched assumption is that Ashkenazi foodways in the USA and USSR have diverged strongly due to the War and the subsequent impossibility of transmission and sharing of folk traditions across the Iron Curtain. This has led US Ashkenazi food to be more Romanian/Hungarian/Polish in style, while USSR (especially in big cities like St. Petersburg, where we're from) to be more of a Belarussian style.

## *Yakov Pechersky*

The photo portrait included in the attachments is of my grandmother's parents. They were both from Eastern Belarus -- Gorki and Propoisk (now Slawharad / Slavgorod), both in the Mogilev gubernya. My great-grandmother's story is told in more detail by mom in this blog post: <https://yiddishsong.wordpress.com/2015/05/04/arele-kumt-in-vald-performed-by-larisa-pecharsky/>. They moved to Leningrad in the early 30s, and suffered through the horrors of the coming years, including losing their entire families (and son, who was in the countryside for the summer of 1941), and barely surviving the Leningrad Siege. We had and have many family friends whose families come from Gorki, since many moved to Leningrad. We have many more photos of our cooking traditions and styles throughout the years, including my participation in it!



# Yakov Pechersky

## **Foods that code as Jewish (to us)**

*Name we use*

*Other names*

*Description and notes*

### **farshirovanaya ryba** (Russian)

gefilte fish (Yiddish; "i" is pronounced between Russian "и" and "ы").

We didn't use this term primarily, but were familiar with it. We are not familiar with a non-Jewish tradition of it "Stuffed fish", a whole fish (carp, perch, pike, sudak, etc) bought, meat cleaned out, ground with meat grinder, mixed with other fish and ingredients, stuffed back in. Often made with beet-based jelly that uses the bones. My grandma still makes this in 2019 in NYC, using whole carps (2-4 lbs) bought from Chinese grocers. Was and is a special occasion food.

### **eyer gehakte** (Yiddish; "h" is "hey", often written as "g" in Russian)

I guess this is related to American "egg salad" -- recent realization, and we don't make the connection at all. Don't have a Russian term for it; Means "chopped eggs" Hardboiled egg whites and yolk are mixed with chopped white onion. Could add chicken shmalts or shkvarki, with fried onion. Still made in 2019 in NYC, albeit without chicken fat, with onion fried in vegetable oil

### **kneydlekh** (Yiddish)

In English-language contexts, "matzo balls". Related to klyotski (Russian), below. "kneyd" is "knead" in English. galushki (Russian), galushki (Ukrainian), both Ukrainian-adjacent term, not matzo-based

Balls made from matsomel (Yiddish). Matsomel was/is made at home by grinding matzo in a meat grinder.

Served with chicken bul'yon (Russian).

This, along with the other matzo dishes was never served at Peysakh time. We did not use the term gebrokhts, but recognize now that was our (implied) tradition.

### **matso** (Yiddish; usually pronounced with "a" at the end) matsa (Russian)

Before 50s, could be bought in a regular Soviet bakery in Leningrad, labeled as "matsa" in Russian. Afterwards, discreetly bought directly from synagogue. Baked yearly by the synagogue and could be picked up in discreet packages wrapped in butcher paper, as if picked-up-laundry. Rectangular, not round or square. My family would always get it before Peysakh for the entire year. Greatgrandmother used to bake matso herself as well. In NYC, bought from stores, machine-based or hand-made.

### **imberlekh** (Yiddish) We also use the term khremslekh (Yiddish)

this term causes arguments because the same word means potato-based pancake in Hungarian/Rumanian Yiddish and Jewish cuisine. imber is Yiddish for ginger Matso-based food. Broken matso (fingernail size) is mixed with honey/sugar and ginger (imbir' in Russian, imber in Yiddish). Baked together on a tray. Cut into rhombuses. Dessert. Rarely made in NYC in 2019. We did not use the term lokshn (Yiddish) with respect to this food.

# Yakov Pechersky

## **teyglekh** (Yiddish)

No other term I know of; teyg is Yiddish for dough Dough-based food. Dough is rolled into small sticks, cut into small balls. Tossed with honey and poppy seed. Baked. Cut into pieces. When eaten, can be broken off into the balls again. Still made in NYC in 2019. Rarely can be found in Jewish stores/bakeries, but those often have much larger doughballs as well as nuts, raisins, etc, which is not our tradition.

## **tsimes** (Yiddish)

No other term I know of Carrot-based stew. Carrots cut in rounds/coin-shapes stewed with sugar (possibly honey), raisins, dried prunes (chernosliv (Russian)). Flour can be added as thickening. Still made in NYC in 2019. I think my grandmother has made it sweeter and softer over the years. Also, in recent travels to Odessa found that local community there sometimes cooks tsimes using kidney beans.

## **hel(d)zl** (Yiddish; "h" is "hey", often written as "g" in Russian)

I guess sheyka in Russian. helz is Yiddish for neck Stuffed chicken neck. When a whole chicken is bought, the neck is cut away, tied at one end, and then stuffed with onion, grain-based meal, spices. Other end is tied. Baked. When server, cut in rounds. My family has not made this in the United States, as far as I know. Stuffing/cooking related to American-style kishka (Russian)?

## **khale** (Yiddish)

khala (Russian), pletyonka (Russian)

Name comes from tradition/ritual of separating a piece and burning it (in Yiddish nem(n) khale, "taking challah") Braided (or round) bread. Could be covered with yolk for a glaze. In Soviet Union, could be found in bakeries under the name khala (Russian), did not code as obviously Jewish. Very closely related to traditional Slavic pletyonka. In post-Soviet Russia, made round (no-braid) khales for Shabes. In NYC in 2019, either store-bought or made at home (single-braid). As far as I know, we don't nem khale.

