

Excerpt from *Encyclopedia of Jewish Food*

Foulaire/Folar

Foulaire is a sweet pastry enwrapping a hard-boiled egg or a Sephardic long-cooked egg.

Origin: Iberia

Other names: Greek: *folariko*; Italian: *scalera*.

For a special treat, Sephardim enwrap *huevos haminados* (long-cooked eggs) or plain hard-boiled eggs in sweet yeast dough; as the pastries bake, the eggs bake into the dough. The dish is called *foulaire*, which is Ladino for “scarf/enwrapping.” Cooks take great pride in the artistry of these pastries, frequently creating a different design for every family member. Each person removes the egg from the pastry, then peels and eats it as well as the sweet bread.

The name of the eggs, *haminados*, sounds similar to that of the evil Persian prime minister, Haman, in the Purim story and— analogous to the Ashkenazic hamantaschen— eggs are referred to as *huevos de Haman* (Haman’s eggs). The pastry-wrapped eggs are traditionally served on Purim as well as the Sabbath preceding it, *Shabbat Zakhor*, when the weekly Torah portion mentions Haman’s ancestor, Amalek. Consequently, *Shabbat Zakhor* is referred to as *Shabbat de Foulares*. For Purim, the shape of the pastry is meant to symbolize either Haman’s prison bars (a basket with strips over the top of the egg) and/or parts of his anatomy (Haman’s foot and Haman’s ear). The pastries are first displayed on fancy plates before being consumed by children and adults, usually for Purim breakfast, as few can wait. *Foulares* may also be included among the food gifts in a Sephardic Purim *misholach manot* (sent portions).

It is also customary to serve *foulares* to honor a newborn child; different shapes are prepared for males and females.

Turkish “Haman’s Egg” Yeast Pastries

(Foulares/Huevos de Haman)

12 pastries [pareve]

1¼ teaspoons active dry yeast or ½ (0.6-ounce) cake fresh yeast

½ cup warm water (105°F to 115°F for dry yeast; 80°F to 85°F for fresh yeast)

3 tablespoons sugar

¼ cup vegetable, olive, or peanut oil

1 large egg

½ teaspoon table salt or 1 teaspoon kosher salt

About 2 cups (10 ounces) bread or unbleached allpurpose flour

12 *huevos haminados* (Sephardic Long-Cooked Eggs, page 253) or hard-boiled eggs in their shells

Egg wash (1 large egg beaten with 1 teaspoon water)

1. Dissolve the yeast in ¼ cup water. Stir in 1 teaspoon sugar and let stand until foamy, 5 to 10 minutes. In a large bowl, combine the yeast mixture, remaining water, remaining sugar, oil, egg, and salt. Blend in 1 cup flour. Gradually add enough of the remaining flour to make a mixture that holds together.
2. On a lightly floured surface or in an electric mixer with a dough hook, knead the dough until smooth and springy, about 5 minutes. Place in an oiled bowl and turn to coat. Cover loosely with plastic wrap or a kitchen towel and let rise in a warm, draft-free place until nearly doubled in bulk, about 2 hours.
3. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or grease the sheet. Punch down the dough. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough ¼ inch thick. Cut out 3-inch rounds. Cut the remaining dough into thin strips. Place 1 egg, large end down, on each round and bring up the edges of the base to form a cup. Use several dough strips to secure the eggs to the bases. Place the pastries on the baking sheet. cover with a kitchen towel, and let rise until doubled in bulk, about 1 hour.
4. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
5. Brush the dough with the egg wash. Bake until golden brown, about 35 minutes. Transfer the fouldares to a wire rack and let cool.

Fourma

Fourma is a meat pie or omelet.

Origin: Tunisia

Meat omelets and casseroles are a prominent component of Sephardic cuisine. The name of this *iege* large Tunisian dish is derived from the French *forme* (shape/form). It is either cooked in a skillet over a brazier or flame, or baked in an ovenproof dish in the oven. A version with rice is a traditional Passover dish; it is served as a main course accompanied with salads and matza (or bread during the rest of the year) or as an appetizer.

