

Vaad

News  
& Views

בס"ד

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## Message from the Director

As we welcome the Yom Tov of Sukkos, and leave our homes in celebration of this great Holiday, the pasuk tells us 'ושמחת בחגך והיית אך שמח'. We have exited the period of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, confident that Hashem has Blessed us with a good year ahead. With this great feeling of happiness, we immediately leave our homes, showing our love for the Mitzvos of Hashem, whilst entering the Sukkah, our temporary dwelling place for seven days.

There are many symbolic reasons for residing in the Sukkah. One of these is that the Sukkah is a temporary dwelling place, symbolizing to us that our lives on this earth are only but temporary. However, when we surround ourselves with the four walls of Torah, and embrace all that is written in it, our Mitzvos, carried out in this world, become our permanent reward in the

World to Come. We use the seven days to reflect and to go about our daily lives, with the shaking of the Lulav and Esrog, requesting Bracha, Blessings from Hashem, in all directions, both materially and spiritually. When we then return to our permanent dwelling places, we enter with a fresh fervor to carry out the ongoing commandments given to us for the rest of the year, which will stand us in good stead for the rest of our lives.

May we all celebrate with much Simcha in our hearts, happiness in our homes, and in anticipation of our spiritual growth.

Chag Sameach

Rabbi Saul Emanuel  
Executive Director



# The Ritz Carlton: The Grand Dame of Sherbrooke Street

by: S. R. Hewitt

Few names have as complete a reputation for luxurious elegance as does the Ritz, and Montreal has the privilege of boasting the oldest Ritz-Carlton Hotel on this side of the Atlantic. Conceptualized and created by local investors who wanted to bring the height of European elegance to Canada, they paid a handsome fee for the Ritz name. Additionally, they agreed to uphold the Ritz's unique (at that time) standards: including washrooms in every room, around-the-clock dining, and most importantly - a grand staircase entrance. Thus it was that the Ritz-Carlton Hotel opened in Montreal's Golden Square Mile, in the last hour, on the last day of 1912.

Just a few months shy of its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, in June 2012, after a closure of four years, the Ritz-Carlton has opened its doors anew. The \$200 million restoration has breathed new life into the "Grand Dame of Sherbrooke Street," allowing the Ritz-Carlton to maintain its tradition of luxury and elegance, while also offering its guests the most cutting edge comforts of modern technology (remembering a returning guest's temperature preferences upon check-in!).

Among the upgraded facilities within the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, the  is delighted to announce

the re-opening of its separate and complete kosher kitchen. The Ritz-Carlton's history of kosher party planning goes back many years, and the kosher clientele has always been an important part of the hotel's business. Indeed, some families have shared entire life-cycles at this hotel, generations of weddings and bar mitzvahs shared in elegance.

The Ritz-Carlton has a separate Kosher kitchen dedicated for Kosher food service only. The new kosher kitchen was designed

with a kitchen consultant who specializes in kosher kitchens, allowing them to make the best choices for the highest efficiency in the allotted space. Using the latest technologies, the Ritz Carlton updated its facilities to attain HACCP-certification. (HACCP stands for Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points, which is a management system in which food safety is addressed through the analysis and control of biological, chemical, and physical hazards.) Additionally, all of the kitchen facilities were designed for the greatest energy efficiency - for example, the water is heated using recycled energy.

The clean lines and modern appliances are complimented by distinctive details, such as different floor coloring, that remind the staff that they are in the kosher kitchen. This is important, as the same chefs and wait staff work in both the general kitchen and the kosher kitchen. The fact that Jewish guests benefit from the phenomenal cooking talent of the Ritz-Carlton's high end chefs, all of whom have been trained in kosher cooking, is one the major highlights of the hotel that has made it a favorite location for Jewish weddings in Montreal for decades.

Mr. Andrew Torriani, the President and General Manager of the Ritz Carlton Hotel, stated that "Ritz has always been the #1 location for weddings, and we want to be the #1 location once again. We provide the best quality kosher food possible and we want to continue to be known for that." Additionally, Mr. Torriani noted that the  was extremely helpful in assisting in the creation of the new kitchen, by informing the Ritz Carlton of the best products and technology available for a kosher facility, as well as ensuring that the proper cleaning staff and regular mashgichim were, and are, available.

