



UC DAVIS
HEALTH

**RADIOLOGY DIVERSITY, EQUITY,
INCLUSION & BELONGING PROGRAM**

March 27th—April 4th Sundown to Sundown

The date of Passover changes each year. Passover takes place in early spring during the Hebrew calendar month of Nisan, as prescribed in the book of Exodus. Exodus 12:18 commands that Passover be celebrated, “from the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.”

Why is Passover Celebrated?

Passover, or Pesach in Hebrew, is one of the Jewish religion’s most sacred and widely observed holidays. It is centered around the retelling of the Biblical story of Exodus, where God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. The celebration of Passover is prescribed in the book of Exodus in the Old Testament (in Judaism, the first five books of Moses are called the Torah).

Often celebrated for eight days (seven in Israel), and incorporates themes of springtime, a Jewish homeland, family, remembrance of Jewish history, social justice and freedom, including recognizing those who are still being oppressed today. All of these aspects are discussed, if not symbolically represented, during the Passover seder.



Seder Meaning: The Hebrew word “seder” translates to “order” or “arrangement” referring to the very specific order of the ritual. The Passover seder is a home ritual blending religious rituals, food, song and storytelling.

It is traditional for Jewish families to gather on the first night of Passover (first two nights in Orthodox and Conservative communities outside Israel) for a religious feast known as a seder for the Jewish holiday. The table is set with the finest china and silverware to reflect the importance of the meal. During the meal, the story of the Exodus from Egypt is read aloud from a special text called the Haggadah (Hebrew for “telling”), and rituals corresponding to various aspects of the narrative are performed. For example, vegetables are dipped into salt water representing the tears Jews shed during their time as slaves, and bitter herbs (usually horseradish) symbolizing the unpleasant years of their bondage are eaten.

The Torah commands that at least four symbolic cups of wine are consumed at various stages in the narrative. At your seat, you may see a specific wine glass (or kiddish cup). The four cups of wine, known in Hebrew as arba kosot, are drunk by each participant at the Passover *seder* service. The Four Cups represent the four expressions of deliverance promised by God Exodus 6:6–7: “I will bring out,” “I will deliver,” “I will redeem,” and “I will take.”

Chametz is any food product derived of wheat, barley, rye, oats, spelt or its derivative.

During Passover there is a Biblical obligation to get rid of chametz: Throughout the seven days of Passover no leavened bread shall be found or eaten. The prohibition extends throughout all eight days of Passover (seven in Israel). According to tradition, this is because the Hebrews fled Egypt in such haste that there was no time for their bread to rise.

Destroying Chametz:

Important chametz must be removed from homes. Closets, rooms, cars, and pockets must be checked for chametz. Foods containing chametz should be placed into rooms that will be inaccessible for Passover. The house should be cleaned thoroughly to remove all crumbs and small pieces of chametz.

Shopping for Passover:

We must make sure that all items bought for Passover are kosher-for-Passover and have reliable rabbinical supervision. All fresh fruits and vegetables, fish and meats are kosher for Passover as long as they have not come into contact with chametz. There is a custom among Ashkenzims not to eat legumes or foods made with legumes.

Medicines

Many cosmetics and medicines contain chametz. Check with a rabbi to ask which items are permissible to use on Passover.

Pet Food

Only certain pet foods are allowed during Passover. Many contain chametz.

Preparing the Kitchen

Dishes and Utensils: It is preferable to have a separate set of dishes and utensils just for the holiday. Under certain circumstances, however, certain utensils can be kashered for Passover.

Stove: The stove must be carefully cleaned. It should be heated to the hottest temperature for 1-2 hours. The grates and iron parts of the stove should have a red-hot glow. The oven and stove-top should be covered with aluminum foil.

Microwave Ovens: The oven should be cleaned thoroughly and a clean cup of water should be placed in the oven. Let the water steam up the microwave. Wipe the oven out afterwards. During Passover a piece of styrofoam or other object should be used in the oven to separate the bottom of the oven and the cooking dish. Food should be covered inside the oven to prevent spillage.

Sink: The sink should be cleaned and not used for 24 hours prior to the kashering. Hot water should be poured into every part of the sink 3 times. Do not forget the drain stopper. Remember to use a clean pot which was not used for 24 hours for the boiling of the water.

Refrigerator, Freezer Cupboards, Closets, Tables and Counters: Clean them to remove residue. Cover these surfaces that come into contact with hot food or utensils with a heavy covering.

Tablecloths and Napkins: Run through the washing machine.

Searching for Chametz

A formal search for chametz is made the night before Passover. The custom is to disperse ten pieces of chametz around the home. A blessing is made: *Bo-ruch A-toh Adon-noi E-lo-hei-nu Me-lech Ho-olam A-sher Kid-de-sh-nu Be-mitz-vo-sov Vi-tzi-vo-nu Al Be-or Cho-metz.* (Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us by His commandments, and has commanded us to remove the leaven.) A candle is customarily used (a flashlight is fine also) to search in every room for chametz. All chametz found should be put in one area to be burned the next morning. Also look for chametz at the office. After the search, a small paragraph is recited to nullify any additional chametz which could not be found: All leaven or anything leavened with is in my possession, which I have neither seen nor removed, and about which I am unaware, shall be considered naught and ownerless as the dust of the earth.

Burning of Chametz

The morning before Passover chametz found from the search the night before is burned. The same paragraph is recited as the one recited after the search for chametz.

