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Ask A Detroit Expert: Best Matzo Recipes For Passover

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Annabel Cohen is an award-winning caterer and food expert based in West Bloomfield, Michigan with over 30 years of catering experience. Cohen runs the catering company Annabel Cohen Cooks Detroit and also teaches cooking classes. Detroit Jewish News named Annabel Cohen "Best Caterer" in 2015, and Detroit Monthly magazine awarded her for "Best Brazilian Food."

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Annabel Cohen believes that there are many ways to create tasty meals using matzo (also known as matzah) during Passover. Matzo is a required food on the first day of Passover for the Seder, a ceremony that retells the story of the exodus of the Jewish people from Egypt, and involves a special meal.

Mina de Espinaca (Sephardic)

Note: Recipe makes eight to nine servings

Ingredients:

- 6 matzos
3 packages of frozen chopped spinach (thawed and drained)
1 cup of mashed potatoes (room temperature)
5 eggs
2 cups of chopped onion
1/4 cup pine nuts
1/4 cup of olive oil
1 1/2 teaspoon of salt (may be adjusted to taste)
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon allspice

Directions:

- 1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. Soak the whole matzos in cold water until they soften a little.
3. Carefully remove the matzos from the water and drain them on paper towels. Don't worry if the matzos slightly crack.
4. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet pan over medium-high heat. Add the onions to the warm oil and cook for about eight minutes.
5. Add spinach and pine nuts, and saute them for three minutes.
6. Remove the pan from the heat.
7. Mix in 4 eggs to the spinach and pine nuts.
8. Stir in the potatoes, salt, pepper, nutmeg and allspice. Note: If the potatoes are already seasoned, adjust the amount of salt.
9. Grease a square baking pan (8-inch or 9-inch) with a small amount of olive oil.
10. Place two of the matzos on the bottom of the pan. Add another matzo if it doesn't fit the pan bottom or breaks.
11. Spread the spinach filling over the matzo and cover it with another matzo.
12. Pour the remaining filling over this matzo layer and cover with the remaining matzos.
13. Brush the beaten egg over the matzo top.
14. Bake for one hour or until the top browns, and the inside bubbles to indicate it is cooked through.

Orange Matzah Brie With Apricot Syrup (Ashkenazi)

Note: Recipe makes two servings

Syrup ingredients:

- 1/4 cup of apricot jam
1/4 cup of honey
1/2 cup of orange juice

Directions:

- 1. Using a whisk, mix together the apricot jam, honey and orange juice in a small saucepan over medium-high heat.
2. Bring the mixture to a boil. Cook, stirring ingredients, for 2 minutes, or until the jam is dissolved.
3. Remove the pan from the heat and allow the syrup to cool while you prepare the matzah brie.

Matzah brie ingredients:

- 3-4 sheets of whole matzah
2 cups of boiling orange juice
1 large lightly beaten egg
1 teaspoon of cinnamon
1 tablespoon of sugar
2 teaspoons of grated orange zest or peel (optional)
2 tablespoons of vegetable oil

Matzah brie ingredients:

- 1. Place matzah sheets in a large bowl (break up the sheets into pieces to fit inside the bowl, as needed).
2. Pour boiling orange juice over the matzah sheets. Let the matzah soak in the orange juice for 2-3 minutes, turning them once or twice until soaked.
3. Drain the matzah well in a colander. It may help to press down on the matzah to help it drain.
4. Add the egg, sugar, cinnamon and grated orange peel. Stir the ingredients until combined.
5. Heat the vegetable oil on a large nonstick skillet pan over medium high heat until hot.
6. Pour the mixture into the pan, and cook it until the bottom of the mixture is golden brown. Break up the matzah into pieces as it cooks. Note: Break the matzah into uneven pieces about the size of 1-2 inches each, not in small bits.
7. Turn the mixture and cook it on the other side until it is golden brown, breaking it up as it cooks.
8. Serve the matzah brie hot with the apricot honey syrup.

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Mushroom Garlic And Leek Farfel (American)

Note: Recipe makes 12 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 12-ounce box of matzo farfel
2 cups of thinly sliced leeks (only white and light green parts)
3 cups of thinly sliced fresh mushrooms (any variety or mix)
1 1/2 cups of finely chopped onion
1 tablespoon of minced garlic
1/4 cup of olive oil
1 cup of white wine
3 cups of chicken broth or water
2 cups of fresh chopped parsley
Kosher salt to taste
Fresh ground pepper to taste

Directions:

- 1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Spread out the farfel on a baking sheet and bake it for about 10 minutes, or until toasted.
3. Remove the farfel from oven and set it aside.
4. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet pan over medium-heat heat until hot.
5. Add the garlic and onions, and sauté them for 3 minutes.
6. Mix in the mushrooms, leeks and wine. Cook the mixture, stirring frequently. Cook until the mushrooms soften and any liquids evaporate.
7. Remove the mixture from the stove, and transfer it and the farfel to a large bowl.
8. Add the broth or water, and toss the mixture well.
9. Add the parsley and seasonings, and mix well.
10. Grease a baking dish with a little olive oil.
11. Transfer the mixture to a baking dish and cover it with aluminum foil.
12. Serve the Mushroom Garlic and Leek Farfel warm.

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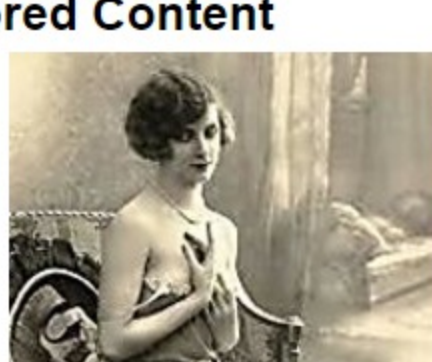
Adrienne Warber is a Freelance Writer with more than 15 years of professional writing experience. After earning a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English from the University of Michigan, Adrienne worked in marketing, where she specialized in communications writing. She is now a full-time freelance writer and writes on many topics, ranging from arts and events to crafts and health. Her work has appeared both in print and online. Her work can be found at Examiner.com and adriennewarber.com.



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