## **pletslekh** (Yiddish, dialect(?))

Could be related to pretzlekh (Yiddish) Dough rolled with sugar and cinnammon, then folded onto itself and baked. Looks like a flower. Made maybe once or twice over 20 years in NYC.

## **smalets** (Yiddish, dialect) **shmalts** (Yiddish, standardized)

smalets (Russian) Chicken, or rarely, goose fat, sometimes with skins.

See shkvarki below, eyer gehakte above.

In our usage, never referred to pork. That would probably be shpik or salo (Russian). Rarely used in NYC in 2019.

## **red'ka** (Russian)

This is metonymy; I am not familiar with another term for this salad Salad using black radish and shmalts/shkvarki. Radish is grated, mixed with chicken fat. We also add fried onion. That's it. Haven't seen it in other families.

Made, not often, in NYC in 2019. Fried onion (vegetable oil) is added.

# Yakov Pechersky

**mezeynes** (Yiddish, dialect) **mezoynes** (Yiddish, standardized)

Mezonot (Hebrew, modern); vypechka (Russian)

In our dialect and usage, refers to any sweet baked good / pastry. Traditionally, category for baked goods that are not "hamotsi", requiring a separate blessing and different rituals with respect to hand washing and blessings before/after meal. Family friends (not from Belarus) used the term shalekhmones (Yiddish) to mean pastries/baked goods. When the term was used, no connection was known to religious traditions related to Purim and the ritual of shalekhmones (Yiddish) / mishloakh manot (Hebrew). Rarely used term in 2019 in NYC.

**khareyses** (Yiddish, dialect) **Kharoyeses** (Yiddish, standardized)

Kharoset (Hebrew)

Grated/processed apples, wine, cinnamon, walnuts, honey. Festive food for Peysakh. This was not a food in the Soviet Union, but rather a term / turn of phrase. If one was not using a food or some other item and leaving it for a later time, instead of using it now, one might hear, "why are you leaving it for khareyses?" As in, why not use it now? khareyses then becomes a catch-all like "the kitchen sink". However, we did not know exactly the food origin of the term until became familiar with this ritual food tradition in late 80s. Now, made in NYC in 2019, but solely for Peysakh.

**eyerlekh** (Yiddish)

Not familiar with Russian term for it, although one might exist When chicken bul'yon is made from a whole chicken, the yet-unlaid eggs in the chicken ovaries can be used and form golden yolks in the broth. We did not use this term explicitly to refer to this when this happened. I learned the term from Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett. I have not had this in the United States.

**Foods below have primarily Russian names, and do not code as (obviously) Jewish (to us).**

**klyotski (Russian)**

Dough (flour and eggs) dumplings into chicken bul'yon. Directly dumped in, irregular shaped. Contrast with kneydlekh (Yiddish) above, which were shaped. These klyotski were more commonly eaten than kneydlekh in Russia in my childhood. In NYC in 2019, still made, although rarer than kneydlekh

**zapekanka (Russian)**

I guess this is kugl (Yiddish) adjacent. But we never ever heard or used or use that term. Friends from Odessa tell me that they used the word babka (Yiddish(?)) for a related dish, something I've also not heard directly. At least two dishes:

1) Noodles, practically always vermisheli, mixed with egg. Pan is filled to the brim and above with mixture. Fried on a stove. Cut and served in chicken bul'yon. Can be refridgerated and served again. We did not use the term lokshn (Yiddish) with respect to this food. Made often in 2019 in NYC.

2) tvorozhnaya zapekanka (Russian), made using tvorog (Russian), often with raisins in it. Baked. Common food in kindergarten and school cafeterias in Soviet Union and Russia. Stressed syllable of tvorog is different in different regions/dialects of Russian. Other varieties can be kartofel'naya, others but we haven't made those.

Made, but not often, in 2019 in NYC.

# Yakov Pechersky

## **shkvarki** (Russian)

Related to shmaltz (Yiddish). Chicken (or rarely, goose) skins, fried in their fat. Onions often fried in it as well. Rarely made in 2019 in NYC.

## **studen'** (Russian)

This is related to kholodets (Russian), but we never used that word to refer to our dish. To us, had a connotation of non-Jewish and Ukrainian/south Russian, possibly pork. Jewish friends from Odessa attest that they only used kholodets and never cooked it with pork. We never ever heard or used or use the term pcha (Yiddish). Aspic. We make it solely using calf bones. We do not put extra chunks of meat in the gelatin, but do put carrot, hardboiled egg, black pepper, a lot of garlic. My grandma prides herself on how clear and transparent her studen' is. Some meat tendon/flesh is at the bottom left over from the bones. My grandma still makes it in 2019 in NYC. Was and is a special occasion food.

## **borsch** (Russian)

Hot beet-based soup. Grandma always includes cabbage. Uses tomato paste. Can be made without meat (veggie broth) or beef/veal based. Often served with sour cream. We made it with beet root, as opposed to beet stems, gives a darker color. We would call beet stems buryak(i), but in Ukrainian and Ukrainian-adjacent Russian, that refers to the whole beet plant. This dish not svekol'nik (see below), no matter what the jars in the store say. Related, see schi below. Often made in NYC in 2019.

## **svekol'nik** (Russian)

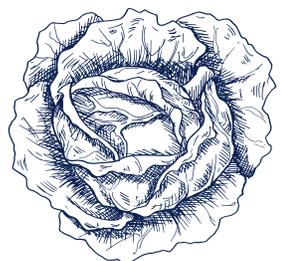
Cold beet-based soup. No cabbage. Served with cucumber, hardboiled egg. Often made in NYC in 2019 using the Borscht (Gold's preferred) jars; see "schavel'" below.