Fast of the Firstborn

It is customary for the first-born male of every family to fast the day before Passover, since the first-born were killed in the last of the Ten Plagues. Many men do not fast on this day because they attend a celebration of the completion of the Talmud instead. Attendance at this celebration allows the fast to be broken.



Seder

On the first two nights of Passover, families and friends gather for a religious feast known as a seder for the Jewish holiday. It is fundamentally a religious service set around a dinner table.

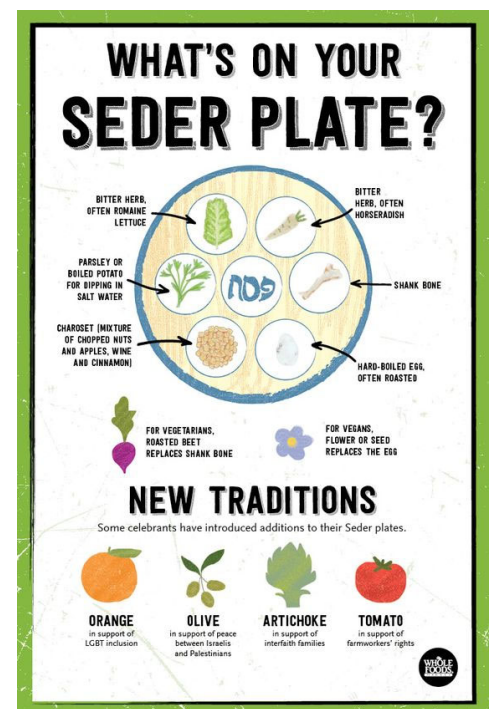
During the meal, the story of the exodus from Egypt is read aloud from a special text called the Haggadah (Hebrew for “telling”), and rituals corresponding to various aspects of the narrative are performed. For example, vegetables are dipped into salt water representing the tears Jews shed during their time as slaves, and bitter herbs (usually horseradish) symbolizing the unpleasant years of their bondage are eaten.



A seder plate at the center of the table contains Passover foods with particular significance to the exodus story, including matzo, bitter herbs, a lamb shankbone and a mixture of fruit, nuts and wine known as *charoset*, which represents the mortar Jews used while bonding bricks as slaves in Egypt. Other typical menu items include matzo kugel (a pudding made from matzo and apples), poached fish patties called gefilte fish and chicken soup with matzo balls.

This is the seder plate, and each food is symbolic for an aspect of Passover:

- ◆ A roasted **shank bone** represents the Pesach sacrifice,
- ◆ **An egg** represents spring and the circle of life,
- ◆ **Bitter Herbs** represent the bitterness of slavery,
- ◆ **Charoset** (an applesauce-like mixture with wine, nuts, apples, etc.) represents the mortar used by the Jews in Egypt
- ◆ **Karpas** (or greens, often Parsley) to represent spring.
- ◆ **Matzah** (three pieces), A cracker like unleavened bread that represents the bread the Israelites took with them when they fled Egypt.



**The word Seder means “order.” There is a special order to the parts of the Seder.
The Haggadah divides the night’s procedure into 15 parts.**

1. Kadeish/Qadesh - A blessing is recited over wine in honor of the holiday. The wine is then drunk and a second cup is poured.
2. Urchatz - Participants wash their hands without a blessing in preparation for eating the Karpas.
3. Karpas - A vegetable (typically parsley, celery, or potato) is dipped into salt water and eaten. The salt water is symbolic of the tears shed by the Jews during the Egyptian slavery.
4. Yachatz - Three matzot have been set up on the Seder table. At Yachatz, the middle matzot, is broken in half. The larger piece is set aside as the afikoman, which will be eaten at Tzafun.
5. Maggid - Maggid is the bulk of the Haggadah. It includes the retelling of the Passover story, the recital of the four questions, and drinking of the second cup of wine.
6. Rachtzah - Participants wash their hands for a second time in preparation for eating the matzo.
7. Motzi - A blessing is recited before eating matzot.
8. Matzah/Matzo - Some matzot is eaten.
9. Maror - A bitter herb, or vegetable, is eaten (typically raw horseradish, endives, or romaine lettuce), symbolizing the bitterness of slavery. The bitter vegetable is dipped into charoset, a traditional food that combines apples, wine, nuts, and cinnamon, symbolizing the mortar for the bricks used by the slaves.
10. Koreich - A sandwich made of matzot and maror is eaten.
11. Shulchan Oreich - Dinner, which includes traditional Passover foods, is eaten.
12. Tzafun - The matzot that was set aside earlier, the afikoman, is now eaten as dessert.
13. Bareich - Participants recite birkat ha-mazon (Grace after Meals) and they drink the third cup of wine. After birkat ha-mazon is recited and the third cup of wine has been drunk, the fourth cup is poured, as well as a cup set aside for Elijah the Prophet. Elijah is supposed to herald in the Messiah on Passover. The door is opened to invite Elijah in.
14. Hallel - The Hallel prayer, traditionally recited on festivals, is recited (and often sung) at this point.
15. Nirtzah - The seder is now completed with the wish that next year the holiday will be celebrated in Jerusalem. This is often followed by various traditional songs, hymns and stories.

Optional Additions: Along with these traditional symbols, some families choose to include:

- ◆ **Kos Miriam (Cup of Miriam)** - a special cup on the holiday table filled with water to honor Miriam, the sister of Moses, who played a vital role in the history of our people.
- ◆ **Tapuz (orange)** - many families and congregations also add an orange to the seder plate as a symbol of inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community and others who feel marginalized in Jewish life.