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# **1883 Revisited: The Kosher Trefa Banquet**

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## 1883 Revisited: The Kosher Trefa Banquet

### Abstract

The Trefa Banquet held in Cincinnati on July 18, 1883 represents a turning point in Jewish history, with particular resonance, for Reform Jews. The dinner, hosted by Isaac Mayer Wise, was a celebration for the first ordination class of Hebrew Union College as well as for participants of The Union of American Hebrew Congregations annual meeting. The event is significant because the nine course French inspired dinner included many non-kosher ingredients which greatly upset guests. The menu was aligned with Wise's thoughts that Reform Jewish life should intersect with and adapt to American culture and customs.

My capstone has three components. The research paper discusses the implications of serving non-kosher food at the Banquet with the goal of trying to decipher if the choice was intentional or not. The second component is a booklet that contains the recipes from the original Banquet rewritten to be dairy-free and with ingredients eligible for kosher certification to ensure that the menu is inclusive, accommodating a range of dietary observances. Finally, I created a cooking class using the new recipes which will be taught at Temple Sholom in Cincinnati. The Jewish community uses food as a way to connect to one another socially and to understand cultures that are different from our own. The cooking class will facilitate that goal. The overarching goal of my capstone is to explore the various theories about what occurred during the Trefa Banquet and how this event impacted and is still relevant to our lives today.

## 1. Introduction

Sharing a meal can have a profound impact on a person's life. Within the Jewish tradition, food and cooking plays a vital role in bringing people together. Food has the power to build social bonds when Jews from all across the globe come together not only to eat, but also to share stories that bridge societal divides. Food connects Jews because we share a common language and culture. The Jewish community eats in moments of joy and celebration as well as sorrow and loss. Food is an explanation of who the Jewish people are without having to use any words which can have profound social consequences. What I have described above transcends Jewish experience, as anthropologist Harry G. West explains:

In south Texas, to give just one example, Chicano men stand together around the grill, barbecuing the off-cuts of meat that are central to their working-class cuisine; through playful banter equating meat with manhood, they reinforce group solidarity. To labor alone and, especially, to eat alone, is not only shameful in many cultural contexts, it is often considered monstrous or sub-human.<sup>1</sup>

West describes one of numerous examples of people assembling to participate in an act representative of their heritage that would have been disgraceful to do alone. Society tells us not to eat alone and normalizes the sharing of meals even with a stranger. Many restaurants have long tables solely for this purpose. This dining experience forces people to break out of their comfort zone and to meet someone new. When we dine with other people, we have an opportunity to learn from one another. “The sharing of food is not limited to family and friends,” West concludes. “Indeed, it may reach beyond the bounds of community to include strangers. In

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<sup>1</sup> West, Harry G. “We Are Who We Eat With: Food, Distinction, and Commensality.” In *Politics of Food*, edited by Dani Burrows and Aaron Cezar: Sternberg Press, 2020.

such contexts, rather than expressing or consolidating affinities, it may serve as a means to forge them — to suspend suspicion, to overcome difference and to level hierarchies.”<sup>2</sup>

However much food can connect communities, the social and religious rules that diners are expected to follow can create barriers. The Quran, for example, forbids Muslim consumption of pork and alcohol. Many Catholics do not eat meat on certain days during the season of Lent. Jews are instructed to keep kosher, with the earliest regulations in the Hebrew Bible, Leviticus, includes prohibitions against eating pork and shellfish.<sup>3</sup> The books of Exodus and Deuteronomy give Jews the basis for separating meat and milk. When these dietary restrictions are observed, food has the ability to bring communities together—as West notes above. The Trefa Banquet demonstrates that they can also do the opposite, dividing communities between those who observe the dietary restrictions and those who do not. This event, held on July 18, 1883, was meant to be a celebration honoring the first class of ordines from Hebrew Union College, the eighth annual meeting of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the Rabbinical Literary Association. The night took a turn when non-kosher food was served. In later accounts of the event, it was noted that people were angry and, while not confirmed, some may have walked out. There are many perspectives as to what may or may not have transpired during the dinner and its impact on the Jewish community.

This paper will focus on the meal, later coined the “Trefa Banquet” by the adversaries of Isaac Mayer Wise, who was president of Hebrew Union College. The paper will highlight the social function of food and how sharing a meal creates social bonds as well as emphasizes power

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<sup>2</sup> Harry G. West 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Paul Fieldhouse. *Food, Feasts, and Faith: An Encyclopedia of Food Culture in World Religions*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, an imprint of ABC-CLIO, LLC, 2017.

dynamics. The paper will explore what occurred during and in the aftermath of the Banquet. It will include a history of the Banquet with archival research providing second-hand accounts as to what occurred. This will be necessary background and provide a framework for discussion of broader topics concerning the Reform Movement and observing kosher laws.

The paper will then address Isaac Mayer Wise's role in the Banquet and the bigger picture question: Was the serving of non-kosher food intentional or not? This paper will broadly discuss the Reform Movement's views on keeping kosher and how Reform Jews' attitudes have changed over the years since that night. The final part of the paper will begin by asking if the Trefa Banquet menu was a mistake based on what we know now and will offer insight about the ways in which we might approach a current day re-creation of the Trefa Banquet. I will make the argument that if we were to have the Banquet today, it should not mix meat and milk and should include only food eligible for kosher certification. With such a menu, the level of kosher observance will now be determined by the hosts of the event based on the guests in attendance. This will help support the stance that food is a social experience, and that the goal of a social experience should be to nurture inclusion and be cognizant of Jews' multiple interpretations of keeping kosher.

## 2. History of The Trefa Banquet

The Trefa Banquet was a very controversial event, and 142 years later, the dispute remains. This tension raises these questions: Why were people so upset by what happened? Were the rules of kashrut broken intentionally or by accident, and why was that so unforgivable to certain segments of the Jewish community? Despite the passage of time, there is still a lot of disagreement over what transpired. Those who did experience the event first-hand have specific memories of the events that occurred. While that may help provide a fuller picture, those stories

could be tainted with personal bias. For example, David Philipson, a member of the first Hebrew Union College ordination class, detailed that shrimp was the first course served. However, when I looked over the menu, littleneck clams are listed as the first course. Phillipson believed that the Banquet helped to make way for a conservative rabbinical seminary.<sup>4</sup>

John J. Appel, a historian of Jewish history, published an analysis in 1996 of the Trefa Banquet. The impact of the meal is very clear as he wrote:

that the inclusion of shrimp, crab, and clams on the menu of the Trefa Banquet was not a caterer's error but reflected the ambivalent, sometimes contradictory attitude of Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise toward kashrut and, more significantly, was deliberately arranged by some Cincinnati businessmen. In fact, the determination of the final menu was probably more benign and lacked any intention to antagonize the guests of HUC and The Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC).<sup>5</sup> Appel agreed with Philipson that the event helped pave the way for Conservative Judaism in America.<sup>6</sup>

Appel asserts that this was not an error of the caterer and reframes the Banquet's events as being intentional. The menu would have reflected Wise's inconsistent and contradictory attitude toward keeping kosher. The Banquet highlights the tensions in Wise's food choices.

Other historians have examined the role of the caterer to make the claim that the menu was deliberate rather than accidental. Lance Sussman adds that even the caterer of the event, Gustave Lindeman, was given only the instruction to provide an elegant meal, and that the meal was reviewed and approved by Rabbi Wise before the event. This was corroborated by Lindeman's granddaughter, Edith Calisch, who offers that that Gus Lindeman had no knowledge

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<sup>4</sup> Philipson, *My Life*, 23.

<sup>5</sup> Lance J. Sussman, "The Myth of the Trefa Banquet: American Culinary Culture and the Radicalization of Food Policy in American Reform Judaism." *American Jewish Archives Journal* 57, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Appel, "The Trefa Banquet," 75-78.

of the guests in attendance.<sup>7</sup> Dr. Jacob Raider Marcus, Director of the American Jewish Archives, sent a letter to Edith Calisch in 1975 inquiring if she knew about the connection between her grandfather and the Trefa Banquet. She wrote in her response to him that she had never heard of this Banquet until her uncle showed her a story about it. Marcus exonerated Lindeman and said that the Banquet committee approved the menu. Calisch then speculated that the reason shellfish was served was because Lindeman was asked to provide a meal of special delicacies. In 1883, shrimp would have been viewed as a product for special occasions as it was not typically seen in the Midwest.

Wise himself at times affirmed and at times contradicted the caterer's claims. In an article Wise published in *The Israelite* in August 1883, he wrote that the cook, who was Jewish, was told to make a kosher meal for the guests. Wise had no idea why the caterer changed the menu. Two weeks later, in Wise's German Jewish newspaper, he wrote that the Cincinnati Banquet Committee approved dishes that violated kashrut to be served. When he was asked to speak about the actions of the committee, Wise protected himself and went on the offensive. It is interesting to note that almost all violations of kashrut made its way onto the Banquet menu except for pork. There was seafood, mixing of meat and milk, and other proteins ineligible for kosher certification.<sup>8</sup>

An eyewitness account complicates Wise's story of the events, but it provides insight as to how those at the Banquet conducted themselves. Henrietta Szold, a 22 year old reporter who attended the Banquet with her father Rabbi Benjamin Szold, wrote in an article that appeared in New York's *The Jewish Messenger* five days after the Banquet:

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<sup>7</sup> Lance J. Sussman. 2005

<sup>8</sup> Die Deborah, August 17, 1883. Author's translation.

