

## It's Hamantaschen Time!



The triangular-shaped cookies are a delicious tradition at Purim, the joyous holiday that celebrates the triumph of fifth century Persian Jews over Haman, the evil minister who plotted to have them killed on a day to be decided by the casting of lots. (The word “Purim” means “lots.”) Purim is celebrated on the 14th day of the Hebrew month of Adar, which this year falls on March 20.

Several theories exist about the origin of the cookie's name. One is that they originally were called “mon-taschen,” which is Yiddish for “poppyseed pockets” — poppyseed being the traditional filling. The most commonly accepted theory, however, ties the name to Haman — the villain of the Purim story — who supposedly wore a three-cornered hat. Whether called mon-taschen, Haman's pockets or Haman's ears, they're delicious, and we're happy to offer the following recipes submitted by members of our Temple staff. (Learn the stories behind these recipes by visiting the Temple website: [www.emanuelnyc.org](http://www.emanuelnyc.org). Click “Worship” → “Holy Days & Festival” → “Celebrate Purim!” → “Purim: Hamantaschen Recipes.”)

### TRADITIONAL HAMANTASCHEN

*A family recipe, passed along by Rachel Brumberg, assistant director of lifelong learning, with a little help from her friends...*

#### For the Dough:

- 3 cups flour
  - 1 cup sugar
  - 2 teaspoons baking powder
  - ¼ teaspoon salt
  - 1 cup margarine
  - 2 eggs
  - ¼ to ½ cup orange juice
1. Put half of the dry ingredients in the bowl of a food processor. Pulse on and off to mix thoroughly.
  2. Add 1 stick margarine (cut up) and process until the consistency of oatmeal.
  3. Add 1 egg and quickly process until blended.

4. With cover on, add small amount of orange juice through food tube; process until it forms a mass. (Juice should be added slowly.)
5. Turn out on the floured surface; form into a ball and wrap with plastic wrap. Chill thoroughly or freeze until ready to use. The dough keeps well in the freezer.
6. Repeat with remaining ingredients.

### **Apricot Filling (courtesy of Leora Isaacs):**

- ½ pound dried apricots
  - ¼ cup apricot nectar
  - Grated peel of 1 lemon
  - 1 teaspoon lemon juice
  - ¼ cup finely chopped walnuts
1. In a small saucepan, combine apricots, apricot nectar, lemon peel and juice.
  2. Cook 20 minutes, until apricots are tender; this may require adding additional nectar as it boils down.
  3. Remove from heat and let cool.
  4. Process in food processor until pureed; add nuts and process until blended.
  5. Makes filling for two dozen cookies; can be completed several days in advance.

### **Other Filling Suggestions:**

It is fun to experiment with different ingredients to fill the hamantaschen. Besides the apricot filling, my favorite is raspberry jam together with dark chocolate chips. If you are going to use jam, make sure that it is a thick jam so that it doesn't ooze out of the cookie while baking. Feel free to be creative with your own fillings!

### **To Make the Hamantaschen:**

1. Roll out a quarter of the dough on a well-floured surface. (You can tape wax paper to a table or counter for easy cleanup.) The rolling pin should be well floured, too. Add flour to dough if too sticky.
2. When the dough is about 1/8-inch thick (maybe even slightly thinner; if it's too thick, the dough will rise while baking and become cake-like), you're ready to start making the cookies.
3. The secret to making the triangle shape of hamantaschen is to start with a circle. The circles traditionally are cut from the dough by using round drinking glasses; today you certainly can buy a circle cookie cutter (but I think that's less fun). My mother also would make mini-hamantaschen by using a small, shot-sized glass to cut out small disks.
4. Once you have the circles cut, place a dollop of filling in the middle of the dough. Warning: Although it's tempting to try to overstuff a hamantaschen, please refrain. Adding too much filling will lead to less than great results when baking; the filling can ooze out, or the sides can fall down, and you almost certainly will wind up with an open, round cookie with filling melted on top.
5. Here's the tricky part: Lift/fold up three sides of the dough circle and pinch the three corners so that you

create a triangle with the filling secure in the center. Make sure that the corners are stuck together tightly and that the three sides become walls around (and even slightly covering) the filling. You want to do this so that, as stated in the above warning, when you bake the cookie it does not fall apart, open up or ooze out.

6. Place filled triangle cookies on a greased cookie sheet.
  7. When there is no longer enough rolled dough left to cut out more circles, ball up the scraps and start again.
  8. Bake hamantaschen in a preheated oven at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 15 to 18 minutes, or until cookies turn golden-brown and are firm to the touch.
  9. Let cookies cool on racks.
  10. Repeat with rest of dough or until fillings run out.
  11. Enjoy!
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## **AREJAS DE HAMAN (Sephardic-style Fried "Haman's Ears" Cookies)**

*From Estelle Hendrickson, former assistant to our rabbis...*

- 3 eggs
  - ½ teaspoon salt
  - 2 tablespoons sugar
  - 4 tablespoons water
  - 2¼ cups flour
  - Oil for deep frying
  - Cinnamon sugar
  - Honey, lemon juice, water (for dipping syrup)
1. Beat the eggs until light and fluffy.
  2. Add salt, sugar and water to eggs; beat well.
  3. Sift in flour to make the dough. Knead until smooth.
  4. Roll the dough on a lightly floured board.
  5. Cut into half-moon shapes with a pastry cutter.
  6. Pinch the center of each half-moon, like a bow tie, and fold the ends up to make "ears."
  7. Deep fry in hot oil until golden brown.
  8. Cool on paper towels and sprinkle with cinnamon sugar.
  9. For dipping syrup: Combine equal parts honey, lemon juice and water (or adjust to taste) in a sauce pan and bring to a boil.



**EMANU-EL EATS is a labor of love undertaken by a dedicated group of Temple members and staff.**

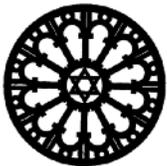
**Food always has been an important part of Jewish life and culture, nourishing the soul as well as the body. In recognition of this and of the diversity that is the Emanu-El community today, work has begun on a cookbook that will pay tribute to the comforting foods of our varied past traditions and the excitement of modern Jewish cooking. We hope that as many of you as possible will volunteer to share favorite recipes, be recipe testers and contribute in other ways as this exciting project evolves. We will keep you apprised of developments in the monthly Bulletin and on the Temple website ([www.emanuelnyc.org](http://www.emanuelnyc.org)).**

**Mail your favorite family and original recipes to:  
Emanu-El Eats  
c/o Temple Emanu-El  
One East 65th Street  
NY, NY 10065**

**Or, complete our online form. Click "Community" → "Emanu-El Eats."**

**Please include your name, contact information, and a brief explanation of how you devised or came to the recipe and why it is special to you. If it is based on a recipe you found in a cookbook or magazine but you have tinkered with it to make it your own, then please include the original source of the recipe, and tell us how you've changed it.**

**We look forward to hearing from you!**



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