



ONETABLE  
**SHABBAT**  
D I N N E R  
**GUIDE**

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**"SHABBAT IS FOR EVERYONE. IT IS AN ANCIENT ANTIDOTE TO  
OUR MODERN AILMENTS." – VOGUE**

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## IN THE GUIDE

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Traditional Shabbat Dinner  
Ritual & Blessings

Shabbat Dinner Alternatives

Fun facts about the cultural significance  
and history of Shabbat dinner

Dinner Icebreakers

Shabbat songs

## OUR APPROACH TO RITUAL

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At OneTable, we invite you to hold tradition in one hand and your beliefs, experiences, and passions in the other. Every week, Shabbat dinner offers a chance to be present. Through ritual, you can carve out moments to connect with yourself and others.

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## ORDER OF OPERATIONS

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- 1. Light:** Officially end the workweek and welcome the weekend with the light of two or more candles
- 2. Sanctify:** Wine serves as a conduit to sanctify the seventh day of the week, the time of Shabbat, as “other,” set apart from the daily grind of the other six days
- 3. Cleanse:** A formal practice of washing hands that recalls an ancient practice during Temple times when Shabbat was accompanied by special offerings
- 4. Nourish:** Breaking bread makes a meal, and Shabbat is a time to enjoy a special braided bread called *challah* that just might steal the show
- 5. Appreciate:** Friday night is a time when you can end your meal the same way you started it, with intention

### >>>>>>>>>> PRO TIP <<<<<<<<<<<<

You’re already having a bunch of people over to your house for dinner. And now you’re supposed to stand up and like, bless things in a foreign language? We get it, it’s a lot. So where do you start when it comes to ritual?

Start with *you*.

Where are you at? If this is your first time hosting a Shabbat dinner, you don’t need to do every ritual, or feel like the rituals you do explore have to be done in a particular way. Experimenting with and claiming ownership over these practices is part of what it means to be Jewish. What feels right to you? Start with one or two rituals, maybe wine and challah. Go from there.

Remember... Shabbat happens every week. There’s going to be another chance for you to host, and many opportunities to expand your ritual repertoire.

# light

In Jewish tradition, lighting candles at sundown on Friday is the last act of the workweek, the literal spark that carries us into the weekend. While you will find no verse in the Torah instructing you to light two candles at dusk, the rabbinic sages over the centuries linked the practice to the concept of shamor Shabbat and zachor Shabbat, the commandments to keep and remember Shabbat.

The beauty of Jewish tradition is not its certitude but its ambiguity; even the rabbis disagree on what exactly it means to keep and remember Shabbat.

What might it mean for you?

While it's heartening that the rabbis took the time to create a text-based conceptual framework around the practice of creating light, it is possibly more remarkable — and in its way even more spiritually moving — to recognize that the ritual of candle lighting is first and foremost a practical exercise. Before there was electricity, an embedded candle lighting ritual ensured that you and your friends would not be celebrating Shabbat in the dark. In fact the Jewish legal sources clearly state that if you can only afford to buy one thing for Friday night it should be candles, because if you can't see your table, your wine, your food, your guests, it's impossible to enjoy Shabbat.

## what you'll need

**CANDLES AND CANDLESTICKS** — try for at least two, but this is a place to experiment; some folks like to light two candles per home, others light two per person.

**MATCHES** — a lighter also works, but we prefer matches for the olfactory effect.

**SAFE PLACE TO LET 'EM BURN** — ideally your Shabbat candles will burn out on their own over the course of the evening, but do blow them out if you're heading out after dinner.

# light

## Hebrew

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת.

## Transliteration

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu  
l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.*

## Translation Option 1

Blessed are You, Infinite One, who makes us holy through our actions and honors us  
with the light of Shabbat.

## Translation Option 2

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, who commands us to kindle the  
light of Shabbat.

## Reflection

On Shabbat, the light within everyone and everything is revealed.

We need only the will to see it.

— Sfat Emet (1847-1905, Poland)

# light



## Breakdown

There's no right or wrong way to approach ritual; there are simply options. As a host, you might have already lit Shabbat candles before your friends arrive. Others might want to wait and light with or for your guests.