There was no regard paid to our dietary laws, she continued, and consequently two rabbis left the table without having touched the dishes, and I am happy to state that I know of at least three more who ate nothing and were indignant but signified their disapproval in a less demonstrative manner.<sup>9</sup>

It is noted that it was revolutionary for women to attend this Banquet and report on it which may affect how people would perceive Szold's comments if up until this point reporters were men.<sup>10</sup> Her report suggests that the serving of non-kosher food was intentional and that the caterer planned the menu which is contrary to Wise's claims. This is still being debated and is ambiguous among many Reform Jews. This Banquet created many divides among the supporters of Wise because he was defensive and could not give one reason why non-kosher food was served. It is said that he referred to oysters as ocean vegetables, which made them permissible to serve.

While the Banquet food horrified some of the guests in attendance and many people in the wider Jewish community, there were people who purported to support Wise and thought of his critics as ignorant. To them, the Banquet was seen as a more modern take on Jewish food and that Jews needed to let go of "kitchen Judaism" because it was outdated. Matters became more tense when the UAHC formed a committee to question Wise's behavior. However, they ruled he was not guilty of conspiring to serve a non-kosher meal.<sup>11</sup> Looking at the bigger picture the Trefa Banquet demonstrated the importance of food practices in Jewish life and that Jewish food had a lot of symbolic value. Until the 1880s most Jews were keeping some form of kosher practice, usually abstaining from pork in their homes and at Jewish communal institutions.

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<sup>9</sup> Lance J Sussman. 2005

<sup>10</sup> Jonathan D. Sarna, "The Debate Over Mixed Seating in the American Synagogue," in *The American Synagogue: A Sanctuary Transformed*, ed. Jack Wertheimer (New York: Cambridge Press, 1987), 262-94.

<sup>11</sup> *American Israelite*, May 9, 1884, p.4; May 23, p.4, edited by Isaac Mayer Wise

Examining Wise's food practice is difficult. We know he did not like the idea of "kitchen Judaism" and that he did not eat pork, but he said oysters were kosher so the assumption is he consumed them. The popularity of seafood during this time in the United States and the belief that it had health benefits meant that part of traditional kashrut in the 19th century was rejected by many American Jews. Moreover, during this time there was a movement towards religious modernism and a more progressive culture, which played a role in the food of the Banquet. Therefore, it is understandable why shellfish would have been served at the Banquet.<sup>12</sup>

In his article on the Trefa Banquet, Appel remarked how one of the four ordonees being honored that evening, Rabbi David Phillipson, remembered two rabbis who rose from their seats and rushed from the room because shrimp had been put before them. This affirms Szold's report. For a long time, many historians relied on Rabbi Phillipson's first-hand account of the Banquet as fact. Phillipson believed that serving shellfish was a mistake of the caterer who should have been told to prepare kosher dishes. Appel notes that this dinner was not the only thing that caused a split between Reformers and Conservatives. He was not satisfied that this mistake at the Banquet was an oversight or the caterer's fault. In Appel's initial research about the menu, he found that little neck clams were listed as the first course, but shrimp was served later. Also, the dessert was listed as ice cream and cheese, another violation of the laws of kashrut. Appel thought Wise believed that many Reform Jews did not care about kashrut and were indifferent to following its rules. In a news article, Rabbi Schreiber:

called Wise's critics ignorant fanatics and the Cincinnati dinner a fitting occasion to declare publicly and emphatically that kitchen Judaism should be relegated to the antique cabinet

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<sup>12</sup> Lance J. Sussman. 2005

where it belongs. Why should a dozen men whose religion depended upon abstention from oysters and lobsters decide what others, who liked these dishes, should eat?<sup>13</sup>

Appel adds, like Calisch did, that the Trefa Banquet did not diminish the caterer's reputation. A year later Lindeman was cooking for the Fraternal Order Free Sons of Israel in Cincinnati. It appears that the Banquet was also contentious because it is what caused friction between denominations and the birth of Conservative Judaism. While the Banquet may have been the starting point for conversations it did not cause a split right away. The Pittsburg Platform of 1885 strengthened the idea and need for a split. Wise did not want to compromise his views on kashrut and this is evident in his own writings in which he lacks the ability to be civil towards those with opposing views from his own. Appel concludes that the Trefa Banquet was purposely arranged by Cincinnati businessmen and supporters of Wise. He believed that these people wanted to adapt Judaism to the customs of American food culture. Wise was either forced to defend their choices or refused to condemn them because it aligned with his own views. Wise wanted Judaism to align more closely with American customs and did not understand that this would create strife and controversy. Appel concludes: "The Trefa Banquet deserves to be better known as a significant episode in this process of secularization and Americanization of Judaism."<sup>14</sup>

According to a term paper submitted to Hebrew Union College in 1950 by Rabbi Daniel Jeremy Silver, American Judaism in 1883 fell under the umbrella of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and into a single organizational body. There was also only one seminary, Hebrew Union College. American Jews felt the sense of unity for which they had been striving over three decades. Silver felt that Wise wanted to celebrate this coming together of the Jewish community. The first ordination of HUC would be the perfect occasion to have a festive feast

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<sup>13</sup> John J. Appel The Trefa Banquet, February, 1966.

<sup>14</sup> John J. Appel The Trefa Banquet, February, 1966.

where old feuds could be put away and joy would be had in celebration of the ordines. Wise also hosted a joint meeting of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Rabbinical Literary Society from July 10 to 13, 1883, which went very well. It is recalled that there was not a single disturbance during those meetings, and peace and harmony triumphed. The weekend would have gone on without a hitch except for the incident at the Banquet dinner when non-kosher food was served. Silver's paper introduces a broader discussion of Wise's attempt to unify American Judaism.

Many people hold the idea that the Banquet is what caused the split between Reform and more traditional forms of Judaism, but according to Silver those tensions were a lot deeper than non-kosher food being served at this event. There was the hope for one seminary and one form of Jewish life in America and this did not come to fruition because of factors that were separate from the practice of keeping kosher. The important thing to note, according to Silver, is that the Banquet, while it did create uneasiness, was not the cause of the splitting of Jews or a catalyst for a split because then a split would have occurred immediately and not a year later. The problems began when the Banquet was singled out as a major event by Rabbi David Philipson, a member of the first HUC ordination class, and people embraced his story and their imagination ran wild. We will never know what exactly happened in 1883 but Silver's argument is in direct contrast to Philipson's claims. Silver's goal was to emphasize how Wise wanted to establish a unified American Judaism.<sup>15</sup>

There are so many varying accounts as to what happened on the night of the Trefa Banquet that it can be difficult to tell whether the serving of non-kosher food was intentional or not. It is clear from the varying accounts above that scholars have different ideas about Wise's

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<sup>15</sup> Daniel Jeremy Silver, *The Trefa Banquet Story, or, A Study in Causation* term paper submitted to Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, 1950.

role in the planning of the Banquet. Some say that he approved the menu and others say the Banquet was the plan of Cincinnati businessmen and supporters of Wise. There are also accounts that state that the caterer did not have any idea of who he was serving. One can surmise if the caterer had known that this Banquet was for the Jewish community, his Jewish background would have led him to provide a different menu. Arguments can be made from both sides. If Wise was the one who wrote the menu, and given what we know of his stance on keeping kosher, the claim can be made that serving non-kosher was intentional. The intended outcome of the Banquet is even more difficult to determine. Did whoever created the Banquet have any idea of the repercussions it would cause solely based on choices of food?

The Banquet was about food, but on another level not about food at all. It was about Judaism, Reform Judaism's stance on keeping kosher, and its effect on the Jewish community at large. Food is a social and communal experience. By having a Banquet where everyone cannot eat the food, this is a statement. It is unclear as to whether or not this was Wise's intended action, but it led to Reform leaders making choices on how keeping kosher would be viewed from a Reform lens. Food has the power to bring people together and the capability of alienating, which it did that night in a significant way where the repercussions are still felt to this day.

### 3. Reform Movement and Kashrut

Attitudes within the Reform Movement about keeping kosher have changed significantly over time from a practice that was influenced by the Pittsburgh Platform to now being a person's individual choice. The Trefa Banquet and its aftermath had a major impact on this shift. The Banquet caused a debate for about two years until a group of Reform rabbis, under the leadership of biblical scholar and Rabbi Kaufman Kohler, united to create the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform.

Part of the Platform included below was a complete rejection of keeping kosher and a move towards a more radical form of Judaism.

