



הסדר של חזון

HAZON'S SEDER & SOURCEBOOK



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TU B'SHVAT

SEDER LEADER'S GUIDE

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{Contents}

- History of Tu B'Shvat and encouragement to make it your own
- Time line, budget, venue and marketing
- Getting your Tu B'Shvat Seder ready to begin
- Preparing to lead your Tu B'Shvat Seder
- Setting the Seder table
- Introductions, songs and other ways to engage your guests
- Introduction activities
- Songs
- Supplementary teachings
- G-dcast
- Activities
- The Family Haggadah



Using the Hazon website and other source materials, we encourage you to create a Tu B'Shvat Seder/Celebration that works for you, your community and your friends and family. As the largest Jewish environmental organization in the country, Hazon hopes you will celebrate the holiday of Tu B'Shvat as a Jewish Earth Day and use our website resources to rekindle or deepen your feelings of gratitude for the bounty of the earth and take more steps towards preserving our world. One thing to note: Tu B'Shvat is a holiday where even those most observant of Jewish tradition are permitted to play music, videos and instruments.

History of Tu B'Shvat and encouragement to make it your own

Tu B'Shvat: The People and the Book:

Deeper Roots, Wider Branches

Nigel Savage, February 2004, The Jerusalem Report

“You can trace the recent history of Tu B'Shvat Seders like branches on a tree. The first one I went to, in London in 1986, was hosted by Bonna Haberman and Shmuel Browns, mentors to me and many others in the renewal of Jewish ritual. I made my own Seder the following Tu B'Shvat, and I've made or attended one every year since. Seders, like trees, grow branches, and the branches sprout fruit in all directions.

The roots of Tu B'Shvat stretch back to the beginnings of organized Jewish life. We learn from the Mishnah (Tractate Rosh Hashanah) that “the New Year of the Trees” divided the tithing of one year's crop from the next — the end and start of the tax year, so to speak. After the expulsion from the Land of Israel, Tu B'Shvat went underground, like a seed, ungerminated, lying beneath the soil of Jewish thought and life.

The expulsion from Spain in 1492 scattered Jews in many directions, and some landed in Safed. Like a forest fire that cracks open seeds dormant for decades, Safed's kabbalists rediscovered Tu B'Shvat, and began a period of mystical celebration of the festival. The idea and structure of Tu B'Shvat Seders traces back to them. Among early Zionists, Tu B'Shvat became the day to celebrate their reconnection to the land. As a kid in Manchester, I got JNF tree certificates on Tu B'Shvat, and Israeli schoolkids to this day celebrate it by planting trees.

The fourth phase of Tu B'Shvat flowering was pollinated by the first Earth Day in 1970 and by growing alarm at the degradation of the planet's resources. Its ground was fertilized by the countercultural havurah movement and the beginnings of an upsurge in Jewish renewal and creativity. Each of us can draw upon these roots to sprout our own branches and seeds and fruits.

The origins of Tu B'Shvat remind us that we are the descendants of an indigenous people, heirs to an ancient wisdom whose echoes can inform our choices today on subjects like how to eat in a manner that is healthy for us and sustainable for the whole planet, or how to rest in a 24/7 world.

The kabbalistic Tu B'Shvat of Tzefat encourages us to open ourselves to mystery, wonder, creativity and celebration; this is an oral wisdom, something learned from others, rather than from books. Naomi Shemer's beautiful contemporary song "Da Lekha" is based on a Reb Nachman story about angels encouraging each blade of grass simply to grow. The spreading in many parts of the Jewish world of drums, yoga and meditation is part of this phenomenon. So, too, is the way that "Od Yavo Shalom Aleinu," written originally by the Israeli band Sheva, has erupted as this generation's anthem. The peaceful and the joyous in Jewish life are being rediscovered. Tu B'Shvat is a moment to celebrate new life and new beginnings, physical and cultural.