If you light *with* your guests, you can set the table with multiple tea lights and matchbooks, and as you take your seats invite everyone to light one or two and say the blessing or share a reflection together.

If you light *for* your guests, you as the host or an invited guest can light one set of candles on behalf of everyone present, and lead the blessing or offer an intention.

Because lighting candles can be understood as the last act of work we do on Friday, there exists a custom in many homes to light the candles and draw your hands toward yourself three times in a circular motion before covering your eyes and reciting the blessing. When you open your eyes, the light has been transformed from light of the week into the light of Shabbat.

## Fun Facts

Because of its home-based nature and Judaism's patriarchal roots, candle lighting has, over the centuries, become one of the few ritual practices traditionally dominated by women. However, as the great 12th century rabbi and scholar Maimonides writes in his legal compendium *Mishneh Torah*, "Both men and women are obligated to ensure that a candle is lit in the home, and obligated to bless before lighting."

So, my friends, by whatever gender you may identify if any, let's get lit.

# sanctify



Pretty much all Jewish ceremonies and celebrations involve wine, and Shabbat dinner is no exception. But ritual doesn't exist for the sake of itself, it exists to accomplish something, almost like an ancient form of technology.

While it's tempting to imagine that our sages simply decided to sweeten celebratory practices from births to weddings with wine because, well, *wine*, they actually do it because the wine itself is like a switch: flip it, and we've set time apart, made it special, holy, other. It's not about the wine itself, it's about what it has the power to do when we raise our glass with intention.

That's the magic of *kiddush*, from the Hebrew word for holy — our ability to demarcate time, to say that this Friday night, this Shabbat dinner, this exact moment, which has never occurred before and never will again, is special. Cheers to that.

## what you'll need

**TASTY BEVERAGE** - the traditional go-to is the fruit of the vine, wine or grape juice.

**KIDDUSH CUP** - your favorite cup, a cup reserved for this purpose, not your everyday cup.

# sanctify

Traditional kiddush in its entirety is pretty long, as it includes an introductory passage taken directly from the book of Genesis, a one line blessing (*borei pri ha'gafen*) that acknowledges the wine itself, and a closing passage that evokes both the creation narrative and the exodus from Egypt. It's the final line of that closing passage (*mikadesh ha'Shabbat*) that makes the wine a symbolic conduit for marking this time as sacred.

There are two main approaches to a traditional kiddush, one short and sweet, sort of like a light bodied Pinot Noir, the other full and robust, more like a Bordeaux. In other words, you can't make a bad choice.

*If you're going for a Pinot Noir vibe...*

## Hebrew

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת.

## Transliteration

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam borei p'ri ha'gafen.*

*Baruch Atah Adonai m'kadesh ha'Shabbat.*

## Translation Option 1

Blessed are You, Infinite One, Creator of the fruit of the vine. Blessed are You, Infinite One, Who sanctifies Shabbat.

## Translation Option 2

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine. Blessed are You, Lord our God, Who sanctifies Shabbat.



# sanctify

*If it's a Bordeaux kinda night...*

## Hebrew

לַיְהִי עֶרֶב לַיְהִי בֹקֶר יוֹם הַשְּׁשִׁי.  
לַיִּכְלוּ הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ וְכָל צָבָאָם.  
וַיִּכַּל אֱלֹהִים בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה  
וַיִּשְׁבֹּת בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִכָּל מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה.  
וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וַיְקַדֵּשׁ אֹתוֹ  
כִּי בּוֹ שָׁבַת מְכָל מְלַאכְתּוֹ אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת.  
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְרָצָה בְּנוֹ  
וְשָׁבַת קִדְּשׁוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן הַנְּחִילָנוּ לְזָכְרוֹן לְמַעֲשֵׂה בְרִשִׁית.  
כִּי הוּא יוֹם תְּחִלָּה לְמַקְרָאֵי קִדְּשׁ זָכָר לִיְצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם.  
כִּי בְּנוֹ בְּחֵרֶת וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשָׁתָּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים וְשָׁבַת קִדְּשָׁךְ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן הַנְּחַלְתָּנוּ.  
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי מְקַדֵּשׁ הַשָּׁבַת.