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Tunisian Meat Omelet - Pie (*Fourma A La Viande*)

6 to 8 servings [meat]
3 tablespoons vegetable oil
8 ounces ground lamb, beef, or veal
1 small onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
2 cups cooked long-grain rice or tagliatelle
10 large eggs, lightly beaten
About 1 teaspoon table salt or 2 teaspoons kosher salt
Ground black pepper to taste
¼ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley (optional)
2 hard-boiled eggs, chopped

1. In a large skillet, heat 2 tablespoons oil over medium heat. Add the beef, onion, and garlic and sauté until the meat loses its red color, about 5 minutes. Stir in the rice and let cool. Add the raw eggs, salt, pepper, and, if using, parsley. Gently stir in the hard-boiled eggs.
2. In a large skillet, heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil over low heat. Add the egg mixture, cover, and cook until the top firms, about 25 minutes.
3. Loosen the sides, slide onto a large plate, and invert back into the skillet, browned side up. Cover and cook until set, about 10 minutes. Serve hot or at room temperature.

Fress

Fress, from the German *fress* (devour), is the Yiddish word for “eat a lot.” A *fresser* is a person who eats a lot.

Fricassee

Fricassee refers to a dish in which bone-in meat (usually chicken) is cut into chunks, browned in fat with onions, and then slowly simmered in a small amount of liquid. As a verb, to fricassee means to prepare meat in a fricassee.

Origin: Spain, France

Other names: Ladino: *armico de pollo*, *pollo sofrito*; Morocco: *fricassada*.

In *Everything But Money* (1966), humorist Sam Levenson reminisced about his childhood in 1920s Brooklyn, noting, “There was also fricassee of chicken livers, fricassee of hearts, fricassee of necks, fricassee of chicken feet, fricassee of fricassee.”

A popular dish in medieval Spain was *olla poderida* (powerful pot), an intensely flavored stew derived from the Sephardic Sabbath stew. Using a technique typical of Moorish and Sephardic cuisine, the cook browned the meat and poultry along with onions in olive oil, added water and flavorings, and then simmered the stew. The French adapted the dish, calling it *potpourri*. A particular form of the braised stew featured pieces of one type of either meat or poultry, and was referred to as *fricassée*, from the Old French *frire* (to fry) and *casser* (to break). The French term *friquassée* was originally recorded in 1485 in the first printed edition of *Le Viandier* (this was an altered version of a French manuscript from around 1300). The recipe in this book called for a cut-up chicken and chopped onion fried in lard; these were simmered in beef stock with ginger and verjuice (juice of unripe grapes).

Chicken fricassees along with the name became common in many cuisines, as they were an ideal way to tenderize older birds and produce a richer sauce; they could also be cooked over a fire, which was an advantage because few families possessed a home oven. The famous French dish *coq au vin* is simply a fricassee with red wine. In many countries, the term fricassee came to refer specifically to braised chicken with mushrooms in a white sauce made from cream. Since at least the sixteenth century, Germans have prepared a dish called *hühnerfriskassee*, which makes use of chicken giblets (*hühnerklein*) and other small pieces and is simmered in a cream sauce. This concept was foreign to European Jews, who used schmaltz instead of lard

and thickened the sauce with only flour and no cream. Italian Jews created a form of fricassee called *ngozzamodi di pollo con polpotte*, consisting of odds and ends of chicken along with chicken meatballs and minus any cream.

