

TOVA'S VEGETARIAN CHOPPED LIVER

4 onions, sliced
1¼ cups walnuts
½ tsp mustard
¼ tsp black pepper
500 g (1 lb) canned peas, drained
(a harder, cheaper kind)

1 Tbs oil
1 Tbs (fat free) mayonnaise
Grate of nutmeg
½ tsp salt
Grated egg whites of two hardboiled eggs

Fry onions in oil on low heat until dark, stirring frequently. In food processor blend walnuts until finely ground. Add remaining ingredients, blending until smooth. Adjust seasonings. Line a damp loaf pan with plastic wrap. Transfer chopped liver to the pan, smoothing it out, and cover well with more plastic wrap.

To serve, either invert liver onto a flat plate, peel off plastic and decorate, or spread it out on a plate and serve garnished with parsley, pickled cucumbers, etc. Best prepared the day before; keeps well for days. Serves 8.

Tova Ron

Tova Ron, Aviv's mother is the classic mother figure, totally devoted to her children and grandchildren. There is, however, a special place in her heart for Vered. Tova always prepares special foods for Vered, buys her presents, etc. She made this, her famous 'chopped liver' the Pesach before Vered and Aviv were married (1991), a few months after the Gulf War. Caroline invited us all to her home in Arad and Gideon, with Aviv Levy's help, conducted the Seder. The following day Caroline led the Levys, Bravermans and Rons to the iris fields at Yeruham. To see these velvety black flowers growing in the arid soil was amazing and especially pleasing to Tova. We then visited the ruins at Mamshit. But most memorable of all was Tova's chopped liver.

Tova looked forward to Vered and Aviv having a baby, which she could look after. The kids always tease me, saying I'd never be a typical (Israeli) grandmother and that I'd never give up my activities to look after grandchildren.

In reply I tell them that when they were young I was sometimes so overtired and distraught, I'd drive from Hofit to Tel Aviv to Granny. While she took the kids to the park I'd have a good sleep and when refreshed we'd have tea and biscuits and then I'd drive back home (40 minutes each way). I then smile slyly and say, "I'll always do the same, when of course you'll bring the grandchildren to Eilat" (5 hours each way).

CHOPPED HERRING

3 salt herrings
3 Marie/tea biscuits
2 hard-boiled eggs
Black pepper

1 onion
1 green apple
½ cup vinegar
Sugar

Choose firm herrings. Remove heads and gut carefully. Soak herrings overnight in a few changes of cold water. Drain, pat dry in a paper towel, skin and fillet. Pat dry again. Mince with onion, biscuits, apple and eggs. Add vinegar, pepper and sugar to taste. Adjust seasonings.

The mixture should be moist but not mushy. Spread on large platter and decorate with thin slices of lemon, slices of scored cucumber, or sprigs of parsley. Serves 6.