



PASSOVER

Atlantan Competes in Manischewitz Cook-Off

Q+A WITH CONTESTANT ROBIN SAUL

BY ELIZABETH FRIEDLY
ASSISTANT EDITOR

From thousands of entries nationwide, the final five contestants have been chosen to compete in Newark, N.J. for the 7th Annual Manischewitz Cook-Off. Among them is Atlanta's own Robin Saul – her Balsamic Mushroom Matzo Panini with mango jam beat out countless other recipes for a chance at the grand prize of \$25,000 on March 21.

And not only is Saul's reputation as a Southern chef on the line, but her daughter's education funds as well; it was in an effort to raise money for her daughter's seminary schooling that Saul decided on a whim to enter the competition.

The *Atlanta Jewish Times* caught up with Saul to talk about representing her community, her love of food and any pre-competition jitters.

The Atlanta Jewish Times: How does it feel to be representing the South on the national stage like this?

Robin Saul: Obviously, it's a tremendous honor. I don't feel like it is a personal winning, I really feel like I am representing Atlanta.

I looked at their [Manischewitz's] list of past winners, and I don't think there's been anyone from Atlanta. It's time that the big cities recognize that Atlanta is not a small town; there's a lot of talent here, there's a lot going on, and we have an identity on our own.

AJT: And this win could help out your daughter as well, correct?

RS: Yes; she's graduating from high school this year, and she applied to a Jewish seminary and got in. The thing is, it's not like college, where you have a lot of scholarship money.

The administrator [at school] said, 'You've gotta think outside of the box when it comes to looking for scholarships.' When I entered this recipe contest, I felt like I was really

thinking out of the box!

I took my talent and I try to do something in order to get funding for her to go to school, so that's really exciting.



Robin Saul

AJT: Have you always enjoyed experimenting in the kitchen?

RS: I have always been naturally drawn to cooking and trying new things. When I ask my family what their favorite recipe is, they laugh and say, 'You always make something different, so we don't necessarily have a favorite.' I just love all types of international and ethnic cooking because you

get to try new things and it literally brings you out of your space to another place.

AJT: When did you find out you were a finalist?

RS: I got a phone call and I was too embarrassed to ask where they were [in the decision process] – because I knew there were thousands of recipes.

I just kind of rode with the tide, I guess you could say, because it was so unexpected that I was chosen. It still hadn't really sunk in that they had really called me. They have so many entries!

AJT: Are you feeling ready for the live competition?

RS: Well, I was at the beginning very stunned because I had never actually made the recipe. Now I've made the recipe several times and each time I make it, I feel much more comfortable with how I'm going to present it.

AJT: Any special Passover plans?

RS: I will be making a lot of matzo jam this Passover, I'll tell you that! My son takes the panini, and he takes a whole spoon of extra jam on top. I can already tell it's a big hit, and it's just so easy to make.

Mmm, Matzolah!

GREAT GRANOLA, AT PASSOVER OR YEAR-ROUND

BY JOHN MCCURDY
MANAGING EDITOR

It would be safe to say that Matzolah was "in the works" for quite some time.

"About 30 years ago on Passover, I had an idea; it didn't exist then and it barely exists now," Wayne Silverman, president of Matzolah manufacturer Foodman's Original, said with a smile. "I made a kosher-for-Passover matzah granola and started sending that around to friends."

"Right away, everyone was saying, 'You've got to market this, you've got to market this.'"

As the saying goes, behind every great man is a great woman. It was Wayne's wife, Laura Silverman, that pushed him to truly launch the product. In 2002, the couple and their daughter, under supervision of a mashgiach, made the first 1,000 boxes of Matzolah.

That limited stock sold almost immediately, and local grocery stores came calling for more right away.

"Some chains wanted us to make a ton of it, but we got scared and quit," Silverman said. "It was overwhelming, and we didn't know what to do."

Thus one more bump in the road was encountered, but neither Laura nor Wayne were truly content to give up. Finally, once the family had relocated to the Atlanta area, it was time.

"We were still thinking, 'We've got to do this, we've got to do this,'" Silverman said. "So I gave up life as I knew it – and my life savings – and took a chance to marry all of the things I've really been passionate about in my life."

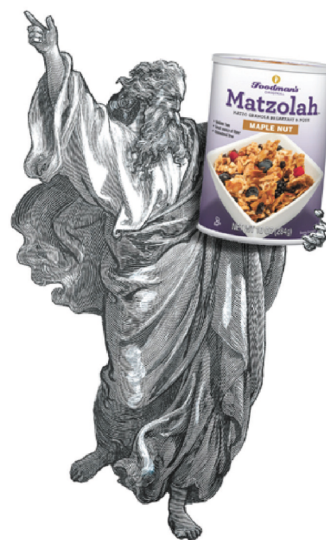
Today, Atlantans have no short-

age of locations to pick up their Matzolah: Try any metro-area Kroger's or Whole Foods, or patronize one of many smaller vendors, such as Bagel Palace, Mercantile Exchange, Oakhurst Market or Kavarna. Nationally, the product can also be found in Shoprite, Stop 'n Shop and Safeway (Northeast) and specialty stores (California and Florida).

And beyond commercial sales, Foodman's also makes a point to partner closely with non-profits all over the country. Locally, Laura and Dave Bogart of Toco Hills represent the company to synagogues, day schools, religious schools and more.

"In this company, I've brought my non-profit executive experience. What we're doing is, we're creating a very different niche of sales channels," Silverman said. "We have direct sales to individuals, and yes, we're in grocery stores – but we've also been doing direct sales to non-profit organizations because I so intimately know all these entities and how they operate."

Regardless of where you find it, it's evident the passion for Matzolah – KasherFest 2013's Best New Passover Product – is spreading. If you want to get in on the goodness, visit any of the above locations or order via foodmannosh.com or (404) 343-1325.



Silverman's personal favorite Matzolah preparation: with fruit and whole-grain flakes in milk