# Pomme Magic - a sweet idea

by: C. Ginsberg

Increasingly conscious of the benefits of a healthy diet, consumers are looking for the freshest and healthiest foods possible. Many are taking the time each day to prepare fresh fruit and vegetables, cutting them into easy to eat slices to take along when they are out and about. We all know how tedious and time consuming this can be, especially when trying to get yourself and your family ready for the day ahead. Wouldn't it be great to have someone else take care of this chore for you? Enter Pommes Ma-gic, a family-run, Canadian company located in the Rougemont region of Quebec, only recently certified by the . Responding to the growing demand for healthy, ready-to-eat and conveniently packaged foods, Pommes Ma-gic introduced sliced, fresh apples to the Canadian market in spring 2004.

Since 1921, the Alix family has been in the agri-food business, especially in the fresh apples sector. The family gradually moved away from apple production to concentrate on the storage and distribution of whole apples to food stores. With an eye to the continuity of the family business, Gilles and Sébastien Alix founded Pommes Ma-gic in 1997, to consolidate their expertise in the processing and distribution of apple-based food products. The company continued to grow rapidly while maintaining a high level of product quality. Today, Pommes Ma-gic develops new apple-based products, such as fresh diced apples, to meet the specific needs of their clientele.

Pommes Ma-gic now offers fresh, unpeeled, red or green sliced apples in three popular varieties. The red apples come in a choice of Gala, well known for its sweet, juicy and crisp flesh, or Empire, enjoyed for its sweet, sub-acidic flavour. The Green apples are the tart and sweet Granny Smith.

The apples are first selected for their firmness and freshness, then washed, seeded and sliced. The slices are dipped in a solution called calcium ascorbate, known as *NatureSeal* - an odourless and flavourless blend of vitamin C and calcium that prevents oxidation or premature browning of the apples - before being packaged. This processing method, completely automated right from washing till sealing for maximum efficiency, was developed by Pommes Ma-gic to ensure consumers would get only quality apples with pure flavour and freshness. The *NatureSeal* extends the life of the apple slices for up to 21 days in the refrigerator, between 1° and 4° C, keeping them as fresh and crunchy as if just cut.

Pomme Magic apples are available at all IGA, St. Hubert and Metro stores. So, on your next trip to the supermarket you can treat yourself to one of the Ready-to-Go, 57 g or 80 g snack packs of red or green sliced apples. These packs are convenient and ideal for you and your kids' lunches, and a great replacement to other packaged junk food. Put them in your briefcase, purse, training bag, kids' backpacks or picnic basket. Or, if you need something larger, the family size bag is ideal for preparing meals and healthy snacks at home more easily.

Eating apples has never been so easy! Bon Appétit!



*“The  is proud that they are able to service the different constituents of the community, by offering them their particular requirements.”*

# KOSHER CATERING: A PRIMER

By: Rabbi Z. Blech

In ancient times, catering was a function of government. Pharaoh's cabinet ministers were actually his catering crew – the Sar ha'Tabachim (The Minister of Meat), the Sar ha'Mashkim (The Minister of Drink), and the Sar ha'Ophim (The Minister of Baking). It was as if the entire Egyptian government was focused on food! Today, of course, Her Majesty's government busies itself with more important matters, and we relegate food service to humble caterers. People, still, however accord great importance to their Simchas, and entrust their favorite caterer with the responsibility of getting everything just right. Much concern centers on the quality of the food and the attractiveness of its presentation. However, a Jew's primary concern is the Kashrus of the event, and a party's seamless success often belies the complexity of maintaining the standards of Kashrus that are the hallmark of Yiddishe Simchah. Ultimately, it is Hashgacha for the event that makes it a true Simchah.

A good Hashgacha does not start at the Simchah, however. Long before the first sushi is rolled, the

Rabbonim charged with setting Kashrus standards must first formulate Kashrus

policies. This is no mean task.