## **schavel'** (Russian)

I don't know where the predominance of schav (Yiddish (?)) comes from. The Soviet Russian-Yiddish dictionary I have has shtshavel and shtshav(ey) (Yiddish) as entries for schavel' (Russian) Cold sorrel-based soup. Served with cucumber, hardboiled egg, green onion/scallion. Often, herring on the side. Made in NYC in 2019 using the Schav (Gold's preferred) jars.

## **schi** (Russian)

Hot cabbage-based soup. Has potatoes and other root vegetables. In our home, never made with soured cabbage. Often served with sour cream. Made often in 2019 in NYC. Friends from Odessa say that such a dish and term is not heard of in their family and friends.



# Yakov Pechersky

**pel'meni** (Russian), **kreplekh** (Yiddish).

We didn't use this term. (Could also be backed) Related to vareniki (Russian), which were usually sweet as opposed to savory (exception might be potato etc). Often cherry. Since cherries were not readily available in Leningrad, vareniki (Russian) was seen as a southern/resort food. Small meat dumplings. In our home, usually made with ground beef on a pel'menitsa (Russian), a "tray" to make ~30 dumplings at a time. Frozen, cooked by boiling. Resulting broth can be eaten as "soup" with the dumplings. Served with vinegar, sometimes with sour cream and butter. Made often in NYC in 2019. Have not had it "soup" style at home since very early after immigration.

**kartofel'nye olad'i** (Russian) **latkes** (Yiddish)

Some dialects use the term khremslekh (Yiddish, see above). Potato pancakes. In our home, potatoes are ground using a meat grinder in a paste/dough, then fried on a pan on vegetable oil in an oval shape, size of half/third of a palm, similar to dairy based olad'i (Russian). Previously in Soviet Union, grated using the finest grating into similar consistency. Never cooked in our home using rough grated, what I would call "hashbrown" style. Russian and Yiddish terms now used interchangeably, but Russian was primary term originally. In Soviet Union and Russia, was not linked to Hanuke at all. Made often in 2019 in NYC, without special occasion. Also made specifically for Hanuke.

**blinchiki** (Russian)

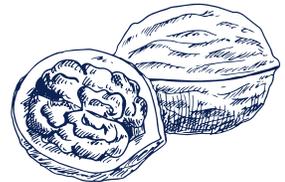
Related to blintses (Yiddish), which are often dairy-filled Using bliny (Russian), crepe-like pancakes (often made on a yogurt, kefir, or buttermilk base), rolled/stuffed with variety of savory filling: egg+green onion, egg+chicken (often left over from making bul'yon), rice+egg, rice+chicken. The bliny used for that were not sweetened, unlike regular bliny. In our home, I cannot remember a dairy-based or sweet blinchik. However, my greatgrandmother used to make tvorog based blinchiki for breakfast and rarely dinner. Served on the side with bul'yon. Made often in 2019 in NYC.

**syrniki** (Russian) **latkes** (Yiddish, archaic)

These are the original Hanuke latkes that were the special oil-fried dish. Obviously, these were fried in vegetable oils since they are dairy, and vegetable oil is the holiday's ritual item. The tradition of having an oil-fried food for the holiday is older than the "New World", so something must have been used before potatoes. Turns out it was farmer's cheese. Using home made tvorog (Russian) or other types of farmer's cheese, pan-fried oval thick pancakes, half-palm size. Often sweetened, served for breakfast. Made, but not too often, in 2019 in NYC.

**rogaliki** (Russian)

Related to rugelekh (Yiddish) Pastry dough rolled with walnuts, raisins, cinnamon. Grandma now uses Russian and Yiddish term interchangeably, but we did not use Yiddish term previously. Made in 2019 in NYC. Often, Pillsbury roll dough is used.



# Ann Toback



I was born in Brooklyn, and then in the early 70's, my family "emigrated" to Sea Cliff, Long Island, where my parents continue live today. There was one Jewish bakery nearby, Strickoffs, next to our grocery store, Waldbaums, and my mom and I would end most grocer visits with a stop in Strickoffs. They always gave me a cookie, and my mom would often buy a loaf of corn rye along with challah. I remember it being a wonderful chewy and crusty loaf with a strong malty smell. The bottom was crusted with what I now know of as cornmeal.

Over the years I have come to crave that corn rye, but have never been able to find it. There have been loaves called corn rye that I have tracked down, even one from Orwashers, but they were not the one that filled my sensory memories.

These past months I have set about finding and making a corn rye bread to rival my memories. And I have succeeded! The loaf from the below recipe, which is gently tweaked from [kitchenproject.com](http://kitchenproject.com), makes a corn rye that is crusty, flavorful, with a wonderful crumb. The bread heels, warm from the oven, are perfection with butter, and the slices are strong enough for any sandwich. And the amazing smell as it bakes in your oven is almost as good as the finished product.



# Ann Toback

## Corn Rye Recipe

Note, Corn Rye doesn't actually have corn in it, the "corn" is probably from the German word, korn, for "grain," although you do put cornmeal on the bottom of the pan for the final bake. Also, it requires a two-day starter, which is very simple to make, and I also love keeping it in my living and working room area, as it gently perfumes the air with a warm, yeasty scent as it ferments. Don't be intimidated by the time, the two-day starter is simple, and the dough is soft and easy to knead. Truly a pleasure to make.