## Transliteration

*Va'yihv erev va'yihv voker yom ha'shishi  
Va'yichulu ha'shamayim va'ha'aretz v'chol tziva'am.  
Va'yichol Elohim ba'yom ha'shivi'i milachto asher asah  
va'yishbot ba'yom ha'shivi'i mi'kol milachto asher asah.  
Va'yivarech Elohim et yom ha'shivi'i va'yikadesh oto  
ki vo shavat mi'kol melachto asher bara Elohim la'asot.*

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam borei p'ri ha'gafen.*

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav v'ratzah vanu  
v'Shabbat kodsho b'ahavah uv'ratzon hinchilanu zikaron l'ma'aseh v'reishit.  
Ki hu yom tehilah l'mikra'ei kodesh zeicher litziat Mitzrayim.  
Ki vanu vacharta v'otanu k'dashta mi'kol ha'amim  
v'Shabbat kodshicha b'ahavah uv'ratzon chinchaltanu.  
Baruch Atah Adonai mikadesh ha'Shabbat.*

# sanctify

## Translation Option 1

There was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. And the heavens and earth and all their components were completed. God completed by the seventh day the work that God had done, and God rested on the seventh day from all of the work that God had done. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, for on it God rested from all of the work that God had created to do.

Blessed are You, Infinite One, creator of the fruit of the vine.

Blessed are You, Infinite One, Source of the universe  
Whose love allows us to become holy through our actions.  
With that same love You made the sanctity of Shabbat our heritage  
and a reminder of the work of creation.

As first among our sacred days, it recalls liberation from Egypt.  
We seek to be holy to You, to embrace this sacred potential among all people,  
for out of love You have passed down to us Your holy Shabbat.  
Blessed are You, Infinite One, who sanctifies Shabbat.

## Translation Option 2

It was evening and it was morning, the sixth day. So the heavens and the earth were finished, with all their complement. On the seventh day, God had completed the work that God had undertaken, and rested on the seventh day from all the work that God had been doing. Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God ceased from all creative work that God had brought into being to fulfill its purpose.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the Universe, Who made us holy with commandments and favored us, and gave us this holy Shabbat in love and favor to be our heritage as a reminder of Creation. It is the foremost day of the holy festivals marking the Exodus from Egypt. For out of all the nations You chose us and made us holy, and You gave us Your holy Shabbat in love and favor as our heritage. Blessed are You God, Who sanctifies Shabbat.

## Reflection

During the week ... we lose some of the light in our eyes; it is restored to us by the reflection of light in our kiddush cup. -Talmud Bavli, Shabbat 113b

All of creation comes closer to its origin on Shabbat. That moment, that movement, begins with kiddush. -Likutei Moharan

# sanctify

## Breakdown

Often one person recites or chants kiddush on behalf of everyone present. Short or long, that's a tall order. It is undeniably intimidating to stand up in front of your guests make kiddush.

The words are hard enough. Then there's the choreography. In some circles, everyone remains seated for kiddush, in others everyone stands, and in still others you stand while reciting the kiddush but sit down to drink the wine. What about the wine itself? Does the person who chants kiddush pass their cup around the table for everyone to taste? Or do you invite your guests to pour wine from the bottle into their own glasses before kiddush, recite the blessing, then everyone drinks their own?

The short answer is yes. There are as many ways to make kiddush as there are words in the kiddush itself. Some hosts recite on behalf of everyone present. Some people sit during kiddush and others stand. Women can make kiddush according to some interpretations, while in others kiddush is always recited by men. Some people even have nifty wine fountains that allow the host to divide their own glass of wine into servings for their guests in a single pour.

There are also ways to use wine as a conduit to sanctify Shabbat without the formal recitation of kiddush. In fact, the best part about kiddush might be its parallels to a modern ritual everyone can relate to: making a toast.

