

HAGGADAT HA'ATZMAUT הַגְּדַת הַעֲצְמָאוֹת

A Picnic Celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut

By Jewish Reconstructionist Communities in Association with the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Study, celebrate, and connect at
Yom Ha'atzmaut
with this new *seder*.

Together, we will honor our past
as we pave the way to the future.



Jewish Reconstructionist Communities
In Association with the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College

Inspired by



WELCOME!

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Welcome to a new celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut. We are happy to adapt a custom of comfort for many—a *seder*. Like at the Passover *seder*, we offer a Yom Ha'atzmaut *haggadah* to tell our story and to ask our questions.

With friends and family, follow the *seder* (the order) to study, to eat, to sing, and to discuss. Explore the hopes and dreams our ancestors captured in Israel's Declaration of Independence. Reflect on Israel's story since the establishment of the state, and share our aspirations for the future. Just as the hopes and dreams of our foremothers and forefathers have paved our way, so too may our hopes and dreams pave the way for a peaceful next generation.

PAUSE CONNECT CELEBRATE IMAGINE GIVE VOICE HOPE

סדר *SEDER*: THE ORDER

The Picnic Celebration: Follow this order. Use this in conjunction with the packing list for your picnic basket.



**1) קֶשֶׁר (Kesher) Connection Between the People of Israel
אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל (Eretz-Israel) and the Land of Israel עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל (Am Israel)**

In the picnic basket: figs, dates, wheat, in the form of pita and humus



2) עֲלִיָּה (Aliyah) Ingathering, Settling, and Cultivating the Land
In the picnic basket: Jaffa orange, and grapes



3) חֲדוּשׁ (Hidush) New life in the Land: Education and Culture
In the picnic basket: cheese plate and honey



4) צְדָקָה (Tzedek) Justice, Social Justice, and Democracy
In the picnic basket: Plate of single spices that will be blended through the ritual (e.g., paprika from Hungary; poppy seeds from Eastern Europe; curry from India; zatar from the Middle East; cinnamon, cardamom, and turmeric from Spain; coriander from Morocco)



5) שְׁלוֹמִים (Shalom) Peace and Security
In the picnic basket: Olives



6) תִּקְוָה (Tikvah) Hope and the Next Generation
In the picnic basket: Layered cake (e.g., baklava)



7) עֲמִיּוּת (Amiyut) Connection and Peoplehood
In the picnic basket: Wine or grape juice



קִשּׁוּר CONNECTION BETWEEN THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל (AM ISRAEL) AND THE LAND OF ISRAEL אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל (ERETZ ISRAEL)

Serve: figs, dates, wheat, in the form of pita and humus

Figs, dates, and wheat are native to the land and symbolize the bounty of the land of Israel. Humus has been a food eaten in the region for many generations and thus represents the people of the land. These foods spark our memories and return our senses to our spiritual and ancient homeland.



We eat foods of ancient and present day Israel. Like our ancestors, we enjoy dates, figs, wheat, and humus.

We pause to experience the longing of ancient and present day Israel. Like our ancestors, we long for connection to the land of Israel.

Song:
My Country
Israel

FUN FACT: **The Menorah and the Burning Bush**

The menorah, a seven-branched candelabrum used in the biblical Temple, is one of the oldest symbols in Judaism. The menorah is the official symbol of the state of Israel and is said to represent the burning bush that Moses saw, as related in the Hebrew Bible.

Recite Together:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ רֵיחַ
הָעוֹלָם הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן
הָאָרֶץ

*Barukh Atah Adonai
Eloheinu Ruach ha'olam
ha'motzi lechem min
ha'aretz*

Blessed are You the
Eternal, spirit of the
world, who brings forth
bread from the earth

Enjoy the food. Bete'avon בְּתַאֲבוֹן Share your answers. Sichah שִׂיחָה (conversation)

Read the text from the First Light section in the [Declaration of Independence](#). [Refer to the questions](#) and discuss your answers together.



