

Four Charoset Recipes from Around the World
(and a savory bonus...)

Yemeni Charosis

6 figs
6 dates
¼ cup sesame seeds
2 tsp honey
1 tsp ground ginger
¼ tsp coriander
cayenne pepper

Grind figs and dates in food processor. Add all ingredients except cayenne. Pulse to mix. Add cayenne to taste.

Greek Charosis

¼ cup currants
¼ cup raisins
¼ cup almonds, finely chopped
1/8 cup pine nuts
cinnamon
cloves
wine

Chop and mash currants and raisins with mortar and pestle, or pulse in food processor. Add almonds, walnuts, and pine nuts; grind or pulse. Add cinnamon, cloves, and wine to taste.

Charosis Rhodesli (from the island of Rhodos)

8 ounces pitted dried dates
8 ounces ground walnuts
Zest of one orange
2 cloves
1 T. apple cider vinegar, or more to taste
¼ cup Manischewitz or other kosher sweet wine
Pinch of salt

Cover the dates with water, add the orange zest, bring to a boil then simmer slowly for 30-40 minutes, until dates are very soft; add a little water while cooking if the dates become too dried out. You can also add a couple of cloves, but be sure to remove them before blending the dates in the food processor.

Let dates cool a bit, then blend for a few seconds in a food processor to insure that the mixture is not stringy. You may need to add a bit of wine before blending if the dates are very dry.

In a large glass bowl, mix the dates, walnuts, vinegar, salt, and wine. Taste and adjust as needed. Refrigerate.

Enjoy with matzah throughout the holiday, but if there's any left over this charoset also makes a wonderful spread with any kind of cracker or bread. Keeps for several weeks covered in the fridge.

Maine Charosis

This recipe appears in Joan Nathan's cookbook, "King Solomon's Table." It was developed by a member of our congregation.

Makes about 2 1/2 cups.

3/4 cup dried blueberries

3/4 cup dried cranberries

3/4-1 cup sweet kosher wine

1 tart apple, peeled and diced

1/3 cup ginger, peeled and sliced into toothpick-sized strips

1/3 cup golden raisins

1/4 cup wine vinegar

1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

2 T. maple syrup or honey

Soak blueberries and cranberries in 3/4 cup of wine for several hours or overnight, until soft. Combine berry-wine mixture with apple, ginger, raisins, wine vinegar, and cinnamon in a medium saucepan and cook over medium heat about 10 minute or until apple pieces are soft. Process in a food processor until combined but not completely pureed. Add maple syrup or honey to taste. Add 1/4 cup wine if needed.

And here's a bonus recipe for your Passover table, a savory alternative to Gefilte Fish, from Tunisia, via Judy Stein

Tunisian Fish Balls

Try this in place of gefilte fish. Serve 2-3 balls per person
It is good over couscous when it isn't Passover.

1½ lbs of cod, sole or other mild white fish
2 T. chopped parsley
2 T. chopped cilantro
3 cloves of garlic, minced
2 onions, finely chopped
1½ tsp kosher salt
½ tsp harissa, (a few drops of hot sauce if you cannot get harissa)
2 tsp ground cumin
1½ cups of matzah meal
1 egg, beaten

For sauce

2 T. olive oil
2 cloves of garlic, minced
6 T. of tomato puree or 4 chopped tomatoes
2 cups fish broth or water

Bone and roughly chop the fish. Combine with all the other ingredients for fish balls except the egg in a food processor and process until fine. Add the beaten egg and process till well combined. Make one two-inch ball and brown in a small amount of olive oil to be sure the mixture holds together and is properly seasoned. In a large frying pan, heat oil for sauce; add other ingredients and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer. Form fish mixture into balls and sauté over medium heat, turning until lightly browned. Add fish balls to sauce when browned and simmer for about 15 minutes. Serve each person several balls with a small amount of sauce.