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KOSHER SPIRIT



is dedicated to

RABBI BEREL LEVY OB"M and RABBI DON YOEL LEVY OB"M,
who set the standards of kashrus at  Kosher Certification and who
inspire us daily to perpetuate and uphold their legacy.

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



Dear Reader,

As the Yom Tov of Chanukah approaches, we are once again reminded of the great miracles that Hashem performed for us — when the few and the holy triumphed over the many and the mighty.

Chanukah is not just a story we recall each year; it's the ongoing story of our very existence as a nation that is guided and protected by Hashem.

In recent weeks, Klal Yisroel has experienced both challenges and triumphs and, once again, we witnessed how the few overcame the many — a living testament to Hashem's constant presence and care. In an ever-changing world, a world that can often feel uncertain, it's important to pause, look beyond the headlines, and recognize the miracles that surround us each day. It is a living reminder that Hashem continues to guide and protect us. While it's easy to focus on the difficulties around us, Chanukah reminds us to open our eyes, recognize miracles for what they are, and express gratitude to Hashem for His endless kindness.

Here at the , we recently held our annual international conference, where rabbonim and mashgichim from around the world gathered to celebrate 90 years of  Kosher Certification. Together, we learned, shared insights, and discussed the latest developments in kashrus and the ongoing mission-driven growth and innovation taking place at  Kosher. It was a time to find new inspiration and to reflect on the responsibility and privilege of ensuring the highest standards of kashrus for the world over.

As we continue into our 90th year of serving the kosher consumer, we are deeply grateful to Hashem for His continued *siyata d'shmaya*, thankful for the trust placed in us by you, the kosher consumer, and we remain steadfast in our commitment to uphold the high standards of kashrus set by Rabbis Berel and Don Yoel Levy, ob"m, while serving the kosher consumer with integrity and care.

Wishing you and your family a bright, joyous, and meaningful Chanukah filled with peace, light, warmth, and revealed blessings.

RABBI CHAIM FOGELMAN

Editor in Chief

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With Shabbos ending early and many of us still fleishig after Havdalah, alternative milks are a great way to enjoy a hot coffee or tea to fulfill the minhag of having something hot at Melava Malka.

Lactose-Free

Perfect for those with lactose intolerance or dairy sensitivities. Plant-based milks are easy to digest and gentle on the stomach.

Dairy- and Cholesterol-Free

Great for desserts, like pumpkin pie and as a healthy substitute for oil and eggs in baked goods.

Lower in Saturated Fat

Most varieties have far less saturated fat than cow's milk, supporting long-term heart health.

Fortified with Essential Nutrients

Many brands enrich their alternative milks with calcium, vitamin D, and vitamin B12—nutrients important for strong bones and energy balance.

Variety and Flavor

Each milk type brings its own taste and texture. From creamy oat milk in coffee to almond milk in smoothies, there's an option for every preference.

Packed with Plant Compounds

Soy and almond milks, in particular, contain antioxidants and phytonutrients that help protect cells from everyday stress.

Light and Calorie-Conscious

Unsweetened options—like almond or cashew milk—are naturally low in calories, making them an easy fit for healthy lifestyles.

Better for the Planet

Producing plant-based milks generally requires less water and land and emits fewer greenhouse gases than dairy farming.

Plant-based milks require reliable kosher supervision. Many refrigerated alternative milks are certified dairy or DE, so one should ensure that they are purchasing a pareve product if they keep Cholov Yisroel or want to use the product alongside meat.



Ed. Note: Why do we have a minhag to drink something warm on Motzei Shabbos? It is a segulah to lift one's spirits during the week. In Pesukei D'Zimra there is a possuk that says ומחבש לעצבותם and הרופא לשבורי לב, ומחבש לעצבותם. This means, "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." The word מחבש actually stands for מים חמים "warm water on motzei Shabbos".



Bishul Yisroel Basics



**BY RABBI YAKOV
TEICHMAN**

Ⓜ Rabbinic
Coordinator

To preserve the unique identity of the Jewish people and maintain appropriate social boundaries, Chazal instituted a regulation prohibiting the consumption of certain foods cooked by a non-Jew. This safeguard helps ensure that Jews avoid accidentally eating non-kosher food, socializing, assimilating and intermarrying with non-Jews.¹ Two general factors determine which foods are included in this prohibition: it is fit to serve at a king's table (עולה על שולחן מלכים), AND cannot be eaten raw (אינו נאכל חי). Additionally, this prohibition only applies if the non-Jew cooks the food entirely alone; if a Jewish person participates in the cooking process, the food is permitted. Products that were already cooked and are only being reheated are exempt from the requirements of Bishul Yisroel.

Fit for a King's Table

עולה על שולחן מלכים

Foods that can be served at a formal meal, such as a wedding, formal dinner, or state dinner, require Bishul Yisroel. This applies only to the whole food, not when it is used as a minor ingredient or coating. For example, **eggs** require Bishul Yisroel, but **egg wash** on bread does not. A question arises when a particular form of a food—such as **potato chips**—is not typically served at formal meals, while other forms of the same food, like **roasted or mashed potatoes**, are. In such a case, is Bishul Yisroel required for the potato chips?

Not Edible Raw

אינו נאכל חי

Bishul Yisroel is only required when the food in question must be cooked; therefore, all products that are eaten raw are not subject to the halachos of Bishul Yisroel. Some common examples are apples, carrots, celery, peppers, and nuts.

What Constitutes Cooking?

Halachic cooking requires the food to be heated. Conventional forms of cooking definitely require the involvement of a Jew. There is discussion among the contemporary Poskim regarding new methods of cooking, like microwave, induction, and sous vide, and if they are subject to Bishul Yisroel. Steaming can be done by direct steam or indirect steam. The former does not require Bishul Yisroel, while the latter does. Marinating, salting, pickling, sun-drying, and cold smoking are not cooking and therefore do not require the involvement of a Jew.

Methods of Bishul Yisroel

When Bishul Yisroel is required, a Jew must participate in the cooking. There are multiple ways for a Jew to render a product Bishul Yisroel:

- Placing the food on an existing fire (regardless of who lit the fire).
- Being physically involved in the cooking process (stirring the pot while the food is still cooking).
- Turning on the fire **after** the food is in the oven or on the stovetop.
- There is a well-known disagreement between the Mechaber (Sephardim) and the Rema (Ashkenazim) about whether a non-Jew can put food on the stove or in the oven that was **already lit by a Jew**. According to the Mechaber, a Jew needs to place the food on the stove or oven even if it was already lit by a Jew. This is known as Bishul Beis Yosef. According to the Rema, as long as the Jew lit the stove or oven, it is sufficient.
- If a product was initially inedible and cooked by a non-Jew (like potato flakes for instant mashed potatoes) but is later made edible through a second cooking done by a Jew, the food becomes Bishul Yisroel.²
- Lastly, if the product was cooked but not all the way, it can still be “saved”. The point where it becomes “too late” to save is a disagreement between the Mechaber and the Rema. According to the Mechaber, it can be made Bishul Yisroel only until it is 1/3rd cooked, and according to the Rema, it can be made Bishul Yisroel if it is not finished cooking. ☞

1 יורה דעה סי' קי"ג

2 The Beis Yosef in his teshuvos, Avkas Rochel (Siman 30) writes that if a cooked food is dried and cannot be consumed without further cooking, the food is viewed as raw.