Framing kiddush in terms of toasting is a perfect way to step into ritual without feeling stepped on. Every language has a different word for cheers — in Hebrew it's *l'chaim*, "to life" — and your guests will most probably bring to the table some expertise in this regard.

Another approach is to explain the purpose of kiddush, to use wine as a conduit to sanctify time, then go around the table and invite each guest to say, as they raise their glass to the weekend, what they're putting down from the week. At the end, you can raise your glasses and toast together, *l'chaim*.

## Fun Facts

If you don't have wine or grape juice, or just feel like experimenting, use a beverage you don't normally drink throughout the week, perhaps another type of juice, a mocktail, or maybe beer or whiskey (depending on what kind of week you had).

At some point, people got the idea that a kiddush cup has to be a chalice or a goblet or something. Nope. As long as it holds about four ounces of liquid or more, what matters about the cup is that it's different, special, *other*.

# cleanse



If you're up for it, there is an opportunity between the rituals of sanctification and nourishment, to invite your guests to get up. The practice of hand washing dates back, all the way back to the time of the first and second Temple period when the Israelites made special offerings on Shabbat. In order to make these offerings, they needed to cleanse their hands with fresh water then raise up their hands and recite a blessing.

## what you'll need

**FRESH TAP WATER** - head to the kitchen

**A CUP FOR WASHING** - ideally one with two handles, although any cup with a handle works

# cleanse

## Hebrew

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה', אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם.

## Transliteration

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu al netilat yadayim.*

## Translation Option 1

Blessed are You, Infinite One, who makes us holy through our actions and honors us as we raise up our hands.

## Translation Option 2

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Who sanctifies us with commandments and commands us to raise up our hands.

# cleanse



## Breakdown

Ritual hand washing isn't for everyone, and you shouldn't feel any pressure to try it out until you're ready to, um, get your hands wet.

Invite your guests to the kitchen sink. Even if you're familiar with the blessing, it's a good idea to have a copy of it by the sink as a prompt for your guests.

Fill your cup with fresh water from the tap.

Take the cup in your left hand and cleanse your right hand with three splashes of water.

Pass the cup directly to your right hand and cleanse your left hand with three splashes of water.

Put the cup down, raise your hands up, and as the water trickles down recite the blessing.

Dry off, you're good to go.

## Fun Facts

Two splashes or three? They're both correct, according to Jewish tradition. As long as you're generous with your splashes, even one splash is enough, especially in cases when water is scarce. The Kabbalists, who wanted every ritual to be imbued with as much intention as possible, opted for three splashes, a practice followed by many today.

You may notice that it gets quiet around the Shabbat dinner table around the time of ritual hand washing. This practice comes from the idea that you shouldn't interrupt yourself between rituals. Because the cleansing of hands is understood as directly connected to the blessing of the bread, many have the custom of not speaking between hand washing and eating the first piece of challah to connect the two rituals as seamlessly as possible.

As a mark of hospitality, many people will place the empty cup back under the tap and begin to refill it for the person behind them in line. Similarly, it is common to hold the towel after drying your own hands, and pass it directly to the person behind you.

# nourish

## THE ONETABLE CHALLAH RECIPE

1 ¾ cups lukewarm water  
1 ½ packages active dry yeast  
1 tablespoon sugar  
1/2 heaping cup sugar  
½ cup olive or vegetable oil,  
more oil for greasing bowl  
5 eggs  
1 overflowing tablespoon salt  
8 to 8 ½ cups all-purpose flour  
2-3 tablespoons of honey (optional)

- [1] In a large bowl, dissolve yeast and 1 tbsp sugar in 1 3/4 cups lukewarm water.
- [2] Whisk oil into yeast, then beat in 4 of the eggs, one at a time, with remaining sugar and salt. Gradually add flour. When dough holds together, it's ready for kneading. (You can also use a mixer with a dough hook for mixing and kneading.)
- [3] Turn dough onto a floured surface and knead until smooth. Clean out bowl and grease it, then return dough to bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise in a warm place for 1 hour, until almost doubled in size. Punch down dough, cover and let rise again in a warm place for another half-hour.
- [4] Split dough into two sections, one for each challah. Braid dough using a standard braid, get fancy with a 6-braid challah (look up a YouTube tutorial), or get creative with your own designs.
- [5] Place loaves on a greased cookie sheet with at least 2 inches in between. Beat the remaining egg and brush it on loaves. Let rise another hour in refrigerator.
- [6] Preheat oven to 375 degrees and brush loaves again. Add poppy seeds, sesame seeds, sprinkles, cinnamon, or anything your heart desires.
- [7] Bake in middle of oven for 35 to 40 minutes, or until golden. Try to let loaves cool before devouring.

