

BEYOND THE APPLES

Three ways Ethiopian Jews use honey on Rosh Hashanah

As the High Holy Days approach, Jewish communities around the world are hard at work in the kitchen preparing traditional foods and symbolic dishes to celebrate Rosh Hashanah. Beets, fish heads and apple are mainstays on the New Year table for many, but for Ethiopian Jews, it's honey that plays a central role in their Rosh Hashanah celebrations.

Ethiopia is one of the honey capitals of the world, known for its rich and strong flavours, and boasting millions of bee colonies.

Though many high-quality varieties of honey are produced in Ethiopia, one in particular is highly prized by consumers: white honey from the northernmost province of Tigray. White honey is considered a delicacy akin to truffles and caviar, and a large portion of Ethiopian Jewry can trace their origins to Tigray.

So how does the Ethiopian Jewish community incorporate honey into their Rosh Hashanah celebrations?

Dabo is a traditional homemade Ethiopian bread that features on almost every Rosh Hashanah table. This round, slightly sweet bread is doused in spiced honey and has a unique spongy, crumbly texture. It's made with a yeast dough formed from flour, water, honey and oil. The dough is left to ferment and then shaped into a large, round loaf. The loaf is then baked in the leaves of the enset tree, traditionally in a clay pot over fire, but these days on the stovetop or in the oven.

In addition to infusing their baked goods



Photo: design by Mollie Suss

with honey, Ethiopian Jews also drink tej, a traditional Ethiopian honey mead. Tej is made by fermenting honey and water, sometimes along with gesho, a type of buckthorn plant native to Ethiopia. The gesho adds bitterness and hops-like flavour to balance out the sweetness of the honey. Spices like ginger, cinnamon and cardamom are also added.

Birz is another traditional Ethiopian beverage typically made from water and fermented honey. It's tasty and, best of all, non-alcoholic so that even the kids can feel like they are getting in on the action. In addition to its slightly sweet flavour, birz is refreshing and has many health advantages. So much so that, for many, it is considered the Ethiopian Gatorade and is served at sporting events for its electrolyte properties. It's also many Ethiopians' comfort drink when they're under the weather.

These honey-filled dishes and beverages hold both delicious flavours and deep symbolic meaning for Ethiopian Jews on Rosh Hashanah, helping them to reflect on the past year and look forward to the year to come.

MY JEWISH LEARNIN

JNF

Environmental rehabilitation is human rehabilitation

As we welcome Rosh Hashanah 5786, a season of reflection and renewal, JNF Australia is proud to support two inspiring projects that show how restoring the land helps heal people and rebuild communities.

Since 1901, the JNF Blue Box has been a symbol of Jewish peoplehood and collective responsibility. With coins dropped in from homes around the world, the Blue Box helped purchase and cultivate the land of Israel, turning dreams into reality and building the foundations of the state.

“A healing garden of olive trees, native plants and shaded paths”

Kibbutz Malkiya: Healing through nature

On Israel's northern border, Kibbutz Malkiya's 400 residents have endured years of threat, war and displacement. Now returning home, they are revitalising their community with three projects supported by JNF Australia:

- Community greenhouse – a 200m² greenhouse offering a therapeutic space for residents to grow produce, revive agricultural traditions and connect across generations.
- Animals heal – a dog park and animal-assisted therapy centre promoting social



Kibbutz Malkiya

connection, healing and awareness of animal welfare.

- Bringing back to life – an advanced recycling centre to reduce landfill, improve soil and water quality, and embed environmental education.

