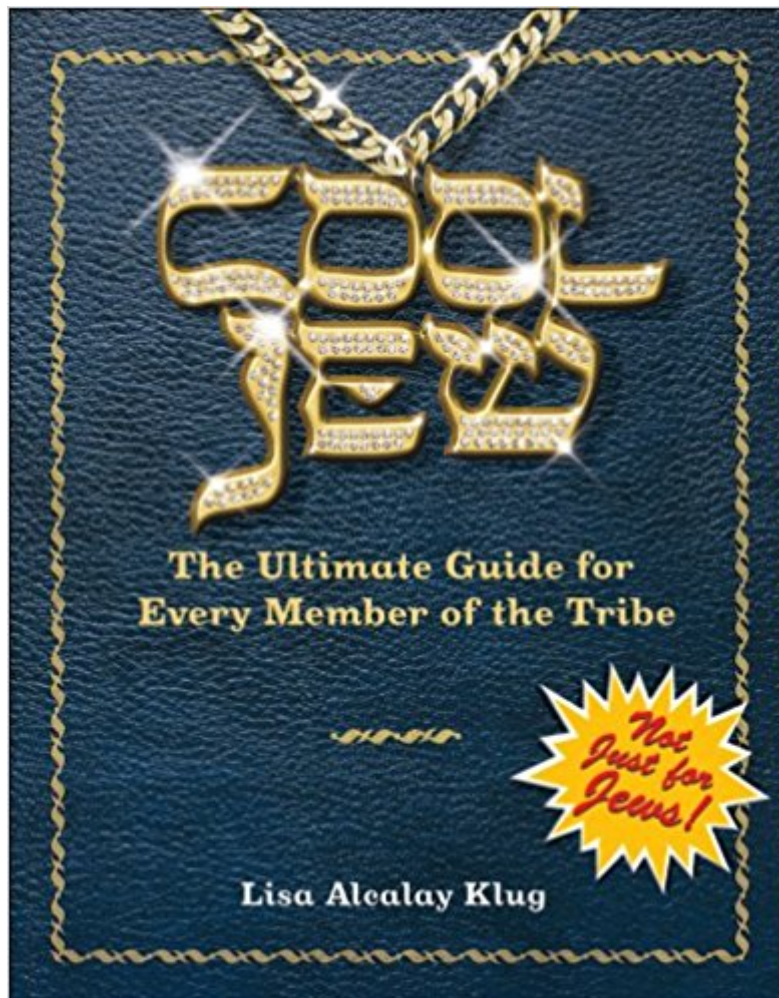




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# Cool Jew: The Ultimate Guide For Every Member Of The Tribe



## Synopsis

It's never been hipper to be Jewish." --VH1 Cool Jew does for gefilte fish and matzah balls what the Preppy Handbook did for plaid and polo-only with much morechutzpah. Cool Jew: The Ultimate Guide for Every Member of the Tribe by Lisa Alcalay Klug delivers the kosher response to The Preppy Handbook. --Publishers Weekly Cool Jew covers everything Hebraic from womb to tomb, finally putting an end to Christmas tree envy. Short essays, lists, instructional guides, photographs, and original illustrations celebrate Jewish cultural pride with love, enthusiasm, and irreverence. Entries ranging from "Heebonics for the Yiddish Impaired" to "Self-Help for the Christmas Carole Intolerant" provide the long-awaited Jewish response to that WASP manual of the '80s, The Preppy Handbook. In addition to cultural hilarity, Cool Jew features resourceful back-of-the-book material, including "People of Da Book" (authoritative texts on Jewish concepts and culture), the "Heebster Jewke Box" (tunes that rock the Heebster vibe), and the "Tribe Online" (an extensive listing of Jewish Web resources).

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Heebsters take over Jewish New Year, not to mention New York. --New York Daily News

Cool Jew picks up where the do-it-yourself Jewish Catalog series left off.

Klug in Yiddish means clever, intelligent, and author proved to possess these qualities. What is so good about this book: 1. It has many short, relevant stories showing connections between almost

anything in everyday life with Jewish culture. 2. It is full of good natured humor, specifically Jewish and generally American. This bridges two world perceptions: Jewish and American, highlighting that above national there is international, I say: human.3. The book is composed in an interesting way: you can start and stop at any point. This makes it a perfect "bed side table book" to read couple pages before you go fell asleep. The book is beautifully illustrated, looks very nice that makes it a perfect gift.

If you are looking for a awesome Bar/Bas Mitzvah gift this book would be a great success.

I've used much from this book as a Girl Scout leader with my Jewish Service Unit and have given it to others working with Jewish Teens. It is also a great book for young and not so young adults. I like it's title, it makes it accessible to a wide age range.

Entertaining and instructive without being preachy. My son enjoyed it as well. Good way to get your kids to learn a bit more about our tribe.

Book is written in a very hap-hazard manner. Didn't find it very interesting and very difficult to follow. Wouldn't recommend it.

Buy this book. Also check out other titles by Lisa A Klug including Hot Mamalah. Makes a really nice gift.

