

our Community



Tu B'Shevat

2016/5776



Jewish Community Council of Montreal

Conseil de la Communauté Juive de Montréal

ועד הוועד היהודי-ממונטריאלי

Greetings

Dear Friend,

Tu b'Shvat, the New Year for Trees, is a minor holiday yet it holds many lessons for us. Among them are Halachot (laws) pertaining to eating of the fruits grown in Israel, including the tithing of the fruit and trees, as well as not benefiting from a tree within the first three years of the tree having been planted. This law applies to locally grown fruit as well.

Additionally, Tu B'Shevat gives us a chance to acknowledge the Brachot (blessings) which Hashem continues to give us on a daily basis, supplying us and sustaining us with fruit and all other foods. On this day in particular, we take the time to actively show our gratitude to Hashem for our sustenance.

On Tu B'Shevat it is customary to eat a fruit we have not eaten this season. We do this to be able to recite the Shehecheyanu,

a prayer said whenever doing something for the first time that year. One of the lessons is a reminder to be thankful and remember to appreciate the "One Above" for giving us our daily nourishment.

We sincerely thank everyone for the incredible input received regarding our new magazine The Community and hope you enjoy this and further editions.

Wishing you a Happy Tu b'Shevat.

Rabbi Saul Emanuel, Executive Director
Jewish Community Council

Up And Coming

FishNzone No stranger to the restaurant business, Mozart on Queen Mary has rebranded better than ever. Keeping their original restaurant, they have expanded next door with the opening of FishNzone.

In a relaxing, dimly lit, elegant atmosphere, one can enjoy original, delicious and eye-pleasing fish dishes. They have the largest kosher fish menu in Montreal and have created innovative and delectable appetizers to begin your dining experience.

In case you doubt the authenticity of the food they are serving, one of their chefs used to work at Buona Notte, the other from Queue de Cheval, both upscale, top notch Montreal restaurants.

You can contact them at 438-381-1788 or via email, restaurantmozart@gmail.com. Check out their menu on their website, <http://www.fishnzone.ca>. They are open on Saturday nights until midnight.

Gamachi Foods Born in Tehran, Dina Nathan learned authentic Iraqi and Persian cooking from her mother and aunts. Her mother was one of eleven children and together with one of her sisters made amba for the entire family. Dina remembers the family and friends making their way to her mother's home to accept a gift of this precious jar made with love.

Amba is an authentic Babylonian dish very specific to Iraqi Jews. No stranger to moving around – from Tehran to London, to New York, finally settling in Montreal with her husband and two small children, Dina longed for familiar comfort foods. It was then that she decided to go back to New York where her mother lives and learn how to make this staple in their diet. She sat by her mother's side until she had mastered not only the recipe but the small details that one can only glean from observing a master.

The secret family recipe uses very specific spices from Israel. Mango is fermented for days in a unique way, then the fruit is spiced, the final ingredients added and the amba is ready to be jarred. Now that she has mastered the original product she is also producing a puree version as well as a MAYGO (mango and mayo) one. Look for Dina's product under the Gamachi label in local stores. You can check out her website <http://www.gamachifoods.com>.

Sorsky's Deli will be the new kid on the block in the Cavendish food court. Owned by Ilan Posesorsky (hence the name), Sorsky's will have not only an extensive menu pleasing to the taste buds but his establishment will be pleasing to the eye as well.

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There are two ways to be a Jew. One is to be born of a Jewish mother. The other is to choose to become a Jew. A dinner was held recently sponsored by the Beth Din of Montreal and a few anonymous donors, bringing together those involved in the conversion process in different levels with those who have chosen to make the decision to take on a life of Torah and mitzvahs. The evening was sincerely emotional and truly inspiring.

In a tightly packed reception hall many people who are part of the incredible program run by the Ruth Institute came to pay tribute and recognize the essential work being done. Those already converted or in the process, their sponsoring families, the rabbis, teachers, mentors and Presidium of the Jewish Community Council together made this evening more than memorable.

What was palpable throughout the evening was the warmth that each person had for the other. If anyone needed to see what true Ahavas Israel looks like, that was the place to be.

