

# Food for thought as a new year begins...



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There is a tradition on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, to eat symbolic foods ('Simanim') meant to help ensure that we merit to have a good new year.

I've added my own Personal Development flavor. You're welcome to print it out and enjoy it at your festive meal.



## Honey

There is no better way to wish "sweetness" to those we love than to add a dip of honey! Our greetings and wishes this time of year always include a Shana Tova U'Metukah — a good and sweet new year! On a practical note, how can we wish this for ourselves too?

**A dash of Personal Development – Ask yourself:**

What one thing could I add to my life this coming year that brings me joy, makes me smile, and gives me pleasure – this particular thing certainly adds sweetness to my life. This thing will make my days brighter.



## Pomegranate

The rimon, or pomegranate, is special for many reasons. It is one of the Seven Species of Israel and has traditionally been used as a "new fruit" for the Shehechyanu blessing. And just as the fruits are full of seeds, we hope we'll be similarly full of plenty merits in the coming year.

**A dash of Personal Development – Ask yourself:**

What would you love to achieve this year? What seeds are you willing to plant and work on, nourish and grow so that you can reap the benefits a year from now? What seeds in your life are you willing to commit to looking after with consistency, discipline and focused dedication? (Think about the different areas of your life: relationships, career, health...) A year from now, you'll be so glad you planted these seeds today. Trust me.



## Carrots

Gezer, the Hebrew word for carrot, sounds very much like g'zar, the Hebrew word for decree. We hope that the new year will wash away all the negatives in our life.

**A dash of Personal Development – Ask yourself:**

What "negatives" in my life are keeping me stuck, holding me back or sabotaging me? What is really preventing me from creating a life I love? What needs to change? What negative thoughts or beliefs no longer serve me, or grow me or advance me? What negative influences should I try wash away? Be honest with yourself. It's a tough exercise with huge benefits.



## Beets or Spinach

The Hebrew word for beets, *selek*, is similar to the word for “remove.” They’re eaten to express the hope that our enemies will depart.

**A dash of Personal Development – Ask yourself:**

Who or what is your enemy? What do you want to stop doing this year? What do you want to let go of, get rid of and take out of your life so that your new year is better? If we can acknowledge what these are, we can slowly create a plan and strategy for removing them one by one. We don’t need to achieve this alone. We can ask for help and get support. The work begins with a decision to truly want to remove these things.



## Black-Eyed Peas, Green Beans or Fenugreek

*Rubia*, which may refer to several different types of small beans, or even fenugreek, is reminiscent of the word *yirbu*, “to increase.” These foods symbolize the hope for a fruitful year filled with merit.

**A dash of Personal Development – Ask yourself:**

What incredible strengths and resources do I have? What talents, abilities and gifts am I blessed with that I’d love to share more of with the world? How can I be more of a contribution this year? Where do I want to make more of a difference, increase my impact, or add more value to the lives of those around me? Make a list. The more specific, the more clarity will give you the push you need to get started. Just one step in the right direction can take you on the most magnificent and life-enhancing journey. Share and Give more of your best self.



## Heads: Fish, Sheep, Cabbage or Garlic

Including some sort of head on the menu is representative of our hope that we are likened to a head, and not a tail. In other words, we should move forward and make progress in the coming year, rather than follow or linger in the rear.

**A dash of Personal Development – Ask yourself:**

Where in my life can I show up more? Where can I find the courage to lead wholeheartedly? Where in my life am I playing small? What opportunities are in front of me that I can step into? Where am I blindly following people around me? How can I live with greater integrity? How can I live a more honest, authentic life that is true to my core values?



## Gourds

The Hebrew word for gourd is related to the Hebrew homonyms pronounced *k’ra*. One word means “to rip,” the other “to announce.” We ask that the Lord rip up any evil decree against us and that our merits be announced before Him.

**A dash of Personal Development:**

What mistakes of the past am I willing to put aside? Am I ready to use my past as my new starting point and not see it as a prediction of how far I can really go? What lessons can I announce, grab and take with me so that I grow from my failures and use them as stepping stones to reach new heights and cover new ground? Acknowledging something is the first necessary step to transformation. What am I ready to announce?



## Dates

The Hebrew word for dates, t'marim, evokes the word tam, "to end". On a more positive note, dates, like pomegranates, are one of the Seven Species of Israel.

**A dash of Personal Development – Ask yourself:**

How can I build monuments with the challenges that have been thrown my way this past year? When one year ends, it also marks the beginning of a new chapter. However, we can't start the next chapter of our lives unless we are willing to turn the page and begin the new one. Am I ready to forgive? Am I ready to move forward? Am I giving myself permission? What limiting beliefs do I want to cut out of my internal dialogue with myself so that I can turn the page with greater confidence, optimism and faith? Am I ready? Who or what can help me be more ready?

The date fruit is also a symbol of tranquility.

Life is messy and chaotic and hard.

We all face battles every day and difficult turmoil that causes upheaval. The date reminds us that we have a space deep within where G-d resides and our aim is find that inner strength, try our best, live meaningful, purposeful and good lives, seek peace, strive for truth and may the new year bring abundant blessings that enable us to access that haven within amidst any storm.

As you bite into and mindfully chew your date, ask yourself:

What would a calmer life look like for me?

Who am I when I am more present?

When I am at peace, what is it about me that shines?

What is the impact on myself and others when I live this way?

May the year ahead bring countless blessings your way and may the fulfillment you experience as you eat these foods nourish you and give you the vitality to make the best choices to create a Shana Tova – in every essence.

Shana Tova Umetuka,  
With love,

*Andi*



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