



# QUEEN OF THE HANUKKAH DOSAS

Written by Pamela Ehrenberg  
Pictures by Anjan Sarkar

*Sadie's family has both Jewish and Indian background, so at Hanukkah they eat dosas, traditional Indian pancakes. But they get locked out just before their Hanukkah party! Who will save the day?*

## JEWISH CONCEPTS

Many of the customs reflected in *Queen of the Hanukkah Dosas* honor the importance of light. Hanukkah is often called the “Festival of Lights,” and Jewish families light menorahs in their homes to rejoice in the Hanukkah miracles. Menorahs may be illuminated with candles, electricity, or oil, and are usually located near a door or window so that passersby will see the light and be reminded of a miracle.

Even when a menorah in the home uses candles or electricity for light, oil is still an important part of celebrating Hanukkah. Oil reminds us of the risks the Maccabees took to chase Antiochus and his army out of Jerusalem, and of the miraculous oil that enabled the Jews to purify their temple. Delicious holiday foods are cooked in oil to recall the miracle that kept the menorah burning for eight nights. And many cooks—like the mom in this story—make enough latkes or dosas to feed an army!

Children often try to win nuts, fruits, or coins by spinning a four-sided Hanukkah top called a dreidel. Anjan Sarkar's detailed illustrations show festive dreidel banners decorating many of the family's windows, and the drawings of Sadie's costume show all four sides of the dreidel. Each side of a dreidel displays a different Hebrew letter. The symbolic letters, *nun*, *gimel*, *hay*, and *shin*, stand for the words *Nes Gadol Hayah Sham*, meaning a “Great Miracle Happened There.”

## USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

Reading Whether they are making potato pancakes (*latkes*), doughnuts (*sufganiyot*), or savory pancakes (*dosas*), people all over the world fry foods in oil to celebrate Hanukkah. You might talk about the different countries and cultural backgrounds in your own family and community, and make plans for special symbols and personalized celebrations. For example, is your family connected to:

- Italy? *Arancini* are crispy round fritters made with rice and stuffed with soft cheese.
- The seashore? Try making fish sticks with a crunchy fried crust.
- The Southern United States? Fried green tomatoes are a tasty delicacy all year long.
- Puerto Rico or Latin America? *Sorullitos* are buttery sweet fried cornmeal sticks.
- Ireland? French fries and other fried potatoes are popular all over the world!

Young children may be cautious about trying unfamiliar foods, but most will enjoy talking about the interesting ways that food items can be symbolic. Ask children what their favorite (and least favorite) foods make them think about. Encourage their creative connections, and consider drawing labels for a dinner or holiday party to make the connections clear to everyone.