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Stories of Bread and Chocolate

The next time you pick up a piece of chocolate or bread, consider that you are partaking in an aspect of global history. Rabbi Prinz speaks at libraries, museums, religious organizations, food events, and book clubs, based on her books, [*On the Chocolate Trail*](#) and [*On the Bread Trail*](#).

Topics for exploring stories about chocolate include:

1. *What Did Alexander Hamilton Drink? Colonial Chocolate Trade:* In colonial North America, chocolate interests were uncovered in the holds of ships, in shops, and in the homes of our country's founders. Merchants dipped deeply into the chocolate culture of their time. (uses slides)
2. *What is the Best Chocolate? Values Mix into our Chocolate Eating:* Faced with a mélange of options when selecting our chocolate, chocolate lovers might be informed by contemporary food values. This interactive session explores the complexities of measuring these food values against our chocolate choices and consumption. (uses slides, discussion, and handout)
3. *Faith Diffuses Chocolate Around the World:* This talk explores religious narratives and rituals related to chocolate. It unwraps tantalizing information about how faith groups contributed to the spread chocolate around the world. It combines age-old passions for chocolate and religion while exploring delightful new themes. (uses slides)
4. *Chocolate Revives World War II Soldiers & Refugees:* Chocolate provided succor and support for immigrants and refugees. It contributed to survival and renewal in strong contrast to the deprivations of that time. (uses slides)
5. *December Holiday Chocolate Coins Melt Together:* This presentation demonstrates how Chanukah and Christmas chocolate melt together by unraveling some celebratory themes of these December holidays. (uses slides)
6. *Chocolate Smooths Transitions:* An opportunity to learn how chocolate encouraged resilience through the centuries. Chocolate diminishes stress. (uses slides)

Topics for exploring stories about breads based on [*On the Bread Trail*](#) include:

1. *Breaking Jewish Breads: More Than Challah*: Explore the diversity of Jewish communities through celebratory breads. These fancifully shaped breads express Jewish hopes and ideals through the seasons of the year. (uses slides and handout)
2. *The Polemics of Leaven: Why Matzah?* Text study about the potent meanings of yeast since biblical times especially as it informs religious uses of breads. (uses handout)
3. *What's the Significance/Meaning of a Braided Bread? Braiding Breads In Faith Traditions* For many Jews a braided, fluffy challah epitomizes the Sabbath. Learn the real story about how and when braided, fluffy breads come into being. (uses slides and handout)
5. *Enhancing Body and Spirit Through Bread*: Consider how the ideals for a better world might be braided into our loaves. Breads feed an appetite for spiritual wellbeing, as well as for physical nutrition. Glean ideas for baking and eating breads that reflect aspirations for blessing, nutrition, and a just society. (uses slides and handout)
6. *Whose Babka Is That?* Reflect on the backstory of babka, including the 1994 episode of the TV show, *Seinfeld*, where Jerry griped, "That was our babka!" Babka generates arguments about heritage, ingredients, quality, and the 'existential' question: whose babka is it anyway? (uses slides)