We hold that all such Mosaic and rabbinical laws as regulate diet, priestly purity, and dress originated in ages and under the influence of ideas entirely foreign to our present mental and spiritual state. They fail to impress the modern Jew with a spirit of priestly holiness; their observance in our days is apt rather to obstruct than to further modern spiritual elevation.<sup>16</sup>

This statement claims that the more traditional laws were created in a very different time period and were not relevant for the Jewish community in 1885. Jews believed the laws were outdated and that they needed to change to express the current culture and lifestyle. The laws did not connect them to G-d and did not make them feel more spiritual. Thus, it was time for a change. The Reform Jewish community's decision to go against the laws of keeping kosher gave them the opportunity to create their own form of Judaism, but it also inspired those who wanted to be more traditional and practice a historical Judaism to found the Jewish Theological Seminary as a counterpart to HUC. In 1937, the Columbus Platform created a shift from 1885 because this new Platform made no mention of keeping kosher since it was seen as outdated. This is significant because it shows people's evolving reactions to kashrut and how practices continue to change over time.<sup>17</sup>

In 1979, the Central Conference of American Rabbis Responsa Committee created a responsum which stated that individual Reform Jews and congregations can keep kosher if they chose to do so, but nothing was being mandated. The responsum states the importance and value of food because it is a gift from G-d that complements how people express Judaism. It also

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<sup>16</sup> Central Conference of American Rabbis, "*Declaration of Principles (The Pittsburgh Platform 1885)*"

<sup>17</sup> Central Conference of American Rabbis. 1937. "The Guiding Principles of Reform Judaism, The Columbus Platform."

mentioned that many people keep kosher so they can feel comfortable dining with other Jews who choose to do so as well; they do not want other people to feel excluded. This is why many Reform synagogues impose some form of dietary laws in their building. Having a kosher kitchen makes people feel comfortable and provides a space where they know they can join together with the community to have a meal. Another reason someone may keep kosher is that it provides them with a link and connection to the Jewish people's history and values. They have read in the Torah how our ancestors kept kosher and received the laws of kashrut and can identify with that.

In the 1979 responsum, two Rabbis of classic Reform Judaism, Samuel Holdheim and David Einhorn completely reject the practice of keeping kosher and tried to push Reform Judaism in a different direction. The responsum also articulates that people can make their own choices, which is one of the tenets of Reform Judaism. Many Reform Jews keep kosher in their own way by not eating proteins ineligible for kosher certification like pork or seafood as well as by not mixing meat and dairy. It is up to the individual to make an informed decision that allows them to create a relationship to Judaism. Some Jews may decide to keep kosher in their home and eat non-kosher food outside of their home. One option is to only eat kosher meat or become vegetarian to avoid taking a life and connect to the principle of treating animals in a humane manner. There is no proscription which says you have to do this, but the responsum encourages people to think about kashrut. Synagogues and individuals can make choices that prompt them to reflect on Judaism and Jewish practice daily. The responsum concludes by talking about what may occur during an emergency situation, and that in Orthodox communities the laws of kashrut would be broken to follow Pikuach Nefesh (saving a life).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Central Conference of American Rabbis. "ARR 128-131 – Kashrut in Reform Judaism." *CCAR Responsa*.

It is abundantly clear from the 1979 responsum that what we eat matters and Judaism is changing, as Carol Balin argues: “What historian Hasia Diner maintains for American Jewry is equally true for modern Jews in general: reality shattered the orderliness of the Jewish consumption, which (had been) based on a relatively broad consensus over kashrut.”<sup>19</sup> Reform Jews have experienced all the numerous ways that a person could keep kosher and from this developed an understanding of how laws can change and become fluid. The Trefa Banquet was not the first time or the last time that non-kosher food was served at a Reform Jewish function.

In 1841, a dinner was held in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Free School for Impoverished Boys in Germany. This feast included oysters, pigs head, and crab.<sup>20</sup> In 1976, Rabbi Isaac Meyer Wise’s granddaughter was awarded an honorary degree by HUC and president of HUC Alfred Gottschalk hosted a lunch in her honor. The salad was served with ham, and when historian Jacob Rader Marcus noticed, the plates were sent back to the kitchen and the ham was removed. Rabbi Carole Balin named this event the “ham jam” and she believed that the historical contexts of these two events illustrated the ways that Reform Jews responded to each occasion. At the Trefa Banquet Wise never announced that there was a problem with the food, and he admonished those who did. He believed that the reasoning for following dietary laws should not be religious, but instead humanitarian.<sup>21</sup>

Wise’s thoughts on keeping kosher spearheaded the creation of the Pittsburgh Platform which allowed Jews to reject kashrut that many believed was keeping them separate from their

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<sup>19</sup> Carole B. Balin. “Making Every Forkful Count: Reform Jews, Kashrut, and Mindful Eating, 1840–2010.” In *The Sacred Table: Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, edited by Mary L. Zamore, 5–16. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2011.

<sup>20</sup> Michael A. Meyer, *A Response to Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998), 114.

<sup>21</sup> Carole B. Balin. “Making Every Forkful Count: Reform Jews, Kashrut, and Mindful Eating, 1840–2010.” In *The Sacred Table: Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, edited by Mary L. Zamore, 5–16. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2011.

neighbors. Jews were now allowed to have meals with non-Jews and create connections with people of other faiths.<sup>22</sup> Judaism was now able to shape a new identity in the kitchen and this is seen with synagogue sisterhoods creating their own recipes that sometimes were traditional and sometimes broke kashrut. Judaism was changing and creating within it an opportunity for people to be diverse in the kitchen with their culinary palates. There was also an understanding that change takes time and letting go of the way things used to be was challenging. Many recipes from during the late 19th century still did not use pig as it was seen as taboo.<sup>23</sup> This was one of the reasons that the director of catering from the “ham jam” incident sent out a letter apologizing for his mistake. Gottschalk wrote back to the caterer privately in a more sensitive manner than Wise did.

Three years after “ham jam,” the CCAR published its first book *Gates of Mitzvah* in 1979 which served as a guide for Jewish practices. In its discussion of kashrut, the authors of the book urged readers to study kashrut and understand if this would be a practice meaningful to their lives since it had been part of Jewish life for so long. *Gates of Mitzvah* did not tell people they had to keep kosher; it gave them a choice and suggested that kashrut did not need to be all or nothing. It did urge people of its value and gave people the opportunity to decide whether or not this was an observance they wanted to keep.<sup>24</sup> In the words of Rabbi Allen Morris, who has served as the Senior Rabbi of Beth Jacob Congregation in Minnesota from 2019 to present, “we can all “chew by choice.”<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Peter S. Knobel, “Reform Judaism and Kashrut,” *Judaism* 39, no 4 (1990):488-93.

<sup>23</sup> Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “The Moral Sublime: The Temple Emanuel Fair and Its Cookbook, Denver, 1888.

<sup>24</sup> Simeon J Maslin ed., *Gates of Mitzvah: A Guide to the Jewish Life Cycle* (New York: CCAR Press, 1979), 40.

<sup>25</sup> Rachel Barenblat “Rethinking Kashrut: An Interview with Rabbi Morris Allen,” *Zeek* November 2007, <http://www.zeek.net.711kashrut/>.

Starting in the 1980s, the idea of Reform kashrut exists but it is unclear as to exactly how it is interpreted as the practices are widely varied. Many are adopting practices from traditional understanding of kashrut while others are thinking about their connection to food, linking it to their health and creating a more sustainable world. Both are seen as a way to express Jewish values. For example, in 2008, Temple Oheb Shalom, a Reform synagogue in Baltimore, began growing food in their community garden to be used for the weekly soup kitchen housed at St. Gregory the Great, a Catholic parish. Four thousand pounds of produce are grown per year helping to feed those in need and fostering strengthened connections between Jews and Christians. This project is Oheb Shalom's understanding of kosher and the multitude of meanings it contains.<sup>26</sup>

In May 1999, the CCAR passed another statement that said they were focusing on the study of mitzvot and renewing their attention to mitzvot that are both ancient and modern because of the times they are living in. This statement was supposed to correct what was passed 114 years ago, which rejected kashrut among other things. Many people did not want to keep kosher because of the displeasing experiences they had growing up. Reform Jews felt that after the Pittsburgh Platform's rejection of kashrut in 1885 that they could not keep kosher. The 1999 Pittsburgh Platform was created to fix the mistakes of 1885 and to give Jews the explicit permission to keep kosher if they chose to do so. This Platform tried to tell people that kashrut was something to help Reform Jews relate to G-d by deepening their connection to spirituality through food. Just like how we have models and levels of Shabbat observance we can do the same with kashrut.

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<sup>26</sup> Jennifer Williams, "City's St. Gregory Begins 'A New Day,'" *The Catholic Review*, December 17, 2009.

Rabbi Richard N. Levy, an American Reform Rabbi and past president of the CCAR, proposed to the CCAR the establishment of a Reform Kashrut Board in 1999. The Board would be a resource for Jews who wanted help adapting the practice of kashrut in their lives. This Board would also be charged with making recommendations to individuals and synagogues. Levy argues that we need to model for others and lead by example. He then poses the question: If we keep kosher does that mean we cannot share a meal with someone who is not Jewish? He answers his question by stating that Jews are not the only group with dietary restrictions and it is very common to inform a host about dietary restrictions. Levy also argues that we assume most Reform Jews do not keep kosher, which would make learning about kashrut not important. We think of the kashrut observance scale as all or nothing when in reality it is a spectrum.

As Reform Jews we are allowed and encouraged to keep the aspects of kashrut that are meaningful to us.