Also present at the event were Rabbi Sholom Chrlqui, Rabbi Dovid Merling and Rabbi Yonah Rosner of the Beth Din, Rabbi Saul Emanuel Executive Director of the Jewish Community Council and the Presidium, Mr. Saul Deitcher, Mr. Leonard Mintz, Mr. Fred Pfeiffer, Mr. Martin Labow and their wives.

Rabbi Chrlqui was the master of ceremonies, speaking in both English and French. Rabbi Emanuel opened the evening welcoming everyone. He illustrated the success and crucial role the Beth Din plays in people's lives. Over the years many people have gone through this very successful and elaborate program. The honesty and honor with which everyone conducts themselves is highly commendable and to be emulated.

Following a hot, delicious and sumptuous buffet dinner, Rabbi Merling addressed the crowd. The crux of his talk was that when the Menorah is lit in each person's home, it continues to do what the Menorah did thousands of years ago - radiating light both inside and to the outside world. He went to tell those assembled that just as a candle is a beacon of light, so too those taking on Torah and mitzvahs

must be a light unto the nations. They must keep and cherish their enthusiasm, spreading it to everyone they meet.

Rabbi Yisroel Cremisi gave greetings and shared a heart-warming story in French. One of the participants then came to the front of the room and emotionally thanked the rabbis for helping him connect with Hashem. He explained that through his learning and with the help of those running the program, he now has an intimate relationship with G-d. His heartfelt words touched everyone in the room.

A young woman then spoke, quietly and with much dignity. She thanked the incredible people who had come into and enriched her life. She explained that the miracles we witnessed on Chanukah are repeated on a daily basis. The Chanukah candles bring her much inspiration, drawing down the light of Torah. "When I feel myself waning, looking for inspiration, I recall the flickering lights of the Menorah which bring a smile to my face and give me much strength."

Rabbi Yerachmiel Strausberg explained that although born Jewish, in his youth he did not spend much time learning about Torah and mitzvahs. He spoke about emunah - faith - explaining what unbelievable things a Torah lifestyle can bring to one's life and family. He told those assembled that they must always have in their lives two things: a proper teacher and a mentor to whom they can speak openly and honestly. He lauded the sponsoring families and the crucial role they play in the lives of those seeking a new way of life.

The evening continued long after the speeches were over. It is very evident that the conversion program at the Ruth Institute is not one dimensional. It encompasses the whole person from the youngest child to the elderly grandparent. Each person is vital and important to its success. Those who go on to live a Torah life do so with the knowledge that what they have learned and the new people they have met have now become part of their families. It is also to be noted that the Ruth Institute's conversion program is recognized and lauded worldwide. Kol Hakavod to everyone involved in this important and admirable endeavor.



Mr. Leonard Mintz

Inside Tu B'Shevat

Miriam Segal

Overview

The 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat is the day designated on the Jewish calendar as the New Year for Trees. On this day we celebrate the trees of G-d's world by increasing in the amount of fruits we eat and acknowledging that it is G-d who creates all species of fruits. It is also a custom to eat carob on this day.

The Distinction of Tu B'Shevat and Eating Carob

To explain the distinction and importance of Tu B'Shevat imagine you own a farm with an orchard in Israel. Once a year you are required by Jewish law to give a specific amount of fruit as tithes (one tenth of annual produce or earnings) - for the High Priests - Kohanim, for the poor, or for eating in Jerusalem (depending on the year in a seven year cycle).

A question arises: When is the cut-off date between one year's crop and the next? The answer is on the day when most of the rainy season in the Land of Israel has passed. That is the 15th day of Shevat, known commonly as Tu B'Shevat ("Tu" is one way of saying fifteen).

But we run into a small issue: There are certain trees - such as the carob tree - that can begin to bud before Tu B'Shevat, but will not be harvested until much later, well after Tu B'Shevat. Would their tithing follow the rules of the tree-year in which they bud, or the tree-year in which they are harvested?

In a nutshell, after much discussion in the Talmud, it was decided by the people that the carob would fall into the same time frame as the seven species and be one of the fruits eaten on Tu B'Shevat, although not listed as one of the seven species.

What is the lesson of the carob?

The Talmud tells us that it takes 70 years for a carob tree to mature and bear fruit. By eating carob on Tu B'Shevat, we learn the value of patiently investing in the future, even when it is a long and arduous process with no immediate gains, for the fruits of our labors will be harvested by generations to come.