Aside from determining what Sh'chitah to use, they

must determine which Hashgachos are acceptable,

what the standards of Pas Yisroel should be, how

to ensure that all food is Bishul Yisroel. The

Hashgacha must therefore take

many factors into account when

arranging the Kashrus of any

Simchah.

Another important standard that must be addressed by the Rabbonim concerns Bishul Akum, which is one of the most serious practical concerns in a catering operation. Chaza"l required that many types of food may only be cooked by a frum Jew, and failure to ensure compliance with this rule renders the food not Kosher. Again, there is a difference between S'phardim and Ashkenazim in how to address this concern. S'phardim follow the opinion of the Shulchan Aruch, and require a frum Jew to be involved the cooking itself – placing the food in the hot oven, placing the pot of food on a flame, or stirring the food while on the fire. Ashkenazim, on the other hand, follow the opinion of the Ramo, who rules that it is sufficient for a Jew to turn the fire on, after which a non-Jew may cook the food. The Rabbonim charged with establishing the Kashrus of the Hashgacha must therefore determine the standards that apply in each particular case. The  is proud that they are able to service the different constituents of the community, by offering them their particular requirements.

Setting policies and guidelines is only the beginning of the process however; it is their implementation that will make or break the Kashrus of the affair. This responsibility falls to the Mashgiach, the professional who has to make everything work. He must be familiar with a myriad of Halachos – rules relating to bishul akum (foods cooked by a non-Jew), checking vegetables to ensure that they do not contain any insects, kashering equipment, the acceptability of different types of food, basar b'cholov, fish and meat – and even Halachos relating to food preparation on Shabbos and Yom Tov! He must be able to recognize problems before they occur, and ensure their timely resolution. Some areas of Kashrus concern are visible to the guests and others are hidden away in the kitchen. Here are a few examples of what “could go wrong” and which a trained Mashgiach works to address:



In the dining room...



**THE BAR.** A “I’Chaim” may be the sine qua non of a Simchah – but these libations are fraught with Kashrus concerns. Kosher wine must be produced by frum Jews, and cannot even be poured by non-Jews without making it Treif. This Halachah would seem to preclude the use of wine at any event where the waiters are not Jewish. Fortunately, Kosher cooked wine – known as M’vushal – is not subject to this restriction, and can be handled by anyone. However, many Kosher wines – especially those of higher quality – are produced in both M’vushal and non-M’vushal varieties, so even when one orders a Kosher wine, the incorrect version may arrive by mistake. The Mashgiach therefore checks every bottle of wine to verify both its Kosher and M’vushal status.

Liqueurs pose other Kashrus concerns. Hotels maintain stocks of popular alcoholic beverages, with which their bartenders are familiar and upon which caterers often rely. Unfortunately, many of these items are not acceptable for Kosher use, and the Mashgiach must therefore carefully review each item to be served. Even after removing those items that are not acceptable, he must constantly monitor the bar to ensure that an eager bartender does not inadvertently introduce a common (non-Kosher) variety that is his stock and trade.

In addition to the actual alcoholic beverages, a seemingly endless list of “mixed drinks” is expected to be served. The mixers to produce these concoctions include flavored syrups, fruit drinks, and dairy (or dairy equivalent) blends – all of which must be monitored to ensure that they bear reliable Kosher certification.



**THE OMELET STATION.** There are times where even the best food from the “production” kitchen will just not do, so caterers are called upon to create custom dishes for the guest. One of the most common manifestations of such personal culinary service is the omelet station, where guests queue for the privilege of instructing the chef to add any (or all) of a variety of vegetables, cheese, lox and mushrooms to an omelet cooked to order. Great care must be taken, however, not to run afoul of the rules of Bishul Akum. Typically a non-Jewish chef manages two or more mini cook tops, each containing a small canister of cooking gas. The Halachic concern is that if the chef would turn the fire on, anything he cooks will be considered Treif.

