

The Fabulous Tale of Fish and Chips

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{ What are your family's food traditions? }



Hot and Cold

Mmm, fish and chips...a classic British snack! You can buy fresh, hot, newsprint-wrapped fish and chips at a “chippy” on practically every corner in London -- but as the author’s note in this book points out, the dish was originally a staple among the Jews of Spain, a thriving community for more than 500 years before their exile in 1492. It’s traditional to avoid cooking and other forms of work on Shabbat, the Jewish Sabbath, but fried fish is also delicious when eaten cold, making it just right for Shabbat lunch. To learn more, visit pjlibrary.org/fishandchips.

HANDS ON!

Make Oven Fries

This book includes a recipe for “fried fish in the Jewish fashion,” just as was once sold by Malin’s of Bow. What goes perfectly with fish? “Chips,” of course! Traditional chips are deep fried in oil, but you can also roast them in the oven, with adult supervision.

Ingredients:

Potatoes (russets or Yukon golds work well)
Olive oil
Salt to taste

Peel your potatoes if you want to, then slice them as thinly as you like. Soak the slices in cold water for about half an hour.

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Remove the potatoes from the water and blot them with kitchen towels until dry.

In a large bowl, toss potatoes with enough olive oil to thoroughly coat each slice, then arrange them in a single layer on a heavy baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Sprinkle with salt.

Roast until the fries begin to turn color at the edges, about 20 to 25 minutes. Use a spatula to toss the slices, then return them to the oven, turn heat up to 425 degrees, and roast until crisp and golden, around 20 minutes more. Scrumptious and galumptious, savoury and flavoury!

Tasty Traditions

Joseph’s grandmother teaches him how to cook fish in a way passed down by her grandmother and great-grandmother. Families have a way of passing down traditions, values, and yes, recipes that help us carry on our culture. The concept of *l’dor vador*, Hebrew for “from generation to generation,” emphasizes the important role that parents and grandparents have in ensuring that the ideas we hold most dear will continue on. That includes cooking food to make it “scrumptious and galumptious, savoury and flavoury!”

A Delicious Pairing

Joseph and Annette start out as rivals, but by the end they have formed a lucrative merger, not to mention a sweet friendship. There’s nothing wrong with a little healthy competition, but sometimes collaboration is better – especially when it results in a delicious pairing like fish and chips. As it says in the biblical book of Ecclesiastes, “Two are better than one, with greater benefit from their labor. And if they fall, one can help the other up.” Joseph and Annette start by knocking each other down, but then they help each other up, literally and figuratively!

TALK IT OVER WITH YOUR KIDS

JOSEPH’S family makes fish and chips for Shabbat lunch. What foods do you like to eat on special days like Shabbat?

ANNETTE is inspired to sell fried potatoes by watching Joseph sell fried fish. Have you ever gotten ideas from other kids? When have other kids gotten ideas from you?

FISH and chips is a delicious combination. Can you think of other foods that taste great when they’re eaten together? Maybe you can come up with a new food pairing!