In the unique context of our time, kashrut can be a natural for Reform Jews. It nurtures our yearning to deepen our spiritual lives; it responds to our classic imperatives for social justice; it brings us into closer contact with our godly role as guardians of creation; it opens new opportunities to mingle with today's diverse population of Jews and non-Jews; it offers a variety of disciplines that can keep us from sliding into the maw of North American materialism.<sup>27</sup>

In 2005, a change was made in the survey presented to attendees of the Union of Reform Judaism Biennial. Questions on kashrut observance were added along with the typical questions about worship and Shabbat practice. There was a perception that since the rejection of the Pittsburgh Platform in 1885, people's views on kashrut have stayed the same. The changes to the survey showed a new openness that perspectives may have changed. The types of questions

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<sup>27</sup> Richard N. Levy. "Kashrut: A New Freedom for Reform Jews." In *The Sacred Table: Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, edited by Mary L. Zamore, 75. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2011.

asked included: “Do you eat pork?”, “Do you eat shellfish?”, “Do you mix milk and meat?”, and “Do you take ethical concerns into account in your diet?” In staggering results, we learned that more people do not eat shellfish than attend Shabbat morning services. Of the 526 attendees who responded to the survey 62% do not eat pork at home and 46% do not eat shellfish at home. 80% do not have chametz during the week of Passover and only 10% of people who responded to the survey do not say motzi at meals. These statistics suggest that Reform dietary practice can turn meals into a spiritual moment. Our dining room can become a sanctuary similar to how our table can be seen as the altar in the Temple.<sup>28</sup>

This survey helps us understand the importance of kashrut to Reform Jews. It allowed us to see that our definitions need to be broader and that for people it is not only about biblical foods but also ethically questionable foods and holidays. We should be discussing kashrut as a way to bring a sense of holiness and community to our tables. We need to be devoting our time to educational materials about kashrut as we have done for Shabbat, especially because many people answered that they observe some kosher rules because they are Reform Jews. This needs to be done in a sensitive manner where we still emphasize that individuals can and should make their own choices. Discussions on kashrut are not about creating a movement-wide stance as they may have been in the past, but as a way for people to become educated in an area the Reform Movement has spent less time focusing on. The findings of the 2005 survey are limited, but they show that this is an area of opportunity for Reform Jews which should be addressed and not ignored.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Richard N. Levy and Marc Gertz. “Is Dietary Practice Now in the Reform Mainstream? A Survey of Attendees at the 2005 Houston Biennial.” In *The Sacred Table: Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, edited by Mary L. Zamore, 105–12. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2011.

<sup>29</sup> Richard N. Levy and Marc Gertz. 2011, 105-112.

It is interesting to note that for many Reform Jews the significance of kashrut has transformed from one of ritual to ethical concerns. The ethical concerns were either ignored or did not exist during the time of the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform. It seems that Reform Jews are more concerned now with the treatment and cruelty to animals which distinguishes Reform kashrut from a more traditional Orthodox stance. Orthodox Judaism seems to be more focused on the treatment of animals in connection to the Torah laws. Branching off of this came the term eco-kashrut which contains four parts: excessive waste and environmental impact, cruelty to animals, health, and labor exploitation. Through eco-kashrut and *hechsher tzedek*, which emphasize care for the environment and animals, we are seeing a new understanding of what is important to the Reform Jewish community. Many people believe that vegetarianism can be considered a form of kashrut. Since 1979, multiple discussions have been held by the CCAR where people spoke favorably about the idea of vegetarian kashrut. Reform leaders who recognized vegetarianism did so because it reminded them of the Torah and the Garden of Eden. They stated that G-d's ideal diet, based on the book of Genesis, was vegetarian and therefore we should all be vegetarian which connects us to creation.<sup>30</sup>

There is also a basis for this argument outside of the Torah that exists with agencies and organizations looking at the welfare of animals and health. In 2000, Rabbi Charles Kroloff, President of the CCAR, formed a task force on kashrut with a subcommittee on eco-kashrut. It is interesting to consider why the idea of vegetarianism connected to kashrut has gained momentum. As Reform Jews we are more interested in ritual than we used to be. We also want to find a reason for kashrut that is based in science and offers health benefits. Diets that claim

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<sup>30</sup> Gary David Rendsburg, "Shemini (Leviticus 9:1–11:47): The Vegetarian Ideal in the Bible," in *From Forbidden Fruit to Milk and Honey: A Commentary on Food in the Torah*, ed. Diana Lipton (Jerusalem: Urim Publications, 2018), 156–59.

health outcomes will tend to draw people. If the argument is that vegetarianism is better for you, then it is logical to conclude that people would be in favor of a vegetarian kashrut diet because it would have those same health benefits. Since the 1970s, Jewish ecological writings have significantly increased, and this trend is continuing. Vegetarian kashrut allows for people to come closer to a more traditional observance while keeping in mind the main tenets of Reform Judaism.<sup>31</sup>

Today's motives to follow kashrut laws often put the emphasis on ethical/utilitarian considerations, contending that kashrut can create holiness in one's life and home, that it can strengthen solidarity within the Jewish people, support the environment or participate in Tikun olam ... Reformers today are therefore led by ethical motives, similar to the ones their predecessors valued. They still stand very far from a traditionalist/orthodox interpretation of kashrut.<sup>32</sup>

Food and kashrut have the opportunity to show a lot about an individual person's characteristics. Food is deeply connected to our identity. What we eat or choose not to eat says many things about the type of person we are and how we create relationships with one another. I believe that Kashrut was a way to create an insular Jewish community and ensured that Jews had few interactions with those of other religions. Kashrut helped Jews relate to one another through a common ground and bonding experience. When different sects of Judaism have incompatible views on kashrut, it can create division. The most well known example of this in Reform Judaism is the 1885 Pittsburgh Platform with its rejection of kashrut. Kashrut observance was

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<sup>31</sup> Aaron Saul Gross. "Continuity and Change in Reform Views of Kashrut, 1883–2002: From the T'reifah Banquet to Eco-Kashrut." In *The Sacred Table: Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, edited by Mary L. Zamore, 234–259. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2011.

<sup>32</sup> Delphine Horvilleur. "From the Treifa Banquet to Tomorrow's Classrooms" "Educating about Kashrut in a Reform Setting" Thesis for a Master of Arts in Religious Education, Hebrew Union College, New York, 2005.

one thing that divided people and it became a roadblock. In the 19th century, sharing meals and eating together was important because it was a social experience. The traditional view of kashrut was that those who observed it belonged to a holy and sacred group that served G-d.

Food helps to strengthen Jewish identity and observing kashrut can be one of those approaches. We eat matzah on Passover as a reminder of what our ancestors experienced. Sufganiyot and potato latkes on Hanukkah have become part of our culture. These foods help to create a connection to Judaism through their taste, smell, and stories. There is also the stance that giving up certain foods like pork and shellfish helps connect us to our Jewish identity. When we make the choice not to eat food that is prohibited under kashrut laws, we are reminded that we are Jewish and we identify as Jews to the outside world. “Kashrut, however defined but taken seriously, means that our stomachs will be praying, and we will feel our identity in our kishkes.”<sup>33</sup> In our Reform Jewish world today, we struggle and wrestle with kashrut because there is not one unified way of keeping kosher; and therefore, there are a lot of aspects of kashrut that need to be considered. We are not only thinking about the food on our plates, but how the food was prepared. It is much easier to make choices concerning kashrut on an individual level, but it can be more complicated when thinking about Reform communal spaces.

If kashrut is a matter of individual informed choice, how are our communities to proceed? In a Reform setting where a rabbi does not hold all the power and authority, lay people often are decision makers and intermediaries. They serve the general congregation by making sure people’s needs are heard and met. Every Reform congregation will have a different stance and policy on kashrut. As a Reform Movement after the 1885 Platform we were never going to have a unified stance because people felt alienated when something important to them was

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<sup>33</sup> Peter Knobel. “What I Eat Is Who I Am: Kashrut and Identity.” In *The Sacred Table: Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, edited by Mary L. Zamore, 439–444. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2011.

dismissed. Kashrut has come a long way since the night of the Trefa Banquet in 1883. While Orthodox Jews might perceive that Reform Jews do not keep kosher, it is not the case. We have seen from this examination and evolution of kashrut that Reform Jews do have an interest in keeping kosher. Kashrut will always be important to Jews because it allows us to come together to celebrate our Judaism through food, eating, and community.<sup>34</sup>

#### 4. Kosher Trefa Banquet

In light of various opinions as to what happened on the night of the Trefa Banquet and the consequences of that night, was the food served at the Trefa Banquet intentional or accidental? Both scenarios are possible because we have views that contradict one another. The question really becomes which source do you trust and what information can we learn from these sources on the importance or lack of importance surrounding kashrut in 1883 and beyond. How do we determine if a person's actions were deliberate or not when, in modern times we obviously cannot speak to anyone who was at the original dinner. We only have accounts from some of the attendees, but there is no way to corroborate their stories. Although we will never know whether Wise intentionally served non-kosher food, it is clear that the Banquet was meant to make a statement. We will never know if the message was supposed to be about unity or intended to spark and create division. There will always be people who support Wise's vision of the Reform Movement and those who wish to contradict and undermine him.

Rabbi Phillipson's view of the events is what people still remember today. He was a member of the first ordination class, which gave him status and credibility. His version of events

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<sup>34</sup> Jeffrey Brown. "Creating a Reform Communal Dietary Policy." In *The Sacred Table: Creating a Jewish Food Ethic*, edited by Mary L. Zamore, 474–481. New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 2011.

is being told as if it is history. It is important to consider that this was his personal account. The Trefa Banquet is still relevant to our lives today because of the narratives it created surrounding the split of Reform and more traditional practice that paved the way for Conservative Judaism. While it is unclear if the Trefa Banquet actually caused a split, some people view this event as the catalyst for Conservative Judaism. Other historians claim the opposing view and believe the split happened later and had nothing to do with the Banquet.