Man is Compared to a Tree in the Field¹

A tree's primary components are: the roots, which anchor it to the ground and supply it with water and other nutrients; the trunk, branches and leaves that comprise its body; and the fruit, which is harvested and enjoyed by humans or animals and also contains the seeds through which the tree reproduces itself.

We are compared to trees because we, too, are made up of three components: roots, a body, and fruit.

The roots of the tree represent the subconscious layers of the human psyche, which are for the most part invisible. Just like the roots of a tree, the composition, breadth and depth of the human subconscious are disguised and constitute the roots of all manifestations of the human self.

The body of the tree symbolizes the conscious personality of the human being, the way we describe our existence consciously to ourselves. It is the "person" you (think) you know.

The fruit of the tree, harvested and consumed by others, represents the impact we have on the lives of people around us.

Tu B'Shevat Customs

There are few customs or observances related to this holiday. One custom is to eat a new fruit on this day, or to eat from the Seven Species (shivat haminin) described in the Bible as being abundant in the land of Israel. The Shivat Haminin are: wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates. (Deut. 8:8).

The Seven Species

In the Torah, wheat is regarded as the mainstay of the human diet, while barley is mentioned as a typical animal food². They represent the staples of our inner make-up. Following these come five fruits - grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates - which add flavor and zest to our basic endeavor of developing our connection and relationship with G-d.

Wheat is the basis for our sustenance but only after we labor to grow, harvest and prepare it. It also represents the endeavor to nourish the Divine aspirations that are the essence of our humanity.



Barley represents the endeavor to nourish and develop our human side, a task no less crucial to our mission in life than the cultivation of our G-dly soul.



Grapes are defined by joy as the grapevine describes its product in Yotam's Parable "my wine, which makes joyous G-d and men."³ A person ignited by joy has the same basic traits he possesses in a nonjoyous state - the same knowledge and intelligence, the same loves, hates, wants and desires. But in a state of joy, everything is more pronounced: the mind is keener, the loves deeper and the desires more aggressive.



Figs are the fourth of the Seven Kinds, also known as the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil—the fruit which Adam and Eve tasted, thereby committing the first sin of history. In a constructive way, the fig represents our capacity for a deep and intimate involvement in our every positive endeavor -an involvement which signifies that we are fully engaged in what we are doing.



Pomegranates are highly compartmentalized fruits: each of its hundreds of seeds is wrapped in its own sac of pulp and is separated from its fellows by a tough membrane. The pomegranate represents our capacity to do and achieve things that are utterly incompatible with who and what we are at the present moment. It is our refusal to reconcile oneself to one's spiritual and moral station as defined by the present state of one's character: the insistence on acting better and more G-dly than we are.



Olives are that part of ourselves that thrives on struggle, that revels in it. Just like an olive, say our sages, which yields its oil only when pressed, so, too, do we yield what is best in us only when pressed to the wall.



Dates represent our capacity for peace, tranquility and perfection. While it is true that we're best when we're pressed like the olive, it is equally true that there are potentials in our soul that come forward only when we are completely at peace with ourselves.



*1 Rash HaShonah 1:1
2 cf. Psalms 104:15 and 1 Kngs 5:8. See also Talmud, Soch 11a
3 Judges 9:8*

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Up And Coming

Ilan is no stranger to the food business, owning Metsuyan also in the Cavendish food court. He realized that the only kosher deli in Montreal is located on Bernard, a distance from Cote St. Luc. The west end, highly populated by observant Jews has no such restaurants.

Sorsky's will have an extensive menu featuring hot smoked meat, specialty sandwiches, club rolls, club sandwiches, for-fainting poutine, fried chicken using a 'special' recipe, delicious fries and much more.

The design will be high-end and high-tech. Ilan believes in using the best of the best in everything he does. Clients will be able to see right into his kitchen, attesting to his penchant for cleanliness.

Sorsky's will be open Sunday thru Thursday from 10:00 am – 9:00 pm, Fridays according to when Shabbos comes in and one after Shabbos on Saturdays. They will cater your event, prepare a full Shabbat dinner or a meal any night, all of which can be delivered. 514-655-7451.

Montreal Menorah Challenge Kalman Emanuel

After weeks of publicity from one end of Montreal to the other and a Facebook blitz, the Grand Menorah Challenge finally came to fruition!

