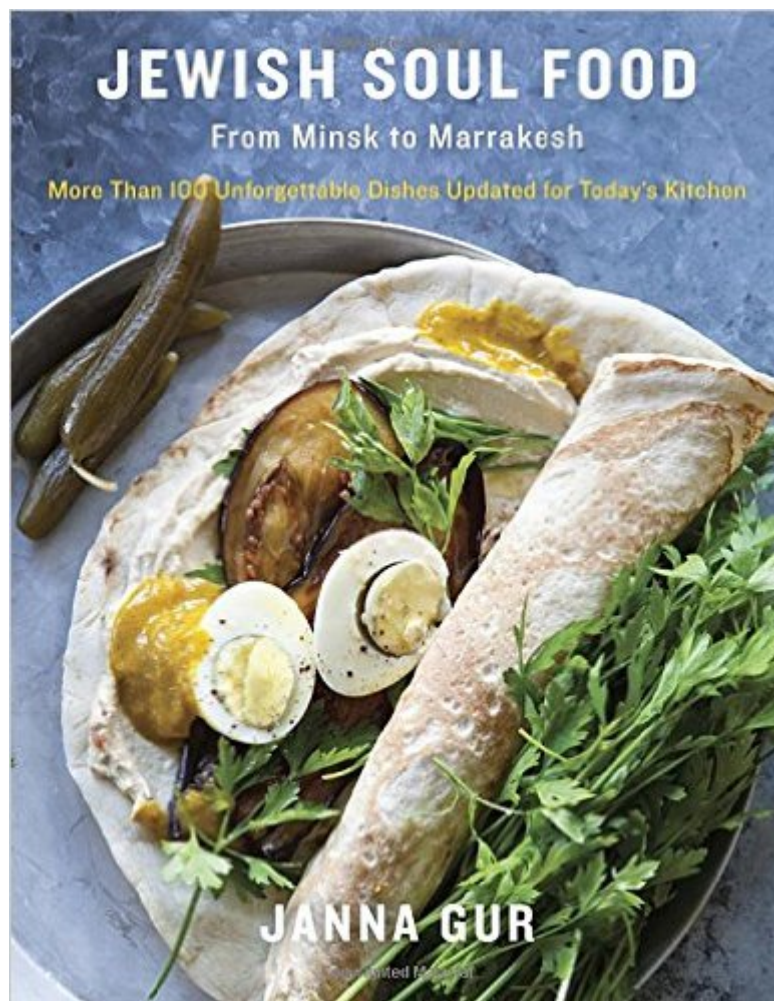


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# Jewish Soul Food: From Minsk To Marrakesh, More Than 100 Unforgettable Dishes Updated For Today's Kitchen



## Synopsis

The author of the acclaimed *The Book of New Israeli Food* returns with a cookbook devoted to the culinary masterpieces of Jewish grandmothers from Minsk to Marrakesh: recipes that have traveled across continents and cultural borders and are now brought to life for a new generation. For more than two thousand years, Jews all over the world developed cuisines that were suited to their needs (kashruth, holidays, Shabbat) but that also reflected the influences of their neighbors and that carried memories from their past wanderings. These cuisines may now be on the verge of extinction, however, because almost none of the Jewish communities in which they developed and thrived still exist. But they continue to be viable in Israel, where there are still cooks from the immigrant generations who know and love these dishes. Israel has become a living laboratory for this beloved and endangered Jewish food. The more than one hundred original, wide-ranging recipes in *Jewish Soul Food*—from Kubaneh, a surprising Yemenite version of a brioche, to Ushpa-lau, a hearty Bukharan pilaf—were chosen not by an editor or a chef but, rather, by what Janna Gur calls a “natural selection.” These are the dishes that, though rooted in their original Diaspora provenance, have been embraced by Israelis and have become part of the country’s culinary landscape. The premise of *Jewish Soul Food* is that the only way to preserve traditional cuisine for future generations is to cook it, and Janna Gur gives us recipes that continue to charm with their practicality, relevance, and deliciousness. Here are the best of the best: recipes from a fascinatingly diverse food culture that will give you a chance to enrich your own cooking repertoire and to preserve a valuable element of the Jewish heritage and of its collective soul. (With full-color photographs throughout.)

