

# Jewish Cooking In America

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Here is a rich tapestry of more than three centuries of Jewish cooking in America. In this book Joan Nathan gathers together more than 300 kosher recipes, old and new. They come from both Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews who came and settled all over America, bringing with them a wide variety of regional flavors, changing and adapting their traditional dishes according to what was available in the new country.

What makes Jewish cooking unique is the ancient dietary laws that govern the selection, preparation, and consumption of food by observant Jews. Food plays a major part in rituals, past and present, binding family and community. It is this theme that informs every page of Joan Nathan's warm and lively text.

Every dish has a story--from the cholents (the long-cooked rich meat stews) and kugels (vegetable and noodle puddings) prepared in advance for the Sabbath to the potato latkes (served with maple syrup in Vermont and goat cheese in California) and gefilte fish (made with whitefish in the Midwest, salmon in the Northwest, haddock in New England, and shad in Maryland). Joan Nathan tells us how lox and bagels and Lindy's cheesecake became household words and how American products like Crisco, cream cheese, junket, and Jell-O changed forever the way Jewish women cook.

The recipes and stories come from every part of the U.S.A. They are seasoned with Syrian, Moroccan, Greek, German, Polish, Georgian, and Alsatian flavors, and they represent traditional foods tailored for today's tastes as well as some of the nouvelle creations of Jewish chefs from New York to Tuscany.

Joan Nathan, an American, author of *The Children's Jewish Holiday Kitchen*, lived in Jerusalem for three years. Her review of Jewish-American cuisine contains more than 300 kosher recipes, with added information on Jewish dietary laws and Jewish culture, drawing from both Sephardic and Ashkenazic traditions. She gives Old World cooking extensive coverage, including foods from Bukhara, Salonika, Israel and Georgia, and writes knowledgeably of New World adaptations. The recipes cover Jewish standards, like homemade bagels and pickled herring and more American-influenced dishes like Cajun matzoh balls with green onions, or American haroset. The book won the 1995 Julia Child Cookbook Award in the American Category. Joan Nathan was born in Providence, Rhode Island. She graduated from the University of Michigan, where she received a master's degree in French literature. She later earned a master's in public administration from Harvard University. For three years she lived in Israel, where she worked for Mayor Teddy Kollek of Jerusalem. In New York, she founded the Ninth Avenue Food Festival. Ms. Nathan wrote for *The Washington Post* for eight years and currently contributes articles on international ethnic food and special holiday features to *The New York Times*, *Food Arts*, *Gourmet*, and the *B'nai B'rith International Jewish Monthly*. She is the author of *The Jewish Holiday Kitchen*, *The Children's Jewish Holiday Kitchen*, *Jewish Cooking In America*, and *An American Folklife Cookbook*, and coauthor of *The Flavor of Jerusalem*. Ms. Nathan lives in Washington D.C. with her husband and their three children.

#### Other Books

*Religion, Food, and Eating in North America*. The way in which religious people eat reflects not only their understanding of food and religious practice but also their conception of society and their place within it. This anthology considers theological foodways, identity

foodways, negotiated foodways, and activist foodways in the United States, Canada, and the Caribbean. Original essays explore the role of food and eating in defining theologies and belief structures, creating personal and collective identities, establishing and challenging boundaries and borders, and helping to negotiate issues of community, religion, race, and nationality. Contributors consider food practices and beliefs among Christians, Jews, Muslims, and Buddhists, as well as members of new religious movements, Afro-Caribbean religions, interfaith families, and individuals who consider food itself a religion. They traverse a range of geographic regions, from the Southern Appalachian Mountains to North America's urban centers, and span historical periods from the colonial era to the present. These essays contain a variety of methodological and theoretical perspectives, emphasizing the embeddedness of food and eating practices within specific religions and the embeddedness of religion within society and culture. The volume makes an excellent resource for scholars hoping to add greater depth to their research and for instructors seeking a thematically rich, vivid, and relevant tool for the classroom.

?. ?. ?. ?. ?. Kapp, "Books for Jewish Children," 548. Scharfstein, Junior Jewish Cook Book, 47, 38, 18. Joselit, *The Wonders of America*, 187. Scharfstein, Junior Jewish Cook Book, 33. Sukkos is the Yiddish or Ashkenazic Hebrew pronunciation of Sukkot."