The solution (at least for Ashkenazim, see above) is for the Mashgiach to light each burner, thus rendering the food Bishul Yisroel. The problem is that the flame is often extinguished, either because the gas ran out, the chef inadvertently lowered the flame too much, or something spilled. Regardless of the reason, the Mashgiach must be vigilant to ensure that the non-Jewish chef does not rekindle the flame – something that can be done literally in a split second using the piezo-electric ignitor built into the burner.



**THE SMORGASBORD.** Although the Swedish smörgåsbord was designed as a buffet form of a normal meal, it has evolved into a “pre-meal” – often far more lavish and varied than the ensuing sit down affair. When preparing food in a kitchen, the Mashgiach has a defined space to monitor. The challenge of the smorgasbord is that the handling of the food – and, hence, the ability to monitor Kashrus concerns – is spread over a much larger area. In addition to ensuring the food is Kosher, he must ensure that meat and fish are kept separate and that waiters do not use their own equipment at carving stations. On Shabbos, care must be taken to ensure that Sternos® are not used to heat food, and that waiters do not use serving equipment that pose a Borer concern.



**WAITERS.** In the time of Daniel, the Meltzar – waiter – was responsible for presenting the food to the guests (see Rashi Daniel 1:11), a position alive and well in a catered affair. Waiters are trained to please their guests, sometimes with unintended consequences. For example, meat meals often contain Pareve versions of inherently dairy items – margarine replaces butter and Pareve creamer replaces milk/cream. We are so used to these Pareve versions that we do not even think about. Unfortunately, neither may the waiter. Warm rolls call for a spread, and waiters have been known to find butter in the hotel refrigerator and not give it a second thought. When coffee is served, waiters have been known to innocently bring real milk to the table – after all, didn't the guest ask for milk with his coffee? A good Mashgiach anticipates such pitfalls and works to both educate and monitor the solicitous waiter.

In the kitchen...

**CONVECTION OVENS.** One of the most sensitive and pervasive concerns in preparing a Kosher meal is addressing Bishul Akum concerns. While the Mashgiach is always careful to turn on every flame used by the non-Jewish chef, one common piece of cooking equipment poses a particular challenge – the convection oven. Industrial convection ovens actually turn off each time their doors are opened, so if the non-Jewish chef opens the doors to put food into the oven, the fact that the Mashgiach had turned the oven on earlier in the day may not address the cooking caused by the new fire started when the doors are closed. The Mashgiach must therefore make sure that he closes the doors every time raw food is put into the oven.

**CHECKING FOR INSECTS.** Caterers are always on the lookout for exotic greens, many of which are commonly infested. Often, a special Mashgiach is required to spend hours washing and checking vegetables and fruits, a painstaking task that bears a tremendous responsibility.

**THE KITCHEN STAFF.** The professional Mashgiach must be a consummate people person. A good chef considers himself an artist – and often comes with an artist's temperament. He wants to do things his way, and it is the job of a good Mashgiach to ensure that the chef's creativity does not conflict with Kosher requirements. In addition, he must work with the chef's brigade so that everyone understands and respects Kosher requirements. Last but not least, the Mashgiach must contend with the party planner, who often times brings cookies, candies, and other specialty items to an event. While party planners augment the work of the caterer, they do not work for him – nor do they have formal relationship to the Hashgacha. As such, rules and standards established for and understood by the caterer may not be known or understood by the party planner. The party planner therefore requires special oversight, just one more responsibility for the professional Mashgiach.

Parties are intrinsic to a Jewish Simchah, and every Bris, wedding, and Bar Mitzvah is accompanied by a festive meal. Often, a caterer is called to arrange for this meal, and his goal is to provide the perfect and most memorable affair. Meeting this standard involves ensuring the ultimate in Kashrus standards, a task that the Mashgiach and the Hashgacha take pleasure in providing.

The <sup>(MK)</sup>, when certifying functions, takes all of the above concerns into account, as well as paying attention to many other issues and challenges which may arise at catered affairs. A tremendous amount of background work goes into the planning on an event and ensuring the smoothness of the operation. The scheduling of a Mashgiach/Mashgichim to be in attendance at each affair, as well as the attention to every detail, requires, a lot of forward planning. This is carried out by the staff and members of the <sup>(MK)</sup>, who ensure that every Kosher event is supervised to the highest standard of Kashrus.

