

## Memories of Shavuot Customs

[Centropa](#) is an organization that collects the memories of Jews living in different countries in Europe in the twentieth century. The memories are collected in the form of photographs, interviews, and videos.

Below are five excerpts from Centropa interviews. Each of the interviews includes a description of how Shavuot was celebrated in their communities.

- Read each interview.
- Highlight the customs mentioned within the interview using the colors below:
  - Tikkun Leil Shavuot
  - Dairy Foods
  - Decorating the Synagogues with Greenery
  - Book of Ruth
  - Honey

### From Rosa Gershenovich's Oral History (Ukraine)

I remember a Jewish holiday called Shavuot. My grandfather didn't go to bed on the night of this holiday, but stayed up all night reading the tikkun Shavuot, which contains the main ideas and provisions of both the Written and Oral Torah Law. I was given scissors and colored paper to cut out patterns to decorate the windows. My grandmother cooked dairy meals on this day. I remember eating pancakes stuffed with cottage cheese dipped in honey. My grandfather was sitting at the table saying that the Torah was as sweet to us as honey.



### From Shahne Berznitskiy's Oral History (Lithuania)

In summer, fifty days after Pesach, we celebrated the holiday Shavuot. On that day God gave the Jews the Torah. As a rule people eat dairy dishes and patties with curds on this holiday. Mother made curds pie and put something resembling a ladder from batter on top of the cake. Mother explained to me that it was the ladder to Heaven, to God.



[From Michal Friedman's Oral History](#) (Russia)

Shavuot was a very colorful holiday in our town. Not far from the town there was a lake where sweet flag [irises] grew. The path leading to the house would be sprinkled with white sand and the entire house decorated with sweet flag [irises]. Most houses looked as if they were growing in the jungle.



[From Elka Roizman's Oral History](#) (Romania)

On Shavuot we only used to eat dairy products after we returned from the synagogue. My mother made cottage cheese puddings, macaroni soup with milk, cheesecakes and dumplings with cottage cheese.



[From Ruzena Deutschova's Oral History](#) (Czechoslovakia)

We went to synagogue every holiday, during Pesach, and Shavuot. On Shavuot, they decorated the synagogue with flowers, it was a joyous celebration.