## what you'll need

**BREAD** - preferably challah because it's delicious in every conceivable way. But don't stress — any bread will do. Two full loaves is ideal. Small crowd? Waste not! Serve up two pitas or two dinner rolls. *Whatever kind of bread you use, take it out of its packaging and place it on its own plate on the table.*

**CHALLAH COVER** - any kind of cover to place over your bread, from a napkin on short notice to an ornate embroidered cloth.

SALT

# nourish

## Hebrew

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, הַמוֹצִיא לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

## Transliteration

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha'olam ha'motzi lechem min ha'aretz.*

## Translation Option 1

Blessed are You, Infinite One, Who brings forth bread from the earth.

## Translation Option 2

Blessed are You, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe, Who brings forth bread from the earth.

## Reflection

Challah is one of the three things for which God created the world.  
Bamidbar Rabbah 15

"On Shabbat, challah represents a taste of tikkun olam, the possibility of the world restored."

- The Maharal of Prague



# nourish



## Breakdown

In the ancient near east, if there wasn't bread on the table it wasn't a meal, and as a result the Jewish sages viewed bread as the primary source of nourishment, both literally and spiritually. Challah, the slightly sweet, ridiculously good braided bread many enjoy at modern Shabbat dinners, comes from a commandment in the Torah requiring the Israelites to set aside a portion of dough every week as an offering; that donation was called challah.

The practice of braiding the bread evolved over time, some with three strands, others six, each with their own referential symbolism to Temple times.

On many tables you will find two loaves of challah rather than one. On Shabbat, we revel in possibility and abundance. We have a double portion of everything just as the Israelites received a double portion of manna on Shabbat during their forty years of wandering in the wilderness. Also, challah French toast is the best, so don't feel pressure to make it through both loaves in one sitting.

Why cover the bread? In general when faced with more than one food, Jewish tradition dictates that the first blessing offered should be on the species that comes first in the list of the Seven Species (wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, dates) mentioned in the Torah. As such, you would say the blessing on the bread (wheat) before wine (grapes). But since you definitely say kiddush to sanctify Shabbat before blessing the bread, there is a dilemma of precedence. So, the sages (in the Jerusalem Talmud, redacted around ca. 400 CE) suggest covering the challah to hide it while we drink the wine first.

No one wants a jealous challah.

Yes, the custom anthropomorphizes the bread. No, the bread doesn't actually know what's going on. But that's ritual. It accomplished something for our ancestors and it can accomplish something for us, in this case turning our Shabbat dinner table into a stage upon which Jewish history and learning and drama is enacted in our very homes. It's kind of fantastic.

# nourish



## **Breakdown...continued**

Once we uncover the challah, the blessing over the bread connects us to the process of work that has to happen in order for the challah to get to our table. Bread isn't just brought forth from the earth, it requires the work of many hands. The possibility and abundance of Shabbat comes with the responsibility to work to make a better world the other six days of the week.

Pass it, rip it, cut it, tear into it like you mean it. There's no right or wrong, as long as the bread makes its way around the table. Lastly, it is common to add some salt to the pieces challah before sharing them with your guests. While this practice has its roots in, you guessed it, Temple times (when offerings were accompanied by salt) it also has a more mystical explanation.

According to Isaac Luria, the great 16th century Kabbalist, both bread (חלה) and salt (מלח) are representations of the divine; salt is divine severity and bread is divine kindness. We seek to overpower the severity of the salt with the kindness of the bread. Therefore, when you salt your challah, do not sprinkle the salt on top the bread, but instead to touch the bread to the salt — kindness over severity.

