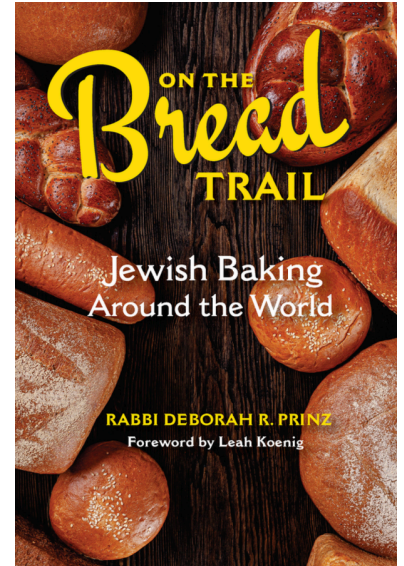


Chocolate & Bread: Jewish History, Values, and Culture

Rabbi Deborah Prinz

Rabbi Prinz speaks by zoom and in-person for scholar-in-residence weekends, adult learning programs, auxiliaries, fund raisers, donor programs, and food festivals. The next time you pick up a piece of chocolate or bread, consider that you are partaking in aspects of our Jewish heritage.

Order Now! *On the Bread Trail: Jewish Baking Around the World* (CCAR Press) takes readers on a captivating journey to uncover the deep historical, cultural, and spiritual connections embedded in a wide menu of Jewish breads. In this sequel to *On the Chocolate Trail*, Rabbi Deborah R. Prinz explores the values that inform Jewish baking, the cherished seasonal and holiday breads that adorn our tables, and the everyday breads that accompany us throughout our lives. *On the Bread Trail* feeds our souls with global recipes, historical insights, and delicious inspiration. From babka to *berches*, challah to *lachuch*, this book is a celebration of heritage, resilience, and the stories that emerge from Jewish kitchens around the world. The book includes a discussion guide.



Available! *On the Chocolate Trail* (2nd Edition, Jewish Lights Publishing) unwraps surprising Jewish connections with chocolate, including Jews in the trade, retail, and production of chocolate since it was first introduced to Europeans. A delectable journey and gastronomic adventure, the book features 25 historical and contemporary recipes.

Available! *The Boston Chocolate Party*, a picture book co-authored with award-winning children's book writer, Tami Lehman-Wilzig. With historic irony, the Boston Tea Party of December 16, 1773, coincided with the last night of Hanukkah. In *The Boston Chocolate Party*, a narrative of redemption and celebration, readers learn about the parallel stories of freedom sought by the American colonists and by the Maccabees.

Traveling Museum Exhibit: "Semi[te] Sweet: On Jews and Chocolate," was mounted at Temple Emanu-El, NYC and based on the book, *On the Chocolate Trail*. Co-curated by Rabbi Prinz, it was featured in the *New York Times*. Now available to travel, it does not require humidity control or security. *On the Chocolate Trail* also formed the basis for "Sweet Treat! Chocolate and the Making of American Jews," an exhibit at Central Synagogue (NYC) displayed from November 10, 2023-February 9, 2024.

Adult Learning Topics: *On the Bread Trail*

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 our Passover use of matzah. We will reassess the biblical text to discover that the dough did rise. (uses handout)

3. *Instead of Wedding Cake, Try Bread:* Discover Jewish customs for celebrating nuptials with breads that took root in places such as Baghdad, Eastern Europe, Ethiopia, Georgia, Greece, Kurdistan, Morocco, and Turkey. (uses slides)

4. *Untangling Shabbat Challah:* Although for many Jews a braided, fluffy challah epitomizes the Sabbath, other breads appeared on Shabbat tables in global Jewish communities. Learn the real story about how and when braided, fluffy challah come into being. (uses slides and handout)

5. *Enhancing Body and Spirit Through Bread:* Consider how the Jewish ideals for a better world might be braided into our loaves. Jewish breads feed an appetite for spiritual wellbeing, as well as for physical nutrition. Glean ideas for baking and eating breads that reflect Jewish 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)