## Corn Rye

### To make the Starter

Day 1 Ingredients:

- 1 Tablespoon Active Dry Yeast
- 2 Cups of slightly warm/tepid water (I put them in the microwave for about 25 seconds)
- 2 Cups of White Rye Flour
- 1 Medium to large onion peeled and sliced in half

1. Combine the two cups of water in a stainless steel or glass bowl and first mix in yeast and then the white rye flour, mix all to combine (I use a Danish Whisk, which has become my favorite tool to make bread - google to find a lot available online).
2. Add the halved onion and gently mix in.
3. Cover the bowl with a clean towel and set on a shelf for 24 hours (I am not strict - maybe a few hours more or less for this).

Day 2 Ingredients:

- 1 Cup slightly warm water
- 1½ Cups White Rye Flour

1. Add the water and white rye flour to the starter bowl, gently mix. Cover again with kitchen towel and set aside for another 24 hours.

Day 3: Remove the onion from the starter and discard. The remaining starter is ready. If you are not ready to make your bread, the starter can be stored in the fridge until ready to use.

Footnotes for below:

[1] Clear flour is a high gluten, high protein flour, a key ingredient in most old Jewish bread recipes. I think you might be able to substitute bread flour here, but I'm not sure the effect. I buy clear flour from <https://www.bakersauthority.com/products/5lb-clear-flour-00-flour-5lb>

[2] Note, you will have a little more starter than needed, this is not a sourdough starter that you can feed and continue. I discard the leftover starter - there really isn't anything to do with it.

# Ann Toback

## To Make Corn Rye Bread

### Ingredients:

1.5 Cups Warm Water

2¼ Teaspoons of Active Dry Yeast (this is the size of a standard packet)

½ Teaspoon Sugar

4 Teaspoons Kosher Salt

3 Cups Corn Rye Starter (from above)

2 Cups Clear Flour[1]

3½ Cups (maybe more) of all-purpose unbleached white flour

Cornmeal for dusting

1 egg white plus 2 teaspoons of water for egg wash

2 teaspoons of caraway seeds if desired (I do not use seeds - I like my rye seedless)

### Instructions:

1. Proof the yeast by combining yeast with ½ cup of warm water and sugar. Let stand about ten minutes until mixture has doubled.
2. In a larger mixing bowl, dissolve salt in remaining one cup of warm water. Then mix in three cups of Corn Rye Starter[2] until well combined. Add the now-proofed yeast and mix. Then add the two cups of clear flour and two cups of all-purpose flour (reserving remaining 1½ cups) and mix to combine. If you use caraway seeds, you can mix them in here. You will have a very sticky and loose dough at this point. Keep in mind that you want to keep the dough loose, it will ultimately give you a great texture and flavor.
3. Spread the remaining 1½ cups of all-purpose flour on your kneading/counter surface and turn the dough onto the floured surface. Knead in the flour. Don't over-knead. Your goal is to have soft and only slightly sticky dough that is just a little elastic. If you poke it, it will gently re-form. I usually wind up adding ¾ to 1 cup more of flour here, to get the perfect slightly sticky, pillowy soft dough with a little elasticity. Form dough into a ball and put in an ungreased bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise until double (around 1½ hours).
4. Punch down dough, and divide into two parts, forming each into an oblong loaf. At this point put them on a tray that has been lightly oiled and liberally sprinkled with cornmeal. The cornmeal grains form a slight rise for the bottom of the loaf allowing it to form a great crust. I have lately been putting my dough in loaf pans, which don't allow the bottom to get as crusty, but make a better loaf for sandwiches. Put loaves in warm area (I proof in my oven on a proof setting, you can also just warm up your oven, turn off, and put loaves inside, for about 45 minutes to an hour until they double in size. Moving the loaves now can mess up the rise, so after this be careful when handling them.
5. Prepare oven: Set a large pan with two inches of water on the the lower rack or bottom of your oven. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
6. Brush egg white wash on your loaves and set in oven. Bake for 30 minutes at 400 degrees, then lower temperature to 350 degrees and bake another 25-30 minutes. The bottom should be crusty at this point. I usually tap the bottom to hear a nice thump, and I know it's done (if not put back for 5-10 minutes). If in a loaf pan, I carefully remove and put back in oven for about 5 minutes to make the bottom more crusty. You can remove the loaves and let cool on rack.

# Mark Slobin



The cards are my mother's, Judith Liepah Slobin, 1909-2002. When she says "mother's, potato khishes," she means her mother, my grandmother Sima Liepah, 1889-1979, taking this back to the 19th century. Both ladies were born in Uman, then Russian Empire, now Ukraine, and came to Detroit in 1922.

Mother's Potato Knishes 2 T also  
2 c mash. potato  
2 c 2 Tbsp. minced onion  
flour  
Mix potato-beaten & fat, onions  
Smooth Add flour to make  
stiff dough. Cakes 1/8" thick  
Depression in center. Meat &  
filling Brush with yolk  
mixed with water, 350°

Mark Slobin

# Russian Cookies

1/2 lb. oleo<sup>or</sup> butter      2 1/4 c. fl.  
1/2 c. pow. su.      nuts  
1 tsp vanilla

## Choco-Chip mandelbrot

5 1/2 oz chips      1/4 tsp sa.  
2 c Matzo Meal      1/2 c chopp nuts  
1 tbsp orange  
" " for lemony.      1 c su  
" "      3 e.

1/2 c shortening  
Beat e. Add su + then rest. Let  
stand 5 min. Divide batter 4 parts  
form 4 strips. Grease sheets + sprinkle  
with matzo meal. 375° 20 min.  
cut      Return to oven to brown

Mark Slobin

## HAMMENTASCHEN

$\frac{2}{3}$  c. short.  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. su.  
1 tbsp. orange j. Rind  
1 e. 1 tsp. Rind  
2 c. fl.  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. b.p.