The Zionists' Tu B'Shvat prompts us to think afresh about the assumption that the era when Jews were connected physically to the Land is over, with Israel now a country of venture capitalists and MBAs. Kibbutzim like Lotan and Ketura, among others, are renewing that connection with the land, and although agriculture is shrinking, there is growing awareness of the need to preserve the environment. Kosher organic farms have sprouted in

Massachusetts, Vermont and Connecticut, and there is a deepening move at the fringes of American Jewish life toward reconnecting with the land in a variety of ways. Tu B'Shvat is a fine time to think about creating a community garden at your synagogue — or exploring Israel on a bike or by foot rather than by car.

Tu B'Shvat today is like a bonsai tree that helps us see in miniature the broader shape of contemporary Jewish renewal. It is one of the clearest examples of the rebirth of rooted Jewish life after the Shoah. The charred site of a forest fire slowly gives birth to new growth, and 40 or 50 years later a new forest stands in its place. Each of the elements of that forest grew literally from seeds that survived the fire; yet the forest itself has its own unique characteristics. Today's Tu B'Shvat Seders grow organically from more than 2,000 years of Jewish tradition, yet the vital elements of them are new and reflect the world we live in. The encounter of postmodern urban life with contemporary environmental challenge is renewing Jewish life in unanticipated ways. It is an opportunity to deepen our roots, and to branch out afresh to engage the world."

Time Line, Budget, Venue and Marketing



Planning ahead:

About ten weeks prior to your Tu B'Shvat Seder, choose a venue. If you are part of an organization such as Hillel, Moishe House or a JCC, you most likely will have a free space in which to conduct your event. If you need to rent or borrow a space, be sure to give yourself enough time to secure it, sign the contract and ensure the space has all you will need (tables, chairs, kitchen facility, etc.) to run your program successfully.

Three to four weeks prior to your Tu B'Shvat Seder, invite guests. We encourage you to use paperless invitations as an environmental measure and perhaps draw your guests' attention to the fact that you are reducing paper waste. One week prior to your event, send a reminder asking guests to update their attendance response and let you know what dish they will be bringing if your event is a potluck.

Building a budget

In conducting a community Seder, consider whether you hope to divide the costs among the participants or even raise money for your organization. The follow are the larger budget items:

- Cost of venue, including space rental if any
- Cost of food
- Cost of drinks
- Cost of tables, chairs and dishware
- Cost of staff time (cooks, janitors, servers)

Add all of these costs, divide by the number of people attending and set your price to cover all of the event's costs or to generate income.

If you would like to run a lower budget event, here are some ideas to explore:

- Host the event in a venue that is free or very low cost: your home, a friend's home, a public park, a picnic area that can be rented cheaply.
- Make the meal potluck, and instruct everyone to bring something specific: food, fruit, drinks, etc.
- In addition to food, guests can bring chairs from home and other needed supplies for seating and eating.
- Use volunteers to help prepare the meal, clean up the event and even serve.

Marketing your Seder

Begin by asking yourself, "who do I want seated at my table?" How do those people find out about events they want to attend?

Consider your potential partners, who can help plan and advertise your Seder: synagogues, youth groups, mens' clubs or JCCs. If you're holding your Seder in an organization's space, be sure they are sending the message to their audiences. Keep in mind the number of guests you would like when reaching out to large groups of people.

Most synagogues and JCCs have bulletins, email newsletters and websites, and may be interested in listing your Seder in their events. Your audience may be a Facebook crowd, in which case they may hear about things through an event invitation. An Evite or Paperless Post may be a more elegant alternative. Do not underestimate the value of sending a personal email or making a phone call. Use the method that will get the best reaction. If you have a blog or website, post information about your Seder; then you can always link back to that information in any other materials or announcements.

