

**FOOD**

# 7 under-the-radar Purim treats you can get from NYC bakeries

Tired of dry Hamantashen and boring fillings, I went on a quest for something new

By [Sam Lin-Sommer](#) and [Matthew Litman](#) March 21, 2024



*Left: Pistachio maamoul from Mansoura bakery. Right: Forward writer Sam Lin-Sommer eats a date maamoul.*

There are a lot of things to love about Purim, the holiday that raucously commemorates Jews' victory over the villainous Haman in ancient Persia. But in my view, ubiquitous boxes of dry, crumbly strawberry and poppy hamantashen are not something to celebrate.

So this year, I set out across New York City's Jewish galaxy to find some more interesting Purim desserts. Boy, was it a successful quest: I dug into an Israeli baker's remix of a French plum tart, a storied Syrian-Egyptian baking family's ode to Turkish pistachios, and a hamantash as Japanese as it is Jewish.

[@jdforward1](#) [#Purim](#) food is so much more than good ole' hamamtaschen. Add these 7 treats to your celebration this year wherever you are! Thanks to Mansoura, [@Michaeli Bakery](#) and [@Breads Bakery](#) for letting us

visit!! #jewish #jewishtiktok #jewishfood #bakery #nyc #newyork #goodfood #ConSantanderConecto 🎵 Aesthetic – Tollan Kim

## Mansoura Bakery, 515 Kings Highway, Brooklyn



David Mansoura, baker and co-owner at Mansoura bakery, stands behind the shop's counter. Photo by Sam Lin-Sommer

I started at Mansoura in Brooklyn's deep South— a Purim gold mine. It's a Syrian-Egyptian kosher bakery that's been around since 1961. Before they

opened their Brooklyn storefront, the Mansoura's ancestors had been baking in Syria and Egypt since the 1700s.

David Mansoura said that for Purim, Sephardic Jews around the bakery's Gravesend neighborhood love their ma'amoul. These are decorative cookies, usually filled with dates or nuts and topped with powdered sugar, that are eaten on holidays throughout the Arab world — the owners mentioned to me that they're also getting some traffic for Ramadan.



Left: Pistachio ma'amoul cookies from Mansoura bakery. Right: Date ma'amoul. Photo by Sam Lin - Sommer

At Mansoura, ma'amoul run \$24 for a box of 12. The bakery ships their delicacies [all over the world](#), and everything is viewable in their [online catalog](#).

For the pistachio ma'amoul, Mansoura uses freshly ground Turkish pistachios. The attention to detail shows: inside the spiral-shaped cookie is a green filling that is simultaneously heady, vegetal, and sweet — unlike anything I've ever tasted. The date ma'amoul look like little frosted donuts, but they're actually crispy on the outside. The thin shell yields to a sweet, jammy date paste — it's delightful.

Mansoura also makes these yummy baklava almond fingers. They don't sell

them as a Purim specialty, but in Turkey and Greece, Jews eat a similar cookie for the holiday that they call Haman's Fingers, so you can buy some of these if you're looking for another way to stick it to the Purim villain we all love to hate.

## Breads Bakery, 18 E. 16th St., Manhattan

Breads, founded in Union Square in 2013 by Gadi Peleg and Israeli-Danish baker Uri Scheft, now has five locations across Manhattan. They're known for sandwiches, challah, and rugelach, but also make some interesting Purim desserts. I was drawn to their matcha Hamantashen, which has a mellow, grassy green tea flavor, and looks pretty cool, too.



Mansoura's baklava almond fingers are similar to the Haman's fingers that Greek and Turkish Jews eat on Purim. Photo by Sam Lin-Sommer



Left: A matcha hamantashen from Breads Bakery. Right: Palmiers from Breads Bakery. Photo by Sam Lin-Sommer

And if you want to celebrate Purim like a Parisian, you can pick up some of Breads' palmiers, which French Jews say symbolizes Haman's ears. They're

crispy and buttery and flavored with cinnamon. I totally did not eat the entire bag in one sitting.

## Michaeli Bakery, 115A Division St. and 401 E. 90th St., Manhattan

My last stop was [Michaeli](#), an innovative Israeli-style shop that's been around since 2019. I set out on this quest to find alternatives to hamantashen, but Michaeli's hamantashen are alternatives in their own right.



Left: Michaeli's halvah hamantashen. Right: Purim galettes. Photo by Sam Lin-Sommer

The owner, Adir Michaeli, makes a Purim galette — essentially, a fruit tart in the triangle shape of a traditional hamantashen, which of course are also supposed to represent the enemy's ears. The plums give it a sweet and sour flavor and the crust is super moist and buttery. It's basically eating a fine French pastry with a Jewish holiday twist. In other words, completely delicious.

And if you're a tahini fan like me, you'll love Michaeli's halvah hamantashen. They're made with a halvah custard and halvah chunks and drizzled with tahini for an earthy, creamy bite.

*Did we miss your favorite Purim treat? Send tips for where to buy them (or recipes for how to make them) to [linsommer@forward.com](mailto:linsommer@forward.com), subject line “Not Hamantashen,” and we’ll check it out for next Purim.*

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