For almost a month children of all ages were busy gluing, building, working and putting together every kind of Menorah one could imagine. As a teacher of one of the participating schools excitedly proclaimed, "I haven't seen my students so involved in a project in a while!"

On the second night of Chanukah over 150 excited boys and girls, together with their parents, grandparents, cousins and friends began arriving for the event at precisely 7:00 pm. The anticipation was palpable. Who would win the contest??

People walked into a large room decorated imaginatively and with great flare in a Chanukah theme. Long tables were set up with a dazzling array of different styles of Menorah's from electric to food oriented. Children from schools across town proved that Montreal children have amazing talent.

The three judges were amazed, astounded and impressed with the originality of the Menorah's. Judge Judy, Judge Worenklein and Judge Zvi discussed at great length which Menorah deserved to be the winner. It was not an easy task to put it mildly.

Rabbi Saul Emanuel, Director of the JCC addressed the crowd announcing that this is the first annual Menorah Challenge. "It is a Kiddush Hashem to see so many areas of our Montreal community represented, coming together for this amazing event."

Tables were elaborately laden with donuts, latkes and Chanukah cookies. Included in the small food court was a cotton candy stand as well as the all new hit popcorn brand, Bad Monkey who set up a very impressive booth for all attendees. People were wowed by the delicious popcorn flavors.

Each child received a fun and colorful Chanukah coloring book and a special dreidel filled to the brim with nosh as well as coupons to some restaurants in town. Many prizes were raffled off and although one person won the Menorah challenge, everyone left a winner. See you at next year's Menorah Challenge!



Défi Menorah de Montréal Kalman Emanuel

Après des semaines de publicité d'un bout de Montréal à l'autre ainsi qu'un blitz sur Facebook, le Grand Défi Menorah s'est finalement concrétisé!

Pour près d'un mois, des enfants de tous âges étaient occupés à coller, bâtir, et travailler à mettre ensemble toutes sortes de Menorah. Un professeur d'une des écoles participantes a même proclamé, « Ca fait un bon moment que je n'ais pas vu mais élèves participer avec tant d'enthousiasme pour un projet ! »

Le deuxième soir de Hanoukka, plus de 150 garçons et filles excités, ainsi que leurs parents, grands-parents, cousins et amis ont commencé à arriver pour l'événement qui débuta précisément à 19h00. L'anticipation était palpable. Qui gagnerait le concours ?

Les gens sont entrés dans une grande salle décorée avec imagination et panache dans le thème de Hanoukka. De longues tables ont été mis en place avec une éblouissante collection de différents styles de Menorah allant de l'électrique à l'alimentation. Les enfants des écoles à travers la ville ont prouvés que les enfants de Montréal ont un talent incroyable.

Les trois juges ont été surpris, étonné et impressionné par l'originalité des Menorah. La juge Judy, le juge Worenklein, et le juge Zvi ont longuement discuté sur laquelle des Menorah méritait d'être le vainqueur. Ce ne fut vraiment pas une tâche facile.

Rabbi Saul Emanuel, Directeur du CCJ s'est adressé à la foule en annonçant que ceci était le premier Défi Menorah de Montréal annuel. « C'est un Kiddouch Hachem de voir des participants de toutes les communautés de Montréal venir ensemble pour cet événement incroyable. »

Les tables étaient chargées de délicieux beignets, latkes et biscuits de Hanoukka. Dans la petite aire de restauration se trouver un kiosque de barbe a papa ainsi qu'un kiosque Bad Monkey Popcorn, la toute nouvelle marque alléchante de popcorn qui a mis en place un stand très impressionnant pour tous les participants. Les gens ont été séduits par les délicieuses saveurs variées de popcorn.

Chaque enfant a reçu un livre de coloriage de Hanoukka et une toupie spécial débordante de bonbons et chocolats ainsi que des coupons pour certains restaurants Montréalais. De nombreux prix ont été tirés au sort et même si seulement une personne a remporté le défi Menorah, tout le monde est sorti gagnant. Rendez-vous au Défi Menorah de l'année prochaine !



Kosher at Cavendish Joannie Tansky

In life one can view events two ways – positively or negatively. The Cavendish Mall is a perfect example of this adage. One can lament and say back in the day it used to be 'the' mall. Or, one can say how the mall has reinvented themselves to serve the changing demographic of the Jewish community.