An important question to consider is whether we need to know with 100% certainty if the serving of non-kosher food was deliberate or a mistake. Does it matter now, in the 21st century, if Wise or the Banquet Committee made the choice to serve non-kosher food or if it was an error by the caterer? This question remains significant because there are still repercussions from that night. An event whose intent was to bring the Jewish community together turned into something completely different when it alienated people. There is no way to know if people were angry enough to walk out, but it is very likely that some attendees found shellfish so offensive that they left the Banquet.

If we were to have the Trefa Banquet in our modern society full of varying practices among Jews, how would and should we approach the re-creation of this event? The Banquet should have brought different groups together for a celebration of the first ordination of HUC. While there have been many Banquets since, none have tried intentionally to resolve the issue of Reform Jews and their diverse eating habits. First, we would need to consider who would be invited to this event because we would want to craft a menu that would be appropriate for anyone in attendance.

This was the source of the problem in 1883 when guests could not and would not eat the food that was set before them. It is surprising that there does not seem to be any accounts of the

food being sent back to the kitchen and there is no evidence that any attendee spoke up that night during the event. Would it have been possible for the kitchen to create new plates of food that did not have any non-kosher food on them? At a Banquet in 1976 for Wise's granddaughter, when ham was found in a salad, Rabbi Jacob Rader Marcus spoke up about the issue. The plates were immediately brought back to the kitchen so the ham could be removed and a new salad could be served. Did this happen because it was easy for the kitchen staff to fix?

The Trefa Banquet may have had too many violations of kashrut which could not be fixed on a moment's notice. To recreate the Trefa Banquet with a kosher menu, ingredients will need to be changed while still embracing the original dishes. This is so guests would see a connection to the original Banquet. The goal is not to make this seem like any other Banquet, but to create a menu that celebrates inclusivity and honors the memory of HUC's first ordination class. Since the original Banquet menu was mainly meat it would not be difficult to replace the nonkosher proteins with others that are eligible for kosher certification. For example, frog legs, which are not kosher, could be substituted with chicken because it has a similar flavor and texture. There are also proteins such as sweetbreads and pigeons that are kosher, but are not widely consumed in the United States. Today, I would substitute those items with kosher meat that would be easier to find and more prevalent in our society. Most people in the 21st century do not eat pigeons or sweetbreads on a regular basis.

The other major issue with the Trefa Banquet is the shellfish that would need to be removed from the menu. It is harder to find substitutes for shellfish than it is for meat, but imitation shrimp and crab are well-known products. The original menu had little neck clams for which I would substitute a kosher fish because imitation clams do not currently exist. For a vegetarian option the clams can be substituted with mushrooms. The Banquet menu also mixes

meat and milk, which is forbidden according to the traditional laws of kashrut. Since there was an abundance of meat products on the menu it would be easier to make this a meat meal and eliminate all dairy. Also, the culinary industry has had great success in finding many non-dairy substitutes such as coconut, almond, or soy milk. These non-dairy products can be used in the dessert course. The original Banquet menu is not very specific and only states that ornamented cakes and ice cream were served. Typically, these items would have dairy. Using non-dairy ingredients is one of the many ways to keep the integrity of the original menu while being creative with substitutions.

Depending on the attendees there would need to be a discussion whether products such as meat would need kosher certification- including which certification would be considered acceptable. There would also need to be a discussion about whether a kosher kitchen would be required for food preparation. The best way to accomplish this would be to ask the different groups participating in the event and to acquiesce to the most observant among them. While this may seem like a lot of work, the goal is to create an environment where everyone knows they are welcome and can participate in the meal. That was one of the problems with the original Banquet because no one was thinking about the guests, especially because it is documented that the caterer did not have any idea about the guest list.

The Trefa Banquet was supposed to be seen as a social experience for building bridges and building connections.. If you were to host an updated Trefa Banquet, this should still be the goal. The original intent of the event should be conveyed through its marketing to guests. While the Trefa Banquet is still seen as contentious today for various reasons including the rumors that people walked out, an event that happened 142 years ago has a different meaning now than it did

in the days following the dinner. An updated Trefa Banquet should be a celebration of modern Judaism. As West reminds us this can transcend Jewish experience.

Even though Judaism has evolved and adapted since 1883 many of its guiding principles remain. I think re-creating this Banquet would be an opportunity to share how kashrut has developed through the ages and to show that it has not been a linear progression after 1883. The evolution of kashrut has had moments where the Reform Movement made claims that kashrut was not a central focus for Reform Judaism inferring that it was not important to people. The Reform Movement has also encouraged individuals to create a practice of their own that includes a person's individual relationship to food. Reform Judaism at its core is about informed decision making, which would be a thoughtful and thought provoking message for an updated Banquet.

I am not the only person who has thought of what an updated Banquet would look like. However, my approach is different with the creation of kosher recipes. I intentionally removed all non-kosher ingredients to create the message that any person can use my updated recipes and that they are not only for certain Jews to cook and eat.

The old model was that Jewish communities have an obligation to cater (in this case, quite literally) to the highest common denominator. Thus, the default dietary policy at a Jewish communal event (like something sponsored by a Federation) would be kosher, according to a traditional standard. My sense is that that model is based on the presumption that Jews who do not keep kosher won't be offended, because: a) they will still be able to eat everything at the event and b) they did not make the same kind of religious choice to eat *tref*, in the way that the "observant" Jew chose to eat kosher (and thus would not be offended).<sup>35</sup> I personally still find value in this old model and think it is worth considering when crafting large scale events for the

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<sup>35</sup> Jeff Brown, *Kashrut in Reform Communal Settings: Past, Present, and Future*, Hebrew Union College Rabbinical Thesis, February 28, 2005.

Jewish community. The goal of this model highlights my proposition in this paper: that inclusivity, when it comes to our food choices, should be a high priority among Jews and non-Jews. It is how we create connections with one another without singling anyone out. Each individual person should be able to make their own food choices without outside pressure from friends or even religious institutions.

A recent example of how the Jewish community grapples with our food choices occurred in 2018. In San Francisco, California a Trefa Banquet 2.0 was hosted by Alix Wall, a journalist interested in Jews and food, as part of the Illuminoshi, an organization she created for local Jews working in the food industry. This event had a buffet of items all containing non-kosher ingredients made by Jewish chefs. A rabbi started the evening with the motzi but removed the word “lechem” and replaced it with “shehakol” so it read that G-d brings everything from the earth. People interpreted this blessing as one over non-kosher food too. This event had bacon, rabbit, and pulled pork. People shared stories of how eating non-kosher foods actually connected them to their Jewish heritage just as others have had the same experience with keeping kosher.

The fact that American Jews still tell the story of that night in Cincinnati in 1883 tells us that debates about food practices have been central to the ways that American Jews think about themselves, the stories they tell about themselves and the ways they organize themselves. ... American Jews have always had a wide range of eating habits, defining what it means to eat Jewishly in a broad array of practices.<sup>36</sup>

This quote illustrates that disagreements among practices have characterized the Reform Movement from its beginning through today.

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<sup>36</sup> David A. M Wilensky. “Tradition and Transgression at ‘Trefa Banquet 2.0’.” *J. The Jewish News of Northern California*, January 8, 2018.

## 5. Conclusion

Food brings people together in times of joy and sorrow in a way that is different from other social events, as West argues Food is an essential and important part of the history of the Jews and links us to our ancestors who ate the same food. For example, during Passover when we recall the exodus from Egypt, we use symbolic foods to share the meaning of the story. On Rosh Hashanah, we eat apples and honey to remind us to have a sweet new year. On Purim, we bake hamantaschen to connect us to Esther's story. We even shape our food in certain ways to use as symbols.

Most Jews can relate to the feeling of fasting on Yom Kippur and the first bite of food consumed when the holiday concludes. Jews are bound together by the experience of smelling oil when latkes or sufganiyot are frying. These experiences are part of our Jewish culture and are shared among all people as common practices. As West summarizes: "Every time we eat, we craft our identities, perform relationships, and shape our communities, from the local to the global. Eating therefore warrants contemplation and care, and should be a locus of creative sometimes disruptive activity"<sup>37</sup>

Food and our consumption of it has a lot of power in defining who we are and how we present ourselves in the world. Food can destroy relationships when people feel left out if they do not understand the cultural or religious norms. This is why we need to bring more intentionality into making our food inclusive. Many people in America think of food as an

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<sup>37</sup> Harry G. West. 2022.

afterthought- that it is just a way to fuel our bodies with energy to keep us going throughout the day. However, it is so much more than that. Food is seen as a prized possession because of all the labor it takes to get food onto the dinner table. Food and power often go hand in hand and especially with the practice of observing traditional kashrut. Rabbis made decisions about what a person would put in their bodies based on what they read from the Torah. This demonstrated the authority that rabbis had over laypeople. Eventually, Reform Judaism changed this cultural norm by establishing that lay people could make their own choices concerning food.

