

La mesa redonda

Every seventh year in the Jewish cycle of time is a sabbatical year. *Shmita*, a Sabbath for the land, is a time of release and return, of rematriation. This year is one of those. We ushered in the year 5782 on Rosh Hashanah. A round braided challah is always eaten on the New Year; dipped in honey, it symbolizes wholeness and continuity. Sweetness. The Jewish calendar marks when we seed, when we harvest, when we celebrate the fruits of our land and our labor. But this year we let the land rest.

Shmita makes the claim that we are more than what we have. It is a moment of divine rest for the soil. A dissolution of the structures—tangible and otherwise—that divide it. There is no *mine* or *yours*. It is all ours. During this time all constructs of ownership, of hierarchy or acquisition, fall away. There are no proprietors or landlords. No private property, no fences, no walls. It dismantles meritocracy and capitalism. Tillage is forbidden, debts are forgiven. It is *power with*, not *power over*, in action. A declaration of solidarity. Altruistic, even.

So what happens when we ring in another year? How might we braid this theory, this practice, through the rest of our lives? Do we dare knock down our fences? Can we make all those fragments whole again? Can the abundance be *ours*?

Para cada año nuevo, cada cumpleaños, mi mama hace un pío nono. El pío nono también es redondo. Una espiral de harina y fruta. También podrá ser otra imagen de tiempo, de cada ciclo, cada repetición. Este Rosh Hashanah tuvimos ambos símbolos en la mesa. Sacamos las hojas para el comedor cuando llegó mi abuela, una más, y así siempre fue en la casa de mis padres. Siempre hubo lugar para otra más. Siempre hubo suficiente. Si una sabe compartir, siempre habrá suficiente.

Doña Lola's Pío Nonos:

Preparation and cooking time: 25 minutes

Ingredients & equipment:

- 6 egg yolks
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 2 tbsp all purpose or gluten-free flour
- 6 egg whites
- ¼ tsp vanilla or almond extract
- ½ lb. dulce de leche or whipped cream for filling
- fresh fruits of your choice for filling
- damp dishtowel
- electric mixer
- 2 medium bowls

Preheat oven to 375°F. Prepare batter by beating egg yolks and sugar until they're almost white (3-5 minutes with electric mixer). In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites until stiff. Fold the whites into the yolk and sugar mixture and add 2 tbsp flour. Once batter is mixed, spread onto greased cookie sheet or cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Place on top rack of preheated oven and bake until golden, about 5-7 minutes. Once baked, the batter should look like a thin sponge cake, about ½ inch in thickness. Remove from oven and flip onto damp dishtowel. Remove parchment paper from top. Spread dulce de leche or choice of filling and fruits onto sheet of baked batter. Roll by using dish towel as support. Cover roll with dulce de leche or whipped cream and fruits as topping.