Netiv HaAsara: 'Between the Olive Trees' healing garden

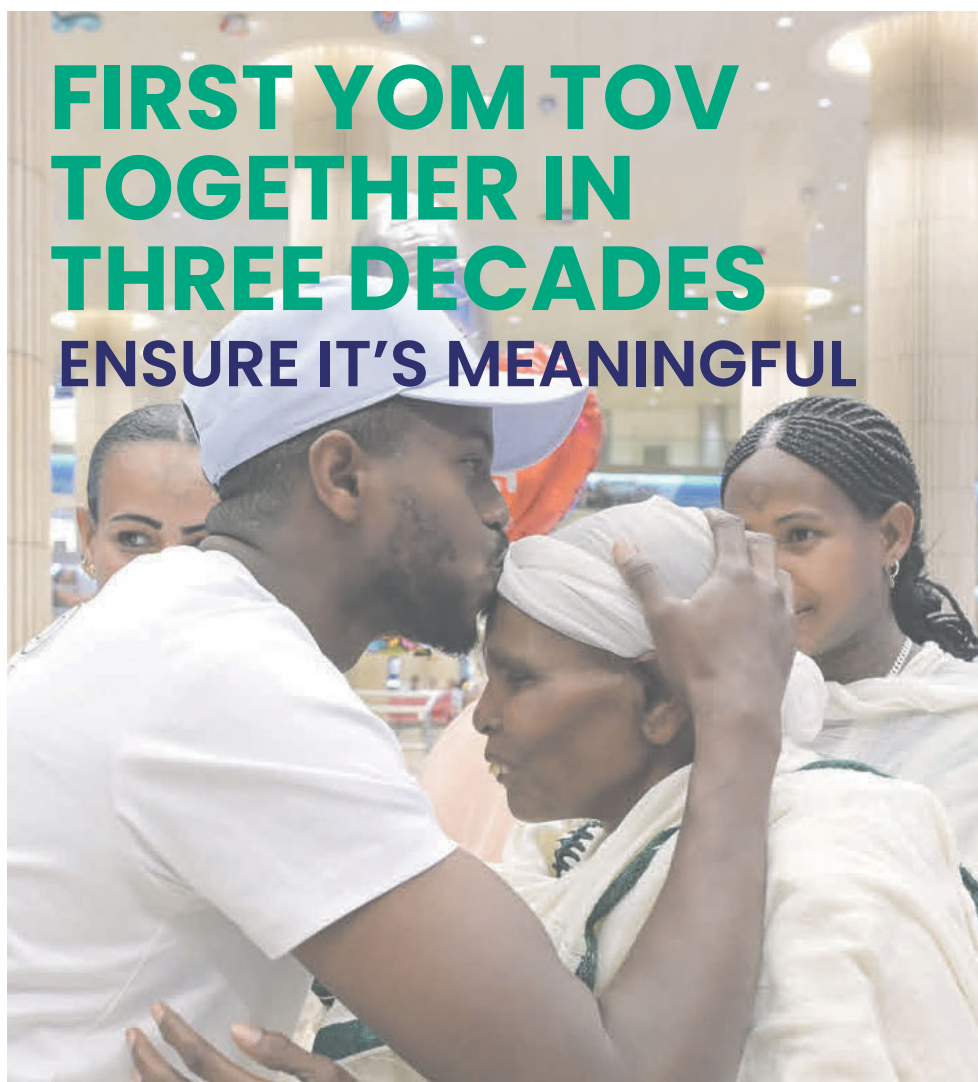
On the southern border and home to Israel's largest flag, Netiv HaAsara is transforming a barren entrance into a community healing garden of olive trees, native plants and shaded paths. It's a sanctuary of peace, beauty and resilience after the trauma of October 7, 2023.

Though geographically apart, these initiatives share one vision. To heal land and to heal people.

This Rosh Hashanah, join JNF Australia's Blue Box campaign and help bring renewal, dignity and hope to Israel's communities.

Donate at jnf.org.au/bbrh25/ or call 1300 563 563

FIRST YOM TOV TOGETHER IN THREE DECADES ENSURE IT'S MEANINGFUL



Send a UIA e-card to loved ones this Rosh Hashana & your donation will provide new Olim with Yom Tov meals at UIA-supported absorption centres
uiaaus.net/e-cards

UIA

FREE HOME DELIVERY



Fruit & vegetables
Fresh flowers
Fresh bread
Fruit salad & juice bar
Organic products
Gourmet deli & groceries
Acai bowls

CUSTOM MADE FRUIT BASKETS FOR ROSH HASHANAH

PLEASE ASK ABOUT OUR LOYALTY PROGRAM

151-155 Bondi Rd, Bondi NSW 2026

Phone: 9387 2575

f @MyFruitologist @myfruitologist