It is surprising that an event that happened 142 years ago is looked at as having so much power in the Reform Movement. People believe that the Banquet dictated where the conversation went next with Judaism in America. Keeping kosher kept the Jewish people insular, while eating shellfish or eventually pork allowed them to sit around a table with non-Jews. By not observing kashrut, barriers were broken by opportunities to create conversations across religious divides. The Trefa Banquet and Wise's thoughts about kashrut broke the traditional role and impact of a rabbi's decision-making power. In our modern Reform Jewish world, we do not have rabbis making our Jewish decisions for us. We get to take Judaism into our own hands and decide not only what we eat, but how we pray or keep Shabbat.

There is no collective position among Reform Jews about kashrut as we saw with the Pittsburgh Platform in 1885 and The Columbus Platform of 1937. This is how a variety of Jewish practices evolved in Reform spaces. While it is clear that Reform Jews are thinking about food, they are not doing so in our modern day on a communal level. What does this say about Reform Jews and kashrut? It does not mean that Reform Jews do not value kashrut or that they do not want to keep kosher. What it means is that as a movement we have other priorities that are

addressed communally and that kashrut has become an individual decision and practice in the home or one that is tied to a synagogue.

While congregations do have the power and authority to set rules and guidelines for their congregants in the synagogue, what people do in their own private home is their business and they may have different kashrut practices. Meal consumption can be seen as a holy and sacred act when we respect and do not judge Jews' unique practices. The goal of sharing a meal with someone is not to scrutinize what is on the other person's plate. The goal is to enjoy another person's company and bring together people over a meal. The food should be secondary not the focal point of the conversation. The error of the Trefa Banquet was that food became the focal point and a source of controversy which made kashrut a topic of discussion in the following years. Everyone should have a seat at the table and the original Banquet made sure that this would not be possible. How do we correct that mistake? Jews have argued that Wise's vision of one Judaism was never going to come to reality. If Jews were not fighting about kashrut, they would argue about some other topic. Jews argue because it helps them wrestle and struggle with their identities as they try to find their place in the world

While other sects of Judaism may believe that kashrut is not important to Reform Jews, this paper strongly suggests that this is incorrect and that the opinions among Jews on the topic of kashrut is very diverse. Reform Jews care about what they eat, and while many may not practice traditional kosher laws, they may keep kosher in their own ways when they intentionally and deliberately think about their food choices. There is still so much mystery concerning the Trefa Banquet, but what is clear is that food has the ability to shape our identities, build social bonds, and reflect power dynamics. Wise, whether he intended it or not, created an event that changed how we looked at kashrut for the years to come.

The table is a place where we can learn from one another and expand our horizons. The table does not always need to be so narrow-minded and inward-looking. At the same time the table needs to include everyone, which is why a recreation of the Trefa Banquet needs to follow more traditional views of kashrut. While this may feel like a contradiction to the idea that individual Jews should be able to make their own choices, it shows how Jews can coexist with mutual respect even with varying levels of observance.

There is an idea within our society that if we are not talking about a topic, it means that it is not important to people, I believe that is false. Simply because kashrut is not on the forefront of everyone's mind like it was in 1883 or 2005 does not mean that it is not worth discussing. The Trefa Banquet was a major event for the Reform Movement. It is up to us as to if we are going to use food as a way to bring the community together or let food create a schism and divide us.

Following this essay you will see the booklet where the recipes from the original Banquet have been adapted to modern kashrut practices, as well as an outline for the cooking class which uses those new recipes.

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## 1883 Revisited: The Kosher Trefa Banquet Menu

My overarching goal for this new and adapted menu was to make it as inclusive as possible so that all Jews and non-Jews can cook these recipes and sit down together for a meal, as discussed in the essay. I wanted to keep the dishes from the original menu as authentic and preserved as possible. The biggest changes I made were removing all non-kosher proteins and all dairy products. All proteins are now kosher, but each individual who makes these recipes may decide for themselves the level of kashrut they prefer.

### Hors-D'oeuvres

For the hors-d'oeuvres section of the menu I was a little more creative in my approach, taking the main ingredients from the original menu and transforming them into items that would be eaten at a cocktail hour. The hors-d'oeuvres are one-bite, handheld snacks, making them the perfect option to pair with a cocktail or mocktail.

#### Olive Skewers

Yield: 4 portions

#### Ingredients:

- 8 wood skewers
- 2 cups pitted olives (Kalamata, Castelvetrano, Cerignola)
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes dressed with olive oil, salt, pepper and torn fresh basil
- 1 cup jarred marinated artichoke hearts

#### Instructions:

- Thread the olives, tomatoes and artichokes onto the skewers

## **Beets and Smoked Salmon**

Yield: 4 portions

### **Ingredients:**

- 2 medium beets, peeled and sliced very thin
- Olive oil, salt, and pepper
- 5 oz smoked salmon
- 1 tsp capers
- 2 tsp dill, chopped

### **Instructions:**

- Preheat the oven to 300°F
- Place the beets on a parchment-lined baking sheet in a single layer
- Bake for 35-40 minutes until crispy
- Add a piece of smoked salmon to each beet chip and garnish with capers and dill

## **Tomato Crostini**

Yield: 4 portions

### **Ingredients:**

- 1 baguette, sliced
- 3 large tomatoes, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 5 leaves basil, torn

### **Instructions:**

- Preheat the oven to 350°F
- Place the baguette slices on a baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil
- Bake until golden, about 8 minutes
- In a bowl, mix together the tomatoes, garlic, olive oil, and basil
- To serve, place the tomato mixture on top of the crostini

## Cocktails

The original Trefa Banquet only had wine pairings and no cocktails or mocktails, but I thought this would be a fun addition with the hors-d'oeuvres. These drinks are inspired by what I thought people would have consumed in 1883, and they are named after Hebrew Union College faculty as a tribute to my professors and all that I have learned from them.

### **The Dr. Christine Thomas**

Yield: 1 drink

#### **Ingredients:**

- 2 oz pineapple juice
- 1 oz coconut water
- 1 oz Bacardi Rum
- 1 oz coconut rum
- 2 oz ginger ale
- Ice (to fill the glass)

#### **Instructions:**

- Fill a tall glass with ice
- Pour in the pineapple juice, coconut water, Bacardi Rum, and coconut rum
- Stir gently to combine
- Top with ginger ale

## **The Dr. David Aaron**

Yield: 1 drink

### **Ingredients:**

- 2 oz gin
- 1 oz fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 oz simple syrup
- Club soda (to top off)
- Garnish: maraschino cherry

### **Instructions:**

- In a cocktail shaker, combine gin, fresh lemon juice, and simple syrup
- Fill the shaker with ice and shake well until chilled
- Strain the mixture into a Collins glass filled with ice
- Top off the drink with club soda
- Garnish with a maraschino cherry

## **The Kalman/Herman**

Yield: 1 drink

### **Ingredients:**

- 1 oz bourbon
- 1 oz sweet vermouth
- 1 oz Campari
- Orange peel for garnish

### **Instructions:**

- Stir all ingredients with ice
- Strain into a chilled glass
- Garnish with an orange peel

## **The Dr. Daniel Fisher Livne**

Yield: 1 drink

### **Ingredients:**

- 2 oz brandy
- 3/4 oz fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 oz orange liqueur
- 1/4 oz grenadine
- Soda water
- Mint sprig garnish

### **Instructions:**

- In a cocktail shaker, combine the brandy, lemon juice, orange liqueur, and grenadine
- Add ice to the shaker
- Shake the mixture well until it's thoroughly chilled, about 15-20 seconds
- Strain into a glass with ice
- Add a splash of soda water to the cocktail and garnish with mint

## Mocktails

### The RS = Richard Sarason

Yield: 1 drink

#### Ingredients:

- 2 Tbsp lime juice
- 5-6 mint leaves
- 8 oz ginger beer
- 1 lime wedge
- 2 oz Seedlip Vodka (non alcoholic)

#### Instructions:

- Pour the Seedlip Vodka and lime juice into a highball glass
- Add the mint and muddle
- Add in ice cubes and the ginger beer
- Stir with a bar spoon to combine
- Garnish with lime wedge

### The Rabbi Edie Yakutis

Yield: 1 drink

#### Ingredients:

- 6 oz water (3 oz for syrup + 3 oz cold)
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ tsp rosewater

#### Instructions:

- Make simple syrup by bringing half the water and sugar to a boil
- Stir to dissolve and reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes
- Cool completely
- In a large pitcher, combine the lemon juice, the simple syrup, cold water, and rosewater
- Pour the rose lemonade into a highball glass

## Appetizers

The original banquet menu had many courses and subheadings. To make the new menu more accessible and easier to understand I created three main sections: appetizers, entrees, and desserts.

### **Little Neck Clams (Half Shell) “Salmon Ceviche”**

Since clams are not kosher, I had to get creative with my substitution and embrace the flavor of seafood in a different way. I substituted the salmon for the clams and created a ceviche that is a semi-cooked preparation of fish. The ceviche can be served in a fake clam shell as a nod to the original dish. This makes for a unique presentation.

