

Ashkenazi Passover Charoset

I find the rhythm of chopping the apples and nuts by hand quite relaxing. You may disagree, and that's perfectly fine. Serve with matzoh, and, if you like, a bit of horseradish.

Makes 5 cups

1-1/2 cups pecans, walnuts, or a combination, toasted, chopped very fine
3 Fuji apples, cored (peel on or off, your choice), chopped very fine
1-1/2 teaspoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 cup sweet red wine

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Puree half of mixture in a food processor until a rough paste forms. Return to the serving bowl with the remaining ingredients, and stir to combine.

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Sephardic Passover Charoset

This unusual charoset was adapted from a recipe my friend Alison shared with me. You'll notice that it uses an entire, unpeeled orange, so please choose an organic, seedless one if you can. The charoset is both quite sweet and also a bit bitter due to the orange peel. The combination is surprising and delicious.

Makes 2-3/4 cups, packed

1 medium seedless orange, well-rinsed, preferably organic
1 pound Medjool dates (about 22-24), pits removed and discarded
3 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
2 tablespoons sweet (red) wine
1/2 cups pecans or walnuts, toasted, finely chopped

Cut the orange into 6-8 rough pieces (do not peel) and place in a food processor fitted with the metal blade. Add the dates. Process for about 15 seconds, or until a mushy paste forms but rough chunks of orange peel are still visible.

Place in a small saucepan with the sugar, cinnamon, and wine. Cook over low heat for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Watch carefully so it doesn't burn.

Transfer to a serving bowl and stir in the chopped nuts.