Pour some wine/grape juice into your cup.



ALIYAH AND SETTLING THE LAND

עֲלִיָּה וְהַתְּיַשְׁבוּת

Serve: Jaffa oranges and grapes



These two luscious fruits enable us to recall our ancestors—the *halutzim*, or pioneers—who left their homes

to settle in *eretz yisrael*. Images of vines with hanging grapes and trees abundant with sweet oranges filled their imagination and yearnings. What they found was desert and swampland. Few came with the knowledge of how to turn a desert or a swamp into an orange grove or a vineyard, yet they cultivated this land and made their dreams a reality.

We cut through the hard skin of the orange, we bite into the grape to taste the juice and the sweetness that was the dream of our ancestors. Together we recall their journeys and each cycle of migration (1882–1904 and 1904–1914, 1919–1924, 1924–1931, 1931–May 1948).

Song About
Aliyah

FUN FACT:

Oranges became the main export of Palestine in the 19th century. Around the time the Shamouti was discovered, there were 200,000 oranges exported from this area, but by 1870 that number had jumped to 38 million.

By the 1930s, Jewish-Arab partnerships and competition abounded in the orange business. By 1939, orange groves covered more than 75,000 acres of Palestine and employed more than 100,000 workers. Today, navel oranges are asserting themselves in Israel, and beginning to outnumber the Shamouti orange trees.

Recite Together:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ רִיחַ
הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרָא פְּרִי הָעֵץ

*Barukh Atah Adonai
Eloheinu Ruach ha'olam
borei pri ha'etz*

Blessed are You the
Eternal, spirit of the world,
that all has been created
by your word

Enjoy the food. Bete'avon
בְּתַאבוֹן Share your answers.
Sichah שִׂיחָה (conversation)

Read the text from the Second
Light section in the [Declaration
of Independence](#).

[Refer to the questions](#) and
discuss your answers together.



Pour some wine/grape
juice into your cup.



NEW LIFE IN THE LAND: EDUCATION AND CULTURE

אור שלישי חדוש החיים בארץ חנוך ותרבות

Serve: a cheese plate, drizzled with honey.

We imagine our ancestors coming from the four corners of the earth, from the darkness to the light, to declare the establishment of a Jewish State, to be known as the State of Israel.

Enjoy the milk and honey, the *halav u'dvash*, to experience the land, the culture, and the learning.



These foods act as symbols in the story of our people to express the fullness and nurturing of the land.

The Land: “And to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey.” (Exodus 3:8)

וְלִהְיוּ מִן-הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת, אֶל-אֶרֶץ טוֹבָה וְרוֹחֶבָה, אֶל-אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֵלֶב וְדָבָשׁ

These very same symbols, *halav u'dvash* (milk and honey), are used by our people to tell the story of education and learning.

New life in the land. Education and culture.

Torah is likened to milk, as the verse says, "Like honey and milk [the Torah] lies under your tongue" (Song of Songs 4:11). Just as milk has the ability to fully sustain the body of a human being (i.e., a newborn baby), so too the Torah provides all the “spiritual nourishment” necessary for the human soul.

We now pray for new life in the land, filled with milk and honey, nourishment for all.



NEW LIFE IN THE LAND: EDUCATION AND CULTURE

אור שלישי חדוש החיים בארץ חנוך ותרבות

Song About Education/ Torah

Enjoy the food. Bete'avon
בתאבון Share your answers.
Sichah שיחה (conversation)

Read the text from the Third
Light section in the [Declaration
of Independence](#).
[Refer to the questions](#) and
discuss your answers together.



Pour some wine/grape
juice into your cup.

Recite Together:

ברוך אתה ה' אלהינו רוח
העולם המוציא לחם מן הארץ

*Barukh Atah Adonai
Eloheinu Ruach ha'olam
ha'motzi lechem min
ha'aretz*

Blessed are You the
Eternal, spirit of the world,
who brings forth bread
from the earth

FUN FACT:

Hemda Ben Yehuda, the second wife of Eliezer ben Yehuda, was a stalwart, fighting to establish a spoken and lived Hebrew language and to complete the creation of the first Hebrew dictionary. She was a prolific writer, working three decades after her husband's death to ensure the completion of the first full Hebrew dictionary. Often not remembered in history as well as her husband, she should be touted as a true heroine of the Hebrew language.