Wine pairing: Amontillado Sherry

Yield: 4 portions

#### **Ingredients:**

##### **Ceviche:**

- 1 lb fresh salmon, diced
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice
- 3 Tbsp red grapes, halved
- 3 Tbsp mango, diced
- 3 Tbsp avocado, diced
- ½ habanero pepper, seeds removed and minced
- Salt and pepper to taste

##### **Lime Aioli:**

- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp fresh lime juice
- Salt to taste

##### **Garnish:**

- 3 Tbsp cilantro, chopped

**Instructions:**

**Salmon**

- Dice the salmon into small cubes and place them in a bowl
- Mix in the lime juice, grapes, mango, avocado, habanero pepper, salt and pepper
- Cover and let it marinate in the fridge for 20 minutes

**Lime Aioli**

- Whisk together mayonnaise, lime juice, and salt until smooth
- Refrigerate until ready to use

**To Serve:**

- Place the ceviche in the fake clam shell and garnish with dots of the lime aioli and chopped cilantro

**To Make Vegetarian:** Replace the salmon with diced hearts of palm

## Consomme Royal

I tried to keep the consomme royal, a very technical dish, as traditional as possible. The only substitution is dairy free milk in the egg custard.

Wine pairing: Sauternes

Yield: 4 portions

### Ingredients:

#### Consomme:

- 6 cups chicken stock
- ½ lb ground chicken
- 1 egg white
- 1 carrot, chopped
- 1 celery stalk, chopped
- 1 onion, minced
- ½ tsp salt

#### Egg Custard:

- 2 whole eggs
- 1 egg yolk
- ¾ cup dairy free milk
- Salt and pepper

### Instructions:

#### Consomme

- In a bowl, mix together the ground chicken, egg white, chopped vegetables and salt
- Put cold chicken stock in a stockpot
- Add the ground chicken mixture on top of the stock
- Slowly bring the mixture to a simmer which will form a raft as the meat comes to the top of the pot
- Create a small hole in the raft to let steam escape
- Simmer for around 45 minutes
- Strain soup through a fine strainer lined with cheese cloth

### **Egg Custard**

- Preheat the oven to 300°F
- In a bowl, whisk together the eggs, egg yolk, dairy free milk, salt, and pepper
- Strain the mixture through a fine mesh strainer
- Pour the custard into an 8x8 square baking dish and then set in a larger pan
- Fill the larger pan with hot water to create a water bath
- Bake for 20 minutes until the custard is set
- Cool and then cut into cubes

### **To Serve:**

- Pour the consomme into bowls and float the custard cubes in the hot soup

## Entrees

### **Filet of Beef with Roasted Maitake Mushrooms, “Shrimp” Potato Puree, Red Wine Reduction, and Crab Fennel Salad**

My goal with the beef was to take all the components of the original dish and present it in a more modern fashion, something you could see in a fine dining restaurant today with the substitution of imitation crab and shrimp.

Wine pairing: Cabernet Sauvignon

Yield: 4 portions

#### **Ingredients:**

##### **“Shrimp” Potato Purée:**

- 4 medium potatoes, diced
- 8 Tbsp dairy free milk
- 8 whole imitation shrimp
- 4 Tbsp dairy free butter
- Salt and pepper to taste

##### **Beef and Mushrooms:**

- 4 small filet mignon
- 4 cups maitake mushrooms
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

##### **“Crab” Fennel Salad:**

- 1 cup imitation crab meat
- 1 cup thinly sliced fennel bulb
- 4 teaspoons lemon juice
- 4 teaspoons olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

##### **Red Wine Reduction:**

- 1 ⅓ cups red wine
- ¾ cup beef stock
- 4 shallots, finely chopped
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme

- 4 tsp dairy free butter
- Salt and pepper to taste

### **Instructions:**

#### **Potato Purée**

- Boil the chopped potato in salted water until tender (about 15 minutes)
- Heat up dairy free milk, butter, and imitation shrimp. Infuse the shrimp flavor into the milk and then take out the shrimp
- Drain potatoes and mix with the milk until creamy
- Season with salt and pepper to taste

#### **Roast Maitake Mushrooms**

- Toss mushrooms with olive oil, salt, and pepper  
Roast in a 400°F oven for 10–12 minutes until the edges are crisp and golden

#### **Crab Fennel Salad**

- Toss fennel with lemon juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper
- Fold in crab gently
- Keep cold until ready to serve

#### **Cook the Filet**

- Season steak with salt and pepper
- Heat a pan over medium-high heat with a bit of oil
- Sear the steak for about 5 minutes per side for medium doneness
- Adjust time if steaks are thicker

#### **Red Wine Reduction**

- Sauté the shallots in a little olive oil until translucent
- Add red wine and thyme, reduce by half
- Add stock and reduce until slightly thickened
- Remove thyme, season, and swirl in dairy free butter

#### **To Serve:**

Place the potato purée in the center of the plate, top with the beef, arrange maitake mushrooms on the right side, drizzle with red wine reduction, and top the beef with the crab fennel salad.

**To Make Vegetarian:** Replace the beef with cabbage steaks

## **Roasted Duck with Pea Puree, Sauteed Peas and Spinach, finished with a Red Wine Cherry Sauce**

This next dish originally had a kosher protein of sweet breads, but I knew this would be an ingredient that people would be unfamiliar with and it is not commonly eaten in the United States. To make the course more accessible I changed the protein to duck and added a red wine and cherry sauce.

Wine pairing: Riesling

Yield: 4 portions

### **Ingredients:**

#### **Duck:**

- 4 duck breasts
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### **Pea Puree:**

- 2 cups frozen peas
- 1 shallot, diced
- ½ cup vegetable broth
- 5 mint leaves
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### **Sauteed Peas and Spinach:**

- 1 shallot
- 1½ cups frozen peas
- 4 cups spinach
- Half a lemon
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### **Red Wine Cherry Sauce:**

- 1 cup cherries, pitted
- ¾ cup red wine
- ½ cup chicken stock
- 1 shallot
- 2 sprigs fresh tarragon

**Instructions:****Duck:**

- Score the duck skin in a cross hatch pattern without cutting into the meat
- Season both sides of the duck breasts with salt and pepper
- Place the duck in a cold pan skin side down and cook until the skin is golden brown for about 8 minutes
- Flip the duck and cook for about 4 more minutes until medium 135°F
- Let the duck rest 5-10 minutes before serving

**Pea Puree:**

- Heat olive oil in a saucepan and add in the shallot sauteing until soft
- Add in the peas and vegetable broth
- Cook for about 3 minutes until tender
- Transfer the peas to the blender and add in the mint
- Blend until a smooth puree forms. Season with salt and pepper

**Sauteed Peas and Spinach:**

- Heat olive oil in a skillet and add in the shallot. Cook until soft
- Add in the peas and cook for about 3 minutes to keep the color bright green
- Add in the spinach and cook until wilted
- Season with salt and pepper
- Finish with the juice of half a lemon

**Red Wine Cherry Sauce:**

- In a saucepan add the shallot and cook until soft
- Deglaze the pan with red wine and cook for about 2 minutes to burn off the alcohol
- Add in the cherries, stock, and tarragon
- Simmer until the cherries are soft for about 10 minutes
- If cherries are too acidic add in sugar to taste

**To Serve:** Put a spoonful of the pea puree in the center of the plate. Place the sauteed greens to the left of the puree. Put the duck on top of the puree. Spoon the sauce around the edges of the duck to not ruin the crispy skin.

**To Make Vegetarian:** Replace the duck with roasted mushrooms

## **Chicken Schnitzel with Roasted Potatoes and Asparagus served with a White Wine Sauce**

Some items on the menu are difficult to interpret due to their original French wording, so I took a few creative liberties in defining their composition. The goal was still to stay as close to the original menu with its ingredients, but it needed to be presented in a new way.

Drink pairing: “Punch Romain”

Yield: 4 portions

### **Ingredients:**

#### **Chicken Schnitzel:**

- 2 boneless skinless chicken breasts
- ½ cup flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ cups breadcrumbs
- ½ cup canola oil for frying

#### **Potatoes:**

- 1 ½ lbs baby potatoes, halved
- 1 bunch asparagus, trimmed
- Olive oil to coat vegetables
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### **White Wine Sauce:**

- 2 Tbsp dairy free butter
- 1 shallot
- ½ cup white wine
- ½ cup chicken stock
- 1 Tbsp capers
- Juice and zest of 1 lemon

## **Instructions:**

### **Chicken Schnitzel**

- Slice each chicken breast in half to make four cutlets
- Take the cutlets and place them between two pieces of parchment paper and pound out the cutlets to about ¼ inch thick
- Season the cutlets with salt and pepper
- Create a dredging station by setting up three bowls: flour, beaten eggs, and breadcrumbs
- Dredge each piece of chicken in the flour, egg, and breadcrumbs
- Heat the oil in a skillet and fry the cutlets 3-4 minutes per side until golden brown

### **Potatoes**

- On one sheet tray lined with parchment paper, add the potatoes, drizzling them with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper
- On a second sheet tray repeat this process with the asparagus
- Roast the potatoes at 350°F for around 25 minutes and the asparagus at the same temperature for around 12 minutes

### **White Wine Sauce**

- In a saucepan, melt the butter. Add in the shallots and saute until soft
- Deglaze with the white wine and simmer until reduced by half about 4 minutes
- Add in the chicken stock, capers, lemon zest, and juice
- Simmer for another 4 minutes until slightly thickened
- Season to taste with salt and pepper

**To Serve:** Place the asparagus and potatoes in the center of the plate. Top the vegetables with the chicken schnitzel and drizzle the sauce around the edges of the chicken being careful to not make the chicken soggy.

