NUTRITIONAL INNOVATION & CULINARY HERITAGE

Honoring Heritage, Elevating Health

Modernizing classic Jewish culinary traditions to enhance nutritional profile

Sponsored by Jewish ERG

Lisa Michelle Miller BS, NC
Nutrition Consultant, certified
Ocean View Nutrition – Nutrition Consulting
Kitchen on Fire – Cooking School

Wellness Journey: Healthier Together

Honoring Heritage, Elevating Health: A Modern Twist on Jewish Food Traditions

We continue to make positive changes toward supporting your body and mind.

Let's talk about ways to embrace cultural foods and memories of our comfort foods while supporting our nutritional needs. We are excited to collaborate with the Jewish ERG team to celebrate Jewish culture and traditions!



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Kitchen on Fire & Ocean View Nutrition

We bring people together through cooking, nutrition and a sense of community.

Public cooking classes
Corporate events
Individual consulting
Virtual & In-Person

- **BUY** seasonal, local, organic and GMO free when possible
- **COOK** using healthy cooking techniques
- **EAT** a variety of whole foods including herbs and spices
- **SHARE** and enjoy meals with friends and family
- **AWARENESS** of allergies and sensitivities

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Objectives – Honoring Heritage, Elevating Health

Wellness through Culture!

1. The role of food in Jewish culture
2. Exploring Jewish foods across regions
3. Building connections by maintaining traditions
4. Balancing nutritional needs and tradition
5. SMART Goals to embrace tradition in a modern world



Chef Olive will demonstrate
Chicken & Vegetable Soup with Shallot-Shiitake Matzo Balls

1:1 Nutrition Sessions
Nov 10th & 12th
December 8th

Raffle Prize
for one lucky attendee today!!

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Today's session is sponsored by the Jewish ERG

JEWISH COMMUNITY

ERG Mission

Supporting the Jewish Community for those who identify based on ancestry, culture, heritage, religion, spirituality.

- Share cultural holidays and traditions
- Discuss events impacting the Jewish Community
- Uphold AssetMark's values of Heart, Integrity, and Respect

JOIN US ON SLACK: #erg-jewish-community

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Let's see Chef Olive and Andy Epstein at the kitchen!

Learn a little about Andy Eptein's family history and the Matzo Ball scoop passed down to him from his grandmother!



Background: Jewish Traditions
Shared by Andy Epstein

Many traditional Jewish dishes were not originally designed simply for flavor. They were shaped by religious requirements, economics, and practical household needs, especially around the observance of Shabbat (the Sabbath).

The Shabbat Connection
Traditional Jewish law prohibits kindling a fire or actively cooking on Shabbat, which begins at sunset on Friday and ends Saturday night. As a result, Jewish communities developed dishes that could be placed over-heat before Shabbat began and then cook slowly for many hours without further attention.

The most famous example is:
Cholent (Ashkenazi Jewish communities): a stew of meat, beans, barley, potatoes, and other ingredients that cooks overnight from Friday afternoon to Saturday lunch.
Hamin (Sephardic and Middle Eastern Jewish communities): a similar slow-cooked Sabbath stew with regional variations, often containing eggs, rice, chickpeas, meat, and spices.

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Background: Jewish Traditions continued

The practical problem: *How to serve a hot, satisfying meal on Saturday w/o violating Sabbath restrictions.*

Why Slow Cooking Worked So Well:

- Tough, inexpensive cuts of meat became tender.
  - Many Jewish communities historically lived with limited means.
  - Cheap cuts such as brisket, shank, or chuck became delicious after many hours of cooking.
- One-pot meals fed large families.
  - Beans, grains, and root vegetables stretched expensive meat.
  - The result was nutritious and economical.
- Flavor improved over time.
  - Long cooking allowed flavors to meld together.
  - Ingredients absorbed spices and broth more completely.
- It required little active labor.
  - The meal could be assembled on Friday and left alone.
  - This aligned perfectly with the spirit of Shabbat as a day of rest.

