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Introduction:

For many, the Rosh HaShanah Seder is a new idea and a new way to start the New Year. However, the origins of this custom date back to the days of the Talmud, where it is suggested that we eat symbolic foods at the Rosh HaShanah meal, accompanied by blessings and wishes for the upcoming year. These foods are consumed in a particular order – a *Seder*.

The Rosh HaShanah Seder consists of delicious foods, puns based on the food's name, reflections on the year that has passed, and our hopes and dreams for the year to come.

For many of us, Erev Rosh HaShanah has become a time to gather around the dinner table and sharing a festive meal. Especially during this time of pandemic and isolation, we hope that the Rosh Hashanah Seder will add a meaningful introduction to your Rosh HaShanah feast with a sense of holiness, poignancy, and humour.

Format

The Rosh HaShanah Seder will last about 45 minutes, concluding before the full meal is served. Set your festive table, including Candles, a Kiddush Cup, and wine/grape juice. Set up your computer, tablet or phone on the table so all present can see and hear the online Seder, or, if possible, stream to a larger screen television. All the blessings and texts will be visible on the screen. Make sure the sound is turned up – we have songs and videos!

Foods to Prepare for your Rosh HaShanah Seder Plate

Like the Passover Seder, we will have a Rosh Hashanah Seder Plate featuring all of the *simanim* – the symbolic foods. These symbolic foods harken back to the Sephardic communities of Spain, North Africa, India and the Middle East and there is a lot of room for

creativity. **Here is a list of the foods you should purchase and prepare for your Rosh HaShanah Seder Plate:**

- 1) **Bread** – preferably a round Challah as is traditional for the High Holy Days.
- 2) **Dates** – whole dates, stuffed dates (often with an almond), date syrup/honey (great for dipping your Challah) or any date pastries or products.
- 3) **Pomegranate** – preferably a whole pomegranate to be cut open at the Seder.
- 4) **Apples & Honey** – Ashkenazim generally dip apple slices in honey. Sephardim will often make a stewed or baked apple with sugar or honey or bake an apple cake. All sweet and delicious!
- 5) **Beans** – Long beans or green beans are common, but any type of bean or legume will work. Use raw or prepare as desired.
- 6) **Gourd or Pumpkin** – Certainly seasonal here in Ontario; gourds are a beautiful and colourful way to adorn your Rosh HaShanah table. Prepare as desired as a side dish or even a pumpkin pie!
- 7) **Beets** – Also seasonal – prepare as desired: fresh, pickled, or roasted with other root vegetables.
- 8) **Leeks or Scallions** – fresh, roasted or in a salad or side dish (Pro tip: combine the above three, pumpkin, beets and leeks, and roast together. Serve hot or cold.).
- 9) **And finally, a head!** – Traditionally the head of a ram or a fish head were served on the Rosh HaShanah Seder table. A whole fish is a great main course option. Alternatively, as vegetarian options, use a whole head of lettuce or a cooked head of cabbage as a side dish. Always popular with our younger guests and adults is a bowl of gummy (Swedish) fish candies.

That's it! All will be explained during the Seder. If, in preparation, you wish to learn more about [the Rosh HaShanah Seder click here](#). And [click here for some wonderful Rosh HaShanah Seder recipes](#).

We look forward to sharing the Rosh HaShanah Seder together. If you have not already, [please register in advance by clicking here](#).

We wish you a *shana tova u'm'tukah* – a happy, healthy and sweet New Year.