INSTANT SOUP ON SHABBOS



**BY RABBI
LEVI Y.
SCHAPIRO**

Ⓚ Rabbinic
Coordinator

CAN ONE PREPARE INSTANT SOUP ON SHABBOS?

There are a few areas of Hilchos Shabbos that must be examined to answer this question.

In addition, there are different methods of production, as well as various components of the soup that must be considered.

>>>

Bishul

The primary issue to discuss is the prohibition of bishul (cooking) on Shabbos.

Does the prohibition of cooking still apply if one does not place the food directly on the fire?

Food that has already been fully cooked and remains solid after heating is not subject to the prohibition of cooking (*ein bishul achar bishul*). Still, *mi'drabbanan*, one may not place cold food directly on the fire, but one may place it in hot water that has been removed from the heat source. (If, however, the food had been previously **baked** (like *kugel*), this leniency does not apply.)

Food that has not been fully cooked may **not** be placed in hot water that is above *Yad Soledes Bo* (approx. 115°F). However, once it is transferred to a second vessel (*kli sheini*), the likelihood of actual cooking is diminished. Nevertheless, there is still a prohibition of preparing food in a second vessel (*kli sheini*), because there are some items that will still cook in the second vessel (and we do not have an exact determination of what they are), and there is an *issur* *mi'drabbanan* because it is so close to a *kli rishon* (primary vessel). If the hot water is further transferred to a third vessel (*kli shlishi*), according to most opinions¹, it no longer has the potential to cook, and it is permissible to add uncooked food to water in a *kli shlishi*. However, foods that are uncooked and only require minimal heat to soften them and make them edible are forbidden even in a *kli shlishi*².

Let us now address each component of instant soup.

Instant Noodles

The production process of the noodles can vary depending on the company. Wheat-based noodles are usually steamed and fried before being dried and packaged. Therefore, the rule of *ein bishul achar bishul* would apply, and they may be placed in hot water that has been removed from the heat source. In addition, they are fully edible even in their dry state and can be eaten as a snack or used as a salad topping. However, some companies may produce instant noodles without completely frying them, so one should only heat them in a *kli shlishi*.

Rice-based noodles are typically not fried; therefore, they may not be placed in hot water that has been removed from the heat source. In addition, they are not edible in their dry state and require minimal heat to prepare them, so they may not be prepared on Shabbos.



Dehydrated Vegetables

Depending on the vegetables that are used, they are typically blanched but not fully cooked (in some instances, they are fully cooked) and dehydrated before packaging. Because they are not edible in their current state and require minimal heat, they may not be prepared on Shabbos, even in a *kli shlishi*.³

Flavor Powder

The flavor powder is typically a blend of various spices and includes spices that were not previously cooked. However, because they will dissolve in the water, they are not subject to the *issur* of bishul when prepared in a *kli shlishi*.

Other Halachic Considerations

Makeh B'patish/Tikkun Kli:

Makeh b'patish and tikkun kli are part of the prohibition of completing the construction of a utensil.

There is a prohibition against making something useful on Shabbos; however, according to the simple understanding of Shulchan Oruch, this does not include preparing food and changing it from inedible to edible.⁴ There are some authorities that say that it does apply if any heat was used.⁵ According to this stricter view, rice noodles and dehydrated vegetables may not be prepared on Shabbos. Wheat-based noodles are edible in their dry form and permitted according to all opinions.

Losh (Kneading):

Kneading is defined by blending flour or other dry solids/powders with liquid to create a thickened batter. Adding a small amount of powder that dissolves in liquid (or if the solid does not stick together due to the high amount of liquid) does not violate the prohibition.

Conclusion

One may prepare instant noodle soup (including the spice blend) in a *kli shlishi* on Shabbos; however, the vegetables should not be added. If the vegetables are already blended into the noodles, the soup may not be prepared on Shabbos. Rice-based noodles may not be prepared on Shabbos. ❏

¹ The opinion of the Yeraim is that the third and fourth vessel should be considered the same as the second.

² ראה בכ"ז שו"ע סי' ש"ח סעי' י"ד ושו"ע סי' ע"א

³ If one can confirm that the vegetables were already fully cooked, it would be permitted to reheat and rehydrate on Shabbos (unless one follows the stricter view regarding tikkun kli [see below]).

⁴ שו"ע סי' שכ"ד סעי' ד'

⁵ ראה ביה"ל סי' ש"ח ד"ה והדחתן, ובדי השולחן סי' קל אות י' ו' אות י'.



BABKA

Doughnuts

INGREDIENTS:

28 Mini Pizza Rounds

FILLING:

5 tablespoons sugar

3 tablespoons confectioners' sugar

3 tablespoons cocoa

1/2 teaspoon vanilla sugar

CRUMBS:

2 tablespoons margarine or butter

2 tablespoons sugar

5 tablespoons flour

3 ounces good-quality chocolate, chopped
Confectioners' sugar, for sprinkling (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place pizza rounds on a baking sheet. In a small bowl, combine filling ingredients. Spoon a small amount of filling in the center of each pizza round. Seal pizza round in a half-moon shape and wrap one end around the other (see photo). You'll want to put the filling in the stickier side (the side that's

sticking to the plastic), so that it closes easier. If not frying immediately, you can freeze until ready to fry. If freezing, defrost fully before frying.

2. Prepare the crumbs. Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. In a small bowl, using your fingers, combine margarine, sugar, and flour until streusel crumbs form. Spread on prepared baking sheet and bake for 8 minutes. Let cool.
3. When ready to fry, heat oil in a deep fryer or saucepan. When oil is hot, add donuts in batches and fry until golden, about 3 to 4 minutes.
4. To melt chocolate, place chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave for 1 minute. Stir until smooth. If there are still chunks of chocolate, microwave for 15 to 30 additional seconds and stir until smooth. Alternatively, you can place the chopped chocolate into a bag. Knot it closed. Place the bag into a cup with hot boiling water. The chocolate will melt. Remove from water, keep bag closed, snip off the tip of the bag and drizzle over the doughnuts.
5. Drizzle chocolate over donuts and sprinkle with streusel. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar if you prefer a sweeter donut, which you of course do!

WHAT'S THE BROCHA?



BY RABBI
SHOLOM BER
LEPKIVKER

Ⓚ Rabbinic
Coordinator

TU BISHVAT AND THE BLESSING OF SHEHECHEYANU

Tu B'Shvat is known as the Rosh Hashanah for trees.¹ It is customary in many Jewish communities to eat fruits on this day², especially those with which Eretz Yisrael was blessed, the *Shivas HaMinim* (the seven species). Often, during this “fruit hunt,” one may encounter the opportunity to recite the blessing of shehecheyanu.

The blessing of shehecheyanu is recited on special, infrequent³ occasions from which we derive joy. For example, one says shehecheyanu when purchasing an expensive garment and likewise when eating a new seasonal fruit that has just become available. The purpose of this blessing is to thank Hashem for granting us life and allowing us to experience moments of happiness and renewal.

With regard to fruits, the blessing expresses gratitude for the natural cycle of growth that benefits all humanity.⁴ Technically, the obligation begins when seeing the

new fruit, though today the common practice is to recite it when eating it.

