

Amelia Silverman

My favourite picture of my baba and I is the of one her and I lighting Shabbat candles together. The picture was taken when I was a little girl on one of our visits to Edmonton. We were both standing at the candles with our eyes covered with a colourful scarf on our heads. My Baba has always instilled within me the importance of Jewish holidays and Shabbat and as a result, it has always been an integral part of my life.

My family and I were fortunate that my Baba and Zaida would come to visit most years for Pesach. My baba would make her famous gefilte fish, and her extra hot Chren. She would set the seder table with care, making sure that the table cloths were whiter than white and the cutlery was placed neatly on the table. She would send me to store to buy fresh flowers to adorn the seder table. On Purim, my Baba would make her famous Hamentashen. She did not make 1 or 2 dozen- this would not be enough for my Baba- she would only be happy when she made 40 to 50 dozen. My baba was famous for her Jewish cooking. Her bourekas, knishes and Kichelas could not be matched. The dish my husband Ryan and I love the most was her Roumanian Eggplant dish. This dish is so famous that it was featured in a Jewish food exhibit in Vancouver. Ryan was lucky enough to have my Baba teach him how to make it.

My Baba was also a fierce Zionist and loved travelling to Israel to visit her family. Upon her return she always filled us with stories on how wonderful life was in Israel. In turn, Israel has always been a central part in the lives of my cousins, my parents and my aunts and uncles. This has been so much so that almost all of us have traveled to Israel and some of us have even spent extended time studying there.

My Baba knew how to live her life to the fullest. Her laugh was contagious and would often have everyone around her laughing to tears. When life was tough, my Baba would cry. I always will remember going to the airport to say goodbye to her after a visit to Vancouver and everyone ending up in tears. Everyone who knew Baba knows that she is not afraid to cry. I hope that I will be able to live as full of a life as my Baba.

For me, the saddest part about my Baba's death is that my own children will never taste her knishes nor will they ever be at the Seder table with her. What gives me comfort though, is that through me, my cousins, my aunts and my uncles, my Baba and her Jewish Neshama- Her Jewish soul will live on. At my seder table there will always be fresh cut flowers and I too will continue to stand in front of my Shabbat candlesticks with my eyes covered reciting the Bracha for the Shabbat candles with my own children. Veshinantam Levanecha- You shall teach your children. My Baba certainly embodied this mitzvah and I am confident that through me, my children will also know how very special my Baba Amelia was and what an impact she made on our Jewish lives.