

Hanukkah Blessings

Candles are added to the *hanukkiyah* (menorah) from right to left but are kindled from left to right. The newest candle is lit first. (On the Shabbat of Hanukkah, kindle the Hanukkah lights first and then the Shabbat candles.)

Light the *shamash* (the helper candle) first, using it to kindle the rest of the Hanukkah lights. As you do, say or sing:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל חֲנֻכָּה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tsivanu l'hadlik ner shel Hanukkah.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to kindle the Hanukkah lights.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים
לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בְּזִמַּן הַזֶּה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, she-asah nisim laavoteinu v'imoteinu bayamim hahaeim baz'man hazeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who performed wondrous deeds for our ancestors in days of old at this season.

For first night only:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיָּנוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ
וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לַזִּמַּן הַזֶּה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higianu laz'man hazeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, for giving us life, for sustaining us, and for enabling us to reach this season.

Hanerot Halalu

We kindle these lights because of the wondrous deliverance You performed for our ancestors. During these eight days of Hanukkah, these lights are sacred; we are not to use them but only to behold them, so that their glow may rouse us to give thanks for Your wondrous acts of deliverance.



Latkes

A Traditional Chanukah Treat

Latkes are potato pancakes fried in oil. The oil is a reminder of the legend that a little oil lasted eight days

What You Will Need:

- 4 cups peeled, grated potatoes
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 eggs
- pepper to taste
- 2 teaspoons chopped chives (optional)

Wash, peel, and grate the potatoes. Squeeze out liquid. Combine with onion, salt, flour, and pepper (and chives). Lightly beat the egg, and stir into the mixture.

Heat the oil in a skillet, and spoon in tablespoons of the mixture to make medium sized patties. Brown on one side, turn and brown lightly on the other. Repeat with the rest of the mixture.

Serve with applesauce, cottage cheese, yogurt, or sour cream.



A Holiday Recipe For Your Family to Enjoy

Sufganiyot (Jelly Donuts)

- 1 Package of Refrigerator Biscuit Dough
- Oil for frying
- Confectioners Sugar
- Your favorite Jelly

Take biscuits apart, using a small round disc; create a hole in the center of each biscuit.

Put a small amount of oil on the bottom of an electric fry pan or in a sauté pan on your cook top. Fry the dough for 1 minute and turn over. The dough will puff up almost immediately. They cook very quickly. Drain on paper towels and spread with your favorite jelly or dust with confectioner's sugar.

Yields 10 servings

**Chanukah Book Suggestions
Your Whole Family Will Enjoy**

***The Hanukkah Guest By Eric Kimmel**

***Latkes and Applesauce: A Hanukkah Story By Fran Manushkin**

***Potato Pancakes All Around: A Hanukkah Tale By Marilyn Hirsh**

***Herschel and the Hanukkah Goblins By Eric Kimmel**

Christmas Menorah's: How A Town Fought Hate By Janice Cohn

Judah Who Always Said No! By Harriet Feder

Hanukkah: Who? What? When? Why? By Sol Scharfstein

The Trees of the Dancing Goats By Patricia Polacco

Child's Chanukah Festival By Charles Mikolayck

Eights Nights: Chanukah Counting Book By Jane Bearman

Fun: Learning About Chanukah By James Sanders

Hanukkah By Jane Behrens

Hanukkah Cat By Chaya Bernstein

Hanukkah of Great Uncle Otto By Ron Levoy

Hanukkiyah for Dina By Floreva Cohen

Heroes of Hanukkah By Donald Liberman

I Love Hanukkah By Marilyn Hirsh

Nathan's Hanukkah Bargain By Jacqueline Greene

Power of Light: 8 Stories for Hanukkah By Issac Bashevis Singer

A Picture Book of Hanukkah By David Adler

***Light Another Candle By Miriam Chaikin**

Laughing Latkes By M.B. Goffstein

Hanukkah Mice By Ronnie Randall

One Night, One Hanukkah Night By Aidel Backman

Where is My Dreidel By Betty Schwartz

Eight Tales – Eight Nights By Peninah Schram

Hanukkah By Miriam Nerlove

All About Hanukkah By Joyce Groner

Grandma's Latkes By M. Drucker

***A Hanukkah Treasury By Eric Kimmel**

What do you do on a Jewish Holiday By Sol Scharfstein

Celebrate Hanukkah By Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith

Chanukah A-Z By S.S. Sidi

Story of Hanukka By Norma Simon

Arielle and the Hanukkah Surprise By Devia Spesegen

***Book of Miracles By R. Lawrence Kushner**

A Virtual Hanukkah Travelogue

BY CANTOR LAUREN PHILLIPS

[Discuss on ReformJudaism.org](#)

