



On the *Chocolate Trail*

Rabbi Deborah R. Prinz

✉ debbierprinz@gmail.com

🌐 onthechocolatetrail.org

📘 Deborah Prinz

🐦 @chocolatetrail

Learn about Jewish History, Jewish Values and Jewish Culture from Chocolate

Many organizations and synagogues have invited Rabbi Prinz to be a speaker/scholar-in-residence for adult learning, auxiliaries, Shabbat, special occasions or food related events. The next time you pick up a piece of chocolate, consider that you are partaking in an aspect of Jewish history. Use *On the Chocolate Trail* (3rd printing, Jewish Lights Publishing) creatively with adults and young people. Quantity discounts are available. Also, chocolate accompaniments and author book signings are very popular.

Learning Topics: Possible topics for exploring the stories of Jews and chocolate include:

1. *Jews on the Chocolate Trail:* Explore the surprising Jewish historical connections to chocolate in this gastronomic adventure and overview. (uses slides)
2. *What is the Best Chocolate? Jewish Ethics Mix into our Chocolate Eating:* Faced with a mélange of options when selecting our chocolate, chocolate lovers might be informed by our Jewish values. We will explore the complexities that surface when measuring our food values against our chocolate choices and consumption. (uses slides and handout)
3. *Jewish Women on the Chocolate Trail:* This session about Jewish women and chocolate melds an enjoyment of chocolate with an exploration of chocolate's worldwide Jewish narratives. (uses slides)
4. *North American Jewish Colonial Traders Dip Into Chocolate or What Did Alexander Hamilton Drink?* In colonial North America the chocolate interests of Sephardi refugees could be uncovered in the holds of their ships, in their shops and in their homes. Jewish merchants such as Aaron Lopez, Daniel Gomez, and others dipped deeply into cacao trading and the processing of chocolate. (uses slides)
5. *Jewish Stories of Chocolate Recipes:* Customize a presentation for your

group based upon the relevant season and your preferred palate, using chocolate recipes and their stories of Jewish culture, history, and/or ethics. Prepare one recipe to enjoy together.

6. *Israelis: Meshuga for Chocolate*: Chocolate permeates Israel. A chunk of Israel's growth as a state may be seen through its chocolate industry, which reflects both immigrant stories and the entrepreneurship of Israel.

7. *Chocolate Revives World War II Refugees*: Chocolate provided succor and support for immigrants and refugees. It contributed to survival and renewal in strong contrast to the deprivations of that time.

8. *Questions Rabbis Ask About Chocolate – Text Study of Responsa*: Finding relevance to our modern lives in the study of our ancient texts, we will look at *she'elot u'teshuvot* (questions and answers) and *halacha* (Jewish law) about chocolate. Bring your own questions about chocolate as well as your passions for text learning and for chocolate. (uses handout)

9. *Chanukah and Christmas Chocolate Melt into Gelt*: This presentation speculates about how Chanukah and Christmas chocolate melt into gelt by unraveling some celebratory themes of these December holidays. (uses slides)

10. *A Haggadah for a Socially Responsible Chocolate Seder*: This experience uses a basic Haggadah text with chocolate ritual foods to discuss social justice issues. Experience the ancient seder and Passover themes through contemporary issues of child labor, economic justice and food sustainability. (uses slides, copies of *A Haggadah for a Socially Responsible Chocolate Seder* and chocolate ritual foods)

11. *Jewish Resilience through Chocolate*: An opportunity to learn how chocolate nurtured Jews facing upheaval in earlier generations. Chocolate smoothes things over in times of stress. (uses slides and handout)

Gifting:

Rabbis, cantors, educators and non-profit leaders have been gifting *On the Chocolate Trail* to teachers, boards, committees, donors and others. It makes a great gift for holidays, Bar/ Bat Mitzvah students, for confirmation students, for graduates and others. People often bundle the book with chocolate. Gift shops stock the book to make it accessible.



Resources:

*Library collections include the book as research material for school projects, for chocolate travel, for an ethics review of chocolate companies around the world and for Jewish study.

*Rabbis, cantors and educators refer to the book as source material for sermons and classes.

*Free downloads at onthechocolatetrail.org:

*Book Club Discussion Guide

*Lesson Plans for use in Jewish schools

**A Haggadah for a Socially Responsible Chocolate Seder*

School Settings:

Schools are developing curricular segments for the exploration of Jewish values, history, blessings, holidays, Jewish food and more. Download lesson plans at onthechocolatetrail.org. This material works well for family education programs.

Professional Development:

Learn with staff from *On the Chocolate Trail* about Jewish resilience, history, food ethics and interfaith issues.

Chocolate Accompaniments:

Everyone loves to taste chocolate in connection with *On the Chocolate Trail*. Organizations and synagogues have offered fun, interactive events such as these:

- *Tastings of *On the Chocolate Trail*'s new and historical recipes
- *Seder using *A Haggadah for a Socially Responsible Chocolate Seder*
- *Chocolate tasting
- *Chocolate bake-off
- *Multi-course chocolate Shabbat dinner
- *Chocolate Oneg or Kiddush
- *Mini-chocolate festival
- *Chocolate making
- *Chocolate and wine pairing



Seasonal Opportunities:

*Use *A Haggadah for a Socially Responsible Chocolate Seder* for a chocolate seder that discusses economic justice, food sustainability and fair labor practices in connection with Passover.

*Make chocolate Chanukah gelt