Adult Learning Topics: *On the Chocolate Trail*

1. *Jews on the Chocolate Trail:* Explore the surprising Jewish historical connections to chocolate in this gastronomic adventure. (uses slides)

2. *Jewish Chocolate Parties: From Generation to Generation:* Early American Sephardi Jews contributed to chocolate parties in the founding of the U.S. (uses slides)

3. *Jewish Resilience through Chocolate:* An opportunity to learn how chocolate nurtured Jews facing upheaval in earlier generations. Chocolate smoothes things over in times of stress. (uses slides and handout).

4. *What is the Best Chocolate? Jewish Ethics Mix into our Chocolate Eating:* Faced with a mélange of options when selecting our chocolate, chocolate lovers might be informed by our Jewish values. We will

review the complexities of measuring our food values against our chocolate choices and consumption. (uses slides and handout)

5. *Questions Rabbis Ask About Chocolate – Text Study*: Finding relevance to our modern lives in the study of our Jewish texts, we will look at *she'elot u'teshuvot* (questions and answers) from the responsa literature about chocolate. Bring your own questions as well as your passions for text learning and for chocolate. (uses handout)

6. *Chanukah and Christmas Chocolate Melt into Gelt*: This presentation speculates about how Chanukah and Christmas chocolate melt into gelt by unraveling some celebratory themes of these December holidays. (uses slides)

7. *A Haggadah for a Socially Responsible Chocolate Seder*: This experience mixes the Haggadah with chocolate ritual foods to discuss social justice issues, worker justice, and food justice. (uses slides, copies of *A Haggadah for a Socially Responsible Chocolate Seder*, and chocolate ritual foods)

Family Learning Options:

1. *The Boston Chocolate Party (with slides and activities)*
2. *What is the Best Chocolate? (with slides and activities)*

Further Resources For On The Chocolate Trail

Free downloads/bonus materials at rabbideborahprinz.org:

- Book Club Discussion Guide
- Lesson Plans for use in Jewish schools
- *A Haggadah for a Socially Responsible Chocolate Seder*

Bread Accompaniments:

- Babka bake-off, tasting, or babkathon
- Jewish breads bake-off
- Shape creative breads inspired by seasonal Jewish bread baking
- Tasting of breads baked from recipes in *On the Bread Trail*.

Chocolate Accompaniments:

Everyone loves to taste chocolate in connection with *On the Chocolate Trail*. Organizations and synagogues have offered fun, interactive events such as these:

- Tastings from the 25 historical and contemporary recipes in *On the Chocolate Trail*
- Seder using *A Haggadah for a Socially Responsible Chocolate Seder*
- Chocolate tasting--provided by local vendors or chocolates that reflect Jewish values



- Chocolate bake-off
- Multi-course chocolate themed Shabbat dinner
- Chocolate Oneg or Kiddush
- Mini-chocolate festival
- Chocolate making
- Chocolate and wine tasting



Brief Bio for Rabbi Prinz

Rabbi Prinz has held a number of leadership positions in the national and regional Reform movement, having served the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) as Director of Program and Member Services and the Director of the Joint Commission on Rabbinic Mentoring. She has mentored rabbinical students through the Mayerson program at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) and was also a Senior Fellow at HUC-JIR's Center for the Study of Ethics and Contemporary Moral Problems (2015-2016). She has

consulted for HUC-JIR, the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), and other organizations. Elected by her colleagues, Rabbi Prinz held each office of the Board of the Pacific Association of Reform Rabbis including the presidency. She was honored to conduct the worship services at regional and national biennials of the URJ. She served as a founding Co-Coordinator of the Women's Rabbinic Network.

The Rabbi Emerita of Temple Adat Shalom, San Diego County, California, she held the position of Senior Rabbi for almost twenty years. Prior to that she was, for seven years, the Rabbi of a synagogue in Bergen County, New Jersey, and also the Assistant Rabbi of Central Synagogue in Manhattan.