Brush with w. & sprinkle  
with su.  $375^{\circ}$

## Knaidlach

2 e.  $\frac{1}{4}$  tbsp. schmaltz 1 c. matzo meal  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. cold w. a dash nutmeg

Beat e. lightly & stir in rest to form stiff  
batter. Cover & chill at least 2 hrs.  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr.

before serving form into little balls  
& drop into rapidly boiling w. Cook 30 min.  
Serves 4.

Mark Slobin



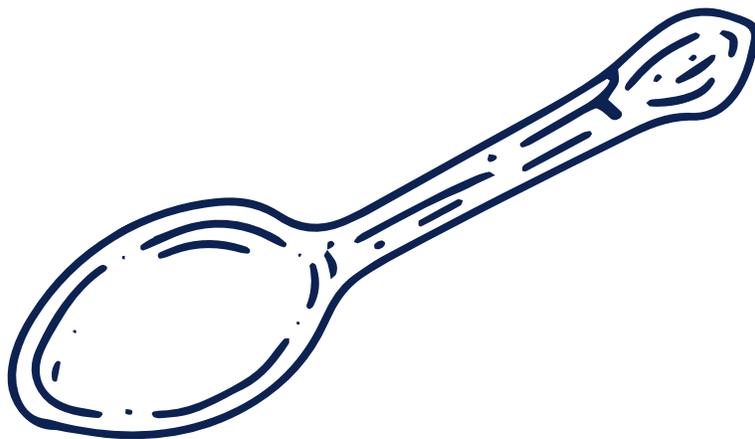
Mark's mother making Peysakh lemon puffs, 1958.

# Emily Socolov



Let's hear it for the mommas who weren't such great cooks, who might have had a copy of Peg Bracken's *I Hate To Cook Book* (1960) next to Adele Davis' *Let's Cook it Right* (rev.1962) and a copy of *The Joy of Cooking* from the 40's which was held together with rubber bands. I don't remember seeing a dedicated box, but there were folders tucked into a desk drawer with assortments of clippings and handwritten recipes. I offer two recipes from my mother, Judith Socolov (b. Brooklyn, 1921-2011).

The first was her standard party dish, an Orzo Pasta Salad. She liked recipes that were foolproof - and I have inherited this desire and have my own arsenal of "tried and trues". The only misadventure I recall about this recipe was when the mixing spoon used to stir this dish was laid on top of the block of Ivory soap that was used to wash the dishes. Maybe I was the one to blame for this? I do know that the soapy flavor was dispersed throughout and the orzo rendering the dish inedible. This episode was almost as irredeemable as the breaking of a glass bottle of corn oil AND a bottle of seltzer on the kitchen floor while unpacking groceries from the neighborhood A&P in Brooklyn. This latter sin I do own.



Emily Socolov

## Orzo with Spinach & Pine Nuts

6 servings

$\frac{1}{2}$  lb. orzo

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup. pine nuts (recipe calls for 2 tbs - much too little, the  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  Tbs. olive oil made the difference)

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup minced red onion

$\frac{1}{4}$  lb. stemmed spinach leaves, rinsed well & chopped

2 pear shaped tomatoes ( $\frac{1}{3}$  lb.) - Diced

3oz. ( $\frac{3}{4}$  cup) crumbled feta cheese

$\frac{1}{4}$  cup. chopped parsley

Freshly ground pepper

- Cook orzo in 2 qts water for 5 mins. Drain, rinse with cold water until cool, drain again.
- In medium fry pan, cook pine nuts over medium heat stirring, until golden (3 mins). Remove nuts & set aside.
- Heat oil in pan, add onion & cook, stirring until soft (5 mins). Add spinach & continue cooking, stirring until wilted (2-3 mins more).
- In large bowl, combine orzo, pine nuts & spinach, toss well. Add tomato, feta, parsley - season w. pepper, toss again. Cover & refrigerate up to 4 hrs.

# Emily Socolov

The second recipe is written on a piece of message cube paper, later stapled to an index card. It represents four generations of my family: my grandmother's recipe, the favorite dish of my mother's children, my incomprehensible scrawl, and my daughter Esther's childhood embellishment.

This casserole embodies the powers of assimilation in immigrant foodways (my grandmother, Rebecca Moroh Coplon (b. Albany, 1890-1967) was the first of seven siblings to be born in America. Her parents both came from Minsk. And while my mother found the dish amusing, her four children devoured it with zeal, especially the burnt bits that stuck to the sides. The dish itself is no longer in the inventory, but it is the Pyrex 3-quart Mixer Bowl #344 which retailed for \$1.49, according to the 1967 Pyrex Retail Catalog (Corning Museum of Glass collection). In order to achieve the exact flavor, all brand name products were required.

Recipe translation:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Cook one package of Muellers Spaghetti according to the directions on the box.

Put three pats of butter into the casserole dish.

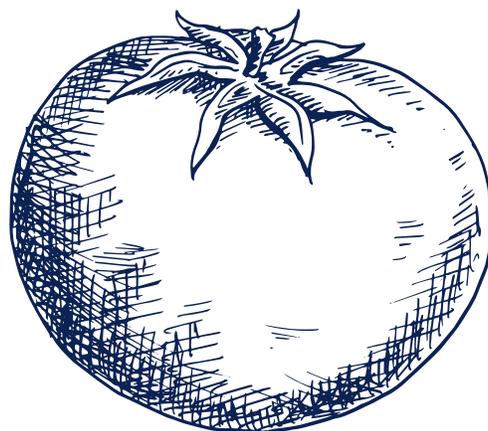
Add drained spaghetti to dish.

