

Tu B'Shvat Blessings

Hand Washing

This is an optional step, but it can be a nice touch to start your tasting. Fill a large bowl with warm water and some flower petals and place a cup in the bowl for pouring. Carry the bowl around the table from person to person or set up a washing station in a corner. Don't forget the towels!

Say this blessing (though some may choose to skip this blessing, since it is traditionally recited upon washing the hands before eating bread, which is not eaten here):

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל נְטִילַת יָדַיִם.

Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu al netilat yadayim.

Blessed are You, Source of all life, Who commands us to ritually wash our hands.

The First Cup

This cup of white wine or grape juice symbolizes winter and the mystical dimension of atzilut, or emanation, at which God's energy infused the creation process with initial life.

[Pour a glass of white wine/juice, say the blessing, and drink half or more.]

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam borei peri ha-gafen.

Blessed are you, Source of all life, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

The First Fruit

This is fruit that is hard on the outside and soft on the inside, such as walnuts, coconuts or almonds. The hard shell symbolizes the protection that the earth gives us and reminds us to nourish the strength and healing power of our own bodies.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הָעֵץ.

Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam, borei peri ha-etz.

Blessed are You, Source of all life, Creator of the fruit of the tree.

The Second Cup

This cup of wine or grape juice is mostly white, with a little red mixed in, to symbolize the passing of the seasons and the mystical concept of formation and birth, often associated with water.

[Add a few drops of red wine/juice and fill the rest with white. Drink half or more.]

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam borei peri ha-gafen.

Blessed are you, Source of all life, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

The Second Fruit

This fruit is soft with a pit in the center — olives or dates [or peaches, apricots, etc.] — and symbolizes the life-sustaining power that emanates from the earth. It reminds us of the spiritual and emotional strength that is within each of us.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הָעֵץ.

Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam, borei peri ha-etz.

Blessed are You, Source of all life, Creator of the fruit of the tree.

The Third Cup

This cup of wine or grape juice is mostly red with white mixed in and symbolizes once again the change of seasons and the mystical concept of beriah, or creation.

[Refill the glass so that there is now half red and half white wine/juice. Drink half or more.]

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגֶּפֶן.

Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam borei peri ha-gafen.

Blessed are you, Source of all life, Creator of the fruit of the vine.



The Third Fruit

This fruit is soft throughout and is completely edible, such as figs, grapes, and raisins. This type symbolizes God's omnipresence and our own inextricable ties with the earth.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ.

Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam, borei peri ha-etz.

Blessed are You, Source of all life, Creator of the fruit of the tree.

The Fourth Cup

This cup is all red wine or grape juice, symbolizing the mystical concept of fire and the idea that within all living things dwells a spark of God.

[Pour a nearly full glass of red wine/juice. Drink all.]

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגֶּפֶן.

Barukh ata Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha-olam borei peri ha-gafen.

Blessed are you, Source of all life, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

