

What is Tu B'Shvat?

The birthday of the trees! It is Jewish Earth Day. Tu B'Shvat (literally, the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shvat) is the New Year of the Trees or the Birthday of the Trees. Tu B'Shvat, a sort of ancient Jewish "Earth Day," reminds us that caring for the earth is a central tenet of Jewish tradition. It is a minor holiday with roots that extend back 2,000 years in Israel when, for tax purposes, it marked the fiscal new year for fruit trees; it later evolved into a celebration of fruit and fruit trees.

How can I celebrate?

Tu B'Shvat has become a day to renew our commitments to the land, an opportunity to take on a new responsibility of environmental awareness and make Jewish values a part of our everyday lives through actions like:

- Recycling
- Planting
- Picking up trash in our community
- Combining errands to save on gas and walking or riding a bike when possible
- Turning off lights and appliances that aren't in use
- Using environmentally friendly materials

Seder:

Think a seder is only for Passover? It is a word that means "order" and there is a customary order as part of a Tu B'Shvat celebration. For some examples of what is included and how to do your own Tu B'Shvat seder, reformjudaism.org/have-tu-bishvat-seder is an excellent resource.

Still have questions?

For more information about Tu B'Shvat, interfaith events and programs around Atlanta, and the JFGA's Interfaith Connector, contact Doug Konkel at dkonkel@jewishatlanta.org