Add 8oz can of Delmonte Tomato Sauce to dish.

Grate 8 oz of Kraft American Cheese and add to dish.

Mix to combine.

Bake uncovered for 60 minutes at 350 until browned.



Emily Socolov

# The Casserole

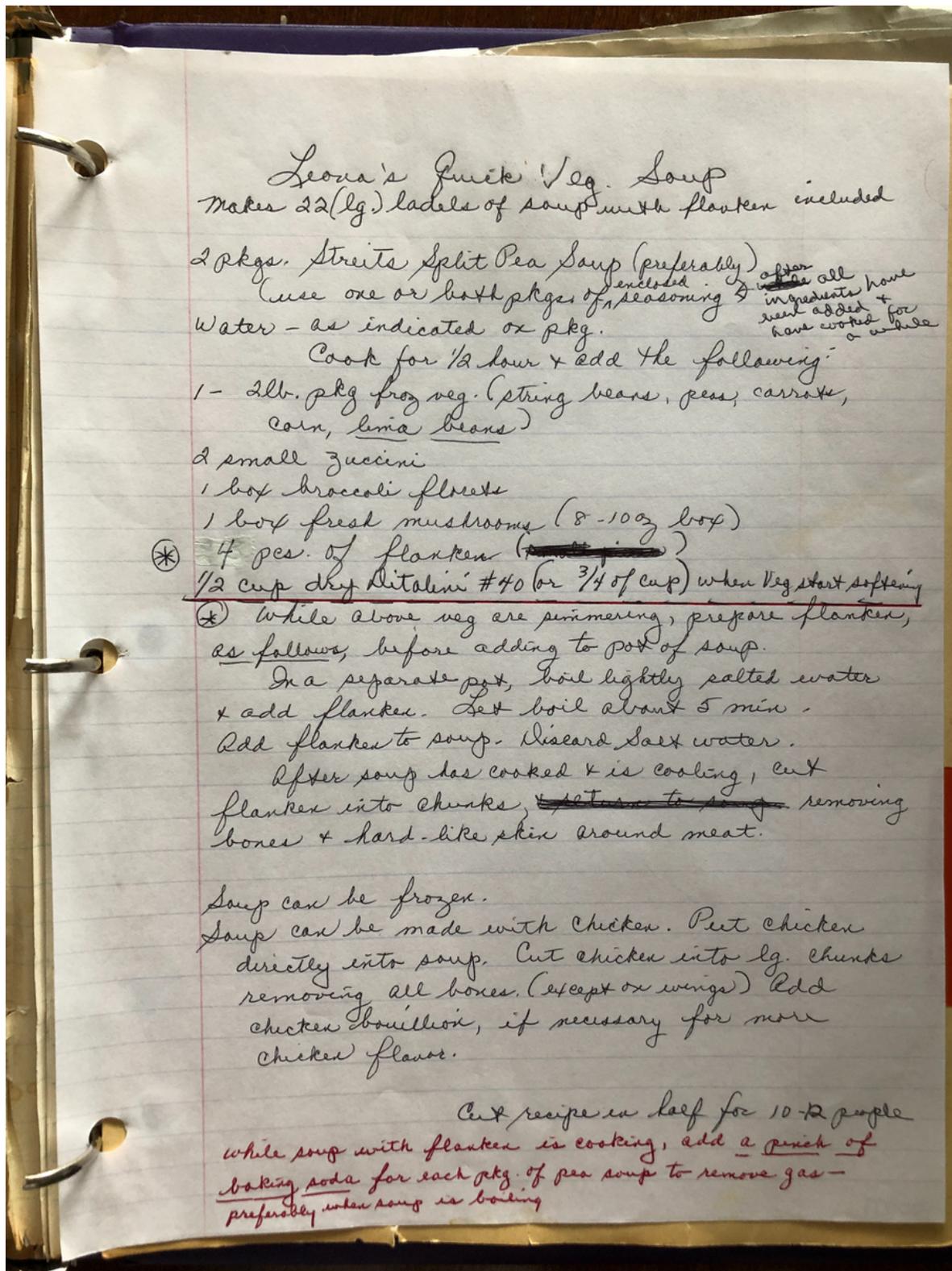


3 parts of butter in casserole  
Cook 1 pkg. Mueller's Spag-  
Mix in 3 (8oz) cans Del Monte  
Sauce  
Gather 8 slices Kraft + mix  
in  
Bake @ 350 ~~400~~ until brown  
uncovered

# Mara D. Gittleman



From my grandma Leona (Zamochnik) Solomon, who was born in Brooklyn in 1930.



# Teri Edelstein



## **Nana Friedhoff's Cabbage Soup**

My grandmother died when I was only five years old so I "know" my grandmother mainly through this and many other recipes that my mother made for us and for her widowed father. I asked my mother to write it down for me many years ago because I love this soup. When my mother wanted to make this soup when I was young, we would go to Squirrel Hill, Pittsburgh's Jewish neighborhood, to the kosher butcher, Federman and Fogel, to get the meat. The butcher shop had a tiled floor covered in sawdust, with the meat and chickens hanging from hooks. One of the butchers was tall and skinny, the other short and fat. I never could remember which one was Mr. Federman and which Mr. Fogel. My mother would sometimes speak to them in Yiddish.

Nana is Stella Beerman Friedhoff. She was born in 1901 in Johnstown, PA, and died there in 1956. I assume that this was the recipe of my great grandmother Toby, for whom I am named - my Hebrew name is Tovah. She came from a shtetl, near Vilnius.