One may recite shehecheyanu on both fruits and vegetables, provided they have ripened sufficiently to be ready for proper consumption. When a fruit or vegetable is clearly identifiable as part of a new crop—either because it looks or tastes distinctly fresher—one may recite the blessing even if older produce of the same kind remains available. However, if the fruit is not from a new crop, the blessing is not said, even if one personally has not eaten that fruit for over a year.⁵ This is because the joy of the new season is a communal, not individual, experience.⁶

Regarding fruits of the same family but slightly different types, the Shulchan Oruch HaRav⁷ rules that even if they taste similar, as long as they are of a different sub-variety (for example, differing in color), one may still recite shehecheyanu. Others⁸ maintain that the fruits must have a distinct flavor to be

considered different enough for the blessing.

In modern times, due to storage methods and advanced growing techniques, many fruits are available year-round. Therefore, shehecheyanu should not be recited unless the fruit is clearly recognizable—both by appearance and taste—as part of a genuinely new crop. This is easiest to accomplish when buying local, seasonal produce.

If one initially saw or ate the fruit without reciting the blessing, it may still be recited later upon seeing or eating it again, omitting the section from Hashem's Name until after the words *Melech HaOlam* (*Boruch atah shehecheyanu v'kiyimanu v'higiyanu l'zman hazeh*).

If the new fruit has been cooked or made into a paste, the same principles apply: as long as it can be identified as part of a new season, the blessing may be recited. However, one should note that when a fruit is cooked, it may lose its original brocha of *ha'eitz* unless some recognizable pieces of the fruit remain.⁹ Ⓚ

1. שלחן ערוך סי' קל"א ס' ו' ובנושא"י. See "ר"ה דף ב' כלים.

2. שם מ"א

3. לוח ברכות הנהנין סי' י"א ס' א'

4. ערוך השלחן סי' רכ"ב ס' ה'

5. סדר ב"ה פ' י"א ס' ט"ו

6. ערוך השלחן שם שם.

7. שם

8. ערוך השלחן, ברכ"י

9. סב"ה פ' ו' ס' כ"ג-כ"ד

אפשרות נוספת להכנת קפה טורקי, להמתין עד שהמים יתקררו מעט לטמפרטורה של פחות מ"היד סולדת בו" ורק אז להוסיף את הקפה. או להעביר את המים מכוס לכוס עד ל"כלי רביעי", ובזה אין חשש בישול בקפה, אף אם המים עודם חמים.

לסיים

זכורני כי בילדותי (בקיץ תשמ"ח) זכיתי להתארח למשך כמה שבועות בביתו של דודי, נשיא ועד הכשרות "או קיי" הרה"ג רבי דן יואל ליווי ע"ה, ובשבת בבוקר הוא הדריך אותי כיצד להכין שוקו וקפה (נמס) בשבת ב'כלי שלישי', לפי כללי ההידור בהלכה. הדרכתו הפכה לשיעור מרתק בהלכות שבת, עם המקורות במשנה, כאשר הדגש היה כיצד כן ניתן לעשות דברים על פי כללי ההלכה ובהידור. בהירות מחשבתו ועומק הדרכתו ההלכתית שהיו נר לרגלי עולם הכשרות, חסרים כיום בכל סוגיה העולה על הפרק. אולם מורשתו ממשיכה להאיר את דרכנו גם עתה. תפילתנו היא כי נזכה להתגשמות דברי הנביא "הַקִּיצוּ וְרַגְנוּ שִׁכְנֵי עֵפֶר" (ישעיהו כו, ט), והרב ליווי ע"ה בתוכם, בביאת גואל צדק, בקרוב ממש. ©

או אפילו על ידי עירוי מכלי שני, מושג הנקרא בהלכה 'קלי הבישול', שגמר בישולם הוא על ידי הדחה במים חמים, ולכן יהיה אסור להכין קפה אף בכלי שני כל עוד המים הם בחום ש"היד סולדת בו". על כן נראה שלנוהגים לאסור בישול אחר אפייה (כדעת הרמ"א ותשובות ה'אור לציון' הנ"ל), אין להתיר הכנת קפה טורקי (שחור) על ידי עירוי מכלי ראשון, אף אם פולי הקפה עברו תהליך של זילוף מים בסיום קלייתם.

הפיתרון להכנת קפה טורקי (שחור) בשבת

גם לנוהגים כשיטת הרמ"א, לאסור בישול אחרי אפייה, בשבת, מובא ב'משנה ברורה' (סימן שי"ח ס"ק לט) שאם הוא משרה את אבקת הקפה במים רותחים או מערה עליה מים רותחים מערב שבת, ולאחר מכן הוא מסנן את המים, ואבקת הקפה מתייבשת, תיחשב היא למאכל מבושל, ומותר בשבת לערות מ'כלי ראשון' מים רותחים על אותה אבקת קפה. (אך יש שכתבו להימנע מהכנת קפה בשבת גם באופן זה, מחשש שהעירוי או ההשריה של הקפה במים חמים בערב שבת לא נחשבה בישול גמור).

בדרך כלל מיד לאחר הקלייה עוברים פולי הקפה תהליך קירור על ידי הזרמת אוויר קר. אך יש מפעלים שבהם מזלפים טיפות מים קרים על פולי הקפה מיד לאחר הקלייה על מנת לקררם. פולי הקפה, בסיום הקלייה שלהם, יוצאים בטמפרטורה גבוהה ביותר - כ-200 מעלות צלזיוס - וטיפות המים המזולפות על פולי הקפה מתחממות מאוד. מיד לאחר זילוף המים, פולי הקפה עוברים תהליך ייבוש למניעת התבשלותם ולשמירה על טריותם.

וכאן נשאלת השאלה, האם ניתן להחשיב את זילוף טיפות המים על פולי הקפה לבישול ראשוני, שהרי המים מתחממים מפולי הקפה החמים היוצאים ממכונת הקלייה.

ואם אכן נחשיב את מפגש המים עם הפולים החמים לבישול ראשוני, יותר לנו - לכאורה - להכין מהם קפה בשבת, כדין דבר יבש שהתבשל לפני שבת, שמותר לחממו שוב בשבת, לפי הכלל ש"אין בישול אחר בישול" בדבר יבש!

פסיקת ההלכה

והנה, בשולחן ערוך (הנ"ל) נפסק אמנם להלכה כי דבר יבש שהתבשל, מותר להשרותו בחמין בשבת. אך במקור הדין (מסכת שבת קמ"ב), נתבאר שההיתר להשרות מאכל מבושל בחמין בשבת מותנה בכך שאותו מאכל בושל קודם השבת **כל צרכו**, וכלשון התוס' (שבת לט, א ד"ה "כל שבא") "כל שבא בחמין מערב שבת - פירוש **שהתבשל לגמרי**". אך מאכל יבש שלא התבשל כל צרכו לפני שבת - אסור להשרותו בחמין בשבת. כמו כן הובא ב'מגן אברהם' (ס"ק יד) שאם לא נתבשל ממש מערב שבת, אלא רק נשרה בחמין, אסור לשרותו בחמין בשבת. וכן פסק ב'שולחן ערוך הרב' (שיח, יא) שמותר להשרות בחמין דבר יבש, רק אם הוא התבשל קודם לכן כל צרכו. וכן נראה בדברי ה'משנה ברורה' (ס"ק לא).

לפיכך בנידון דידן, שמיד לאחר זילוף המים הקרים על פולי הקפה, הם עוברים תהליך של ייבוש **למניעת בישולם** ולשמירת טריותם - לא נוכל להתיר הכנת קפה מדין "בישול אחרי בישול".

