

Seder Aerobics!



Martha Stewart, from Joan Nathan - <http://www.marthastewart.com/335368/joans-american-haroset>

6 large apples, such as Granny Smith, Fuji, or Jonathan, cored and quartered

1/2 cup coarsely chopped pecans

1/4 cup sweet red Kosher wine, such as Manischewitz

2 tablespoons sugar, or to taste

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, or to taste

Combine apples, pecans, wine, sugar, and cinnamon in the bowl of a food processor fitted with the blade attachment. Pulse until coarsely chopped. Taste and adjust for seasoning.

1: Insecticide?

1. Talmud, Pesachim 114a, 116a

Mishnah: They bring before him matzah, *chazeret* and *charoset* and two cooked foods, even though *charoset* is not a mitzvah. Rabbi Eliezer son of Rabbi Tzadok says: Mitzvah.

Gemara: If it is not a mitzvah, why bring it? Rabbi Ami said: Because of *kafa*.

2. Rashi (11th century France) to Pesachim 116a

The sap in *chazeret* is harsh, and contains a toxin.

3. Tosafot (12th-13th century Western Europe) to Pesachim 115b

Rabbeinu Chananel explained that this is a worm... Perhaps most greens don't have *kafa*... But because of the danger of *kafa* we are concerned about the minority of cases, and one needs *charoset*.

2: To remember the apple

4. Talmud, Pesachim 116a

What is the mitzvah? Rabbi Levi said: Commemorating the apple... And make it tart, to commemorate the apple.

5. Song of Songs 8:5

Beneath the apple I awakened you, there your mother birthed you, there the one who birthed you experienced birth pangs.

6. Talmud, Sotah 11b

At the time to give birth, they went and gave birth in the field, under the apple, as in Song of Songs 8:5.

3: To remember the clay

7. Exodus 1:14, 5:18

And they embittered their lives with hard labour, with clay and bricks and all manner of field work...
And now, go work, and straw will not be given to you, and you shall give the quota of bricks.

8. Talmud, Pesachim 116a

And Rabbi Yochanan said: Commemorating the clay... And make it thick, to commemorate the clay.

9. Rabbi Mordechai ben Hillel (13th century Germany), Pesachim 611

Rokeiach wrote that this is why we place in *charoset* sweet cane (?), cinnamon and ginger, because one cannot crush them well, to avoid having tough strands. This commemorates the clay, which had straw mixed into it.

10. Rabbi Moses Maimonides (Rambam) (12th century Egypt), Commentary to Pesachim 10:3

This is an acidic mixture, like straw, commemorating the clay. We make it thus: we soak figs or dates, boiling and crushing them until they soften. We knead them with vinegar and add *sanbel*, *karnit* or hyssop without grinding.

11. Rabbi Mordechai ben Hillel (13th century Germany), Pesachim 611

In the Aruch: Rabbi Yochanan says that to commemorate the clay we make *charoset* of all kinds of food – sweet, bitter and acidic – like clay, which contains everything.

4: To remember the plague of blood

12. Jerusalem Talmud, Pesachim 10:3 (per Korban ha'Edah commentary)

Some taught: "It must be soft". This is to commemorate the blood.

13. Tosafot (12th-13th century Western Europe) to Pesachim 116a

And when eating it, we dilute it with wine and vinegar

14. Rabbi Moshe Isserles (16th century Poland), Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 473:5, citing Tur

Make the *charoset* thick, to commemorate the clay, and then we add a little vinegar or red wine to commemorate the blood.

15. Rabbi Avraham Gombiner (17th century Poland), Magen Avraham 473:16

If it is on Shabbat, add the liquid before Shabbat. And see 321:16, that one may add liquid in an unusual way, putting in liquid first and then putting the *charoset* in.

5-6: Customs

16. Rabbeinu Yaakov (14th century Spain), Tur Orach Chaim 473

Make it thick to commemorate the clay, and from acidic things to commemorate the bitterness.

17. Tosafot (12th-13th century Western Europe) to Pesachim 116a

A responsum of the Gaonim explains: Make *charoset* of fruits that are compared to the Jews in Song of Songs: "Beneath the apple I awakened you," "Like a split pomegranate," "The fig has sweetened", "I said I would climb the [date] palm". *Egoz* – "to the nut garden". Almonds [*sh-k-d*], for G-d was diligent [*sh-k-d*] about the end.

Recipe

Taste	Texture	Ingredients
Sharp (insecticide, slavery)	Thick (clay)	Apple
Sweet (combat bitter taste)	Long strands (straw in clay)	Fruit and nuts
Blend (clay)	Liquid added (blood)	

Other notes

18. Rabbi Moses Maimonides (Rambam) (12th century Egypt), Commentary to Pesachim 10:3

According to Rabbi Tzaddok, that *charoset* is a mitzvah, one must recite a blessing, "Who sanctified us with His commandments and commanded us regarding eating *charoset*." But this is not the law.

19. Rabbi Moses Maimonides (Rambam) (12th cent. Egypt), Mishneh Torah, Laws of Chametz and Matzah 7:11
Charoset is a rabbinic mitzvah, to commemorate the clay with which they worked in Egypt. How do they make it? Take dates or dried figs or raisins or the like, and press them, and add vinegar and add spices like clay with straw, and put it on the table on Pesach night.

20. Deuteronomy 26:6-7

And the Egyptians harmed us and oppressed us, and set hard labour upon us. And we cried out to HaShem, Gd of our ancestors, and Gd heard our voices and saw our suffering and our struggle and our strain.

21. Exodus 2:23-25

And it was, after many days, the King of Egypt died, and the Children of Israel groaned from the labour and they cried out, and their wail rose to Gd, from the labour. And Gd heard their cry, and Gd remembered His covenant with Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov. And Gd saw the Children of Israel, and Gd knew.

22. The human hand Slaves, Mothers, Leaders and Sacrificers