As the chill of winter sets in, it's fun to fantasize about visiting warm climates and exotic destinations. In many parts of North America, we dream of a white [Hanukkah](#) (or we wish for the opposite). Other Jewish communities, Australia, for example, celebrate the Festival of Lights in the heat of summer or, as in Alaska, in constant darkness.

Here are eight countries around the world — some warm and some cold — that offer unique traditions that you and your family can use to spice up your Hanukkah celebrations.

1. **Cuba:** In their cooking, Cubans use plantains in much the same way we use potatoes: mashing them, baking them, and frying them. It should not come as a surprise that Cuban Jews make fried plantains, otherwise known as *tostones* or *patacones*, for their Hanukkah celebrations. Here's a [plantain recipe you can try at home](#).

2. **Syria:** The Jews of Aleppo were descendants of Sephardic Jews expelled from Spain in 1492. When they finally found a safe haven in Syria, they vowed to light an additional *shamash* (helper candle) on Hanukkah as a sign of thanks. Today's Syria is a much different country. This Hanukkah, consider adopting the Syrian Jewish tradition of lighting an additional *shamash* in solidarity with the refugees who are fleeing Syria in droves in search of shelter and peace.

3. **France:** In the wine-making region of Avignon in the south of France, it is customary to end the Shabbat that falls during Hanukkah by opening a new bottle or cask of wine. After *Havdalah*, Jews would travel around the neighborhood to various homes, tasting the wines and toasting the holiday. This is a fantastic way to build community and to celebrate the holiday with family and friends.

4. **Mexico:** In Spanish, Hanukkah is known as *Januca* or *Lucenarias* — the feast of lights. Mexican children play a game called *toma todo* (winner takes all), which is similar to the version of dreidel that we play except the top has six sides instead of four. The *toma toda* dreidel is known as a *pirinola*. For a true multi-cultural experience, Mexican Jews often break a dreidel-shaped piñata filled with Hanukkah trinkets and treats.

5. **Italy:** On Tishah B'Av, we read the Book of Lamentations, often in complete darkness. There is an Italian custom of saving the candle that was used to help us read on Tishah B'Av to help us light the menorah during Hanukkah. On Tishah B'Av, we mourn the destruction of the Holy Temple. On Hanukkah, we celebrate its rededication. Using the same candle for both occasions

connects the two events. On Tishah B'Av we are sad, but on Hanukkah we rejoice as we rekindle this same light as the *shamash* for our festival of freedom.

6. **Kurdistan:** Although Jews no longer live in Kurdistan, many Kurdish Jews still observe two unusual Hanukkah customs. The first is similar to the giving of Hanukkah *gelt*, but with a twist: a week before the holiday, children lock the doors to their rooms. Their parents must give them coins in order to gain entry. The second custom was developed by Jews too poor to afford a *hanukkiah* (Hanukkah menorah). They used eggshells as cups for wicks and oil, lighting the required number of cracked shells every night. Be creative and find other ways to repurpose everyday objects as a sign of light and hope on Hanukkah!

7. **Morocco:** Jews in Morocco extended the joy of Hanukkah into a ninth day, which became known as "the day of the *shamash* ." On that day, children would go from house to house, collecting leftover Hanukkah candles. Then, they would make a giant bonfire, dancing and singing around it, and jumping and leaping over it. It was believed that jumping over the fire could bring good luck. Single women would jump over the fire in the hopes of getting married. Married women struggling to conceive would jump over the fire in the hopes of being blessed with a child. (As an aside: another fun way to repurpose extra Hanukkah candles is to soak three candles in hot water. Then twist the softened wax together for an instant miniature *Havdalah* candle!)