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Background: Jewish Traditions contnued

Beyond Cholent

- The same logic influenced many other Jewish foods:
- Brisket is often braised for hours.
- Stuffed cabbage simmers slowly.
- Tzimmes cooks gently to soften carrots and dried fruit.
- Various Sephardic bean and rice dishes are traditionally cooked overnight.

A Historical Perspective

What's interesting is that Jewish cuisine independently developed a tradition that resembles modern slow-cooker cooking centuries before electric crock pots existed. In many towns, families would bring their Sabbath pots to communal bakeries on Friday, where they remained in the gradually cooling ovens overnight and were retrieved for Saturday lunch.

So, the reason many Jewish dishes simmer for a long time is not primarily culinary, though the flavors are wonderful. It is largely because Jewish communities developed recipes that accommodated **Shabbat observance**, while also making the most of affordable ingredients and minimizing labor. Over generations, those practical solutions became beloved culinary traditions.

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Raffle Prize





Victoria 6-Quart Cast Iron Dutch Oven with Lid and Dual Loop Handle

Preserving Identity Through Culinary Science

Cultural Anchor

Food forms the centerpiece of Jewish memory, weekly Shabbat rituals, and holiday celebrations across the Diaspora.

The Health Challenge

Traditional diaspora recipes favored saturated fats, heavy sodium, and refined carbs designed for cold climates and physical labor.

The Modern Mission

Apply modern nutrition science without compromising kosher laws, beloved nostalgia, or authentic flavor profiles.



Actionable Tips for Kitchen & Community

Smart Veggie Swaps

Replace half the potato volume in recipes with cauliflower or turnips.

Spice-Forward Flavor

Build deep savory notes using sumac, za'atar, and turmeric.

Plant-Forward Options

Center festive menus on protein-rich lentils, chickpeas, and beans.

Category	Traditional Choice	Modern Healthy Swap	Health Advantage
Cooking Fats	Schmaltz & Margarine	**EVOO & Sesame Tahini**	Monounsaturated fats
Starches	Refined White Flour	**Buckwheat & Quinoa**	Complete plant proteins
Sweeteners	White Sugar & Corn Syrup	**Medjool Dates & Raw Honey**	Micronutrients & lower GI
Technique	Deep Pan Frying	**Roasting**	Eliminates oxidized oils

Upgrading Traditional Comfort Classics

Sweet Potato & Zucchini Latkes
Air-fried sweet potato and zucchini bound with almond flour.
Higher fiber & lower glycemic impact

Greek Yogurt Noodle Kugel
Whole-wheat ribbons in protein-dense cottage cheese base.
Probiotic-rich & reduced refined sugar

Herb Matzo Ball Bone Broth
Whole-grain matzo in nutrient-rich bone broth with kale.
Anti-inflammatory & reduced sodium

Shabbat & New Year Challah
Spelt sourdough braided with olive oil and pumpkin seeds.

Hanukkah Sufganiyot
Air-fried oat-flour bites filled with seedless chia-berry jam.

Passover Charoset
Polyphenol-rich mix of walnuts, figs, and pomegranate seeds.





Set SMART goals to...

Time your meals to meet your nutrition and cultural goals!

- ✓ 1 goal around your commitment to keep traditional foods alive this holiday season
- ✓ 1 goal to think about recipes you love that could get an update to evolve as part of your healthy choices at home!

Specific
Measurable
take **A**ction
be **R**ealistic
Time-oriented



Sign up Today!

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About Us

- Kitchen on Fire Cooking School
  - For the Home Chef in Berkeley since 2005
  - Owned by Chef Olivier Said (founder) & Lisa Miller
  - Hands-on Cooking Classes & Events (In-Person/Virtual)
  - Nutrition Education, Corp Wellness, 1 on 1 Consulting
  - lisa@kitchenonfire.com
- Ocean View Nutrition – Consulting & Public Speaking
  - Owner & Nutrition Consultant, certified
  - Consultations, Classes & Presentations
  - lisa@oceanviewnutrition.com

Link to today's presentation, demo info and more
https://www.kitchenonfire.com/assetmark-healthier-together/