**NEWLY**



**CERTIFIED**



**BeeMaid Honey**

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Company produces honey.



**Mozart Restaurant**

5335A Queen Mary Road

Phone: 514-419-4411

Dairy and fish restaurant



**Embassy Plaza**

Chomedey, Laval, Quebec

Reception Hall



**Nutrino**

Alma, Quebec

Company produces milk & cream



**Fuego Restaurant**

6136 Cote St. Luc Road

Phone: (514) 481-0123

Steakhouse & Fish Restaurant



**Petite Bretonne**

Blainville, Quebec

Company manufactures croissants



**Holiday Inn Montreal Airport**

Montreal, Quebec

Banquet Hall



**Regent Chemicals Ltd**

Valleyfield, Quebec

Chemical Company



**JohnVince Foods**

Boucherville Quebec

Manufactures & repacks confectionery



**Ritz-Carlton Hotel**

Montreal, Quebec

Banquet Hall



**Laiterie de la Baie**

Labaie, Quebec

Company produces dairy products



**Swurl**

located at Jewish General Hospital

Frozen Yogurt outlet (not Chalav Yisrael)



**Miel Abitémis**

St Bruno de Guiges, Quebec

Company produces honey



**Titan Oils**

Montreal, Quebec

Produces canola & vegetable oil

# SUKKOS POINTERS

## SUKKOS TRAVEL ADVISORY

- For the seven days of Sukkos, the Sukkah becomes our abode. This reminds us of the Jewish people who lived in Sukkahs during the 40 years of traveling in the midbar/desert. Just as Hashem protected us then, so too He protects us now, with the clouds of glory, which the Sukkah resembles.
- The esrog, lulav, hadassim & aravos, are each independently chosen for their particular beauty, prior to the onset of Sukkos. We shake all these items together, in all directions as a symbol of Hashem's control over the entire world.
- We do not shake the arba minim/four species on Shabbos.
- On the first day when we shake the lulav & esrog we make a Shehecheyanu
- It is a special Mitzvah to rejoice on Sukkos.
- The days of Chol Hamoed are celebrated with a Simchas Bais HaShoeivah, which reminds us of the water libations that were offered during Sukkos. We receive the Blessing of the water (rain) during the Chag of Sukkos.
- On Shabbos Chol Hamoed we read Koheles, written by Shlomo Hamelech. Koheles describes the requirement to focus on our spiritual pursuits, without concentrating on the personal pleasures of this world, which are only temporary.
- On Hoshana Raba, the 7th day of Sukkos, we circle the bima seven times with the Arba Minim/Four Species in our hands. Many stay up the night of Hoshana Raba to study the Torah. This is the day on which our judgment by Hashem, which commenced on Rosh Hashana, is sealed.
- Shemini Atzeres, the eighth day, is the day we seal our special relationship with Hashem. As this is a new Yom Tov, Shehecheyanu is recited at candle lighting & Kiddush.
- The Holiday of Simchat Torah is celebrated by the rejoicing in the completion of the reading of the entire Torah throughout the year.
- All the Torah scrolls are taken out of the ark, while the community expresses joy in unity at completing our Torah, with our commitment to carry out all its edicts.

Once again, this year, arrangements have been made with US Border Protection at the Champlain border crossing, to have agricultural specialists available over the Sukkos traveling season. They have been thoroughly briefed about the use of the Esrog & Lulav, and are trained to handle these items delicately and with care. The border officers are fully informed of all the traveling dates over Yom Tov and you can rest assured that traveling with these items will not pose a challenge. Please declare these items and hand them over for inspection.

We have been asked to remind passengers who are traveling, that every passenger in the vehicle must have a seatbelt, and car seats must be provided to children, who are required by law to be in a car seat. There have been incidents where this has not been the case, resulting in hefty fines and long delays. Please ensure that this is adhered to, for your safety & for the safety of your children.