



Raisin Wine for Passover

“Le-Shanah Haba'ah B'Yerushalayim” (Next year in Jerusalem) is the wish that concludes every Seder, the feast marking the beginning of the Jewish Passover holidays. Before saying it, participants drink the fourth and last glass of wine. The Passover Haggadah, which contains stories and instructions for the ritual Seder meal, stipulates that everyone must drink four cups of wine on the night of the Seder: whether man or woman, young or old, rich or poor. The cups should not be too small and should at least be half emptied.

The Passover Festival commemorates the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, and the four glasses of wine stand for the four promises God made the Hebrews: to lead them out of Egypt, to deliver them, to redeem them, and to embrace them as the chosen people.

Although the wine now proffered on Passover is usually kosher red wine, sweet wines were often served in the past. One example is the raisin wine in the following recipe, which was published in the weekly journal “The American Hebrew” on March 27, 1896. Such sweet wines were brought to the United States by Jewish immigrants from eastern Europe, who had experience producing honey and raisin wines. The wine is easy to make at home and particularly suitable for children as it contains no alcohol.

yields 6 quarts:

- 2 pounds raisins
- 1 pound sugar
- 1 lemon
- 6 quarts (5,5 l) boiling water

Instructions:

Place the raisins, sugar, and lemon in a large stone or ceramic jar. Add the boiling water and stir every day for a week, covering the jar with a towel. Then strain and bottle. Let the wine sit for another 10 to 12 days before drinking.

