

The Rosh HaShana “Seder”

Customs for the night of Rosh HaShana vary from community to community and from family to family. This page is provided as a set of suggestions for those who do not have a fixed custom in their home. Nothing mentioned here is the final word on anything. If you are in doubt about anything, check with your Rav.

After KIDDUSH, wash for HaMotzi and eat from the LECHEM MISHNEH. Some use honey on the challa rather than salt. Some use salt for the HaMotzi and then take another piece of challa with honey. After challa with honey, say:

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
שֶׁתַּחַדֵּשׁ עֲלֵינוּ שָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתוּקָה.

It is appropriate to respond to Y’HI RATZON statements of others with AMEIN, as they are bracha-like.

Since the fruits and vegetables to be eaten as part of the SEDER LEIL ROSH HASHANA are not “normal” components of a meal, they are not covered by the HaMotzi, and need their own brachot, which should be said in accordance with the "rules of brachot" - as follows...

Among the fruits of trees, one should say the bracha on the fruit with the highest priority: [1] Olive, [2] Date, [3] Grape, [4] Fig, [5] Pomegranate, [6] your favorite among fruits not of SHIV’AT HAMINIM, [7] a whole fruit, rather than a piece, [8] larger piece. This list does not imply that all these fruits [1]-[5] are part of your Leil Rosh HaShana Minhag; the full list of priorities is provided to cover any situation.

Among vegetables, make the bracha on what you like best.

Between HaEitz and HaAdama, HaEitz will usually be said first, unless you have a HaAdama that you like better than any of the fruits, in which case, HaAdama will precede HaEitz (even over 7-Minim).

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ.
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה.

If one or more fruits require a SHEHECHEYANU, they will be covered by the SHEHECHEYANU of Kiddush, if they are on the table at the time. Otherwise, one additional SHEHECHEYANU should be said (even if there are more than one fruit that “need” it).

When all brachot are taken care of, many eat a slice of (sweet) apple dipped in

honey. The Y'HI RATZON above can be repeated for the Apple & Honey.

From this point on, whichever of the following items you have - to eat (or even to just be on the table), say the appropriate Y'HI RATZON.



For RUBIYA (black-eyed peas):

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שְׂיִרְבוּ זְכוֹתֵינוּ.



For KARTI (leek):

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
שְׂיִכְרְתוּ שׁוּנְאֵינוּ.

For SILKA (beets or mangold):

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ, שְׂיִסְתַּלְקוּ אוֹיְבֵינוּ.

For DATES:



יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
שְׂיִתְמוּ שׁוּנְאֵינוּ.

For KARA (type of squash, pale green):

some say this for carrots - play on words גִּזְרִי/גִּזְרִי

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
שְׂיִקְרַע גִּזְרֵי דִּינֵנוּ וְיִקְרָאוּ לְפָנֶיךָ זְכוֹתֵינוּ.



For POMEGRANATE:

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
שְׂנַרְבֵּה זְכוֹתֵינוּ כְּרֻמוֹן.

If one eats FISH on Leil Rosh HaShana, say the following:



יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
שְׂנַפְרָה וְנַרְבֵּה כְּדָגִים וְשִׁלָּא תִּהְיֶה עֵין הָרַע
שׁוֹלֶטֶת בָּנוּ כְּדָגִים הֶלְלוּ שְׂאִין עֵין הָרַע שׁוֹלֶטֶת בָּהֶם.

Some place the HEAD of a ram or fish on the table and say:

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ, ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ,
שְׂנַהֲיֶה לְרֹאשׁ וְלֹא לְזָנָב.



If one eats the meat of a sheep (preferably a ram), he says:

יְהִי רָצוֹן שְׂתִזְכָּר־לָנוּ אֵילֹו שֶׁל יִצְחָק.