In The Beginning

Built in 1973, it was the first mall in the West End of Montreal. People had an option to shop locally for items they would normally have to trek downtown to find. Anchored by Eaton's, Steinberg's and Miracle Mart, it served the communities of Cote St. Luc, Hampstead, Notre Dame de Grace and Montreal West.

In 1976 the Parti Quebecois was elected with Rene Levesque at the helm. That was the beginning of many waves of young Jewish families fleeing Quebec down the 401 for staid, calm Toronto. It was also the beginning of many changes for the Cavendish Mall. Over the next thirty-four years, the mall would see multiple modifications coupled with some very lean years. In 2010 it was decided to demolish 40% of the mall to make way for a large, upscale, residential housing development. For residents living in the area, watching the mall being bulldozed was difficult, especially for those who fondly remembered shopping there over the years. In the end, things turned out well. The mall is now not only surviving, but thriving.

In this article, our mandate will focus on the kosher establishments that have emerged over the past few years. With a growing Sephardic community as well as more Jews than ever observing the laws of Kashtruth, the need to provide stores, restaurants and butcher shops grew over the years. People in the area needed places to shop for their growing families. Currently, there are six establishments under the MK certification in the mall: IGA, J&R, KOSHER KIMLY, THE KOSHER PIZZA BAR, SUSHI METSUYAN AND SORSKY'S DELI (coming soon).

The first of those stores to open was J&R Butcher in 1991. Established in Outremont in 1942, J&R expanded, opening a second store in the Cavendish Mall when they realized many of their customers were moving to the West end of the city. In 1996 they closed the Outremont location and focused solely on the store in the mall. J&R has weathered many changes. Their clientele is fiercely loyal, their store immaculately clean and their motto that the customer is always right and comes first could be a lesson for many in the service industry to learn from.

IGA came on board in 1992 when Steinberg's closed. It started out as a regular IGA, with a small kosher department. Over the years, their excellent management had the foresight to expand that department to suit the needs of an ever-growing, observant Jewish population, not only in Cote St. Luc, but well beyond those borders. Today, their kosher department is the largest of its kind within a supermarket in the city. It is the go-to place for everything kosher, including some very hard to find items that no one else carries.

The Food Court

The food court is a story within a story. It was and has always been a place where people go to meet, schmooze, see and be seen. Four years ago, Doudou Dahan opened the Kosher Pizza Bar (Maestro). He was very successful both in the mall and with take-out and deliveries. Then came Sushi Metsuyan, owned by Ilan Posesorsky. Ilan has another fantastic surprise awaiting shoppers in the mall. He is opening a kosher deli! It is called Sorsky's (part of his last name) and will be serving all the food associated with a deli. Stay tuned for the grand opening!





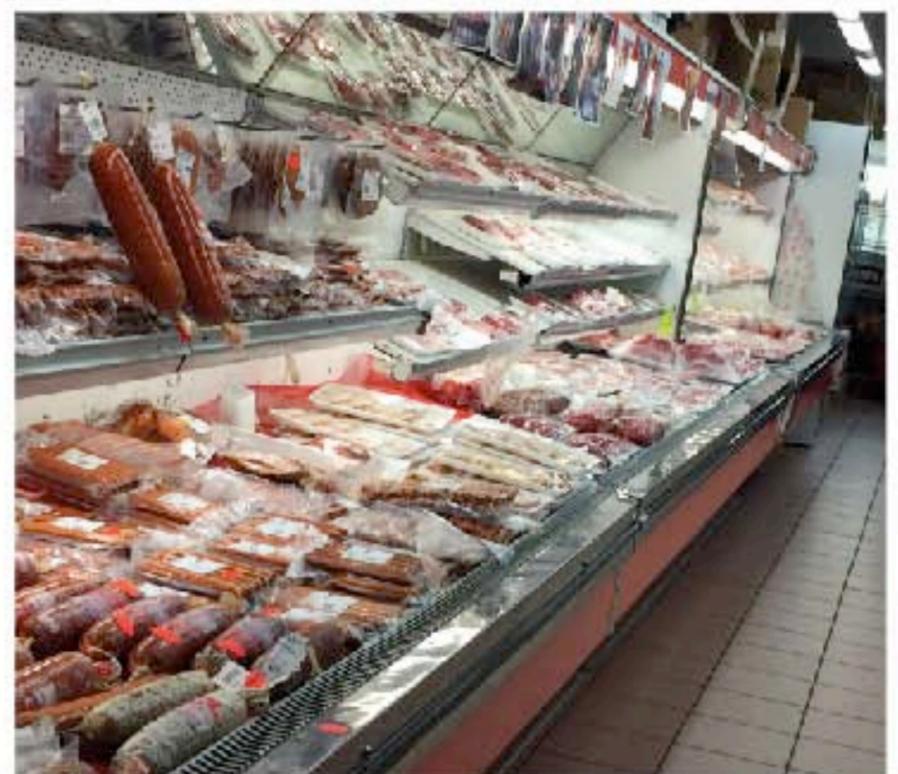
About a year ago, Doudou Dahan was carefully watching Kimly, the Chinese food restaurant and realized that many students from nearby schools were ordering food that was not kosher. He took it upon himself to change things, bought the restaurant and it is now kosher.

