

Everything You've Ever Wanted to Know About Chametz

Bedikat Chametz: Searching for Leaven.

It is customary to hide 10 pieces of *chametz* after the house has been thoroughly cleaned so that *chametz* may be searched for (often by candlelight with a feather and spoon) and then removed. Since the first *seder* is Wednesday night (April 8, 2020) this year, search for *chametz* on Tuesday night.

Biur Chametz: The Burning of Leaven.

On the morning after the *bedikat chametz*, the gathered *chametz* is taken outside and burned – traditionally by 10 am. This would take place on Wednesday this year.

Mechirat Hametz: The Sale of Leaven.

Since tradition prohibits the possession of *chametz* in one's home, the rabbis allowed Jews to isolate their *chametz* in a separate part of their home and "sell" it (on paper) to a non-Jew; and then buy it back at the end of *Pesach*.

What is Chametz/Leaven?

Chametz is any food or drink made from or with any of 5 types of grain: wheat, spelt, barley, oats, rye (Sephardi tradition). Ashkenazi Jews later added *kitniyot* (legumes) including rice, corn, maize, millet, peas, beans, and other podded vegetables (such as peanuts) to those foods classified as *chametz*.

Why Isn't Matzah Chametz?

Matzah is the prescribed unleavened bread in the Torah. In the baking process, special precautions are taken to avoid the onset of the leavening process (less than 18 minutes from contact with water to the end of the baking process.)

Products & Ingredients to Avoid:

Breads, Cakes, Biscuits, Crackers, Cereals, Pasta.

Seeds from Pods: Mustard, sesame, sunflower, carob, poppy, fenugreek, cumin, caraway, fennel, cardamom, coriander.

Grain Alcohol: Whiskey, bourbon, beer.

Other Legumes: Soybeans, lentils, clover & alfalfa sprouts, peanuts (though there's a split of opinion).

Dried Fruits: If processed with flour.

Sweeteners: Corn syrup, confectioner's sugar (if it contains corn starch), honey (prohibited by some, allowed by most).

Yeast, Baking Soda, Baking Powder.

Soy Products: Soy oil, soy sauce, tofu.

Corn Products: Corn oil, corn starch, popcorn.

Grain Vinegars.

Baby Food & Dog Food Containing Chametz

"Hidden" Ingredients in Condiments:

Margarine (may contain corn oil)

Vanilla Extract (contains grain alcohol)

Ketchup (may contain corn syrup)

Mayonnaise (may contain vinegar)

So, What Can I Eat?

Meat, Chicken Turkey, Fish.

Fresh Fruits & Juices.

Most Vegetables: String beans are allowed according to the Conservative movement.

Potatoes, Dairy Products. Eggs.

Coffee, Tea, Wine, Brandy, Tequila.

Cider & Wine Vinegars. Sugar. Salt. Pepper. Garlic.

Many Spices & Herbs.

Oils: Olive, walnut, almond, grapeseed, cottonseed.

Thickener: Potato starch

Processed Foods Labeled "Kosher for Passover" or "Kosher L'Pesach."