My mother, Hulda Friedhoff Edelstein, was born in 1926 in Johnstown, PA, and died in Columbia, SC in 2019.

In a large stock pot brown about 2 lbs of marrow bones w/ meat or short ribs of beef or combination of any kind of soup meat. Brown on both sides.

Add cold water to almost full -- scrape bottom of pan to get essence.

Add 1 whole onion w/ slit celery ribs and several carrots halved.

Add lid and cook slowly for several hours. Add 2 bouillon cubes (beef). Add 1 small can of whole tomatoes, which you have diced a little, or 2 or 3 fresh tomatoes diced.

Add lid & cook slowly till rich stock. Add salt & pepper to taste.

When stock has a good taste cool and refrigerate for a day or 2.

Remove onion and fat before re-cooking. You can make stock richer by leaving lid off for 1/2 hr. or 1 hr. while cooking slowly.

Slice smallish to medium head of cabbage. Add to hot soup - add lid and cook only till wilted. Add juice of 2 lemons about 1 1/2 Tbls of sour salt & about 1/2 cup sugar.

Adjust to taste. Simmer about 1/2 hr w/out lid.

NOTE from Teri: if you do not have sour salt, AKA Citric Acid, just add more lemon juice.

Teri Edelstein

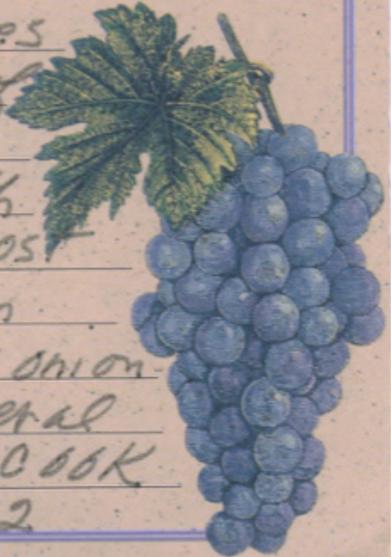
Recipe for

# Nana Friedhoff's Cabbage Soup

From the kitchen of

Hulda

In a large stock pot brown about 2 lbs of marrow bones w/ meat or short ribs of beef or combination of any kind of soup meat. Brown on both sides. Add cold water to almost full - scrape bottom of pan to get essence. Add 1 whole onion w/ slit, celery ribs and several carrots halved. Add lid + cook slowly for several hours. Add 2



boullion cubes (beef). Add 1 small can of whole tomatoes which you have diced a little or 2 or 3 fresh tomatoes diced. Add lid + cook slowly till rich stock. Add salt + pepper to taste. When stock has a good taste cool + refrigerate for a day or 2. Remove onion + fat before re-cooking. You can make stock richer by leaving lid off for 1/2 hr or 1 hr. while cooking slowly. Slice smallish to medium head of cabbage. Add to hot soup - add lid + cook only till wilted. Add juice of 2 lemons, about 1/2 lbs of sour salt + about 1/2 cup sugar. Adjust to taste. Simmer about 1/2 hr w/out

# Teri Edelstein



Mom, Nana, cousin Larry, and Poppa, Johnstown 1950



From the bottom left Stella Beerman Friedhoff, AKA Nana; unknown; Frieda Beerman Romanoff; Rosalind Romanoff; Hulda Friedhoff Edelstein AKA Mook; Robert "Bob" Edelstein, AKA Daddy; Robert Romanoff; unknown; Arnold Friedhoff; Frances Friedhoff; Allan Romanoff; Abraham Friedhoff, AKA Poppa.

Note the soup tureen in front of my Mom and Dad. Who knows what was in it?

Taken in Johnstown, PA, 1955. And many thanks to James Caulfield.

# Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett



## **Elixir: Dora's Soup Reinterpreted by her Daughter**

My mother was ninety-one and already a shadow of her former vibrant self, when I wrote this tribute to her in 1991. She passed away eight years later, just shy of her 99th birthday. She was born Doris (Dvoyre) Shushanoff in the city of Brest-Litovsk (Brisk in Yiddish, Brześć nad Bugiem in Polish, and Brest in Belarus today) and came to Canada when she was twelve. She was a fastidious mincer (you had to see the precision with which she minced radishes) and equally fastidious about kashering meat and skimming the foam from broth to produce a crystal clear chicken soup. Above all it is her split pea barley soup that I identify with her. Here it is, in my version.

## Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett

Bring 8 cups of water to boil in a large pot. Meanwhile, carefully wash 3 large leeks, preferably organic. Place the dark green tops (plus the dark green tops of other bunches, if you have them or can salvage them from a farmers' market--some people throw them away!) into the water and simmer until they are very soft, about 30 minutes.

At the same time, in a small pot, simmer 1 pound (or 2 1/2 cups) of washed green split peas (organic if possible) in 4 cups of water. The fresher the split peas the quicker and softer they will cook; soak overnight for even faster results. Cook till soft, about 40 minutes.

Meanwhile, cut the white part of the leeks in half, wash free of sand, and slice thinly. Scrub two large sweet carrots, a knob of celery root the size of your fist (with the dark green stalks) or six stalks of celery. The dark green variety from Chinatown is flavorful, especially if your celery root did not come with its top. Add a large parsnip, a parsley root (if you can find it). Dice the celery stalks and leaves. Leave everything else whole. Organic vegetables preferred.

By this time, the leek tops should be soft and grey green. Lift them out with tongs and drain in a colander, saving all the liquid. As they are cooling, put all the vegetables into the leek stock and simmer. Wash and add 2/3 cup washed and soaked barley (preferably large, darkish, and unpearled, from health food store) and 1/2 cup soaked large white limas.

