

“It’s time to celebrate!”

When culinary historian Marcie Cohen Ferris teams up with fellow Southerner Sara Foster, the result is a down-home Hanukkah feast

RECIPES: Farmers’ Market Greens • Classic Brisket • Simmered Black-eyed Peas with Tomatoes • Sweet Potato Latkes • Fresh Pear Cake • Jelly Doughnuts



Farmers’ Market Greens

“These are not your typical Southern-style greens cooked for hours with bacon fat, but they’re still Southern with the diced turnip. You can use most any mix of greens—Swiss chard, mustard, beet, turnip, kale—the more, the better.” —Marcie Cohen Ferris

MAKES: 8 servings

PREP: 10 minutes

COOK: 50 minutes

1/4 cup olive oil, divided

1 onion, chopped

1 pound fresh kale, washed and stems removed

1 pound fresh mustard greens, washed and stems removed

1 pound fresh turnip greens, washed and stems removed

1 turnip, peeled and diced

1 (32-ounce) container chicken broth

Sea salt, to taste

Freshly ground pepper, to taste

1. Heat 2 tablespoons olive oil in a large pot or saucepan over low heat. Add onion, and sauté about 2 to 3 minutes.

2. Add kale and next 6 ingredients. Reduce heat to very low, cover, and simmer 45 minutes, stirring occasionally, until greens and turnip are tender. Uncover, drizzle greens with remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil, and cook 3 minutes. Serve warm.

COOKBOOK AUTHOR MARCIE COHEN FERRIS HAS REAL CHUTZPAH—she dares to create a Southern-style barbecue sauce for her family’s favorite roasted brisket. In this menu, Marcie’s version of black-eyed peas, simmered in tomato sauce, is influenced not only by her roots in Blytheville, Arkansas, but also by the rich heritage of Sephardic Judaism. Her friend and our contributing editor Sara Foster shows her own firm footing in the American South with her Sweet Potato Latkes. Together, Marcie and Sara have crafted a feast that pays tribute to the two beloved culinary traditions.

Classic Brisket

“This was our favorite Hanukkah entrée prepared by the sisterhood at Temple Israel in Blytheville, Arkansas, and it was always served with potato latkes.”

—Marcie Cohen Ferris, *Matzoh Ball Gumbo*

MAKES: 8 servings

PREP: 10 minutes

COOK: 13 minutes

BAKE: 3 1/2 hours

STAND: 10 minutes

1 1/2 teaspoons seasoned salt or Greek seasoning*

1 1/2 teaspoons freshly ground pepper

1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt

1 (4 1/2 - to 5 1/2-pound) boneless beef brisket, trimmed with some fat left on

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 celery stalks, chopped

3 onions, chopped and divided (about 3 cups)

1 (12-ounce) bottle tomato-chili sauce**

1 cup ketchup

1 tablespoon strongly brewed coffee

1 tablespoon stone-ground mustard

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

1 cup dry red wine

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Combine first 3 ingredients; sprinkle mixture over both sides of brisket.

2. Heat oil over medium-high heat in a large heavy roasting pan set over 2 burners. Add brisket, fat side down, and cook about 5 minutes or until browned on underside. Turn brisket; add celery and 1 cup onion around sides of pan. Cook, stirring vegetables occasionally, 6 to 8 minutes or until brisket is browned and vegetables are golden.

3. Mix chili sauce, next 4 ingredients, and remaining chopped onion in a bowl; pour over brisket, combining with pan juices and vegetables. Cover with aluminum foil, and bake 1 hour. Add wine, cover, and bake 2 1/2 to 3 more hours or until brisket is very tender when pierced with a fork.

4. Transfer to cutting board; let stand 10 minutes. Slice thinly against grain, and arrange on a warm platter. Skim fat from pan juices; serve juices as gravy.

*For testing purposes, we used Cavender’s All-purpose Greek Seasoning.

**For testing purposes, we used Heinz Chili Sauce. >



Simmered Black-eyed Peas with Tomatoes

"This recipe is adapted from the [sisterhood at Temple Israel's] synagogue cookbook, *The Sephardic Cooks*. Traditionally, these peas are served with 'pink rice'—Sephardic-style rice cooked with a bit of tomato sauce. Miriam Cohen, a longtime member of the Sephardic community in Montgomery, Alabama, told me, 'You know, when I cook pink rice, my son says, "This is Jewish soul food!" It is, you know.'" —Marcie Cohen Ferris, *Matzoh Ball Gumbo*

MAKES: 6 to 8 servings (4 cups) **PREP:** 10 minutes **COOK:** 1 hour 6 minutes

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped (about 1½ cups)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper, plus more to taste
- 2 (16-ounce) bags frozen black-eyed peas

1. Heat oil in a large, heavy saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and garlic, and sauté about 4 minutes or until tender. Add tomato and next 3 ingredients; cook, stirring often, about 2 minutes or until tomato starts to soften.

2. Stir in black-eyed peas and 3½ cups water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer about 1 hour or until peas are tender. Season with more kosher salt and pepper, if desired. Serve hot or warm.



Sweet Potato Latkes

Sara's Southern twist on the classic latke will have your guests asking for more.

MAKES: 10 to 12 servings

PREP: 25 minutes

BAKE: 50 minutes

COOK: 8 minutes

- 3 sweet potatoes (about 2¼ pounds)
- 2 Russet potatoes (about 1½ pounds)
- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup breadcrumbs
- Zest of 2 oranges
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- Canola or safflower oil

TOPPINGS: applesauce, goat cheese, or sour cream

1. Preheat oven to 400°. Wrap 1 sweet potato in aluminum foil, and bake at 400° for 50 minutes to 1 hour or until tender when pierced with fork. Unwrap and cool to room temperature.