בנוסף, יש מן הפוסקים שחששו לכך שהקפה לאחר הקלייה הוא מהדברים המתבשלים גם בטמפרטורה נמוכה





הרב שלמה חיים הלוי וינפלד
תבר ועד הכשרות

חג החנוכה ושמירת השבת

כיוון שהקפה עובר קלייה במפעל, לכאורה הכנת קפה בשבת תיחשב "בישול לאחר אפייה", שלפי השולחן ערוך - וכך נהגו בחלק מעדות המזרח - זה מותר, ולפי הרמ"א - וכך הוא מנהג האשכנזים - הדבר אסור (אפילו ב'כלי שני', כל עוד המים הם בטמפרטורה העולה על 45 מעלות צלזיוס). נוסף ונציין, כי גם בקרב פוסקי ההלכה הספרדים, הדעות בעניין זה חלוקות: מהם (תשובות 'אור לציון' חלק ב, פרק ל, שאלה ה ועוד) שאסרו הכנת קפה בשבת ואפילו ב'כלי שני', כיוון שלדעתם, היתר השולחן ערוך להשרות דבר אפוי בחמין בשבת הוא רק כאשר המאכל האפוי **מוכן לגמרי לאכילה** ואילו ההשריה במים חמים בשבת **מחממת** אותו בלבד. ואולם פולי קפה, גם לאחר קלייתם אינם מוכנים עדיין לאכילה, שהלוא אם נוסף את אבקת הקפה למים קרים לא יהיה זה 'קפה' והמים לא יהיו ראויים לשתייה. לעומתם דעת הגר"ע יוסף זצ"ל (שו"ת 'ביע אומר' חלק ט בהערותיו על ה'אור לציון') היא, שהקפה ראוי לאכילה מיד לאחר קלייתו, שכן יש הולכי דרכים הלועסים את פולי הקפה ושותים מים, ומברכים על פולי הקפה "בורא פרי העץ", ולפיכך מותר להכין קפה שחור בשבת ואין בכך משום (איסור) בישול.

פולי קפה שעברו זילוף מים בתהליך הקלייה

כאמור, פולי הקפה עוברים קלייה ולאחר מכן הם נטחנים ונארזים לשיווק. והנה,

כעובד עבודה זרה" (רמב"ם הלכות שבת ל,טו). משום כך גם, יהודים בכל הדורות מסרו את נפשם על קדושת השבת.

בישול אחר אפייה בשבת

בקשר לכך נציג כאן שאלה חשובה ומעניינת בהלכות שבת, בנושא הכנת קפה טורקי (הנקרא גם קפה שחור) בשבת: כידוע, מלאכת בישול היא אחת מ-39 המלאכות שעשייתן בשבת אסורה מן התורה. ומובא בשולחן ערוך' (סימן שיח, סעיף ד) שמאכל יבש אשר נתבשל כל צרכו קודם שבת, מותר לחממו במים חמים בשבת, שכן "אין בישול אחר בישול" בדבר יבש. ונחלקו הפוסקים בשאלת מאכל שעבר קלייה בתנור לפני שבת - האם גם הוא נחשב 'מבושל' ויהיה מותר לחממו (להשרותו בחמין) בשבת, אם לאו.

על כך מביא השולחן ערוך' (שם, סעיף ה) שתי דעות, ולהלכה הוא פוסק שמותר לחמם במים חמים דבר יבש שעבר קלייה לפני שבת. הרמ"א, לעומת זאת, חולק עליו וקובע כי גם דבר יבש שעבר קלייה לפני שבת אין להשרות במים חמים - ואפילו ב'כלי שני' - כל עוד חום המים הוא ברמה ש"היד סולדת בו" (45 מעלות צלזיוס).

הכנת קפה טורקי (שחור) בשבת

קפה, כידוע, מיוצר מפולי צמח הקפה שעברו תהליך קלייה בתנור ליצירת ארומה וטעם ייחודיים, ולאחר הקלייה בתנור הפולים נטחנים לאבקה דקה ונארזים למכירה.

ב מסכת שבת (כא,ב) מובאת הברייתא הידועה המספרת את סיפור החנוכה:

"מאי חנוכה?... שכשנכנסו יוונים להיכל טימאו כל השמנים שבהיכל. וכשגברה מלכות בית חשמונאי וניצחום, בדקו ולא מצאו אלא פך אחד של שמן שהיה מונח בחותמו של כהן גדול ולא היה בו אלא להדליק יום אחד. נעשה בו נס והדליקו ממנו שמונה ימים! לשנה אחרת קבעום ועשאו ימים טובים בהלל והודאה". מלחמת היוונים ביהודים לא הייתה מלחמה פיזית בלבד, אלא בעיקר מלחמה רוחנית. הם ביקשו לעקור את האמונה מליבותיהם של ישראל וגזרו עליהם שורה של גזירות ובראשן מניעת קיום ברית מילה, פגיעה בבנות ישראל, חיוב להצהיר בפומבי על כפירה בה' ואיסור לשמור שבת.

זו גם הסיבה שכשהיוונים נכנסו לבית המקדש הם לא **שפכו** את השמנים אלא **טימאו** אותם. כי זו כאמור הייתה מטרתם - פגיעה בקדושה וברוח של עם ישראל.

מסירות נפש על שמירת השבת

שמירת שבת הינה מצווה הנוגעת בשורש האמונה בבריאת העולם על ידי ה' יתברך, כנאמר (שמות לא,טז-יז): וְשָׁמְרוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרֹתָם בְּרִית עוֹלָם. בֵּינִי וּבֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֹת הָאֵל לַעֲלֹם כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה ה' אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת וַיִּנָּפֶשׁ.

לאור זאת השוו חז"ל חילול שבת לכפירה בה' וה' מחלל שבת בפרהסיא הרי הוא



MASHGIACH CONFERENCE

©Kosher Certification Celebrates
Decades of Kashrus Excellence at
Annual International Conference

Photo credit: Shalom Burkis

Ⓚ Kosher Certification recently convened its annual International Conference, marking a significant dual milestone: 90 years of unparalleled kosher excellence and the 50th anniversary of *Mivtza Kashrus* (the worldwide campaign for kosher observance initiated by the Lubavitcher Rebbe).

The conference, attended by Ⓚ Kosher's global network of rabbis, rabbinic coordinators, and mashgichim, adopted the inspiring theme: "Serving Hashem through Kashrus: Our Ongoing Shlichus and Learning". Kosher certification is not just a technical service; it is a vital spiritual mission and a continuous educational pursuit.

CELEBRATING 90 YEARS OF COMMITMENT

A moving highlight of the conference was the screening of a brand-new, exclusive video celebrating 90 years of Ⓚ Kosher Certification. The video traced the Ⓚ's history from its founding, showcasing its growth into one of the world's most respected kosher certifying agencies.



Rabbi Levi Garelik, Menahel of Congregation Beis Shmuel and noted lecturer



Rabbi Efraim Mintz, Executive Director of JLI and Rav of Getzel's Shul



Rabbi Levi Krinsky



Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Kesselman, Machon Smicha

The celebration highlighted the significant contributions of the late Rabbi Don Yoel Levy, OB" M, the Ⓚ's long-time Kashrus Administrator. Rabbi Levy, who continued the work of his father, Rabbi Berel Levy, OB" M, was the driving force behind Ⓚ Kosher's transformation into a global leader in industrial kosher certification. Under his leadership, Ⓚ Kosher pioneered new standards, extended its supervision to almost 800,000 products in 100+ countries, and established the sophisticated, modern operational structure that defines the agency today. His vision and commitment to the highest standard of halacha, combined with cutting-edge technology, paved the way for the Ⓚ's unparalleled reach and integrity.

