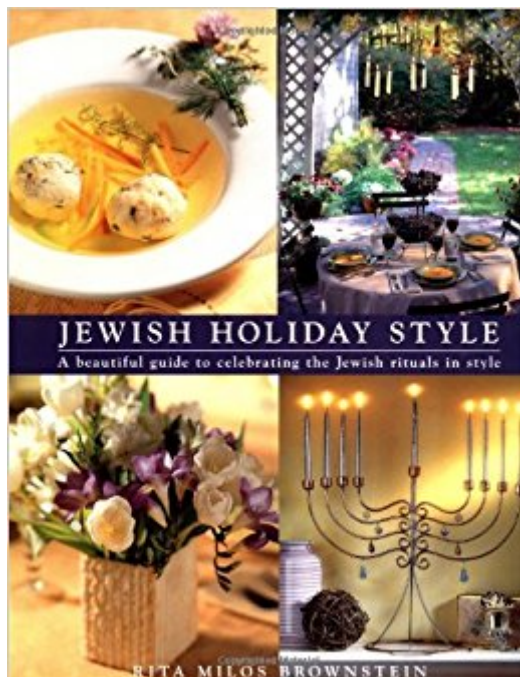


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# Jewish Holiday Style



## Synopsis

The Jewish holidays come to fresh and vibrant life in this stunning treasury designed by the former art director for HOUSE BEAUTIFUL and GOOD HOUSEKEEPING. From suggestions for a Rosh Hashanah honey tasting party, to eye-catching ideas for rooftop Sukkahs and Purim carnival costumes, Rita Brownstein transforms nine Jewish holidays into truly memorable occasions. Sprinkled with interesting insights into the religious and historical significance of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Succoth, Simchat Torah, Chanukah, Tu b'Shevat, Purim, Passover, and Shabbat, Brownstein also supplies recipes, decorations, and craft projects that can involve the whole family. Whether its beeswax Menorah candles for Chanukah or Chocolate Orange Hamantashen for Purim, JEWISH HOLIDAY STYLE is filled with ideas to animate the holidays with symbolic meaning.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"In Judaism, since the spiritual and the physical are intimately connected, each has the power to enhance and infuse vitality into the other, creating a divine partnership. This concept of beauty and spirituality is most attainable during the Jewish holidays." So writes Rita Milos Brownstein, in the introduction to Jewish Holiday Style, a Martha Stewart-esque treatment of the Jewish holy days. The book is a colorful step-by-step guide to making the highlights of the Jewish calendar as chic and elegant as they can be. Although Brownstein sometimes gets carried away with her rhetoric (Yom Kippur becomes "a day spa for the soul"), her ideas and instructions (such as making your own Chanukah menorah, or celebrating Rosh Hashanah by tasting various honeys) will add some zest to the oldest Jewish traditions. And even Brownstein's excesses have at least this to redeem

them: they always encourage the biblical virtue of hospitality.

Jewish cookbooks have become a rapidly burgeoning category. Appearing at the beginning of the annual cycle that starts with Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, three of these four new titles focus on Jewish holidays and holy days, while Friedland's concentrates just on the Sabbath. Greene's book, a revision of her 1985 title, is by far the most ambitious of the group, with more than 250 recipes (80 or so entirely new, the others thoroughly revised) for all the major holidays and some minor ones, and including Israel's Independence Day as well as religious celebrations. A cooking teacher and the longtime food editor of the Baltimore Jewish Times, Greene also offers extensive background on each holiday, and her diverse recipes are from all around the globe. Highly recommended. Recently, a growing number of Jews have found themselves returning to their religious roots and observances they have let lapse, making Friedland's book on celebrating the Sabbath particularly timely. A cookbook editor and author of *The Passover Cookbook*, Friedland presents 175 recipes for the three meals of Shabbat (Friday dinner, Saturday lunch, and the "third meal," marking the end of the Sabbath later on Saturday). Like Greene's, her recipes are international in scope, reflecting both the Ashkenazic and Sephardic heritages, and her text is readable and informative. Recommended for most collections. Brownstein, the former art director of *Good Housekeeping* and *House Beautiful*, offers a lavishly illustrated crafts book with recipes and ideas for the holidays. For each holiday, there is a menu, several crafts projects, and decorating suggestions. Brownstein's approach will not be to everyone's taste (the three sukkahs for Sukkot, for example, include a "fantasy" Penthouse Sukkah, "high-tech and sleek," but the minimatzo vases for the Passover seder are pretty cute). For larger collections. Rubin seems like a nice woman, but would her cookbooks have been published if she weren't actor/singer Mandy Patinkin's mother? Her second book, which opens with "testimonials" from grandchildren and other family members, includes recipes for Thanksgiving, a bridal luncheon, and a barbecue as well as for four major Jewish holidays. The recipes are simple, and many of them rely on convenience foods; some have little to do with traditional Jewish holiday cooking (the buffet menu includes Mexicali Layered Dip and two shellfish dishes). Only for collections where Rubin's *Grandma Doralee Patinkin's Jewish Family Cookbook* is popular. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Pretty picture book, but don't expect a how to on decorating for the holidays.

My favorite Holiday book and an appreciated gift.

Loved it

Rita Brownstein has created a unique guide to celebrating the Jewish holidays creatively. She combines outstanding artistic and culinary talents with a deep appreciation and knowledge of Jewish customs and laws. The result is a new and exciting approach to the annual cycle of traditional Jewish observance. This is not just a cookbook or only a home decorating book. This book will appeal to those who know the Sabbath and holiday celebrations are not just dinner parties. Beautiful decorations and holiday symbols enhance their beauty and meaning. This book is obviously a labor of love and I highly recommend it.

I've turned to this book again and again for Jewish holiday celebrations, and it often has lovely ideas. Just as often, some of them strike me as rather improbable and silly. On the plus side, the sukkahs she describes making are lovely interpretations of the idea, but on the minus side, trying to follow her directions to actually construct one will make you crazy. BELIEVE ME. I've used some of her ideas for Rosh Hashanah cards and been pleased with the results, but the Purim costumes and mishloach manot baskets mostly seem silly. And make your own journal for Yom Kippur? I don't know, I'm always way too busy to mess with something like that. Many of her recipes are surprisingly delicious, especially her orange-chocolate hamantaschen and the raspberry linzer-torte hamantaschen...YUM! So while it's not always consistent, I am glad to have it in my library nonetheless.

The author has done a wonderful job of bringing fresh visual and culinary interpretations of all of the Jewish festivals and holidays, beautifully demonstrated through sensitively written text and gorgeous photos. Best of all, the author has done her research and has faithfully stayed on course in respectfully explaining Jewish religious ritual. It's a wonderful resource for those who have never attempted a Purim costume or Passover meal, as well as for those who prepare Sabbath meals week after week and just want a fresh perspective.

I bought this book for myself, and five more copies for my friends and family. This passover I am planning on making three matzah-cover vases for my pesach table, and I'm also going to have a glass-square seder plate. These stylish things are chic and inexpensive, plus they look great with any room or setting. The book itself has more knowledge than any other style book: usually books

are either one or the other. Is Ms. Brownstein planning on writing any books in the future?

I turn to this cookbook often, not just for the holidays. The recipes are delicious and this is one of those highly visual books loaded with color photos. The matzo ball soup makes the best chicken soup I've ever had. I make it with variations (barley, wild rice) every month. I love this book and am delighted to have found Rita Brownstein. I hope she writes more books. I'll be waiting hopefully.

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