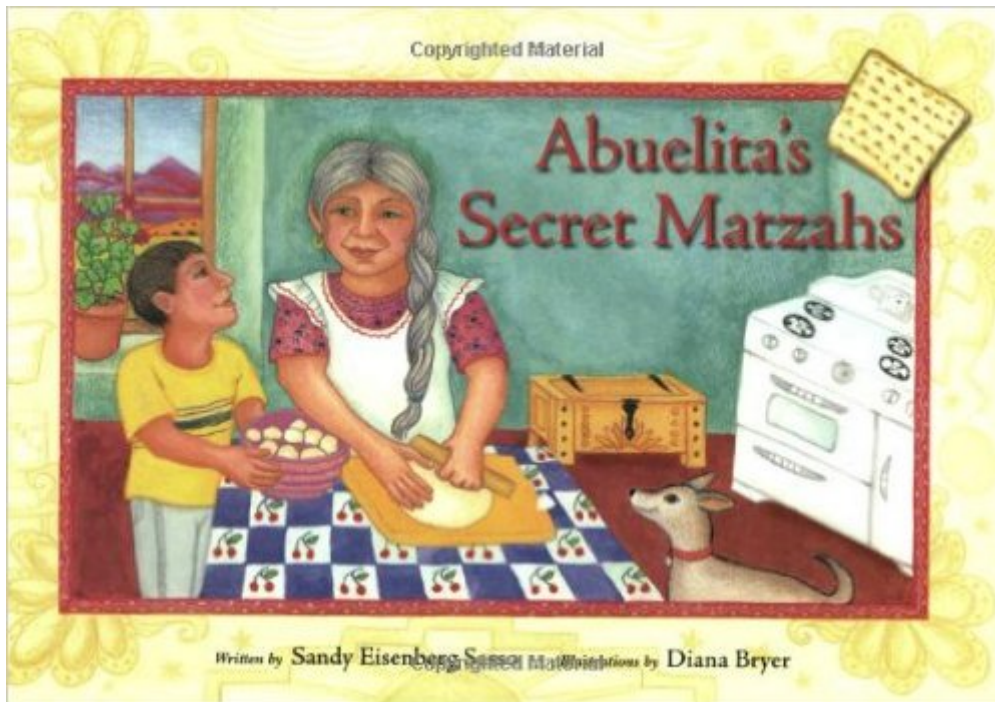


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# Abuelita's Secret Matzahs



## Synopsis

Abuelita's Secret Matzahs tells the fascinating and little-known story of the Cryptojews, while illustrating the universal importance of faith for people of all religious denominations. Jacobo loves to visit his abuelita, his grandmother, especially at Easter time. But Abuelita has a big secret. During semana santa, Holy Week, his grandmother never makes bread, only tortillas made without yeast. She never eats pork, and she lights two candles on Friday nights. But whenever Jacobo asks her questions, she answers, "Ah, mijito, my child, it is the way of our family." One day, Abuelita is finally ready to share her secret. "Sit with me on the porch. It is time to tell you the secret of our family . . ."

## Book Information

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Clerisy Press (March 1, 2005)

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Product Dimensions: 7.7 x 11.5 x 0.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.4 out of 5 stars See all reviews (7 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #883,032 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #135 in Books > Children's Books > Holidays & Celebrations > Jewish #141 in Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Holidays #327 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Religious Fiction > Jewish

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool and up

## Customer Reviews

Abuelita (grandma) is descended from "crypto Jews" in New Mexico, people who hid their religion in the 15th and 16th Centuries when they left Spain for Mexico and the new Mexican territories. When her grandson, Jacobo, comes to visit around Easter time, he learns about her avoidance of pork and the secret flat tortillas (no yeast) she traditionally eats at this Springtime religious festival. Peculiar? Then Jacobo meets and plays with David. David's family also eats flat bread, lights candles on Friday night, and avoids pork. They are Jewish and celebrate Passover, not Easter. Jacobo, like David, asks a lot of questions. But unlike at a seder, there is no Ha Lachman Anya... abuelita keeps quiet. But after continued question, abuelita relents and tells him the story of hidden Jews. A lovely multicultural and historical story. The book ends with a recipe for Jacobo's favorite

Sopa (although it is not a Passover soup since it uses leavened bread)

Contrary to what another reviewer said, this book is about accepting and treasuring your family's heritage, not hating or hiding it. Crypto Jews represent a real chapter in Jewish history, and their story has not often been told. This book is also a great choice for mixed-religion families; it sensitively portrays the choice Jacobo will face as he gets older and has to choose his own religious path, and it does so without a bias toward either Judaism or Christianity.

Jacobo's grandmother has a secret: she does things differently than his friends, never making his favorite sopaipillas with honey during Holy Week and celebrating some holidays differently. "It's the way of our family," she will only say when Jacobo asks her about the tortillas made without yeast - until one day she shares a family secret about their real heritage. Good reading skills will lend appreciation to this sensitive story.

Thank you Sandy Sasso for another wonderful story for our children, and especially for those of us with Sephardic roots who have been left out of the conversation for so long. This lovely story reflects the emerging population of Conversos living in the Southwest and brings to light the conflicting traditions that have been buried for many generations. It also serves well our multicultural population, the foundation of America.

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