The spirit of "Kashrus as a Holy Mission" resonated throughout the day, inspiring attendees to rededicate themselves to their crucial roles in upholding the integrity of kashrus for the global Jewish community.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EVENT





The program featured a lineup of distinguished speakers who delved into the practical application and profound meaning of kashrus today. **Rabbi Chaim Fogelman**, of the Ⓚ Executive Vaad HaKashrus, and **Rabbi Eli Lando**, Ⓚ Executive Manager, shared valuable insights into the past, present, and future of Ⓚ Kosher.



Rabbi Chaim Fogelman, Ⓚ Executive Vaad HaKashrus






Rabbi Eli Lando, Ⓚ Executive Manager

Other speakers included **Rabbi Kalman Weinfeld**, of the  Executive Vaad HaKashrus, **Rabbi Sholom Ber Hendel**, of the  Executive Vaad HaKashrus, **Rabbi Shlomo Weinfeld**, of the  Executive Vaad HaKashrus, and  Field Representatives – **Rabbi Shmuel Klatzkin**, **Rabbi Zalman Vishedsky**, **Rabbi Levi Krinsky**, and **Rabbi Levi Klein**.

The deep connection to the Rebbe's initiatives was a central topic. **Rabbi Ephraim Mintz**, founding Executive Director of the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute, discussed the Lubavitcher Rebbe's unwavering emphasis on the importance of kashrus as a foundation of Jewish life and **Rabbi Levi Garelik**, *Moreh Tzedek* of Congregation Bais

Shmuel, and noted lecturer, delivered a special address on the transformative impact and history of *Mivtza Kashrus*.

A strong emphasis was placed on ongoing education and training through programs that have collaborated with  Kosher to create specialized learning tracks. There were presentations from Lemaan Yilmedu, the premier English-language Halacha study program, and Machon Smicha, a unique online smicha course, which both spoke on the crucial role of continuous rabbinic learning and the connections between their programs and  Kosher. A video presentation from the Kosher Institute of America showcased the ongoing programs that they produce with the  to train foodservice kashrus professionals worldwide.



Rabbi Kalman Weinfeld,  Executive Vaad HaKashrus




Use the QR code to view the exclusive 90 Years video.



Rabbi Sholom Ber Hendel,  Executive Vaad HaKashrus



Rabbi Shlomo Weinfeld,  Executive Vaad HaKashrus





Rabbi Yoni Rappaport, Rabbinic Coordinator and Rabbi Elisha Rubin, Rabbinic Coordinator



Rabbi Yitzchak Hanoka, Tri-State Rabbinic Coordinator, Rabbi Yitzchak Teller, Rabbi Aaron Weiss, Rabbinic Coordinator



Rabbi Shlomo Klein, Rabbinic Coordinator, Rabbi Levi Marmulsteyn, Rabbinic Manager, Rabbi Chaim Ozer Metal



Does Chocolate Require

BISHUL YISROEL?



BY RABBI
OSHER
GUTNICK

Ⓚ Ingredients
Department

Approximately two thousand years ago, during the times of the Mishnah, Chazal instituted a decree forbidding the consumption of certain foods cooked by Gentiles, known as bishul akum.¹ This decree was established for the purpose of preventing intermarriage,² and, according to some opinions, to protect us from mistakenly eating non-kosher food.³

The prohibition of bishul akum applies only to foods that meet both of the following criteria:⁴

Eino ne'echal k'mo shehu chai – not eaten raw. Foods that are consumed without cooking (under normal circumstances⁵, by a majority of people⁶) are not subject to the prohibition. Bishul Yisroel is only necessary when the act of cooking is significant enough

1. ראה עבודה זרה ל"ז, שו"ע יו"ד סי' ק"ג.

2. רש"י ע"ז ל"ה, תוס' שם ל"ח, טור סי' ק"ב.

3. רש"י שם ל"ח, וראה ערוך השלחן ק"ג סי' ב.

שו"ע שם

4. ראה שו"ע שם י"ב (דעה א) ורמ"א שם, שדבר שנאכל חי רק ע"י הדחק אסור.

5. ראה סולת למנחה כלל ע"ה דין ט"ז דאם אדם אחד אכלו חי בטלה דעתו אצל כל אדם. וכן נפסק 6 בכמה אחרונים.

to transform a previously inedible food into something fit for consumption.⁷

Oleh al shulchan melochim – suitable to be served on a royal table. Foods included in this category are those that one would typically invite an honored guest to partake in. Casual foods or snacks, by contrast, are not subject to the prohibition because they are less likely to lead to socialization.⁸

There is much debate among halachic authorities over which particular foods are *eino ne'echal k'mo shehu chai* and *oleh al shulchan melochim*. In this article we will explore whether chocolate falls into either of these categories.

The Production Process

A brief overview of the production process is vital in understanding how and why chocolate may require bishul Yisroel.

Production begins with the seeds of the cacao fruit, also known as cocoa beans. Each bean is surrounded by a sweet-tasting pulp, which is edible raw and has a sweet fruity flavor. **The bean itself, which is the main component used for chocolate production, is quite bitter; it does not resemble chocolate and is generally not eaten in its natural state.**

The beans are typically harvested by hand and gathered into piles, then left covered for several days to ferment in their own pulp. Naturally occurring microorganisms react with the pulp during fermentation, giving the beans a chocolate-like flavor. During this reaction, the temperature of the beans can reach up to 116°F. Despite being near the threshold of *yad soledes bo* (halachic cooking temperature), the fermentation is not considered “cooking” in the context of *bishul akum* as it does not involve the use of a fire or similar primary heat source. Heat generated by alternative methods, such as fermentation or *melicha* (salting), was not included in the rabbinic decree of bishul akum.⁹

Following fermentation, the beans are dried and roasted. Roasting gives the beans a fuller chocolate flavor.¹⁰

The beans are de-shelled and broken down into smaller segments called nibs, which are then ground into a paste called cocoa mass (also known as cocoa liquor).

Cocoa mass may be used as an ingredient for chocolate production (see below) or separated into two components: cocoa butter and cocoa cake. Cocoa



cake is milled into cocoa powder, which is used as an ingredient in drinking chocolate (i.e., hot cocoa) or solid chocolate (i.e., chocolate bars). Cocoa butter is used as an ingredient in solid chocolate; it gives the chocolate its buttery consistency, allowing it to be solid at room temperature, yet easily melted.

To produce solid chocolate, the cocoa powder, cocoa butter, and/or cocoa mass are typically mixed with sugar (or an alternative sweetener) and then “squeezed” through a series of fast-spinning rollers to break down the particles. This is known as the refining step.

To produce milk chocolate and white chocolate, dried milk is added to the recipe. To produce white chocolate, cocoa powder and cocoa mass are omitted.

The mixture is then transferred to a specialized blending tank called a conche, which agitates and further breaks down the components over a period of several hours (or days). This process, known as “conching,” results in a smooth-textured, liquid chocolate. Lecithin (to help bind the ingredients together) and vanillin (to improve taste) are usually added to the recipe at this point. Additional cocoa butter may also be used to improve liquidity.

⁷ “ע”פ רש”י ביצה ט”ו. ד”ה אין, “דכיון שנאכל כמו שהוא חי אינו בשול דלא אהני מידי.”

⁸ “ע”פ רמב”ם הל’ מאכלות אסורות פ’ י”ז הל’ ט”ו, דאין דרך האדם לזמן את חבירו עבור מאכל שאינו חשוב.