Other SIMANIM for Leil Rosh HaShana

As we indicated, we have presented in the link for SIMANIM, a standard set of SIMANIM. But there are others, to be found on other presentations of SEDER LEIL ROSH HASHANA. For example:

- **OLIVES** (If you use olives, they have the highest priority for BOREI P'RI HA'EITZ and therefore should be taken first, with all other fruits in mind):

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלְהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
שְׁנֵהֲיָה רַעֲנָנִים בְּזִיתִים וְיִהְיוּ בָּנֵינוּ כְּשִׁתְּלִי זֵיתִים סָבִיב לְשִׁלְחָנוֹ:

- **EGG** (SHEHAKOL, assuming that the whole set of SIMANIM is not considered to be a 'normal' part of the meal, hence not covered by HAMOTZI)

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלְהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
שֶׁתִּהְיֶה שָׁנָה זוֹ לְבָנָה עֲלֵינוּ כְּבִיצָה:

The above two items are from a Bencher + Seder Rosh HaShana that was given out at a recent wedding. In addition, there was a different version of Y'HI RATZON for APPLE & HONEY:

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאַלְהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ
שֶׁתִּהְיֶה שָׁנָה זוֹ מְתוּקָה עֲלֵינוּ כְּדָבָשׁ:

In addition to the 'serious' Y'HI RATZONS, here is an old favorite among the 'whimsical' (maybe light-hearted is a better term) SIMANIM:

- **A lettuce leaf, half of a raisin, and a stalk of celery:**

MAY IT BE YOUR WILL, HASHEM, TO LET US HAVE A RAISE IN SALARY.

Ed. note: The following are some homemade suggestions for more SIMANIM. Some are more serious than others. All are intended to ask HaShem for good things in the coming year. I'd be careful of using SHEIM HASHEM in any of the homemade types of SIMANIM, but Y'HI RATZON MIL'FANECHA is a safe opening phrase. HASHEM ELOKEINU... rather than His actual names can be added, as well. I don't know if the term 'fun' is appropriate, but asking good things from G-d with a smile seems acceptable.

- **CABBAGE (K'RUV) and/or CAULIFLOWER (K'RUVIT):**

... MAY YOU RESTORE THE BEIT HAMIKDASH - WITH THE ARON AND THE K'RUVIM.

- **GRAPES** (unless you follow the custom of the GR"A not to eat grapes on Rosh HaShana) - different spelling but a SIMAN nonetheless:

G-D, HELP US BE HUMBLE, SO WE WILL BE ANAVIM.

- **BUTTERNUT SQUASH (DOLARIT)**

MAY WE EARN MORE DOLLARS (AND OTHER CURRENCIES) SO THAT WE CAN HELP OTHERS WITH THEM.

- **PEACH (AFARSEIK):**

HELP GUIDE JEWS FROM **AFAR** TO COME TO LIVE IN ERETZ YISRAEL, FOR YOUR **SAKE** (AND THEIRS).

- **SH'NITZEL** (MBCSEY from way back):

SHENINATZEIL MEI-O-Y'VEINU (may we be saved from our enemies)

Others from MBCSEY:

- **RED PEPPER (GAMBA):**

MAY WE SUCCEED, GAM B' LIMUD TORAH AND GAM B' AVODA.

- **EGGPLANT (CHATZIL):**

MAY WE SHARE GOOD FORTUNE WITH OTHERS
- CHATZI LAHEM AND CHATZI LANU

- **T'CHINA: SHE-YISHMA T'CHINATEINU** (May He hear our supplication)

- **CHUMUS: HELP US, HASHEM, VANQUISH HAMAS** (and other enemies).

- **QUINOA** (not to be pronounced KIN-WA in this case):

MAY WE LOVE ERETZ YISRAEL K'NO'A, Machla, Chogla, Milka, & Tirtza

- **SALMON** (pronounced the way Hebrew speakers do):

MAY WE BE AS WISE AS KING SOLOMON.

Feel free to come up with new SIMANIM on your own. Challenge your children and guests to find new ones. Most importantly, have a Good Yom Tov.

Some of these extra SIMANIM can be had and said during the meal, and not necessarily at the beginning, as is traditional with the 'regular' SIMANIM.