



## **Special Food Days to Enjoy Over the Summer in 2018**

The calendar is filled with special days throughout the year. Put your own Jewish twist on these summer days while you enjoy special foods.

### **June 12 – International Falafel Day**

Falafel is a particularly popular food in Israel. Take the opportunity to connect with Israeli cuisine by making your own falafel and enjoying it in a pita with hummus and tahini. You can find a recipe for falafel (along with some of its history) [here](#).

### **June 17 – Eat Your Vegetables Day**

In the Torah, it says that when God created people, God instructed them that they have domain over the Earth and that they have a responsibility to take care of the Earth (Genesis 1:28-30, Genesis 2:15). On Eat Your Vegetables Day, make a salad with a variety of sustainably produced vegetables. Discuss how you can use the earth's resources while continuing to protect those same resources. You can even [start](#) producing your own produce.

### **July 7 – International Chocolate Day**

Chocolate is especially important on the Jewish calendar around Chanukah, when *gelt* (chocolate coins) is a favorite treat. As you enjoy some chocolate on International Chocolate Day, think about the Maccabees' courage in standing up for what they believed was right and what you can do to make a difference in the world. You can even make your own chocolate with cocoa powder and common kitchen items. Check out one recipe [here](#). If you would rather keep it simple look for Israeli chocolate at your local supermarket. You can even [sing a song](#) and declare your love for chocolate while you eat.

### **July 13 – French Fries Day**

Believe it or not, French fries just might have originated in France (though Belgium also claims ownership). French fries have become a popular addition to sandwiches at falafel stands in Israel (though they are called chips there). Reprise your falafel sandwich from June's Falafel Day and include your own homemade French fries. You can find a recipe for French fries [here](#).

### **July 15 – National Ice Cream Day**

The whole month of July is National Ice Cream Month, but July 15<sup>th</sup> has been specially set aside as a day to enjoy this tasty, cold treat. This year, National Ice Cream Day falls during the Nine Days, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of Av, on the Jewish calendar. The Nine Days are the days leading up to *Tisha b'Av*, when we commemorate the destruction of the first and second *Beit Hamikdash* (Temple in Jerusalem), which the Talmud tells us happened because the Jewish people were not being nice to each other. In commemoration of the Nine Days, buy a tub of ice cream and work as a team to sculpt a model of the *Beit Hamikdash*. As you eat the sculpture, discuss how working together as a team helped the success of the project.



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### **July 26 – National Bagelfest Day**

This one kind of goes without saying. Bagels are a delicacy that were brought to North America by Polish Jews. While different places have their own methods of making bagels, can anyone debate the deliciousness of this boiled-then-baked, hole-in-the-middle bread? Take the opportunity to cook your own. While it might be a *patshke* (a time consuming, multi-step process, in this case), you can find one recipe [here](#) and a gluten-free one [here](#). When your bagels are done, whether you enjoy lox, cucumber, or avocado on top, make sure to include a good *schmear*. Make an especially tasty treat to give to someone you love tonight when *Tu B'Av* begins.

### **August 2 – Ice Cream Sandwich Day**

In Israel, the ice cream sandwich is called a *קַסֶּטָה* (*kaseta*) because of its resemblance to a cassette; and it often contains half chocolate and half vanilla ice cream. Put on some Israeli music and enjoy eating a *קַסֶּטָה*. You can even find Israeli hits from the 80's, the heyday of the cassette tape (but you can still play the music through your favorite digital source). Try turning your phone into a [cassette player](#) as well.

### **August 3 – Watermelon Day**

In the Torah, it says that watermelon was one of the foods that *B'nei Yisrael* (Children of Israel) missed from Egypt as they traversed the desert on the way to the Promised Land (Numbers 11:5). In fact, there is historical evidence that watermelon was cultivated in ancient Egypt as far back as the second millennium BCE. Celebrate the freedom of summer by eating some watermelon and remembering the Exodus from Egypt. Enjoy that we can eat watermelon as free people. Click [here](#) for some fun ways to present your watermelon.

### **August 4 – National Mustard Day**

Whether you like Dijon, brown, yellow, or any of the many varieties of mustard, this is the day for you. Just as we can take mustard seeds and develop them into a variety of flavors that enhance our food in different ways, so too the Torah offers us multiple flavors of understanding that enhance our lives and our communities. Do a mustard taste test. (You can even [make your own](#) if you prepare far enough in advance.) As you taste different mustards, choose your favorite *pasuk* (verse) or narrative from the Torah and discuss the different flavors that emerge from it.

### **August 10 – National S'mores Day**

While there are many examples of things that should not be mixed (e.g. wearing linen and wool together, breeding animals of different species), what could be more appropriate than mixing a graham cracker with a roasted marshmallow and chocolate? Gather some friends around a campfire and enjoy some tasty s'mores together. It is not a *mitzvah*, but maybe it should be.