⁹ ראה שו”ע ורמ”א שם י”ג.

¹⁰ Due to their naturally high acidity, the cocoa may also be mixed with an alkalinizing agent (commonly potassium carbonate). Although not essential to make edible cocoa, it results in a milder tasting, darker-colored product known as Dutch-processed cocoa, which is sometimes preferred over natural (non-alkalized) cocoa.

Significant heat can be generated by friction during the conching process, with temperatures often exceeding *yad soledes bo*. The heat keeps the chocolate in a liquid state, allowing the particles to be blended and broken down more easily, while also evaporating unwanted moisture. Like the heat generated during fermentation (above), the heat generated by friction does not pose a bishul akum concern.¹¹

After conching, the liquid chocolate undergoes a process called tempering, wherein it is cooled and warmed again under low heat to promote the formation of stable cocoa butter crystals. This gives the chocolate a smooth surface and allows it to break cleanly when cooled into solid form. While still warm, the chocolate is poured and molded into its desired final shape (chips, squares, bars, and so on).

In summary, while chocolate and its ingredients are heated and warmed at various stages of production, the main concern of bishul akum arises from the fact that the cocoa beans are roasted during the process. Roasting is a form of cooking using conventional heat, which (when performed by a Gentile) may render the product forbidden.

When only one component of a product is inedible raw

The Shulchan Oruch rules that when multiple ingredients – edible raw and inedible raw – are mixed into a product and subsequently cooked by a Gentile, we follow the *ikkar* – the main ingredient – in determining its status. If the main ingredient is edible raw, the product is permitted.¹² Based on this ruling, one may be inclined to argue that chocolate is not subject to bishul akum because the cocoa bean component has been mixed with other ingredients to the point where it is no longer the *ikkar*. However, unlike in the Shulchan Oruch's case, the cocoa beans are roasted **before** being mixed with other ingredients, not after. What is the halacha then?

The Pri Chodosh's Ruling

The first Posek who appears to address this question is the Pri Chodosh, who rules that drinking chocolate



has the same status as coffee, which is permitted because the bean component is *botul* – nullified in the water¹³ (or the milk) with which it is made. The Pri Chodosh lived over three hundred years ago (during the 17th century), just as chocolate was starting to gain popularity across Europe. In that era, chocolate was almost exclusively consumed as a hot beverage, typically made by mixing cocoa mass (ground roasted cocoa beans) and hot water, with the possible addition of sweeteners and spices for taste.

Although the Pri Chodosh's ruling was in reference to drinking chocolate, it may also apply to other forms of chocolate where cocoa is not the main component, such as white chocolate.¹⁴ (The main component of white chocolate is usually sugar, which is not subject to bishul akum.¹⁵) However, in other popular forms of chocolate, such as dark or bittersweet chocolate, the main component may be cocoa,¹⁶ which brings us back to our question.

Can chocolate be eaten raw?

The Chasam Sofer takes a different approach to the Pri Chodosh and draws a halachic distinction between coffee and chocolate: while coffee is permitted because the bean component is *botul* in the finished product, chocolate¹⁷ is permitted because it can be eaten “as is.”¹⁸ The Chasam Sofer apparently holds that cocoa – the basis for both drinking chocolate and solid chocolate – is edible raw and therefore not subject to bishul akum.¹⁹

It should be noted that there are a number of companies today producing “raw chocolate”. Although this product currently has no legal definition in the United States, manufacturers declare that the ingredients do not exceed 118°F during the manufacturing process. The

13 פרי חדש י"ד ק"ד ס"ק ו': "מותר לשתות הקא"וי בבית העכו"ם... יש להחזיר מין משקה אחר שנקרא גיקולאט"י בלעז. ומסביר שם דכשם שבטל הפרי לגבי המים לענין ברכה כך הוא בטל לענין בישול עכו"ם. ועוד טעם נתן להיתר, שרובא דעלמא שותין אותם בלא ליפות פת, ולשיטתו דבר שאינו עשוי ללפת בו את הפת אין בו משום בישול עכו"ם (אע"פ שעולה על שלחן מלכים ואינו נאכל חי, ע"ש).

14 White chocolate contains cocoa butter but does not contain cocoa powder nor cocoa mass. It is notable that prior to 2002, the FDA defined white chocolate as “confectionary” because it did not meet the legal definition of chocolate for this reason.

15 ראה פסקים ותשובות סי' ק"ג הערות 38 ו-76.

16 ואעפ"כ, מנהג העולם הוא לברך שהכל נהיה בדברו על כל מיני שוקולד. וראה שו"ת שבט הלוי א"ח סימן כ"ו.

17 The Chasam Sofer is referring to drinking chocolate (like the Pri Chodosh) as opposed to solid chocolate, given the context of his ruling regarding coffee. By some historical accounts, solid chocolate was already beginning to gain popularity in Europe during Chasam Sofer's lifetime (5523-5600/1762-1839); nevertheless, it was still more common to consume it as a beverage. The solid chocolate in those days would have been quite crude compared to the smooth-textured chocolate of today, which was only invented after the discovery of the conching process in 5639/1879.

18 חידושי חתם סופר ע"ז ל"א: "ושאקילאט"ע פשוט דנאכל כמות שהוא ומותר, משא"כ קפה שהתיר מטעם שבטל לגבי המים (ודלא כתשובת מהר"ם א"ש (נדפס בשו"ת פנים מאירות ח"ב סי' ס"ב) שראוי לבטל נפש להחמיר בקפה, ע"ש).

19 ראה גם תשובות מהרש"ם חלק ב' סי' רס"ב: "טעשיקילאדע ליכא איסור שהרי נאכל חי." (ומוסיף) שם: "ונודע כי הטיקילאדע בזמן הזה יש בה חשש תערובות איסור ואין לאכלה ולשתותה בלא הכשר (מרב ריא שמים)".

11 Some chocolate manufacturers may add a small amount of conventional heat to the conche if the heat generated by friction is deemed insufficient to create a fluid mixture. In most cases, however, the conche requires cooling to limit the heat generated by friction, as excessive heat tends to ruin the taste of chocolate.

12 שו"ע י"ד סימן ק"ג ב.

cocoa beans are fermented and dried, but not roasted.²⁰ Raw cocoa beans, nibs and powder (marketed as “cacao”) are also sold by retailers for use in smoothies and other food applications. Although such products may not taste quite the same as conventional cocoa or chocolate, their presence in the marketplace seems to support the Chasam Sofer’s notion that chocolate is eaten raw.

Roasting after fermentation

Whether or not the cocoa beans are roasted during the chocolate-making process, they typically undergo a fermentation step after harvesting (as above). Fermentation is essential in developing the bean for consumption and significantly changes its taste in a way that roasting alone cannot. The Shulchan Oruch rules that food made edible by salting (by a Jew or a Gentile) and then cooked by a Gentile is not subject to the prohibition of bishul akum.²¹ This is because the initial salting step is not considered an act of cooking vis-a-viz bishul akum (as explained above), and the subsequent roasting by the Gentile is of no halachic significance because the food was already edible beforehand.²² Poskim also apply this concept to foods that have been made edible by soaking (*kovush*) or cold-smoking prior to cooking.²³ We may therefore infer that if cocoa beans undergo fermentation (a form of soaking), which makes them edible without subsequent roasting, then they do not become forbidden if roasted by a Gentile.

Is chocolate really fit for a royal table?



