

(C)HANUKKAH

*SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2022
–MONDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2022

Hanukkah, also known as the Festival of Lights, is a Jewish holiday that is celebrated over eight days and nights in remembrance of two miracles. The first is the victory of a small, greatly outnumbered army of Jewish People, the Maccabees, over the mighty Greek army. The second was when the Maccabees liberated the Temple from the hands of the Greek invaders, they found only a small cruse of pure and undefiled olive oil fit for fueling the menorah, which would only last one day. Miraculously, the oil burned for eight days and nights. The holiday begins on the 25th of Kislev, in the Jewish calendar, based on the lunar cycle. The word Hanukkah has no correct spelling in English, but it is commonly spelled Chanukah which means dedication or induction.

CUSTOMS

Hanukkah is observed by lighting a unique candelabrum or menorah, called a *Hanukkiah*. One additional candle is lit on each night of the holiday, progressing to eight on the final night. While the typical menorah has seven branches, the Hanukkiah has eight branches with an additional raised branch (*shamash* - attendant candle), one for each night of Hanukkah and the shamash to light the others. Many families exchange small gifts each night, such as books or games. It is also customary in many homes to play Dreidel, a four-sided spinning top, with Hanukkah gelt (Yiddish for “money”), after lighting the Hanukkiah.

FOOD

It is traditional to eat fried foods or foods baked in oil (preferably olive oil) to commemorate the miracle of the oil. Traditional foods include potato pancakes called Latkes and Sufganiyot, deep-fried jam-filled doughnuts.



ACTIVATION SUGGESTIONS

1. Place a sign at the hostess stand that reads “Happy Hanukkah” or “Channukah Sameach” (*sah-MEY-akh*).
2. Display a Hanukkiah, the Hanukkah Menorah, in a highly visible area, usually near a window. Make sure to light candles after sunset daily.
3. Offer traditional Hanukkah foods like Latkes (fried potato pancakes) or Sufganiyot, a deep fried yeast donut filled with jelly and powdered sugar.
4. Create a word search or crossword puzzle about Hanukkah, for kids’ menus.
5. Offer Hannukah gelt (usually chocolate coins in a thin metal wrapper).
6. Have dreidels available for kids to play with.
7. Display Hanukkah books in front of restaurant.