8. **Tunisia:** The seventh day of Hanukkah coincides with *Rosh Chodesh Tevet* — the beginning of the Hebrew month of Tevet — which has become a holiday within a holiday for Tunisian Jews. Known as *Chag haBanot* (Festival of the Daughters), girls and women celebrate the courageous act of Yehudit, the Jewish woman who saved the Jewish nation by killing the general sent by Antiochus, the evil ruler of the Syrian-Greek Empire. In celebration of the day, women would do no work, visit one another, and eat doughnuts and honey cookies. The holiday was particularly special for young women engaged to be married in the coming year.

Wishing you a Hanukkah that is filled with love, light, and the celebration of your own unique family customs!

A version of this article originally appeared in Sinai News, the newsletter of Congregation Sinai, Milwaukee, WI.

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The Maccabeats - Hamilton Chanukah

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3UubcYj49k>

You may already have this...

<https://reformjudaism.org/11-great-modern-hanukkah-songs>

My FAVORITE Chanukah book of all time--I think you would love it!

https://www.amazon.com/Latke-Who-Couldnt-Stop-Screaming/dp/1932416870/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1511889320&sr=8-1&keywords=the+latke+who+couldn%27t+stop+screaming+by+lemony+snicket

There are eight ways to celebrate listed below. Feel free to mix and match and choose. Imbedded in them are links to music, to stories, to recipes, to children's books and to articles.

- 1. Set up a table near a window (preferably facing the street.)** Cover it with aluminum foil. Set up as many Hanukkiyot (Hanukkah menorahs) as you can find (the ones your kids made in the ECP?) Every one can light a Hanukkiyah. Click here for the blessings. Jewish tradition counsels not to work while the candles are burning. Sing a song together. Eat. Read a book. Play a game. Bask in the glow of candlelight.
- 2. Hanukkah celebrates miracles.** The story of the oil is a beautiful legend, but it still contains the stuff of miracles. How incredible to hope, when you think you don't even have enough to start! "That's the Jewish answer to a world that feels dark. Go ahead and light." One of the most incredible miracles of the physical universe is the transformation of matter into energy. Watch the miracle as the candles burn. What other miracles in your life are happening practically in front of your eyes that you don't notice?
- 3. Have fun.** If you have little ones at home, march around the house like Maccabees. Turn and melt and jump little candles (sung to 10 Little Indians.) Play dreidel.
- 4. Take a "soulfie."** Rabbi Naomi Levy writes, "We've grown accustomed to taking selfies to help us remember special moments in our lives – but it doesn't capture the self at all. It doesn't take in our interior world – our minds, our souls, our longings, our feelings, our prayers. A selfie is all surface. A selfie, in which we're always disproportionately large and the background vista looks like a tiny speck, it also a distortion of reality." Hanukkah is a perfect time to take a soulfie, she advises. Connect to the light within.
- 5. Desserts!** Sufganiyot (jelly donuts), stained-glass cookies, Hanukkah butter cookies. There are real recipes and short-cuts. I (Shira, not a cook) use beignet mix for sufganiyot – sprinkle with confectioners sugar and dip into raspberry jam.
- 6. Tell stories.** Attached are some of our favorites. Or tell stories of Hanukkah moments you remember – or of miracles in your life.
- 7. The historical story of Hanukkah** is about conflict, civil war, assimilation and zealotry. Read a summary of this all-too-real story. www.nytimes.com/2009/12/11/opinion/11brooks.html. One conceptual differences between Judaism and Christianity: hmsi.info/their-story-is-not-ours-an-article-by-rabbi-harold-m-schulweis-from-reform. In 2016, Kol Ami put the Maccabees on trial for religious fanaticism and murder. Read the closing arguments of the prosecution and the defense here. What lessons do these stories from history hold for you about our Jewish world today?
- 8. Bring light into someone's life.** Cook for the homeless at Kol Ami. Help celebrate birthdays at the Coachman Family Center. Pick up a bag of food from the Atrium and bring it to someone who needs. Light candles by video (Skype, FaceTime, WhatsApp) with someone who is far away or homebound.

lilith.org/articles/8-lessons-for-hanukkah-useful-all-year/

A great article for families on Hanukkah and giving tzedakah.