Although meant to be a hip and humorous guide to modern Judaism, Lisa Alcalay Klug's Cool Jew: The Ultimate Guide for Every Member of the Tribe requires forty years of patience to schlep through. The book is packed with what is meant to be cute little "yiddish-isms" that get tiresome very early on: shnooked, shtickl, sh'mantra... How many words starting with "sh" can you possibly fit into one book? The author herself states at one point that the "sh" words can go "...on and on without end!" It certainly seemed that way. Klug's writing style is sprinkled with awkward phrases that I can only guess are attempts at sounding hip and/or cute. Here's an excerpt from the first page of the first chapter: "...as a Heebster, you don't just survive, you thrive! Being Jewish is about much more than bagels and loxy. It's about moxie, about feeling Yiddishe foxy! Because when you're of Da Tribe, you've got Da Vibe. It's not about deprivation. It's about celebration, exclamation and exaltation! When you embrace Da Place, you're blessed with grace. So let go of the pain. You're a

link in the chain. Shun shame and embrace fame. Take charge and live large."If you thought the above excerpt was clever, then you should definitely check out this book. However, if you groaned when you read it, like I did, then you'll have a tough time getting all the way through the guide. By the time I was done with this book, I was glad to leave all the "kabba lah lahs," "oyPods" and "Mani's" behind. Another big problem with this book is that it is not very accessible to outsiders. I'm Jewish and attended religious school for over a decade and there were many jokes in "Cool Jew" that went over my head. I imagine non-Jewish readers will be quickly phased by all the inside jokes. The book is packed with quizzes that force you to turn the book upside down to find the answers. With a quiz appearing every third page or so, I was quickly tempted to start skipping the quizzes because I was tired of constantly flipping the book. It's a shame, really, because the most interesting info about modern Judaism was located in the quizzes (such as different classic Jewish dishes and Yiddish words). Not everything about this book was annoying. In between silly rap songs and overly-cutesy turns of phrase in modern Yiddish, occasional nuggets of interesting information shined through. For example, the descriptions of G-d and Birthmarks in the unfortunately titled Kabba Lah Lah chapter. And the descriptions of many Jewish dishes. And the multitude of Jewish-themed websites that I had no idea existed. It's too bad a lot of the good stuff was buried beneath writing that tried too hard to be funny in a way that few will get. And this might just be a personal peeve, but I was hoping for more information about the less mainstream Jews. Perhaps 80%-90% of the book was focused on Ashkenazi and Hasidic habits, dishes, customs, etc. There was mention of Shephardic Jews, but hardly any information about what differentiates them from the other groups. Bukharian Jews, of which there might be more than 50,000 living in the USA (concentrated mostly in Queens, NY) only get a mention about having a unique yarmulke and language (to add insult to injury, the word "Bukharian" is misspelled in one place). The section about the lost tribes of Israel would have been the perfect place to go into detail about the customs, traditions and cuisine of this sizable group that were cutoff from mainstream Jewry for over 2,000 years. I guess Klug thinks all Jews eat cholent, gribenes and herring (I've personally had none of the above). The bottom line is this: there are some sections of Cool Jew that yield thoughtful and interesting information. Unfortunately, wading through Klug's annoyingly insistent yiddishified language and humor will have you running to a different source for information about Jewry (wikipedia?). Or, if you come from a European Jewish background, you might understand more of the book, but I can't imagine how you could read this book without wincing at the non-stop barrage of bad puns. [Disclosure: This review also appears on [...], a site for review and discussion of creative works.]

Upon first glance, "Cool Jew" may seem to you like a humorous parody for entertainment purposes. And, you'd be right. However, amongst the cheeky writing and amusing games, there happens to also be a lot of handy and educational information. For example, there are sections outlining each major Judaica item, such as the Kiddush cup and the Chanukah menorah. Also, you can find a detailed description of traditional foods associated with each Jewish holiday (because food is after all, very important in Judaism!) and explanations of the various head coverings worn for men and women. Look out for interesting historical information and tidbits on famous Jews, as well. The humor does range from the witty to the outrageous! There are definitely sections of the book that have the potential to offend the more devout among us but that is exactly why a lot of the content shouldn't be taken too seriously. It is all in good fun and Klug, being a proud member of the Jewish faith herself, would not intentionally insult anyone. Some ideas however, may not be for the faint of heart, such as the idea to take yarmulkes/kippas (Jewish head covering) and "sew leather shoelaces on a matching leather pair to create a sexy string bikini top". Talk about risquÃfÂ© religious humor! Funny highlights include:-Letterman-like Top Ten lists-`Recycle, Reuse, Reschmooze' sections that offer other uses for common Jewish objects-`FYI for the Yiddish impaired' Other great features are the hilarious and sometimes wacky drawings, photographs and comics located throughout the book. On the cover of the book it says that the book is not just for Jews, which is absolutely true. Non-Jews may not understand all of the humor, but it would probably be a very enjoyable way to learn more about another religion and pick up the `Jewish slang'!"Cool Jew" is a fun read and recommended as great entertainment when read with friends and family (which I did, and it really is!)[...]

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