The Story Within A Story

Two years ago, Mikey, an observant, kind and soft-spoken man in his fifties was eating in the food court. It was a Friday, he had finished his shopping and bought a slice of pizza before going home. As he was eating, a large group of Jewish teens rolled in and began ordering from non-kosher establishments. Mikey was extremely uncomfortable watching this happen. Perhaps, he thought to himself, they just don't know about kosher.

It took a week and Mikey devised a plan. The next Friday he went back to the food court and as the teens arrived he told them the following, "If you eat kosher pizza and fries, I will pay for your lunch." It was an offer the boys and girls could not refuse. That week he fed about twenty kids. Slowly word got out and twenty turned into fifty he was buying for. One day one of the teens looked at Mikey and said, "I'm paying for my own pizza."

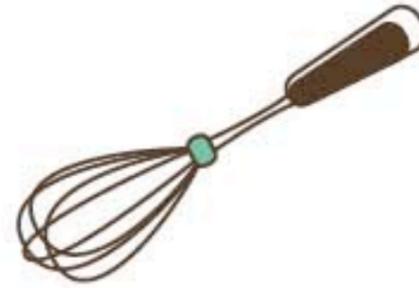
Montreal is a very unique, warm and tight Jewish community. What Mikey, Ilan, Doudou, IGA, J&R have done in the Cavendish Mall, now called Quartier Cavendish, is a tribute to each of them and to the community at large. While the physical space may not be as large as it was in 1974, sometimes in life it's not the size but the quality. Quartier Cavendish has weathered many storms and emerged as it once was, 'the' place to go in the west end for many of their resident's needs.



Holiday Recipes



Pomegranate Glazed Chicken



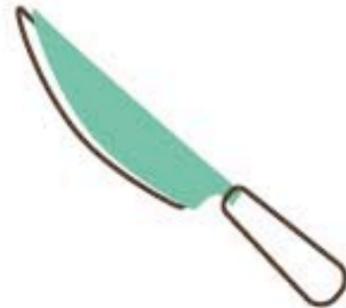
- 2 cups pomegranate juice
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary
- 3 garlic cloves, smashed
- Coarse salt and ground pepper
- 2 teaspoons red-wine vinegar
- 4 bone-in chicken breast halves

Preheat oven to 425 degrees, with rack in top third. Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil; set aside. Make glaze: In a large skillet, combine juices, rosemary, garlic, and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Boil over high heat until reduced to 1/2 cup, about 15 minutes, stirring and scraping down sides of skillet with a wooden spoon or heatproof spatula. Strain through a fine-mesh sieve into a liquid-measuring cup; stir in vinegar. Reserve cup glaze for serving.

Meanwhile, season chicken with salt and pepper. Place, skin side up, on prepared baking sheet; bake 15 minutes, then brush chicken with glaze. Continue baking, brushing with glaze every 5 minutes, until chicken is cooked through, 20 to 30 minutes. Let rest 5 minutes; drizzle with reserved glaze. Serve.