When creating marketing materials, be sure to include all relevant information, including where the Seder is, when it's taking place, by when people need to RSVP and to whom they must RSVP. If you're reaching out to people who may not be familiar with Tu B'Shvat or a Tu B'Shvat

Seder, consider adding a sentence or two explaining what it is. This will help create low barriers for participation.

Visual aids always help with marketing. Use pictures of a Tu B'Shvat Seder if you've held one in the past. If you're connected to artistic people, find out whether they can help you create flyers, posters and graphics to use online.

Lastly, be creative! Think of all of the ways you hear about events. Look at how others are marketing and advertising events of similar size. Will any of their methods may work for your Seder? The first rule of marketing is "know your audience." If you are not an authority on your Seder's audience, ask for help.

There is no one way to market an event, but use the two or three options that work best for you.

Getting ready to begin your **Tu B'Shvat Seder**



Preparing to lead your Tu B'Shvat Seder:

To prepare you to lead a Tu B'Shvat Seder, it's important to remember that people support things they help create! Your Seder will be more fun and successful if you give everyone a chance to speak. Be sure to plan places for your guests to share, read aloud, ask questions, sing songs or contribute their thoughts.

Here are some ways you can work with this Leader's Guide and with the Hazon Tu B'Shvat Haggadah to prepare to lead your Seder.

- Download the Hazon's Tu B'Shvat Haggadah and print it.
- Read through your copy with a red pen to make leader notes to yourself.
- Decide what introduction you will use or make up your own opening activity. Some ideas are in the section "Introduction Activities," on page 7.
- Decide what parts of the Seder text you will

read out loud and what will be read aloud by individuals around the table.

- Decide what songs you would like to sing at your Seder and at what point you might sing them. Some suggestions are in the section “When to insert songs,” on page 7.
- Review the supplemental teachings, starting on page 8, and decide which of them you might use and at what point in the Seder.
- Review the list of activities, such as Eco-Bingo or Planting Herbs, starting on page 8, and decide which of them you might include in your Seder. Note what supplies you will need for the activities you have chosen and make sure to obtain them in advance and to have them nearby before you begin your Seder.
- Decide whether and when you would like to play the newest G-dcast cartoon, about Honi the Circle Maker and the holiday of Tu B'Shvat. Watch it in advance of your Seder, and create discussion questions or remarks to go along with the viewing.
- Consider the ages of your guests. Is Hazon's Family Haggadah better suited to some of them? If your group is mixed, do you want to include some elements of the Family Haggadah in a Seder mostly aimed at adults?

Setting the Seder table

Be sure to have all the drinks and ritual foods you will need for your Seder on or near the table (or know who is bringing them). This includes:

- White wine or grape juice, or both
- Red wine or grape juice, or both
- Fruit with outer shells that are not eaten: bananas, walnuts, oranges
- Fruit with soft outsides but hard pits: apricots, olives, dates
- Fruits that can be eaten in their entirety: apples, berries, figs
- Some form of bread

Do you want other foods as well? Decide whether your Tu B'Shvat Seder will be conducted as part of lunch or dinner or after or between meals, and what other food you might serve. This is a wonderful opportunity to have your friends bring a dish to share. You could suggest a theme; for example, food made with organic products, a dish the chef has never made before, a dish made with orange ingredients, food made with local ingredients or with Israeli ingredients, etc.

Decide whether you will assign seats, in which case you will need name cards, or are comfortable with guests seating themselves randomly. Do you prefer partners or friends to sit together or mixed with others?

Introductions, songs and other ways to engage your guests



Introduction activities.

Whether you have two guests, six guests, 15 guests or more, planning participatory introductions will warm up the people at your table and prepare them to engage throughout the Seder. Allow for 10–20 minutes depending on the number of guests you have. Some opening ideas:

Partner interviews and introductions: Ask pairs of people sitting next to each other to interview each other by asking a few questions. What is your name? Where do you live? Is this your first Tu B'Shvat Seder? What are you most looking forward to this evening? Give pairs 2.5 minutes each to share their answers with each other and prepare to introduce their partner at the table. "My partner is Deborah. She lives in San Francisco. She has been to a Tu B'Shvat Seder before, but not for ten years. Deborah is looking forward to the singing."