**To Make Vegetarian:** Replace the chicken with eggplant

## **Soy and Sesame Chicken Wings with Pickled Cauliflower and Herb Ranch**

The original protein for this dish was frog legs, which are not kosher. The rest of the description only lists cauliflower. Therefore, I updated this dish by changing the main component to chicken wings because they have a similar flavor to frog legs. I created an imaginative cauliflower dish to complement the entree.

Yield: 4 portions

### **Ingredients:**

#### **Chicken Wings:**

- 2 lbs chicken wings
- ½ cup soy sauce
- 2 Tbsp honey
- 1 Tbsp rice vinegar
- 1 Tbsp sesame oil
- 1 Tbsp ginger, minced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 Tbsp sesame seeds

#### **Pickled Cauliflower:**

- 1 head cauliflower, cut into florets
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 cup water
- 1 Tbsp sugar
- 1 jalapeno, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- 1 tsp black peppercorns
- 1 tsp salt

#### **Herb Ranch:**

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp soy milk
- 1 Tbsp minced fresh dill
- 1 Tbsp parsley
- ½ tsp garlic and onion powder
- Salt and pepper to taste

## **Instructions:**

### **Chicken Wings**

- In a bowl, mix all ingredients except the chicken and sesame seeds. Pour the marinade over the chicken
- Marinate the chicken for at least 30 minutes or up to overnight
- Preheat the oven to 400°F. Spread the wings in an even layer on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake for 40 minutes and flip wings over once half way through
- Garnish the chicken with sesame seeds

### **Pickled Cauliflower**

- In a saucepan, bring the vinegar, water, sugar, jalapeno, and spices to a boil. Cook until the sugar dissolves
- Pour the brine over the cauliflower florets in a bowl and cool to room temperature
- Refrigerate for 24 hours before serving

### **Herb Ranch**

- Place all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth

**To Serve:** Place chicken wings on a plate next to the pickled cauliflower. Serve the ranch in a ramekin next to the chicken.

**To Make Vegetarian:** Replace the chicken wings with tofu

## **Turkey Vol Au Vents with Green Leaf Lettuce and Radicchio Salad**

The original meat for this dish was pigeon. I substituted turkey and kept the structure of a vol au vent, a classic french preparation, intact.

Drink pairing: Champagne

Yield: 4 portions

### **Ingredients:**

#### **Vol Au Vents:**

- 1 sheet of puff pastry, thawed
- 1 egg beaten, for egg wash

#### **Filling:**

- 3 cups cooked turkey breast, diced
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 tsp dijon mustard
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- ½ cup celery, diced
- 1 red apple, diced
- ¼ cup red onion, diced
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- Salt and pepper to taste

#### **Salad:**

- 2 cups green leaf lettuce, torn into small pieces
- 2 cups radicchio, cut into small pieces
- 1 lemon, juiced
- Olive oil, salt and pepper to taste

### **Instructions:**

#### **Vol Au Vents**

- Preheat the oven to 400°F
- Cut out 4 circles of puff pastry using a round cutter
- Place on a parchment-lined baking sheet and brush with egg wash.
- Bake for about 15 minutes until puffed

**Filling**

- In a bowl mix together the mayonnaise, mustard, lemon juice, salt and pepper until smooth
- Add in the celery, apple, red onion, cranberries, and turkey
- Mix everything together gently until well combined

**Salad**

- Mix together the green leaf lettuce and radicchio
- Toss with the lemon juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper

**To Serve:** Fill the puff pastry shell with the turkey salad or split the puff pastry in half adding the turkey in the center to form a sandwich. Add the bitter green salad to one side of the vol au vent.

**To Make Vegetarian:** Replace the turkey with diced sweet potatoes

## Dessert

### Coconut Cake Roulade with Coconut Buttercream, Raspberry Sauce, and Coconut Ice Cream

The dessert section of the original menu has very little information but lists ice cream and ornamented cakes. I combined the two into one plated dessert using coconut as the main flavor profile because it is an ideal dairy free substitute.

Drink pairing: Cognac and Coffee

Yield: 6 portions

#### Ingredients:

##### Coconut Ice Cream

- 2 cans (13.5 oz each) full-fat coconut milk, chilled overnight
- 1 can (5.4 oz) coconut cream
- ½ cup maple syrup (adjust to taste)
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon salt

##### Coconut Sponge Cake

- 4 large eggs, separated
- ½ cup granulated sugar, divided
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp coconut extract
- ⅓ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 Tbsp cornstarch
- ¼ tsp salt
- ½ cup shredded sweetened coconut
- Powdered sugar (for rolling)

##### Coconut Buttercream

- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted nondairy butter, room temperature
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 2 Tbsp coconut cream
- ¼ tsp coconut extract
- Pinch of salt

**Raspberry Sauce**

- 1 cup fresh raspberries
- 2 tbsp sugar (adjust to taste)
- 1 tsp lemon juice

**Instructions:****Ice Cream**

- In a chilled bowl, whisk together the coconut milk, coconut cream, maple syrup, vanilla extract, and salt
- Whip until smooth and slightly thickened (1–2 minutes with a hand mixer)
- Pour the mixture into a loaf pan
- Smooth the top, cover with plastic wrap or foil, and freeze for 6–8 hours or until firm

**Sponge Cake**

- Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a 10x15 inch sheet tray with parchment paper and lightly grease it
- In a large bowl, beat egg yolks with ¼ cup sugar until pale and thick. Add vanilla and coconut extract
- In another clean bowl, beat egg whites to soft peaks. Gradually add remaining ¼ cup sugar and beat until stiff, glossy peaks form
- Sift together flour, cornstarch, and salt. Gently fold into the yolk mixture. Fold in the beaten egg whites in 2–3 batches, then fold in the shredded coconut.
- Spread batter evenly in the prepared pan and bake for 10–12 minutes, or until lightly golden and springs back to the touch
- While hot, dust a clean kitchen towel with powdered sugar. Turn the cake out onto the towel, remove parchment, and roll the cake up from the short side with the towel inside. Let it cool completely

**Coconut Buttercream**

- Beat butter until smooth
- Add powdered sugar, coconut cream, coconut extract, and salt
- Beat until light and fluffy

### **Raspberry Sauce**

- In a small saucepan, combine raspberries, sugar, and lemon juice
- Cook over medium heat until the berries break down and the mixture slightly thickens
- Chill until ready to serve

### **Assemble the Roulade**

- Carefully unroll the cooled cake
- Spread the coconut buttercream evenly over the surface
- Gently roll the cake back up (without the towel). Trim ends for a clean look
- Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before slicing

### **To Serve:**

- Slice roulade into equal sized portions. Spoon raspberry sauce over each slice. Add a scoop of coconut ice cream on the side

## **1883 Revisited: The Kosher Trefa Banquet Cooking Class**

### Overview of Trefa Banquet

The most famous example of breaking tradition in Reform Judaism is the Trefa Banquet. This event held on July 18, 1883 was meant to be a celebration honoring the first class of ordines of Hebrew Union College, the eighth annual meeting of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the Rabbinical Literary Association. Instead, the night took a turn when non-kosher food was served. In later accounts of the event it was noted how angry people were, and while not confirmed, some may have walked out. There are many opinions as to what may or may not have happened during the dinner and how the Banquet affected the Jewish community.

### Theories as to What Happened at the Trefa Banquet

- The serving of non-kosher food was a deliberate plan made by Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, founder of Hebrew Union College
- The serving of non-kosher food was an error of the caterer who did not know Jewish guests were to be the attendees
- The serving of non-kosher food was purposely arranged by Cincinnati businessmen and supporters of Wise

### Reform Judaism and Kashrut

- 1885 Pittsburgh Platform was a complete rejection of keeping kosher and a move towards a more radical form of Judaism

- Columbus Platform in 1937 made no specific mention of kashrut which acknowledged that within the Reform Movement there are a variety of practices concerning keeping kosher
- In 2005, at a Union of Reform Judaism Biennial meeting in Houston Texas, survey questions were added about kosher observance which showed that more people do not eat shellfish than attend Shabbat morning services. The results of this survey proved that keeping kosher is important to Reform Jews

### Kosher Trefa Banquet

- To recreate the Trefa Banquet with a kosher menu ingredients will need to be changed while still keeping in mind the composition of the original dishes. The goal is to create a menu that celebrates inclusivity. The original banquet was supposed to be a social experience for building bridges and building connections and this should be reflected in a new menu. My new kosher menu was created with the intent that all Jews and non-Jews can cook these recipes and sit down together for a meal to enjoy them. The biggest changes I made were removing all proteins ineligible for kosher certification and all dairy products. The proteins are now eligible for kosher certification, but anyone making these recipes can decide for themselves how strictly they want to keep kosher.
- For the cooking class, I wanted participants to be able to make recipes from the different sections of the menu. I chose for the attendees to make the RS Mocktail, Beets and Smoked Salmon, Turkey Vol Au Vents, and Coconut Cake. While the original Trefa Banquet menu did not include cocktails, I have added drinks to be paired with the hors d'oeuvres. These recipes highlight my thought process behind the deliberate substitutions I chose to make.