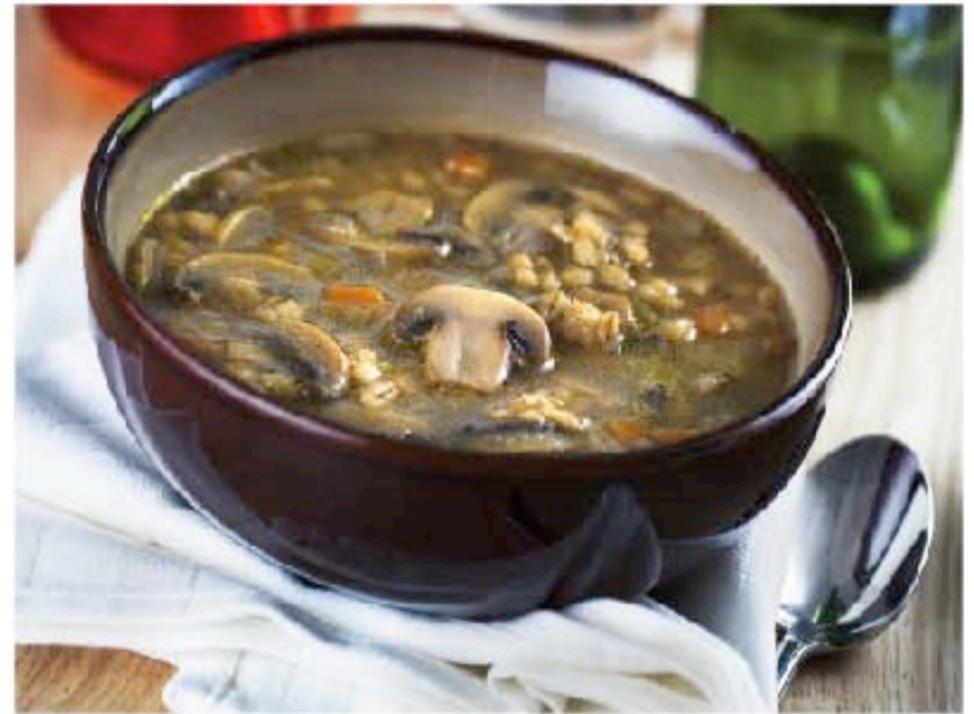
Mushroom Barley Soup

- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter or margarine
- 1 pound mushrooms, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 large carrots, chopped
- 2 large celery stalks, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup pearl barley, rinsed



- 2 tablespoons flour
- 8 cups canned vegetable broth

Melt butter in heavy large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms, carrots, celery, onion and barley. Sauté until vegetables begin to brown, about 20 minutes. Add flour to pot and stir 5 minutes. Gradually mix in broth. Bring soup to boil, stirring frequently. Reduce heat to medium and simmer until barley is tender and soup is beginning to thicken, about 40 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.



Green Olive Salad



- Green Olive Salad
- 1 lb Green Olives, pitted
- 2 stalks celery
- 1 1/2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 cup white wine vinegar
- salt to taste (start with 1/2 teaspoon and go from there)

Crush the pitted olives, and wash lightly under running water. Put them into a salad bowl, add the celery and dress with oil, abundant vinegar and salt.

To taste, you can also add a hot chili pepper cut into small pieces.



Montreal Menorah Challenge

brought to you by:  

The Montreal Menorah Challenge was a smashing success!!

It was great to have so many children from across this great island, participate in this wonderful event.

Thank You to all our generous sponsors and the schools that helped promote this event.



BH Select Kosher Food Distributors

Dried Fruits and Nuts Certified or approved by



No Hechsher Required.

*Must be checked for infestation

Dried Fruits

Apricots* - domestic Unflavored
Apricots* - Turkish
Carob* (Buxer)
Coconut Unsweetened only
Dates (whole)* (no oil)
Figs (whole) – Very difficult to check for infestation.
It is preferable not to use them.
Ginger

Nuts

Almonds raw
Cashews raw*
Pistachios raw
Sunflower seeds raw
Walnuts raw*

Reliable Hechsher Required.

*Must be checked for infestation

Dried Fruits

Apples
Banana Chips
Blueberries (wild)*
Cherries
Coconut (sweetened) toasted
Craisins
Dates (glazed)
Dates – Tunisian in retail packaging should not be used
Kiwi
Mango
Nectarines
Papaya
Peaches
Pears
Pineapple
Prunes
Sugar coated fruit

Nuts

Almonds (dry roasted)
Cashews (roasted)*
Peanuts (roasted and shelled)
Pistachios (roasted)
Sunflower Seeds (roasted)

