

Hamentashen Recipe

INGREDIENTS

Dough

4 eggs, separated
 1/4 tsp. salt
 1 1/2 C. sugar
 1 squeezed lemon
 1 tsp. vanilla
 4 C. sifted flour
 3/4 C. vegetable oil
 4 tsp. baking powder



Filling

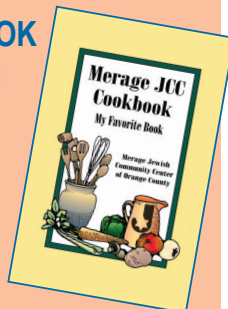
prune jam (lekvar)
 2 squeezed lemons
 1 tsp. vanilla

Beat egg whites until stiff. Add oil and mix together. Add beaten egg yolks and salt and mix. Add other ingredients adding the baking powder and flour last. Allow the mixture to stand a few minutes. Mix the filling. Roll out the dough to about 1/4 inch thickness. Make circles of dough using any round form of approximately 4 inches. Place a rounded teaspoon of filling in center. Bring three points of the circle to the center to form a triangle or tricorn shape. Pinch edges together to form ridges. You can use the back of a fork. Moisten edges with water if necessary. Place on lightly greased cookie sheet and bake in 350° oven approximately 25 minutes or until lightly browned.

Recipe by David Herz (Hillcrest Jewish Center Nursery School, NYC, 1977), *The Merage JCC Cookbook*

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PURIM

March 20, 2011
14 Adar, 5771

Merage
Jewish Community Center
of Orange County

Purim

14 Adar, 5771 • March 20, 2011

WHY DO WE CELEBRATE?

Purim is a holiday teeming with opportunities to give and to share. The story of an ingénue queen duping an evil villain seems at first glance to be a whimsical and wishful spoof of Jewish history. But lurking beneath the surface of this joyful holiday is a message that encourages the Jewish people to celebrate our uniqueness while emphasizing the humanistic values rooted in our traditions.

HISTORY

The story of Purim celebrates how the beautiful Queen Esther and her cousin Mordechai saved the Jews from the wicked villain, Haman.

The Book of Esther recounts the story of Purim telling how the Jews of Persia were saved from destruction. During the time of King Achashverosh, one of his ministers, Haman, sought to destroy the Jews in revenge for being snubbed by Jewish Mordechai, who refused to bow down to him.

With the king's authority, he drew lots (purim) to determine the fateful day, which fell on the 13th of the month of Adar.

Learning of this decree, Mordechai approached the new queen, his cousin Esther, to intercede with the king. Esther, who had not revealed her Judaism publicly, fasted for three days in preparation for this task. At a banquet she denounced the evil Haman, who was eventually hanged. Because a royal decree could not be rescinded—including the decree ordering the extermination of the Jews—the King sent another decree to all the provinces authorizing the Jews to protect

themselves from their enemies. The days following this struggle (the 14th and the 15th of Adar) were declared days of feasting and merrymaking, today celebrated as Purim.

IN THE COMMUNITY

Purim is observed by hearing a celebratory public reading of the Scroll of Esther (*Megillat Esther*) and dressing up in costume. When the name of the villainous Haman is read, the congregation makes noise—often with the aid of graggers (noisemakers) to blot the evil villain's name out.

The reading is usually followed by a festive meal in which Purim spiels (plays) poking fun at the Purim story, along with figures of authority, are performed. Many synagogues hold carnivals emphasizing the carnival element of this holiday.

The traditional food eaten on Purim is hamantashen, a triangle-shaped pastry that some say resembles the evil villain's hat (others say his ears)!



Text and contents courtesy of Peninsula Jewish Community Center, Foster City, CA.

MITZVOT (commandments) OF PURIM

Purim presents us with opportunities to give to our friends, family and the community. Three “giving” mitzvot or commandments of Purim are:

MECHATZIH HASHEKEL: literally translated, it means giving “half a coin.” The implication is that the coin should be donated to a just cause.

MISHLOACH MANOT: sending gifts of food to friends and family.

MATANOT LA'EVYONIM: giving gifts to the poor.

