

101 Ways to Spice Up Your Shabbat Dinners
A List for Youth Group Advisers
by David Levy

The Food

1. Iron Chef Shabbat
2. Candy Shabbat
3. Potluck Shabbat
4. Local Shabbat
5. Family Recipes
6. Take-out Shabbat
7. Meat Lovers' Shabbat
8. Fondu Shabbat
9. Deep Fried Shabbat
10. Raw Shabbat
11. Mexican Shabbat
12. Israeli Shabbat
13. Pasta Lovers' Shabbat
14. Breakfast for Dinner Shabbat
15. Eat like a Kid Shabbat
16. Monochromatic Shabbat (eg only red foods, decorations, outfits)
17. Rainbow Shabbat (each course a different color of the rainbow)
18. Acronym Shabbat (**S**irloin, **H**orseradish, **A**rtichokes, **B**eets, **B**arley, **A**pple **T**art. or something like that)
19. Kosher Chinese
20. Soul Food Shabbos (mac and cheese or fried chicken/home fries/collards or kale/corn bread)
21. New Orleans Shabbos (Jambalaya (sans pork, of course), Gumbo z'herbes, veggie Red Beans and Rice, Abita Beer/Root Beer)
22. Make your own Pizza Shabbs (everyone's got to get there before candlelighting or be okay cooking on Shabbos)
23. Edible containers Shabbos
24. Sushi Shabbat (set the rice cookers to turn off exactly as shabbat starts; rice will stay warm until you're ready to roll)
25. Hors D'oeuvres Shabbat

The People

1. With a different Jewish youth group
2. Interfaith
3. Intergenerational (with older people)
4. Intergenerational (with younger kids)
5. Family
6. Guest Speaker
7. Guest Chef
8. Guest songleader
9. Alumni (talk about Jewish life in college)
10. Gender Divided Shabbat (boys and girls or by identity)
11. Rabbinical students

The Setting

1. Rabbi's House
2. Your House
3. Outside
4. Nursing Home
5. Hospital
6. Half-way House (if possible)
7. Restaurant
8. Progressive (Each course at a different home)
9. Regressive (Ditto, but start with dessert)
10. Local Hillel (or Jewish fraternity)
11. Pool
12. Park
13. Roof
14. Roof garden

The Education

1. Placemats
2. Table tents
3. Labels
4. Share-Your-Own-Traditions
5. Shabbat traditions from around the world
6. Shabbat traditions from different movements

7. Learn a song from the bentcher between each course
8. Everyone teaches a song they know from camp/summer programs
9. Everyone brings a dish from their family
10. Storytelling Shabbat
11. "Pop-Up" Shabbat Dinner
12. Each course teaches something different about Kashrut
13. Each course involves some kind of food-prep to teach about what's allowed (& what's not) on Shabbat
14. Signage throughout the prayer space

The Theme

1. Seasonal
2. Holiday
3. Goofy (pop-culture, etc)
4. Costume!
5. Musical
6. Different Jewish communities
7. Different world cultures
8. Story (thread)
9. Pajamas

Prepare in Advance

1. Challah baking
2. Make-Your-Own Challah Covers
3. MYO Kiddush Cups (glass etching)
4. MYO Candlesticks
5. MYO Serving Platters/Handwashing Cups (Paint Your Own Pottery)
6. MYO Songbooks/Bentchers
7. MYO Explanatory materials / transliterations

Take-Aways

1. Everyone gets a bentcher (with the shul/youth group logo)
2. Everyone gets the recipes
3. Everyone gets left-overs
4. Everyone brings left-overs to a shelter