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I was disappointed because there is so much overlap with her earlier cookbook "The Book of New Israeli Food." If I had never seen that book, I would have given this five stars. However, in the first 50 pages of Jewish Soul Food, there are 8 or 9 recipes which are identical (pickled lemons, harissa, broth for the Passover green chicken soup) or very, very similar (chopped liver, gefilte fish, gondi soup, matboukha) to recipes in her earlier book. My suggestion is buy one book or the other, but not both. The two cookbooks overlap primarily in recipes for Jewish food of Middle Eastern origin. Here are the main differences. The "Book of New Israeli Food" is not just Jewish Israeli but also Arab Israeli so not all recipes are Kosher or from the Jewish community. "Jewish Soul Food" contains many more recipes for European Jewish (Ashkenazi) food. "Jewish Soul Food" also assumes a greater availability of "exotic" Middle Eastern ingredients. For example, both cookbooks have recipes for spicy Moroccan carrot salad. The "Book of New Israeli Food" uses lemon juice. The recipe in "Jewish Soul Food" uses Moroccan pickled lemons. When the recipes overlap, the ones in Jewish Soul Food tend to be more complex. Another example - The recipe for ras-el-hanoot (a Moroccan spice blend) in the earlier cookbook contains only five spices. The recipe in Jewish Soul Food is made up of 14 spices!

Each year, the parents, grandparents, aunts/uncles, and neighbors who remember the recipes are retiring from cooking and more. This book preserves the dishes for our kitchens and those of our children. I was drawn to this new cookbook right before Thanksgiving 2014 and Shabbat Toldot (the parshat that mentions a lentil stew shared between Jacob and Esau.. what better weekend to read a soul food cookbook?) Gur was born in Riga, Latvia, when it was part of the USSR. In 1974, as a 15 year old, she emigrated to Israel with her family, and she is currently a top rated food editor (Al Hashulchan) and cookbook author (The Book of New Israeli Food: A Culinary Journey, 2008). Her maternal grandparents hailed from Kishinev in Bessarabia. The kernel of the book: preservation and to remind people that couscous is a Jewish soul food as much as chopped liver and gefilte fish. For many of her selected soul foods, she gives their cultural name, the English description, and the region of its source. Regions include Ashkenazi, Sephardic, Iraqi, Middle Eastern, Yemeni, American, Turkish, Israeli, Syrian (and Aleppo), Egyptian, Moroccan, Kurdish, Libyan, Ukrainian, Russian, Algerian, Romanian (Bessarabian) and Bulgarian. Some of the soul foods that she

translates are Krupnick, Kneidlach, Gondalach, Borscht, H'rira, Kuku Sabzi, Messayir, Chersh, Forschmak, Ushpalau, Fesanjan, and... Goulash. Some of the recipes are from Ruth Oliver, a twentieth generation resident of Jerusalem. She also includes four online sources for ingredients, including the retailer: Kalustyans. The chapter headings are Starters, Salads & Noshes (23 recipes); Cozy Soups for Chilly Nights (14); Meatball, Fishballs, & Stuffed vegetables (10); Braises, Pot Roasts & Ragus (13); Meatless Mains (12); Savory Pastries (11); Shabbat State of Mind (9); and Cakes, Cookies and Desserts (20). The standout recipes that she has thankfully recorded are too numerous to list, but include: Spicy Carrot Salad; Beet Salad with Cumin and Cinnamon (roast the beets on coarse slat instead of boiling, brings out more flavor); Tangy Sweet Orange and Salty Black Olives Salad; Blues Ones and Red Ones (blue eggplants with red tomatoes (a la her grandmother); Mashawia; Chopped Liver with more onion than liver a la Chef Omer Miller; or Chopped Liver a la Chef Erez Komarovsky which uses leeks instead of onions and crusts the liver in cumin, mustard seed and peppercorns. Also there are Syrian Meatballs with Sour Cherries from Chef Pini Levi whose family hailed from Urfa Turkey (close to Abraham's birthplace, perhaps); Stuffed Cabbage with Sauerkraut; Beef and Pottao Sofrito; Shakshuka; Mujaddara; Bulgarian Pre-Sabbath Pabbath Casserole with Cottage Cheese; Strudel; Plum Dumplings; a babka; Kubaneh (a Yemenite slow baking overnight 6+ hour Shabbat Bread); sweet Jerusalem Kugel; Chicken Noodle Hamen; Chreime (Tunisian Fish Stew) versus Moroccan Fish Stew (try halibut if you can't get a fresh grouper); Algerian Passover Green Chicken Soup; and Bimuelos (honeyed Hanukkah Puffs)

Great cookbook! Recommend it to everyone. Can't wait to cook even more of the recipes in it. What a great way to preserve a heritage than through updating recipes that have come down through the millennia.

There is a lot of culture recipes in there, it's missing few but it's giving you the basics. there is Israeli recipes in There 2 ;-)

Very good book. The best cookbook I own! I tried at least 10 recipes and they're all fantastic!

Excellent in presentation and execution. Interesting new recepies and easy to follow.

Excellent recipes and interesting stories...recommended by 2 friends!

Great cookbook showing some of the roots of modern foods

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