2. Reduce oven temperature to 250°. Peel and grate remaining potatoes with large side of a box grater or grating blade of a food processor. Combine grated potato, eggs, and next 5 ingredients in large bowl. Slip cooked sweet potato flesh out of skin, and stir thoroughly into potato mixture; discard skin.

3. Heat enough oil in large skillet to cover bottom of pan. Drop batter by tablespoonfuls in hot oil, and fry over medium heat until golden brown and crispy, about 2 to 3 minutes per side. Remove from pan, and place on a baking sheet lined with paper towels to drain. Repeat with remaining latkes, adding more oil to pan if needed. Keep batches of latkes warm in oven on a wire rack placed on a baking sheet. Serve warm with applesauce, soft goat cheese, or sour cream.

Fresh Pear Cake

"My mother-in-law, Shelby Ferris, is a wonderful cook. She always has a homemade dessert prepared when we come for holidays and family gatherings. This is one of my favorites. Use pears that are just beginning to feel soft on the bottom. The cake cuts better after it has cooled, but it smells so wonderful, you may not be able to wait that long." —Marcie Cohen Ferris, *Matzoh Ball Gumbo*

MAKES: 16 servings **PREP:** 30 minutes **BAKE:** 1 hour 5 minutes **COOL:** 1 hour

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 2½ cups sugar, divided
- 5 just-ripe pears (about 2½ pounds), peeled and cut into ¼-inch slices*
- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 4 large eggs, at room temperature**
- ⅓ cup orange juice
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon almond extract

GARNISH: powdered sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Grease a 10-inch tube pan, and dust with flour.

2. Combine 3 cups flour, baking powder, baking soda, ½ teaspoon cinnamon, and kosher salt in a medium bowl. Mix ⅓ cup sugar with remaining ½ teaspoon cinnamon and 2 tablespoons flour mixture in a large bowl. Add pears to large bowl, and toss gently.

3. Beat butter in a large bowl at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Gradually beat in remaining 2 cups sugar, and continue beating until light and fluffy. Scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Scrape sides of bowl. Gradually beat in remaining flour mixture with mixer on low speed until blended. Add orange juice and extracts; beat until smooth.

4. Spoon one-third of batter into prepared pan, and smooth over bottom. Top with half of pears, keeping within edges of batter. Spread another layer of batter, and top with remaining pears. Top with remaining batter to cover pears.

5. Bake 1 hour 5 minutes to 1 hour 15 minutes or until cake is golden brown and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Transfer to a wire rack, and let cool 1 hour. Run a knife around edges of pan and center tube. Invert onto a plate. Dust with powdered sugar, if desired. *For testing purposes, we used the sweet Starkrimson pear, available July through February.

**Remove eggs from refrigerator, and place in a bowl for 30 minutes. >



FOOD STYLIST: SARA FOSTER; PROP STYLIST: STEPHANIE BASRALIAN



Cottage Kitchen Favorite

Some recipes have been adapted from *Matzoh Ball Gumbo: Culinary Tales of the Jewish South* by Marcie Cohen Ferris (The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), \$29.95; order at uncpress.unc.edu.



Jelly Doughnuts

We're partial to apricot and raspberry jam in these airy doughnuts, but feel free to substitute your favorite jam.

MAKES: 10 large or 20 small doughnuts **PREP:** 30 minutes
RISE: 1 hour 15 minutes **COOK:** 8 minutes

- 1 (1/4-ounce) envelope active dry yeast
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup sugar, plus more for dusting
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- 2 cups vegetable oil
- 1/2 to 3/4 cup jam

- 1. Combine** yeast, 1/2 cup warm water, and honey in a small bowl or measuring cup. Let stand in a warm place for 5 minutes or until mixture begins to rise and become foamy.
- 2. Stir** together flour, 1/4 cup sugar, salt, and cinnamon in a large bowl. Add egg and yeast mixture, and stir to blend into a sticky dough. Turn out onto a lightly floured surface, and knead until smooth and soft, about 5 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, and cover loosely; let rise in a warm place about 1 hour or until almost doubled in size.
- 3. Punch** down dough, and roll out to 1/2-inch thickness on a lightly floured surface. Cut into 1 1/2-inch rounds, and place on a baking sheet lined with parchment or wax paper. Cover loosely, and let rise 15 to 20 minutes.
- 4. Heat** vegetable oil in a large saucepan until a deep-fry thermometer (see "Find it fast!" at right) registers 355° to 365°. Fry 4 to 5 rounds at a time until golden brown, 45 to 60 seconds per side. Drain on paper towels; roll in sugar to coat while warm. Repeat with remaining doughnuts.
- 5. Fill** a pastry bag with jam. Make a hole in one end of each doughnut with a wooden skewer. Push pastry tip into hole, and pipe about 2 teaspoons jam into each doughnut. Serve warm. ■

TEST KITCHEN TIP

It's worth it to buy a deep-fry thermometer to get the oil temperature in the right range: Too low, the doughnuts will be soggy; too high, they'll get too dark before cooking through. For safety, clip it to the pot before heating the oil.



Find it fast!
TAYLOR PRO KITCHEN DEEP FRY THERMOMETER, \$9.99, from Bed Bath & Beyond; 800/462-3966 or bedbathandbeyond.com