And with that, we head mouth-first into dinner.

## **Fun Facts**

Celebrating something special like a birthday or a wedding? Skip the salt and add honey to your challah instead.

# appreciate



Many faiths and cultures have a grace before meals, not quite as many have a grace after meals. The blessing after the meal, or Birkat ha'Mazon in Hebrew, like all Shabbat dinner rituals, evolved over time. We do however have a source text for this practice in the Torah, from Deuteronomy 8:10: "When you have eaten and are satisfied, bless."

It's actually pretty radical that in Judaism, the ritual of grace after meals isn't about expressing gratitude for food itself, but for food and a full feeling. To say grace therefore requires a sense of intention around the act of consumption, nourishment, and feeling good as a result.

The traditional grace after meals is long. So long it makes the long version of kiddush seem short. It's long because the sages kept finding more and more things to be grateful for. Food, the earth, God, dinner hosts, parents, Shabbat, Torah, the exodus from Egypt, the list goes on. You can find the full version [here](#), courtesy of our friends at Hillel International.

At OneTable, we are grateful that there is also a succinct grace after meals recorded in the Babylonian Talmud (Brachot 40b) that serves precisely the same purpose in seven words of beautiful second century Aramaic. Way to show up, sages.

## what you'll need

All you need is the intention to end your Shabbat dinner with gratitude.

# appreciate

## Hebrew

בְּרִיךְ רַחֲמָנָא מַלְכָּא דְעֵלְמָא מְרִיחַ דְּהַאי פִּיתָא.

## Transliteration

*Brich rachamana malka d'alma marei d'hai pita.*

## Translation Option 1

We are blessed with compassion by You, Infinite One, who sustains us with bread.

## Translation Option 2

Blessed are You, Merciful One, Ruler of the universe, Who sustains life with bread.

## Translation Option 3

You are the Source of life for all that is, and Your blessing flows through me.

## Reflection

What shifts in your experience of gratitude at the Shabbat dinner table?

What else nourishes you, besides food itself?

## Fun Facts

Shabbat dinner doesn't end with the food runs out or the drinks stop flowing. Shabbat dinner doesn't even end with grace after meals. Shabbat dinner ends when you walk your guests to the door. It's a last act of ritual hospitality, and one that makes hosting on Shabbat so deeply rooted in Jewish practice.

As Maimonides writes: "The reward you receive for accompanying guests on their way is greater than for all other mitzvot. Our sages teach that showing hospitality for guests is the greatest expression of gratitude, greater even than study or prayer. Accompanying guests on their way is greater still."

Shabbat shalom.

# ICEBREAKERS



## **Two Truths and a Lie**

Each person goes around the table and introduces themselves and shares two truths and a lie. It is up to the rest of the group to determine which one is the lie.

## **Who Am I?**

Prior to the dinner have people submit interesting facts about themselves. Throughout the meal read them out loud. Have guests guess who the fact is about. Try playing for points - winner gets to take home the leftover challah?  
(Just kidding, there is never leftover challah.)

## **Where Have my Shoes Taken me?**

Have everyone share a story that happened in the shoes they are wearing.

## **Fishbowl**

Everyone writes a get to know you question on a slip of paper. All of the papers go into a bowl or jar and then each person grabs one and introduces him or herself and answers the question they grabbed. You can have guests write out their question when they arrive at your dinner or have them submit them in advance.

## **Throw a Ball**

Throw the ball to someone. That person introduces him or herself and then throws the ball to someone else to do the same. Shabbat edition - try throwing a challah roll instead!

## **Palace in Time**

Abraham Joshua Heschel calls Shabbat a palace in time. The meaning of Shabbat is to celebrate time rather than space. What time is most holy to you? What time do you treasure?

## **Two-Handed Kiddush**

For some, there is a custom to fill their Kiddush cup all the way to the top until it spills over to represent the overflowing joy and blessings of Shabbat. In order to hold such a full cup you must use two hands. What do you need to put down to have two hands available to hold your overflowing cup with two hands this week?

