

PASADENA JEWISH TEMPLE & CENTER

Cooking at Home for the Synagogue When Your Kitchen Isn't Kosher?

You shall be holy unto me for I the Lord am Holy...
Leviticus 20:26

Why Keep Kosher?

Kashrut, the Jewish dietary laws, have been a fundamental expression of Jewish religion since the beginning of our people. The Conservative movement honors this tradition by ensuring that all food served in the synagogue meets established standards of *kashrut*. This article has been written to enable those congregants whose kitchens are not kosher to prepare food at home that will meet these minimum standards for certain specified synagogue functions.

כשר

If you have any questions or doubts about anything you are buying or preparing, please contact Rabbi Grater.

Some Reasons to Keep Kosher

- ➔ *Kashrut* links us to generations past as well as to all traditionally observant Jews in the world today.
- ➔ Kosher slaughter laws teach us reverence for all life through concern about the suffering of the animal.
- ➔ *Kashrut* is a *Mitzvah* (an action which our tradition tells us is desired by God). The *Mitzvot* add a religious dimension to daily life.

Kashrut is a discipline of food preparation and consumption, which transforms a basic daily activity into an affirmation of Jewish identity and values.



Permitted and Forbidden Foods

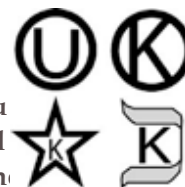
1. Kosher means proper or permitted. Its opposite is *treyf*, meaning foods forbidden for consumption. *Fleyshg* (*b'sari*) refers to foods containing meat. *Milchig* (*halavi*) refers to food containing dairy products. *Pareveh* (or Parve) refers to food containing neither milk nor meat.
2. Meat may be eaten if the animal has split hooves and chews the cud — and if the animal has been slaughtered in the kosher manner (*shehita*). Cattle, sheep, deer are included as are fowl.
3. A fish is kosher if it has scales and fins. Conservative Judaism accepts swordfish and surgeon as kosher while most Orthodox authorities do not. Shark, catfish, and

shellfish are not kosher. Also, many new varieties of fish are available in markets, so check.

4. Eggs that come from permitted fowl are *pareve* but eggs should be broken into a glass dish before being added to the food. Any eggs with blood spots should be discarded. Fish eggs (roe and caviar, for example) are kosher if the fish is kosher.
5. Conservative and Orthodox views differ on Cheese And Wine. Conservative Judaism rules all cheeses, hard and soft, kosher. (We decided that rennet, the curdling agent, is a *pareveh* chemical agent no matter where it came from.) Similarly, all commercially produced wines, beers, and liquor are kosher.
6. Fruits and Vegetables are Kosher and *pareveh*.
7. In the European tradition, *Kashrut*-observing Jews maintain a separation of milk and meat by waiting a minimum of three hours after eating meat before they eat milk products. Therefore, it is important to let people know if milk or meat products are being served, particularly in evening functions such as *Ongei Shabbat* when many people may have eaten a meat dinner before services.

How Do I Know if it's Kosher?

1. The best way is to look for an accepted *hekhsher* (Kosher symbol).
2. If you have a clear choice between a product with a *hekhsher* and one without (for instance, two brands of canned tuna fish or salmon) you should choose the one with the *hekhsher*. This ensures the *kashrut* and rewards the manufacturer who has indicated an interest in serving the kosher market. In addition, kosher wines are more appropriate for religious occasions.
3. In the absence of a kosher symbol, check the label to see if the product contains any meat or meat derivatives (lard, chicken stock). If so, it is not kosher.
 - ➔ Baked goods should indicate "vegetable shortening." Be careful as many pie crusts, cookies, and tortillas contain lard (pig fat) or tallow (beef fat).
 - ➔ Items such as creamers and margarine listed as "non-dairy" often contain the emulsifier sodium caseinate, which is a milk product. The letter "P" next to a kosher symbol means Passover. The word "*pareveh*" is always spelled out.
 - ➔ Gelatin and rennet are kosher and *pareveh*.



Cooking for Synagogue Events

To use any PJTC facility, a requisition form must be submitted and approved by the office manager. This includes kitchens and activity spaces. Serving dishes and cooking utensils may not be moved between kitchens.

1. The Main Kitchen may be used for both dairy and meat functions. Dairy and meat equipment is kept in separate locked storage areas. Meat and dairy meal preparation may not take place at the same time. Working surfaces are covered when meat meals are being prepared or served. Please use only those areas and utensils made available for your use by the temple staff.

2. Food preparation in the Main Kitchen and food service in the Social Hall is limited to food either prepared on site in the Main Kitchen or provided by a kosher caterer approved by the Rabbi.
3. Certain events in the Social Hall such as *Ongei Shabbat* where home-baked goods are served (as set forth in Draft K) should use the "Oneg Trays and Serving Pieces" set aside for this purpose.
4. The Wohlmann Hall Kitchen is for dairy foods only.

Now We're Ready to Cook!

Instructions for Cooking

One of the main prohibitions on Shabbat involves not using fire, which is directly related to cooking. As such, the following rules apply to cooking:



- ➔ There is to be no cooking on Shabbat that involves preparing food from scratch.
- ➔ Warming food is permitted provided that it is three-quarters of the way cooked and that one of the caretakers turns the ovens on.
- ➔ Wohlmann Kitchen is strictly dairy and should never be used for meat meals. Wohlmann Kitchen will be locked during meat meals taking place on the Katz Terrace.

Utensils

For the food to be kosher, it must be prepared with kosher utensils. Ideally you should have special utensils that are used exclusively for "kosher cooking," and have been stored and cleaned separately (like Passover dishes). If not, we recommend disposable aluminum pans for baking/cooking, or utensils lined with aluminum foil and glass bowls used for mixing. Metal spoons, beaters, bowls, etc., should be run through a dishwasher set at high temperature before use.

- ➔ Only dairy dishes may be brought to the synagogue.
- ➔ Home cooked items should be covered during cooking and storage and brought to the synagogue in wrapped containers.
- ➔ All food should have an attached note identifying the item and donor and indicating (a) where the item was purchased, or (b) a statement that the item was prepared in accordance with PJTC's *kashrut* guidelines.
- ➔ Home cooked foods should be served from the original containers using utensils brought in for that use. Food containers and serving implements should be either disposed of or taken home to be washed.

Ritual Items

When someone is sponsoring a Kiddush or Oneg, they need to make sure the following items are prepared and put out before the end of services:

1. Kiddush cup and little cups with wine and juice.

2. Challah and washing station for *motzi*, including water, a towel, and a knife.
3. Schnapps (Saturday morning only).

PJTC has a dual challenge in regard to *kashrut*. We want to preserve the tradition and pass it on in good condition to the next generation. But we also want to open the door for maximum participation by our members in the activities of our temple. We have therefore developed these guidelines to help you and us accomplish this.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation and your help in maintaining the role of the Pasadena Jewish Temple and Center as the repository of Jewish values and practices for the Jewish community of Pasadena and its neighboring cities.

The purpose of this guide is to implement "Draft K," the official kashrut policy of the Pasadena Jewish Temple & Center.

For Your Information

The Jew & The Carrot

Launched in November, 2006, [The Jew & The Carrot](#) is the epicenter of Jews, food, and sustainability on the web. It brings together 3,000 years of Jewish thought and food tradition with contemporary issues like sustainability, organic eating, nutrition, food politics, and healthy, delicious cooking.

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