Chocolate bars and truffles can be enjoyed on their own as a snack, or perhaps as a dessert at the end of a meal. Some chocolates are elaborately decorated and may be considered a fancy food; indeed, a box of chocolates is commonly considered a fitting gift for special occasions.

Nevertheless, contemporary Poskim have ruled that chocolate falls into the same category as sweets and other confectioneries which are not distinguished enough to require bishul Yisroel.²⁴ Some Poskim appear to leave open the possibility that chocolate may be suitable for a royal table, but still support the custom to permit it because it is usually eaten on its own, rather than as part of a meal.²⁵

When cooking alone doesn't make the food fit for a royal table



Even if we do consider some chocolates to be fit for a royal table, the roasting of the bean alone certainly does not result in a product that is fit for a royal table.²⁶ The beans (or nibs) must undergo major changes after roasting, including a lengthy refining process, significantly altering their taste and form. Some Poskim cite this reasoning to permit sugar and refined vegetable oil, which also require significant changes subsequent to their initial cooking or roasting steps to be considered *oleh al shulchan melochim*, and the same logic may be applied to chocolate, thereby providing an additional factor to be lenient.²⁷

In conclusion, we see that chocolate truly has no parallel in the culinary world. It is not quite like coffee, candy, vegetable oil, or cooked fruit, although it shares halachic commonalities with all of these and more. Given the factors discussed above, the view of the  and other mainstream kosher agencies is that all forms of chocolate – including cocoa powder, baking chocolate, drinking chocolate, chocolate coins, and even fancy chocolate – do not require bishul Yisroel.²⁸ Let us thank Hashem for this wonderful treat He has given us. 

20 The stated purpose of omitting the roasting step is to preserve the nutritional value and health benefits of the cocoa beans.

21 שו"ע שם י"ב: "דגים קטנים שמלחן ישראל או גוי הרי הן כמו שנתבשלו מקצת בישראל ואם צלאן גוי אחר כן מותרים." ו"ל שזה דומה לענינו, דכשצולים את הקקאו הצלי"ה היא אחרי כבישה

ולהעיר שאחרי המליחה צ"ל נאכל לרוב בני אדם ולא ע"י הדחק, כדן דבר שנאכל כמו שהוא חי כ"ל וכדעה הראשונה בשו"ע שם שאוסרת דגים מלוחים גדולים שאינם נאכלים אלא ע"י הדחק, וכן נפסק בערוך השולחן י"ד ס"י ק"ג כ"ה-כ"ו ובעוד אחרונים

23 ראה פסקים ותשובות שם כ"ו, וטעם לדבר שגם כבישה ועישון קר אינם נחשבים כבישול לענין "בישול עכו"ם, כמבואר בשו"ע שם י"ג, וממילא המאכלים נחשבים כ"נאכל חי

תשובות והנהגות ח"א ס"י תל"ח: "בשוקלדה נראה שאין איסור בישראל עכו"ם, וטעם הדבר שאין איסור אלא במאכל חשוב העולה על שולחן מלכים שחשוב ביותר. אבל מה שאין אוכלים אלא עראי "להנאת הטעם ולא בתוך הסעודה דומה לתה וקפה ומשקה ושוקלדה שנהגו שאין בהם בישראל עכו"ם

25 ראה הערה הקודמת, וראה קובץ מבית לוי גליון ח' עמ' מ' בשם הגר"ש וואזנר, שיש להקל כיוון שאינו אכילת סעודה ולא פרפרת רק טעימת ארעי

בענין זה דומה לבקבת קפה קלוי, שעליו כתוב בכף החיים י"ד ס"י ק"ג ס"ק כ"ג דלא נאסרה משום "בישול עכו"ם" דהא קלוייה אינה עולה לא על שולחן מלכים ולא על שולחן הדינות

27 ראה שו"ת שואל ומשיב ס"י ר"ל שהתיר סוכר דאחרי הבישול צריך זיקוק וקישוי כדי להעלותו על שולחן מלכים. וכן נמצא בשו"ת בית שלמה י"ד ח"א ס"י קע"ח לגבי שמן צמחי שנעשה מגרעינים מבושלים. נראה מדבריהם שצ"ל תיקון גדול במאכל שמביא למציאות חדשה, משא"כ בתיקון קטן כגון הוספת תבלינים או שאר חומרי גלם בלבד, יש לאסור. ראה שו"ת חסד לאברהם י"ד ס"י

28 בתשובות והנהגות ח"ה סימן רמ"ט אות ה' כתב שטוב עדיף שישראל יוסיף פעולה בבישול, אך נראה מדבריו שמתור בלאו הכי כיוון שאינו עולה על שולחן מלכים בסעודה, ע"ש

A CLOSER LOOK: **SUSHI**



**BY RABBI SHOLOM
BER HENDEL**

Ⓚ Executive Vaad
HaKashrus



What is sushi?

Sushi, which translates to “sour rice” in Japanese, is a traditional dish made from rice (mixed with rice vinegar), nori (seaweed), and fish (cooked or raw), vegetables, or a combination of both.

Sushi is typically served with soy sauce, wasabi, and pickled ginger. The soy sauce is used for dipping, wasabi to enhance the flavor of the fish, and the pickled ginger is eaten between pieces of sushi to cleanse the palate and enhance the flavor of the fish.

What are the ingredients in sushi?

There are many types of sushi and each type is made with a different combination of fish, vegetables, and nori. The one thing all sushi has in common is the rice, seasoned with rice vinegar, which is the base for all types of sushi.



Rice vinegar is created by converting the starch in rice into sugars. The sugars are then fermented to create *sake* (rice wine). The sake is then further fermented into rice vinegar, which is diluted with water to achieve the desired flavor and acidity.¹

Many sushi rolls use nori as well. Nori is made by cultivating and harvesting seaweed from the sea, and

is processed by washing, chopping, and blending it into a watery paste. The paste is spread onto a fine screen and dried into thin sheets, and then roasted, cut and packaged.

There are many different types of sushi:

- **Maki (most common type in Japan):** a sushi roll where rice and fillings are spread on a sheet of nori and then rolled and sliced into bite-sized pieces.
- **Uramaki (most common type in America):** like maki, but the rice is on the outside to make it more palatable to Americans who did not find the nori appealing.
- **Tempura:** battered and deep-fried sushi.
- **Nigiri:** small, oval-shaped balls of seasoned sushi rice with a slice of raw fish or other topping pressed onto it.
- **Aburi:** nigiri that is lightly seared with a culinary blowtorch. The searing process cooks only the outer layer of the fish while leaving the inside of the fish raw, creating a smoky flavor and a unique texture.

Is sushi kosher?

While raw **rice** is inherently kosher, cooked rice is subject to the laws of Bishul Yisroel, because rice is not edible raw and is considered suitable for a king's table. Therefore, cooked rice is only kosher² when a Jew is involved in the cooking process. Since most rice

¹ For more information about the process and kashrus of vinegar, see <https://www.ok.org/consumers/a-closer-look-ingredients/what-is-white-vinegar/>.

² The same would apply to cooked vegetables that are not edible raw, such as sweet potatoes.

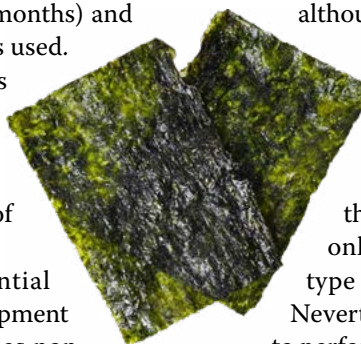


cookers automatically shut off after the rice is fully cooked, a mashgiach is needed to turn the cooker back on for each batch to ensure Bishul Yisroel.

