

01/02/12 - The Eighth Night of Hanukkah

Jewish Geography, Miracles, and Hanukkah; what could these three topics have in common? As it turns out, quite a bit actually. Hanukkah is essentially a celebration of miracles, a belief that the impossible could be accomplished. Jewish geography is what Jewish people talk about when they get together for dinners and discuss who their family is and where they came from in the hope of ferreting out unknown connections and lost family members.

The Jewish world is just big enough that families have and do become separated and small enough that there are miracles of reunion from time to time. Through cataclysmic events like the Holocaust and the nation hopping and changing of citizenship brought on by the general effects of the Diaspora, families have lost members over the years

Last year my younger sister was visiting and I invited some dear friends over for a Shabbat Dinner. On a lark, or call it clairvoyant event if you wish, my sister asked my girlfriend's mother what her maiden name was. Well wouldn't you know it? The name was the same as my sister's married name before it was changed. The family surname was changed when my sister's in laws arrived in the United States after surviving the Holocaust. The family was a large extended family of vintners in Poland before the Second World War. The name, an unusual one, was changed to different new names by various brothers as they left Europe after the Holocaust. This created an impossible maze for cousins to track and my friends were under the impression that they were the sole surviving branch of the family.

Sad, that their entire family had perished in the Holocaust, imagine their delight as they discovered this piece of information by some serendipitous miracle.

This year on the eighth night of Hanukkah my sister was visiting again and my friends had us all over for the eighth night of Hanukkah. We celebrated the miracles with this lovely dinner:



Crackers

Hummus

Dried Apricots

Roasted Nuts

Dinner Rolls

Baby Lettuce Salad

Baked Salmon

Halena's Tartar Sauce

Curry Cous Cous with Dried Cranberries

Roasted Brussels Sprouts

Roasted Baby Carrots

Wine, Water

Biscotten Torten

Homemade Shortbread

Coffee or Tea

Halena has promised to give me the recipes for the Biscotten Torten, tartar sauce,



One more thing I was thinking about, since today is already the second day of the New Year, I would like to invite you all to greet the New Year with optimism, a new sense of purpose, and a promise to ourselves to cook tasty, healthy food for our families.

I will renew my efforts to meet with good cooks of all Jewish ethnicities to write down, test, and post recipes for 'our' food.

Happy New Year to all.

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Sufganiyot, Jelly Doughnuts

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HAPPY PASSOVER

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The Eighth Night

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Rosh Hashanah begins September 13th 2015 at sundown or 1st of Tishrei 5776.

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