

Foods Jesus Ate and How to Grow Them

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For Christians, bread and wine symbolize the substance of Jesus and the promise of eternal life. Jews eat bitter herbs at the Passover Seder to remember the bitterness of life as Egyptian slaves. Today, as people advocate eating locally and restarting the concept of Victory Gardens on the White House lawn, choosing to grow the very same foods available to Jesus can add special meaning.

Master gardener and author of over thirty books such as *Flowers of the Bible*, *Herbs of the Bible*, and *Plants of the Bible*, Swenson guides readers through where to buy, how to plant, and even how to cook the healthy and delicious food mentioned in the Bible. He also adds suggestions for sponsoring biblical feasts at places of worship and visiting the flourishing Bible-inspired gardens in various parts of the world. Everything a potential gardener or cook needs to know is contained in these beautifully illustrated pages. Swenson discusses the origins of foods such as almonds (one of the earliest domesticated fruit trees appearing in the Bronze Age), lentils (in the human diet since Neolithic times), garlic (originating 6,000 years ago in Central Asia), and many other common foods. He advocates getting children involved because, "Seeds are the beginning and the end, miniscule miracles that contain all that's needed to produce a melon, a head of lettuce or other biblical foods." Learning about the foods Jesus ate can draw readers closer to the scriptures and healthy eating.

DEIRDRE SINNOTT (March / April 2009)

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