

Haroset Recipes from around the world for the “mortar” of the seder plate.

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Ashkenazi Haroset

On the Passover seder plate, haroset symbolizes the mortar used by slaves in Egypt. These are the classic Eastern European ingredients. Only the proportions vary.

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Ingredients

2 medium-sized tart apples
1/2 cup (50 g) walnuts, chopped
1/2 - 1 teaspoon cinnamon
2 - 3 Tablespoons sweet red wine
1 tablespoon sugar or honey, or to taste

Directions: Peel, core, and finely chop or grate the apples. Mix with the rest of the ingredients.

Haroset from Egypt

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Ingredients

1/2 lb (250 g) pitted dates, chopped
1/2 lb (250 g) large yellow raisins or sultanas
1/2 cup (125 ml) sweet red Passover wine
1/2 cup (60 g) walnuts coarsely chopped

Directions

Put the dates and raisins/sultanas with the wine in a pan. Add just a little water to cover. Cook on very low heat, stirring occasionally, until the dates fall apart into a mush. Cook until it thickens to a soft paste. Pour into a bowl and sprinkle with walnuts.

Haroset from Italy

The haroset of Padua has prunes, raisins, dates, walnuts, apples, and chestnuts. In Milan they make it with apples, pears, dates, almonds, bananas, and orange juice. The following is a general version.

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Ingredients

3 apples, sweet or tart
2 pears
2 cups sweet wine
1/3 cup (50 g) pine nuts
2/3 cup (100 g) ground almonds
1/2 lb (250 g) dates, pitted and chopped
3/4 cup (100 g) yellow raisins or sultanas
4 oz (100 g) prunes, pitted and chopped
1/2 cup (100 g) sugar or honey, or to taste
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger

Directions

Peel and core the apples and pears and cut them in small pieces. Put all the ingredients into a pan together and cook, stirring occasionally, for about one hour, until the fruits are very soft, adding a little water if it becomes too dry.

Other possible additions: chopped lemon or candied orange peel, walnuts, pistachios, dried figs, orange or lemon juice, ginger, nutmeg, and cloves.

Haroset from Morocco

Ingredients

1 lb (500 g) dates, pitted and chopped
1-1/2 cups sweet red Passover wine
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
ground cloves ground cloves
1 cup (125 g) walnuts, coarsely chopped

Directions

Put the dates into a pan with the wine, cinnamon, and cloves and simmer, stirring occasionally, until you have a soft paste. Put through the food processor if you want a smoother texture. Let it cool and stir in the walnuts.

Variation: A Libyan version is flavored with ground ginger, nutmeg, and cloves -- 1/4 teaspoon of each.

Turkish Haroset

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Ingredients

2 sweet apples weighing 1/2 lb (250 g), peeled and cut into small pieces
1/2 lb (250 g) dates, pitted
1 cup (150 g) raisins
Juice and grated zest of 1 orange
1 cup (250 ml) sweet red Passover wine
2 - 4 tablespoons sugar, or to taste (optional)
2 oz (60 g) walnuts, coarsely chopped

Directions

Put all the ingredients except the sugar and the walnuts together in a saucepan and cook on very low heat until the mixture is soft and mushy and the liquid is reduced, stirring occasionally. Add sugar to taste. The amount will depend on the sweetness of the other ingredients. Blend to a paste in the food processor. Pour into a bowl and sprinkle with walnuts.

Piedmontese Haroset

A different haroset from the land of Turin.

This haroset recipe is adapted from one sent by Nedelia Tedeschi, of Turin. She enclosed a little picture of a squirrel eating a chestnut, from the package of dried chestnuts she uses to make the paste. It was Passover, and the Italian store near my house had closed, so when I phoned around to try to find dried chestnuts and couldn't, I used cooked vacuum-packed ones instead. The result was very unusual and also delightful.

Ingredients

1/2 lb (250 g) cooked chestnuts
2/3 cup (125 g) blanched almonds
2 hard-boiled egg yolks
Grated zest of 1 orange
Juice of 1 orange
About 3/4 cup (175 ms) sweet red kosher wine
1/3 cup (75 g) sugar or more to taste

Directions

Boil the chestnuts for a minute or two, and drain. Grind the almonds fine in the food processor, then add the rest of the ingredients, including the chestnuts, and blend to a paste.