# TABLE TOPICS

If you could have an endless supply of any food, what would you get?

If you were an animal, what would you be and why?

What is one goal you'd like to accomplish during your lifetime?

When you were little, who was your favorite super hero and why?

Who is your hero?

What's your favorite thing to do in the summer?

If they made a movie of your life, what would it be about and which actor would you want to play you? What genre would it be?

What's your favorite cartoon character, and why?

If you could visit any place in the world, where would you choose to go and why?

What's your dream job?

Are you a morning or night person?

What are your favorite hobbies?

What are your pet peeves or interesting things about you that you dislike?

What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten?

Name one of your favorite things about someone in your family.

Tell us about a unique or quirky habit of yours.

What are three words to describe yourself?

If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?

If I gave you \$10,000, what would you spend it on?

What's your favorite movie?

If you could talk to anyone in the world, who would it be?

If you could wish one thing to come true this year, what would it be?

If you could live in any period in history, when would it be?

If you could have any question answered, what would it be?

What's your favorite TV show right now?

If you could have any kind of pet, what would you have?

If you had to be allergic to something, what would it be?

If you sat down next to Beyoncé on a bus, what would you talk about?

If money and time was no object, what would you be doing right now?

If you had one day to live over again, what day would you pick?

If you could learn any skill, what would it be?

If you were sent to live on a space station for three months and only allowed to bring three personal items with you, what would they be?

# SONGS



## **Singing on Friday Night**

The singing of songs has a purpose on Shabbat - both to honor Shabbat and to enhance one's spiritual closeness to the Divine.

## **Niggunim**

On Friday night, some forego songs with words altogether in favor of niggunim, melodies without words. In Jewish tradition, songs without words are often more meaningful and moving, because words (especially when they're in another language) can be distancing and limiting.

## **Zemirot**

Zemirot literally means "songs" in Hebrew, and generally refer to traditional songs in Hebrew or Aramaic. Most songs have many different tunes, and new tunes are always being written... there's no "right" melody.

# SONGS

Ani Ma'amin אני מאמין	אני מאמין באמונה שלמה בביאת המשיח ואף על פי שיתמהמה, עם כל זה אֶחָכֶה לוֹ בְּכֹל יוֹם שִׁיבֹא	Ani ma'amin, b'emuna shelema, be'viat hamashiach, Vi'af al pi sheyit'mame'ha im kol zeh achakeh lo bechol yom sheyavo.	I believe with perfect faith in the coming of the Messiah; and even though he may delay, I will await him every day.	<a href="#">LINK</a>
Ki Va Moed כי בא מועד	אתה תקום תרחם ציון כי-עת לחגנה כי-בא מועד	Ata takum terachem tzion ki et lechenena ki va moed	You will rise and have compassion on Zion, for it is time to show favor to her; the time has come	<a href="#">LINK</a>
Kol Ha'Olam Kulo כל העולם כולו	כל העולם כולו גשר צר מאד והעיקר לא לפחד כלל	Kol ha'olam kulo, geshher tzar me'od. Veha'ikar lo lifached k'lal	The whole world is a very narrow bridge, and the most important part is not to be afraid	<a href="#">LINK</a>
Ivdu עבדו	עבדו את-ה' בשמחה באו לפניו ברגנה	Ivdu et Hashem be-simchah, bo'u lefanav bir'nana.	Serve the Divine with gladness, come before Him with joyous song.	<a href="#">LINK</a>
Tov L'hodot טוב להודות	'טוב להודות לה' ולומר לשמך עליון. להגיד בבקר חסדך ואמונתך בלילות	Tov l'hodot la'hashem, ulizamer l'shimcha elyon, l'hagid baboker chasdecha v'emunatcha baleylot	It is a good thing to give thanks unto the the Divine, and to sing praises unto Thy name, O Most High; To declare Thy loving kindness in the morning, and Thy faithfulness in the night seasons.	<a href="#">LINK</a>

Good Websites:

- More Shabbat evening songs with lyrics & videos
- This site has videos to match many songs, but no lyrics