



Special Food Days to Enjoy Over the Summer in 2019

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 7 – National Doughnut Day

Doughnuts might be more associated with Hanukkah than with the upcoming Shavuot holiday, but that does not mean that you cannot partake of these delicious treats in their traditional round or stick form. You can even buy doughnuts that are gluten free! Feeling ambitious? [Make](#) your own. Feeling dairy free? You can still [make](#) your own.

June 9 – 10 – Shavuot

The holiday of Shavuot is often thought of as the [dairy](#) holiday, with [cheesecake](#) and [blintzes](#) being particularly popular. Try one of the traditional foods or make [mac and cheese](#) for dinner. Avoiding dairy? Use a dairy substitute. And the best part? Ice cream for dessert! (And it is not even National Ice Cream Day yet.)

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 18 – International Sushi Day

The laws of *kashrut* dictate that only fish with fins and scales are permitted for eating (Leviticus 11:9 – 12, Deuteronomy 14:9 – 10). On International Sushi Day, celebrate raw fish (and/or vegetables) with vinegared rice. For added fun, make the classic [nigiri sushi](#) or make your own [sushi rolls](#). Don't have all the sushi-making tools? Deconstruct your sushi into a [sushi salad](#).

July 6 – National Fried Chicken Day

Shooing a wild bird away before taking its eggs is a *mitzvah*. Eating a chicken that has been breaded and fried in oil is delicious. Try making your own [fried chicken](#) and remember: It is OK to like your fingers because it is good.

July 7 – World Chocolate Day

Israel's Elite chocolate company was founded by Eliyahu Fromenchenko in 1933. Channel his entrepreneurial spirit and [make your own](#) chocolate with common kitchen items. If you want to keep it simple, look for Israeli chocolate at your supermarket. Do a taste test and compare chocolates from around the world. You can even [sing a song](#) declaring your love for chocolate while you eat. While you are out buying your treats, remember the *mitzvah* not to oppress laborers (Deuteronomy 24:14 – 15) and try to find Fair Trade chocolate.



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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 21 – National Ice Cream Day

July is National Ice Cream Month, and the third Sunday has been set aside as a day to enjoy this tasty treat. This year, National Ice Cream Day falls on the Fast of the 17th of Tammuz, the beginning of the Three Weeks—the days leading up to *Tisha b'Av*, when we commemorate the destruction of the First and Second *Beit Hamikdash* (Holy Temple), which the Talmud says occurred because the Jewish people were being unkind to one another. To commemorate the Three Weeks, buy ice cream and work together to sculpt a *Beit Hamikdash* replica. As you eat the sculpture after the fast, discuss how working as a team helped the success of the project.

July 26 – National Bagelfest Day

Bagels are a delicacy that were brought to North America by Polish Jews. While different places have their own recipe secrets, can anyone debate the deliciousness of this boiled-then-baked, hole-in-the-middle bread? While it might be a *patshke* (a time consuming, multi-step process), take the opportunity to cook your own with this [recipe](#). A gluten-free one is found [here](#). Whether you enjoy lox, cucumber, or avocado on top, make sure to include a good *schmear*.

August 3 – National Watermelon Day

In the Torah, watermelon is listed as one of the foods that *B'nei Yisrael* (the Israelites) missed from Egypt 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. Although National Watermelon Day falls during the Nine Days, a particularly somber time leading up to *Tisha b'Av*, you can celebrate Shabbat and 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 19 – National Potato Day

Do potatoes appear in the Torah? No, they do not. However, they were a staple food for shtetl Jews and became the inspiration for a classic [Yiddish song](#). Enjoy some potatoes with meat and bread. For a special treat, make them into a kugel. While you are eating, discuss the song's [lyrics](#) and think about how you can help people who are hungry.