The term fricassee probably entered Ashkenazic cookery in western Germany shortly after the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which increased contacts with the French, and then spread eastward, where it also became known as *gehahktech hindel*. Ashkenazim, who utilized every part of the chicken, simmered the odds and ends—*pupiks* (gizzards), *gorglach* (necks), *fliegelarge lach* (wing tips), and *fisselach* (feet)—into a hearty dish for Friday night dinner, at which it was served as either an appetizer or a main course. Cooks were able to stretch the dish by using the unattractive and less fleshy parts of the bird; as a result, a single chicken or even a few parts of one, along with a starch, could easily and amply feed a large family. Less frequently, fricassees were made from goose and veal. Chicken fricassee remains a standard Alsatian Sabbath dinner. Moroccans make a version introduced during the French colonization of the Maghreb, which is accented with cinnamon and turmeric.

In the first Jewish cookbook in English, *The Jewish Manual* (1846), the author's husband from a Sephardic background, offered an expanded definition of fricassee: "This is a name used for delicate stews, when the articles are cut in pieces." Braised versions are referred to in *The Jewish Manual* as "brown fricassee," while any foregoing this step are called "white fricassee." The author's fricassees are made from veal and not poultry. Already found in this work was the addition of meatballs, in this case encasing a hard-boiled egg.

The first American record of this term associated with Jews was in *Jennie June's American Cookery Book* (1866) by Jane Cunningham Croly in a section of "Jewish Receipts." Her recipe for "Brown Fricassee Chicken" directed: "Take a chicken, cut it up in pieces and fry them brown, either in the best sweet oil or rendered fat. Then take six onions, slice them and cover them in frying-pan with enough oil or fat to fry them; when soft take the cover off, so as to let them brown, then scald and peel two tomatoes, cut them up and put them in the pan with the onions to simmer a little. Put the fried chicken into a saucepan with the onions etc., add a little thyme, pepper, salt and a few grams of allspice, and enough hot water to make a rich gravy; cover it up and let it cook for half an hour or an hour, according to the tenderness of the chicken; a very small piece of garlic and mace can be added when cooking, if liked." Tomatoes would become a common addition to fricassees in America. Soon thereafter, the first Jewish cookbook in America, *Jewish Cookery* (1871) by Esther Levy, offered a recipe "To Fricassee Chicken," which was a white fricassee, in which readers were instructed: "Cut the chicken up, and lay the pieces in a saucepan, with enough water to cover them; season it well; after it has boiled a few minutes, skim the surface, and add pepper. When the chicken is boiled tender, take the pieces out, and pour off the water, if there is too much for gravy. When the chickens are fat, they require no suet. Lay the chicken back in the saucepan, and thicken with flour, and see it is seasoned sufficient."

The first edition of *The Settlement Cookbook* (1901) contained recipes for "Ganseklein or Fricasseed Goose," "Veal Fricassee," and "Chicken Fricassee"; the latter, similar to the version

in *Jewish Cookery*, was a basic boiled chicken dish (not braised), which called for a little celery and carrots, and was flavored with a little ground ginger and thickened with flour. In America, until after World War II, chicken was relatively expensive and, therefore, poorer families continued to make fricassee using the odds and ends. A distinctive twentieth-century American augmentation by Ashkenazim, possibly adopted from the Italians in America, was the addition of small beef meatballs (*mit klops*) to further enhance the fricassee, because ground beef was then much cheaper than chicken. As Jews moved up the economic ladder, the amount of thigh and breast meat in the fricassee increased, but for the most part, the meatballs stayed. As certain chicken parts, notably the feet and beaks, became difficult or impossible to obtain, the main parts of the bird became necessary. In many Ashkenazic homes, housewives served the dish at special occasions. Chicken fricassee became a favorite comfort food, conjuring up images of a mother or grandmother holding sway over the stove. The ingredients and amounts in a fricassee are very informal and can be adjusted according to availability and taste—for example, adding fewer or more meatballs, using tomatoes instead of flour, adding peppers and other vegetables, adding rice, and so on. The essence of any fricassee remains the gravy, which should be rich, flavorful, and relatively thick. Fricassee is typically served with rice, noodles, barley farfel, or dumplings.