JUSTICE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND DEMOCRACY

אור רביעי צֶדֶק, צֶדֶק חִבְרָתִי

Serve: a plate of spices, each one representing a different country of origin, to be blended during the *seder* (e.g., paprika from Hungary; poppy seeds from Eastern Europe; curry from India; za'atar from the Middle East; cinnamon, cardamom, and/or turmeric from Spain; coriander from Morocco).



Every spice represents the culture and the people that came to the Land of Israel with hopes and needs of justice and democracy. Experiment with tasting each spice individually and the enhanced flavor that comes from mixing them together. Shmear the spices with your pita. Be prepared for the multiplicity and complexity of the tastes.

אלו ואלו דברי אלהים חיים
דף י"ג, עמוד ב', מסכת ערובין, תלמוד בבלי

Elu v'elu divrey Elohim Chayim.

These and these are the words of the Living God.
(Babylonian Talmud, Eruvin 13B)

This text from the Talmud highlights the importance of each individual person and idea. While each of us are whole and strong on our own, we are also strengthened when we come together in community and honor each of our varying perspectives, knowing that we have each been created *b'tzelem elohim*, in the image of God.



JUSTICE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND DEMOCRACY

אור רביעי
צדק, צדק חברתי

Social
Justice Song:

Yehi hakol

Enjoy the food. Bete'avon
בְּתַאבוֹן Share your answers.
Sichah שִׂיחָה (conversation)

Read the text from the Fourth
Light section in the [Declaration
of Independence](#).

[Refer to the questions](#) and
discuss your answers together.



Pour some wine/grape
juice into your cup.

Recite Together:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ רוּחַ
הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַכֹּל נִהְיָה בְּדַבְּרֹךְ

*Barukh Atah Adonai
Eloheinu Ruach ha'olam
shehakol nihiyah bidvaro*

Blessed are You the
Eternal, spirit of the
world, that all has been
created by your word

FUN FACT

Thirty-seven Jews signed Israel's Declaration of Independence. These men, women, doctors, rabbis, religious, and secular individuals signed their names in the new official language of the country, Hebrew. One person signed the declaration twice. Do you know who that was?



PEACE AND SECURITY

אור חמישי שלום ובטחון

Serve: Olives



The olives represent peace and hope. We read in the biblical story of Noah (Genesis 8:11), “When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf! Then

Noah knew that the water had receded from the earth.” He knew then that life could begin again.

Olive trees have existed on the land since biblical times. Today they are cultivated by both Jews and Arabs, and represent a shared love for the land and its fruit.

The State of Israel chose the olive leaves around the menorah as its emblem as a symbol for its desire for peace. The olive also symbolizes light, as the oil produced from the olive lightened the menorah in the Temple.

FUN FACT:

The Israel Defense Force features soldiers from over 70 countries. One-quarter of these recruits come from the U.S. These soldiers are known as “lone soldiers.” They are supported by individual families who host and care for them so they are not “alone.” Women account for 30% of the lone soldiers, serving in all roles including combat. The first group of Chinese Jews joined the IDF in 2014. They came from Kaifeng, China. They were originally rejected when they attempted to sign up. But thanks to friends in high places, they were later accepted into the IDF.

Recite Together:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ רוּחַ
הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ

*Barukh Atah Adonai
Eloheinu Ruach ha'olam
bore pri ha'etz*

Blessed are You the
Eternal, spirit of the
world, creator of the
fruit of the tree

Enjoy the food. Bete'avon
בְּתַאֲבוֹן Share your answers.
שִׂיחָה (conversation)

Read the text from the Fifth
Light section in the [Declaration
of Independence](#).