Metaphor opening: People around the table take turns sharing their names, where they live, what they do for a living and the fruit on the Seder table they are most similar to, and why. Let people know that they will only have two minutes to reply and give the group a few moments to think of their answers before they need to speak.

Simple introduction: Share your name, where you live, what you do for work and one thing about yourself that others can't tell by looking at you. Let people know that they will only have two minutes to reply and give the group a few moments to think of their answers before they need to speak.

An even simpler introduction Share your name and something you love about the earth:

Songs: Singing with others in a group is a joyful experience that enhances the life of every person who participates. We've posted recordings of some songs that we like to sing at a Tu B'Shvat Seder. Below are recommendations of points at which you may choose to include them, but feel free to sing them at any point during your Seder that you think will engage your participants. Is some section taking a long time without enough group participation?

- A niggun, or wordless tune. This makes a good opening.
- Tunes for the blessings over the wine, the bread, for fruits that grow on trees or bushes and for fruits that grow in the ground or on annual plants.
- Shehecheyanu – A tune for the blessing over joys. We suggest singing this as part of the meditation after eating the first group of fruits
- It is a Tree of Life – You might sing this after the second group of fruits, in connection with the meditation on other verses there that discuss trees as metaphors.
- Adamah V'Shamayim, "Earth and Sky." – You might sing this as part of the meditation on "the Good Land," after eating the third group of fruits.

- B'rich Rachamanah – This is a very short and accessible form of the blessing after a meal.

You can teach the song before you lead it, so that everyone can sing along. Some of these are posted in teaching versions that you can model for your guests. If you like, download the words, print them and pass them around. Download the guitar chords if someone at your Seder can play them. You can play the mp3 version of the songs from our website with the words, or karaoke-style to sing along.

Supplementary teachings

Use the “More Learning” section of the Haggadah for more ways to make your Seder unique – to make it fit the group around your own specific table. These Jewish texts can be used as the bases for transition discussions between each world, or use one or more of them as dessert for the folks who are still ready for more at the end of your program. Here are few more ways to help bring these texts to life for your guests:

- Print the texts and questions out and split them among the participants. Each table can talk about one text, or each person at one table can present a different text. Mixing and matching is okay. Tape them to the walls and have people walk around and visit different ideas and perspectives.
- Engage people creatively! Break out the markers, play-dough and scissors. See if you can transform the discussion questions into a group or individual art project. Perhaps you could create a huge mural on a white sheet through the text study.

- Bring in pieces from other traditions and from your own culture. Does a text remind you of a favorite song or poem? Share it with your community and talk about the connections between the older and the newer texts.

- Think practically. Remember that there is often an action component to learning. How will learning this text and engaging in these discussions affect my relationship with the natural world? Bring it back to tachlis (nuts and bolts).

Activities: Punctuating reading and eating with hands-on activities helps engage more parts of our mind and hearts in what we are learning.

- Eco-Bingo: This activity is described in the Haggadah.
- Planting herbs is a lovely activity from Birthright Next that includes decorating a pot and planting herb that can be harvested for cooking and or creating Havdallah spices.

G-dcast

G-dcast is an educational media company that makes accessible and entertaining media, including animated shorts, feature-length films and games, that introduce viewers to core Jewish texts. Their Tu B'Shvat cartoon, about three minutes long, tells the story of Honi the Circle Maker, who ridicules an old man planting a carob tree so that his descendants might reap the fruit. Honi falls asleep, only to wake up, seventy years later, to find the old man's grandchildren eating carob.

The Family Haggadah

The Family Haggadah is intended for families and groups that include school-aged children, grades 1-6. Any of the other activities or supplements can be combined with elements of the Family Haggadah.