

## 'Two Jews Making Food' and a Whole Lot More



Amy Kirwin, left, and Rebecca Edana are the hosts of "Two Jews Making Food," in which cocktails flow and recipes of Jewish classics as well as international cuisine are shared with a side of culture and humor.

Courtesy of LTV  
By [Jennifer Landes](#)  
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"So much of the food we eat oftentimes represents something, or it's the telling of a story," said Rebecca Edana during last year's Passover episode of the LTV and Sun20TV show "Two Jews Making Food." Amy Kirwin, her co-host, agreed. "In this case, it absolutely is, because you have a Seder that tells the story of Moses freeing the Jews from Egypt and the bad Pharaoh and all the plagues."

"And don't forget the ladies," Ms. Kirwin added wryly as they discussed Miriam, the sister of Moses, whose well was the source of water for Israelites in the desert. A cup of water is a recent addition to the Passover tradition to honor the role of women in the religion.

No matter what culture or religion, holidays tend to revolve around food, whether it's the lack of it, as in the fasts of Yom Kippur and Ramadan, the restrictions in Lent and Passover, or the full-on feasts that other special days offer. With Passover beginning on Wednesday, it's a good time to check in with these local women, who celebrate Jewish food and culture, along with other cuisines, and have a darn good time doing it.

In a Passover Seder, "every single food that you eat is symbolic of something. Nothing is random," Ms. Edana said in a recent joint Zoom interview. "Someone didn't just put parsley on the Seder plate. There's a reason for why it's there. It adds to the story." She said the stories and symbolism behind food in general "is something to talk about, a way to relate. It just makes it interesting to me."

They said FOMO (fear of missing out) during another holiday was the impetus behind the series. Ms. Edana hosted a Hanukkah party and recalled that Ms. Kirwin's reaction was "You had a party for Jewish people and you didn't invite me? Who was there?"

"I thought I was her only Jewish friend here," Ms. Kirwin joked. But the guests were just her family, "no extras," Ms. Edana confirmed. The idea of making a Hanukkah dinner and recording it to share with their mothers morphed into a Facebook Live event, where they could interact with those watching. It immediately became something more. According to Ms. Edana, Ms. Kirwin told her she had bought the domain name for the website "Two Jews Making Food." And she replied, "'Amy, what are you designing? Why? What are you doing?' And she said, 'We're going to Facebook Live, so let's just do it. I'm gonna make it a show.'" Ms. Kirwin admitted, "When I'm very excited about something I'm off to the races."

The first show, filmed on a cellphone in Ms. Edana's kitchen, was in December 2019. They continued, spottily, through the pandemic, then landed at LTV's kitchen studio in December 2021 with a photo (which has since evolved into a life-size flat figure) of their mascot, Jason Momoa, in tow.

In an ambitious half-hour format, they make multiple recipes and cocktails and share a bit of culture and Yiddish, and a lot of schtick. Both women have theatrical backgrounds and their ease on camera and their similar broad senses of humor shine through every episode.

On Facebook, they sometimes made five different dishes. The first episode was two hours long. "Sometimes I looked at Amy and said, 'What were we thinking when we created this show?'" Ms. Edana said.

They describe themselves as home cooks who like to explore flavors. "And it's not all basic stuff," Ms. Kirwin said. "Sometimes we will do something that's quite challenging." For their "Christmastime for the Jews" episode, they made a Peking duck. ("Chinese food, you know? We embrace the stereotype," she added with a laugh.)

"People think of traditionally Jewish cooking as Eastern European food, but it's actually very worldly," Ms. Edana noted. For centuries, "Jews have been moving around, and they've been taking in other culinary dishes and making them their own. And there's just a very interesting history as to why we eat what we eat, and how it relates to other people." Every culture seems to have some kind of a dumpling, whether it's ravioli or wontons. She said she loves when people on the show tell her "My Polish grandma makes this" or "We eat this in Spain."

They miss the live component of the early days, but the trade-off is worth it. With LTV, "We got a great space with proper cameras and good sound as opposed to always struggling," Ms. Kirwin said.

Ms. Edana recalled the time they tried holding the phone camera over the food. "We couldn't see what we were doing. So we were holding it over..."

"Just your cleavage," Ms. Kirwin interjected, finishing her sentence the way they often do with each other. "And you're welcome, audience." At the time of the interview, they had completed 27 episodes at LTV. The intended schedule is a new episode every two weeks, but the pace was hard to maintain with their own lives and careers to manage. They took a summer break last year and came back in September for season two. And they were back in the studio on Monday for two new episodes, the first of which, devoted to Passover, will likely begin airing on Tuesday, the next one on or about April 18. All episodes also post on YouTube about a week after taping.

They've plotted out their studio time for the next year with an eye to consistency, but also manageability. "When we go into the studio, it's just the space and us," Ms. Edana said. "There are people operating the camera and the sound, but in terms of food prep, I'm bringing it all in and we're cleaning it all up."

Ms. Kirwin likes to try things she's never made before on the show, "because it's very funny if it's terrible." They'll try something that sounds amazing, but if it bombs, it's okay. Their point is not to fear failure. Ms. Edana once made a cocktail with mezcal, and Ms. Kirwin said it tasted like a shoe.

Following a Julia Child recipe, Ms. Kirwin heeded directions to cook chicken cutlets for five minutes on each side. Ms. Edana warned her it wouldn't cook completely, but she persisted. In the end, they tried a corner of it. "It was effing delicious," Ms. Kirwin recalled. "It was delicious," Ms. Edana acknowledged. "But it was half raw."

Early on, there were bonus sessions where they ate the food and discussed how it tasted. In their tighter format, they often don't have the time to taste. As a result, a companion podcast may capture those moments.

They have invited in audiences and gained a "super fan" — Billy Field, whose granddaughter, Samantha Young, works with Ms. Kirwin at Guild Hall (where Ms. Kirwin is chief creative officer). Known for his effusive Halloween house decorations in East Hampton, he has spread the word as far away as South Carolina, according to Ms. Kirwin. Ms. Young often makes their recipes for dinner, including one for pho, a Vietnamese soup he tried on the show that reminded him — positively — of the flavors of the country he served in during the war.

They like interacting with the audience, restricted to about eight people in the small studio because of remaining Covid concerns. They share the food and drinks with them, as well as the banter. And, they help clean up. Anyone who wants to attend a taping can reserve a place through [twojewsmakingfood@gmail.com](mailto:twojewsmakingfood@gmail.com).

"What I like about our show is that it's friendly, it's accessible, and it's very relatable," Ms. Edana said. "It's just so nice to talk to people about food and how it affects their life and their story . . . and how we relate to each other as humans through food."

For Ms. Kirwin, "It's just about the love of food, really, and how it brings people together. Enjoying yourself in the kitchen with friends, having fun."