Soon as the leek tops have cooled enough to handle, squeeze all the goodness out of them, put all the drained liquid into the pot, discard what remains of the leek tops.

Now, look in on the peas. If they have softened nicely, you can mash them with a spoon, whisk them, puree them in the pot using a hand blender, or give them a turn in the food processor: they should be smooth. Add them to the soup pot. Cover and simmer gently.

As the whole apartment fills with the aroma of roots releasing their concentrated goodness and the pulses swelling as they rehydrate, go off and do something else--or sit at the table and look off into space, daydreaming, reading, the radio humming. Check the pot in about 40 minutes. Add more water if necessary.

# Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett

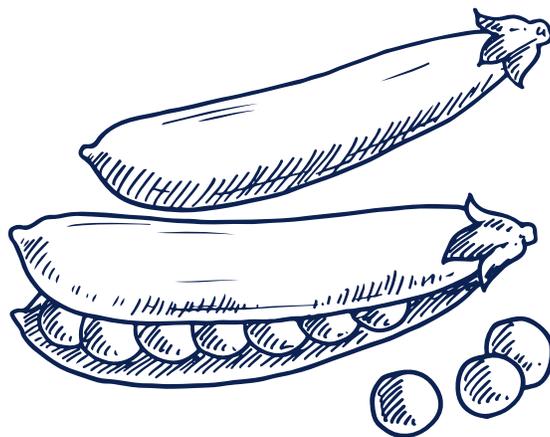
Soon as the vegetables are cooked through, remove them. Mash them coarsely with a fork or dice them. Return them to the pot. Add kosher or sea salt to taste.

Soon as the limas and barley are soft, the soup is ready to serve. Wash the fresh dark dill (a good handful) and chop coarsely, stems and all (as well as finely chopped dark green tops of the parsley root or flat-leaf parsley) and add at the last minute or, even better, serve the soup with finely chopped fresh herbs added to each bowl or served in a bowl so each person can help themselves.

Serve it forth. With coarse bread--either Essene sprouted grain loaf (from health food store or sprout the wheat and make your own) or Lithuanian sour rye cut from a crusty round loaf the size of a millstone (or make your own from whole rye). Sweet tub butter for those who still eat butter. Half-sour dill pickles--the butcher has them. Cold buttermilk.

When the soup has cooled, put some in the fridge and pack the rest into containers and freeze so you don't get bored eating 4 gallons of the same thing every day in a row. When reheating, thin out with water (or leek stock or vegetable water) as needed and refresh with fresh chopped dill. Dill freezes well in little packets and can be chopped into the soup that you defrost. Or, add fresh chopped dill to the top of the container of soup just before freezing.

Remember Barbara's mother Dora when you serve it forth and the cold winters in Eastern Poland just after World War I. - Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Manhattan /January 7, 1994. <https://www.jewishfoodsociety.org/posts/2018/1/15/bkg-soupaq>



# Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett



Mayer Kirshenblatt (1916 Opatów / Apt - 2009 Toronto)

The Soup Pot Never Left the Stove

Acrylic on canvas, 1994

"The soup pot never left the stove. When mother was ready to cook, she would light the fire. The hottest heat was under the front two burners. She would set the soup pot on one of the back burners so the soup would cook slowly and add scraps throughout the day: a piece of carrot, a potato, some barley, a bit of chicken, or even some meat. By the end of the day there was soup. You didn't even wash out the pot, because a little bit of flavor remained on its surface. Even now, I feel that a day without soup is not a day."

From *They Called Me Mayer July: Painted Memories of a Jewish Childhood in Poland Before the Holocaust* by Mayer Kirshenblatt and Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (University of California Press, 2007). <http://www.mayerjuly.com>

# Memories of the Yiddish Kitchen

YIDDISH NEW YORK 2020

**CURATOR** Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett

**DESIGN** Clara Byom

This collection of recipes and memories is free to be shared  
within the Yiddish New York community and beyond.



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Cover Image

Contributor: Yakov Pechersky

Photographer: Larisa Pechersky

This holiday table was prepared by my mother, Larisa, and my grandmother, Zhenya, for a small Roshashone celebration in 2013 in Queens, NYC. My mother took this photo before shkia. For the evening meal, it would be just my mom and grandmother, and for the day meal, they went to see family friends. I had just started my first job after college, and was spending roshashone with my roommate's family in Cambridge.

My grandmother made the gefilte fish by hand from carp. For the beginning of the meal, there are the various simanim, signs, like apples, honey, pomegranate, carrots (cut in rounds, like golden coins). The Yiddish word for carrots, mern, is a homonym meaning "to increase." While we can speak Yiddish at home, our usual language is Russian, and our home interpretation of the carrots is now also based on the "irbu" connection. According to Michael Wex, the siman was fenugreek, whose Talmudic name rubia (which means black-eyed peas in Modern Hebrew), was chosen due to the assonance to the verb "to multiply," irbu. Luckily for Ashkenazim who did not have access to fenugreek, there was wordplay: rube was later changed to merrube, which mean carrots in German. Nowadays, mern is the word for carrots in Yiddish, and continuing the punnery, also means "to increase." Note the fish head on the table that we eat as well, which is left over from the carp - May we all be like the head and not like the tail! The challah was bought from a local kosher supermarket. The bottle of wine is a Tokay variety, made by Kedem. My grandmother likes sweet wine, and in the Soviet Union/Russia, it was considered a delicacy! (We immigrated to New York City in 1998 from St. Petersburg). The makhzor is a monogrammed birthday gift my mother received, since her birthday is on Yom Kippur.