Nori is known to be prone to infestation, which affects its kosher status. Sea creatures such as sea horses and mini shrimps can get caught in seaweed and can end up mixed in the product. The level of infestation varies depending on the time of the year (typically decreasing in the colder months) and depends on the processing methods used. The kosher certifying agency ensures there are effective systems in place to prevent infestation and inspect samples of the finished products to verify that the product is free of infestation.

Additionally, there are potential kashrus concerns related to the equipment used. Flavored seaweed that includes non-kosher flavoring can be processed on the same equipment.

Fish, a quintessential part of sushi, poses its own challenges. Once the kosher signs of a fish (the fins and scales) are removed, fish requires supervision by a mashgiach temidi.³ The only exception is salmon due to its unique red color. Kani, imitation crab, includes fish, which must be from a kosher-certified production.



Historically, fish has always required Bishul Yisroel, since it is not edible raw and is considered suitable for a king's table. However, now that fish is commonly eaten raw in sushi, one might question whether it should still be subject to the laws of Bishul Yisroel. The consensus of the Poskim is that although many people eat raw fish in sushi, the consumption of raw fish has not become common enough to consider raw fish edible.

Aburi sushi undergoes a light searing process, and there is reason to suggest that it may not require Bishul Yisroel, since only the surface is cooked, and the same type of fish is also eaten raw in nigiri sushi. Nevertheless, Ⓚ policy requires the mashgiach to perform the searing process or light the torch.

Vinegar, soy sauce, wasabi, ginger, and any other condiments consumed with sushi require reliable kosher certification. Both the production process and the additives and processing aids can affect the kosher status.

Due to all the potential kashrus concerns, **sushi should only be consumed with a reliable kosher certification** to ensure that your sushi is kosher without compromise. Ⓚ

³ Shulchan Oruch, Yoreh Deah 118:1.

To REVEAL What CANNOT Be REVEALED

Excerpted from Selections from Likkutei Sichos, Chanukah

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The inner reason why it is necessary that the Chanukah lights produce light which, in and of itself, can be seen by everyone, to the extent that they should attract public notice, can be explained as follows: The highest levels of G-dliness, including those that transcend Seder Hahishtalshelus, the chainlike structure of existence – and even the Essence of G-d Himself – must be drawn down to this material realm.¹

Such G-dliness entirely transcends all measures and limits of our world and, indeed, all the worlds. Nevertheless, the ultimate intent is that even such lofty G-dliness be drawn down in a manner that will enable it to permeate and be internalized within our material frame of reference.

There is a parallel to this in our Divine service. Primarily, the power of mesirus nefesh and the essential bond between a Jew and G-d it manifests are not intended to serve as an intermediary, a mere catalyst to arouse and illuminate our revealed powers of intellect and emotion. The fundamental purpose is the mesirus nefesh itself and the consummate bond with G-d that it expresses. Nevertheless, in its most complete manifestation, mesirus nefesh should also be openly apparent, to the extent that it should affect our revealed powers, motivating them to a deeper involvement in the Torah and its mitzvos, for as explained in Tanya,² observance of the Torah and its mitzvos is dependent on mesirus nefesh.

Nevertheless, even when (Heaven forbid) a person's mesirus nefesh does not directly impact his observance of the Torah and its mitzvos in an apparent matter – as it is possible that a Chanukah lamp will not actually provide light for another person – there is nothing lacking in the mesirus nefesh per se. There is only a lack in the person's revealed powers; they are not sufficiently developed to be conduits that are affected by the mesirus nefesh.³

Even so, this lack does not detract from a person's mesirus nefesh; that power was aroused and expressed. The power of mesirus nefesh always exists intact within all Jews as an inherent potential, as our Sages state,⁴ "A Jew, even though he sins, [remains] a Jew." Moreover, in this instance, the mesirus nefesh exists not only as a latent, inherent potential; rather, it has been set alight and activated. ❧

3 To cite an example of how a person's essential powers may not affect his conscious self: Our Sages (Berachos 63a, see Ein Yaakov) say that a thief calls upon G-d before breaking into a home. On the one hand, his faith is aroused in a revealed manner, as evident in his calling upon G-d. On the other hand, this arousal does not affect his revealed powers; indeed, he uses them to act against G-d's will and steal.

A similar concept can apply regarding mesirus nefesh: It is possible that a Jew who actually gives up his life al kiddush HaShem, to sanctify G-d's name, may still be lax in the observance of a particular mitzvah, and may still be considered coarse and underdeveloped with regard to his revealed powers, for his self-sacrifice does not necessarily affect his revealed powers. As Tanya (ch. 18) states, even the most base and unrefined individuals are prepared to sacrifice their lives al kiddush HaShem. Nevertheless, their self-sacrifice does not affect their revealed powers and, from the standpoint of those powers, they may remain base and unrefined. (See also Kuntres HaAvodah, ch. 5; the maamar entitled VeAtah Tetzaveh 5741, sec. 10.) This is not the place for further discussion of the matter.

1 This transforms our lowly world into a dwelling for G-d, a place where His Essence is revealed. See Tanya, ch. 36.

2 Tanya, the conclusion of ch. 25.

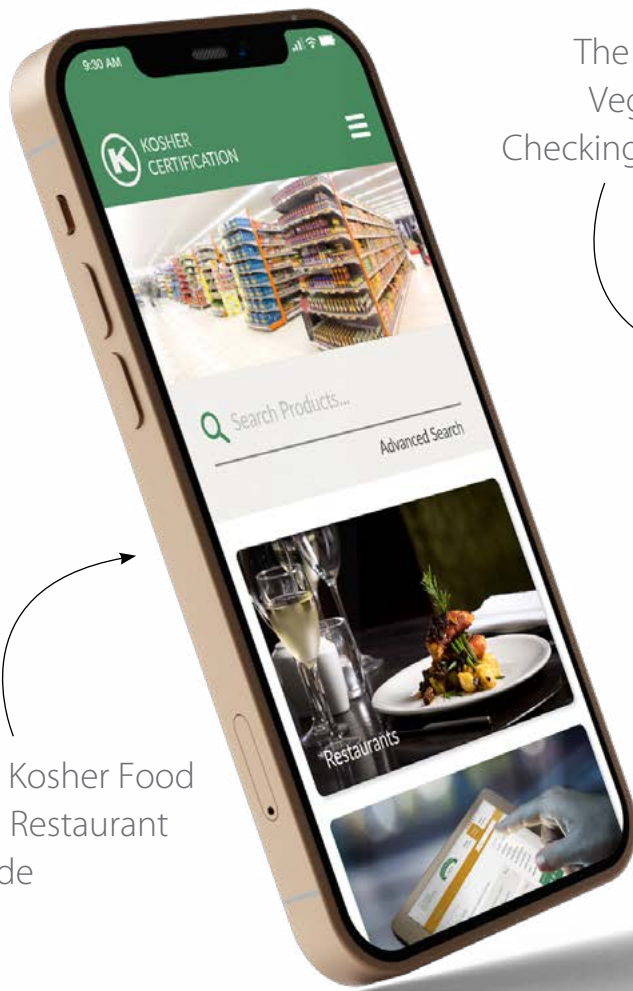
4 Sanhedrin 44a.

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