[Refer to the questions](#) and
discuss your answers together.

Pour some
wine/grape
juice into your
cup.



Song About
Peace: [Od
yavo Shalom](#)



FUTURE GENERATIONS AND HOPE

אור נשִׁי

הדורות הבאים ותקוה

Serve: layered cake (e.g., baklava)



We inherit the layers of hope laid down by our grandparents and great-grandparents. Their lives, their choices, and their labors are our foundation. It is ours to build on. We commit to learn from the past, and to continue the act of building. We have faith that tomorrow can be better, and stronger and sweeter!

FUN FACT:

When the State of Israel was established in 1948, Hatikvah, meaning hope, was unofficially proclaimed the national anthem. It did not officially become the national anthem until November 2004, when an abbreviated and edited version was sanctioned by the Knesset in an amendment to the Flag and Coat-of-Arms Law (now renamed the Flag, Coat-of-Arms, and National Anthem Law).

Recite Together:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ רוּחַ
הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא מִיְּנֵי מְזוֹנוֹת

*Barukh Atah Adonai
Eloheinu Ruach ha'olam
bore miney m'zonot*

Blessed are You the
Eternal, spirit of the
world, creator of various
kinds of sustenance

Enjoy the food. Bete'avon
בְּתַאֲבוֹן Share your answers.
Sichah שִׂיחָה (conversation)

Read the text from the Sixth
Light section in the [Declaration
of Independence](#).

[Refer to the questions](#) and
discuss your answers together.



Pour some wine/grape
juice into your cup.

Song About
Hope:
[Lu Yehi](#)



PEOPLEHOOD

אור שביעי עמיות

Serve: wine or grape juice

With your *hevre*, your friends, you have just completed an exploration of Israel's Declaration of Independence, the core text written to declare the founders' intentions. Now it is time for you to explore a core text that expresses your intentions for Israel's today and tomorrow.

Keep in mind your text can take any form: dance, poem, song, artwork, or photo. Feel free to share original work as well. Listen to one another's selection. Say amen after each sharing.



Amen Amen. Inspired by the texts of your *hevre*, pour some wine/ grape juice in your cup. **ALMOST TIME TO DRINK!!** Hopes are not easily fulfilled. We've waited until now to take our first sip to help us more fully appreciate the years, tears, and effort between a hope stated and a hope achieved.

During each light we gradually filled our cup with our own hopes for Israel.

As individuals we have our unique hopes and dreams.

We are individuals. We are also part of a people.

We now turn to our shared hopes and dreams.

Each person now is invited to pause and reflect on your own full cup. It is Jewish tradition to fill a kiddush cup to the rim so that it overflows. Our cups run over.

Now that we we've spent time deeply listening to our own voices and the voices of one another, we have more capacity to create shared hopes. Together we can build our shared full cup for our Israel.

To our future. *L'chayim*. Each person pour some of your hopes (from your cup) into the *Kos Tikvah*. כוס תקווה



PEOPLEHOOD

אור שביעי עמיות

Recite Together:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן.

Barukh Atah Adonai

Eloheinu Ruach ha'olam bore pri ha'gafen

Blessed are you the Eternal, spirit of the world, who creates the fruit of the vine

Together we build and contribute to a strong and peaceful vision for the land and the people of Israel. We drink from the *kos tikvah*.

Either: 1) all take a sip from the shared cup; 2) pour a bit of wine/ juice from the *kos tikvah* into each cup; or 3) designate one person to drink from the *kos tikvah*.

Now we drink from our own cups. Remember that both our individual and shared hopes are necessary ingredients to fulfill the promises of the promised land.

חֲזַק חֲזַק וְנִתְחַזַּק

Hazak, Hazak v'nithazek.

From strength to strength may we be strengthened.

Happy Holiday

Hag sameach

חג שמח

THANK YOU!

Thank you for being one of the first groups to use the Yom Ha'atzmaut picnic *seder*.

Please take a moment to complete this survey, which will let us know how we did.

SURVEY