



# Learn about Purim!

Purim takes place on the *14th of Adar* (Hebrew Calendar).



[Learn more about the artwork here](#)

## **Queen Esther/Harriet Tubman**

Artwork by Fred Wilson

Part of the Jewish Museum collection

This year, Purim is taking place during Black History Month! African American artist Fred Wilson created this double portrait of Queen Esther (of the Purim story), and the abolitionist activist Harriet Tubman. If you look closely at the picture, you can see Queen Esther's headdress, veil, and royal scepter right behind Harriet Tubman. Both of these women fought hard to save their people from danger. Harriet Tubman is most known for her work on the Underground Railroad, helping enslaved Africans escape from plantations and bondage to freedom. You will learn more about Queen Esther's work throughout this e-mail!

**Why do you think Fred Wilson chose to feature Queen Esther and Harriet Tubman in the same picture?**

**Can you think of any other figures throughout history, and today, that might fit into this portrait?**



The story of Purim takes place in the city of Shushan, in modern day Iran. The story is filled with self sacrifice, evil plots, masking identities, and (spoiler alert) a happy ending! Every year, Jewish communities read from a special book called *Megillat Esther*, which looks like a one-sided Torah scroll. During the reading, it is customary for the congregation to make a lot of noise when the name

Haman is spoken. Haman is the man who hatches an evil plot to destroy the Jews - wouldn't you want to boo him, too? Congregants yell, hit objects together, and twirl noise makers called *groggers*. Many people also refer to Purim as the "Jewish Halloween" because dressing up in costumes is part of the tradition! Children and adults pretend to be the characters in the story, or take the silly opportunity to dress up in costumes of all sorts - clowns, ballerinas, you name it! There are many special parts to celebrating Purim, but the emphasis on individual acts of strength and activism, and the celebration of a female hero are really what make this holiday stand out!

## **LEARN MORE ABOUT PURIM**

**What costume do you want to wear for Purim?**

**Which yummy Purim food would you like to try?**



*Shake Your Grogger (A Purim Song) by Michelle Citrin*

Purim time is upon us, we'll be singing some crazy tunes  
Yes everything's topsy turvy, I mean we eat cookies filled with prune

**Chorus:** Shake, shake, shake your grogger, shake your grogger right  
Shake, shake, shake your grogger, shake it all the time  
Work, work, work your grogger, work your grogger right  
Work, work, work your grogger, work it all the time

Well there was a guy named Haman, he tried to kill of the Jews  
But thankfully brave Esther saved us, she knew what to do with no time to lose  
She jumped in the line, put her mask on, drank some wine  
Jump in the line, everything will be fine  
Jump in the line, put your mask on, drink some wine  
Jump in the line, everything will be fine

**Chorus:** As you shake, shake, shake your grogger, shake your grogger right...

Everyone's dressed up in costumes, we march around in parades  
'Cause us Jews if you give us lemons, we'll make a lemonade!

(Jump in the line, put your mask on, drink some wine  
Jump in the line, everything will be fine x2)

**Chorus:** As you shake, shake, shake your grogger, shake your grogger right...

The moral of this Megillah, is stand up for what you feel  
And if you try to kill us, we'll boo out your name and make a Purim Spiel!

(Jump in the line, put your mask on, drink some wine  
Jump in the line, everything will be fine x2)

**Chorus:** Shake, shake, shake your grogger, shake your grogger right...

Dance, dance, dance the horah, dance it all in time  
Work, work, work your grogger, work it all the time, hey!

Jump in the line, put your mask on, drink some wine  
Jump in the line, everything will be fine (x2)

**Chorus:** Shake, shake, shake your grogger, shake your grogger right...

### **LISTEN TO THE SONG**



The most recognized Purim food is probably Hamentaschen, or Oznei Haman (Haman's Ears), a triangular cookie filled with jam, chocolate, poppy seeds, or any filling of your choice. However, because the story of Purim takes place in Shushan, modern day Iran, let us learn about some foods that are special and unique to the Iranian or Persian Jewish community! Today, Persian Jews live primarily in Los Angeles, California, and on Long Island in New York. If you visit a nearby Persian restaurant, you might be able to taste test this recipe!

Gondi is a soup and dumpling dish, made with flavorful ingredients and spices. It is a uniquely Persian Jewish dish that isn't shared with other Iranian communities, and is generally eaten during Shabbat Friday night dinners, and on special holidays.

### **FOLLOW THE RECIPE**



One of the *mitzvot* (sacred obligations) during Purim is to send *matnot l'evyonim* (gifts of food or money) to the hungry. As we know, many of our neighbors are hungry due to loss of income during this pandemic and the systemic inequities in our society.

As a Western Queens Jewish community, we invite you to help stock the community fridges that have popped up in our neighborhoods. Simply click on the icon for the fridge nearest you to see the details. Each fridge has different needs and rules. They may be asking for food or donations of money to purchase food. We hope you'll make this act of *chesed* (lovingkindness) part of your Purim practice this year and in the future!

For an added personal touch, download these [Notecards](#), print them out and write a neighborly note to include with your food donation, explaining that your gift is part of the holiday of Purim.

## **FIND YOUR COMMUNITY FRIDGE**