

How Hot?

Rabbi Alexander Davis
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Shabbat 40b

א"ר יהודה אמר שמואל אחד שמן ואחד מים יד סולדת בו אסור אין יד סולדת בו מותר והיכי דמי יד סולדת בו אמר רחבא כל שכריסו של תינוק נכוי

Rav Yehuda said that Shmuel said that the *halakha* is: With regard to both oil and water, heating either one to the point where the hand spontaneously recoils from it is prohibited. Heating either one to the point where the hand does not spontaneously recoil from it is permitted. The Gemara asks: And what are the circumstances in which a hand spontaneously recoils from it? Not all hands are equal in their sensitivity to heat. The Sage, Rava, said: Any water that could cause a baby's stomach to be scalded is considered water from which the hand spontaneously recoils.

Shulchan Arukh, Orakh Chayim 318:14

מותר ליתן קיתון של מים או של שאר משקים כנגד האש להפיג צינתו ובלבד שיתנם רחוק מהאש בענין שאינו יכול להתחמם באותו מקום דעד שתהא היד סולדת [פירוש מתחממת ונכוי] [בו דהיינו שכריסו של תינוק נכוי] בו אבל אסור לקרבו אל האש למקום שיכול להתחמם שתהא היד סולרת בו הואפי' להניח בו שעה קטנה שתפיג צנתו אסור כיון שיכול להתבשל שם:

It is permissible to place an ewer of water or other liquid near a fire in order to make the liquid temperate, provided that it is far enough away that it cannot reach the point where it becomes hot enough for the hand to recoil (hot enough to burn), that is a place which is hot enough that the abdomen of a baby will be burned. It is forbidden, however, to bring it close enough to the fire where it is in a place that it can heat up to the level that the hand will recoil; this applies even to leave it there for a few moments in order to warm the water because the ability to cook the water exists.

- Chavos Ya'ir (Moravia, 18th C)- Anything hotter than lukewarm, which is the temperature of saliva.
- Hacham Ben Tzion Abba Shaul (Israel, 1923-1998)- 104 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach (Israel, 1910-1995)- 113 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Ben Ish Hai (Rav Yosef Haim of Baghdad, 1833-1909)- 176 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Rav Moshe Feinstein (Russia-New York, 1895-1986)- 149 degrees Fahrenheit.

Cooked How Much?

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Shabbat 20a

מתני' אין צולין בשר בצל וביצה אלא כדי שיצולו מבעוד יום אין נותנין פת לתנור עם חשכה ולא חררה על גבי גחלים אלא כדי שיקרמו פניה מבעוד יום
גמ' וכמה א"ר אלעזר אמר רב כדי שיצולו מבעו"י כמאכל בן דרוסאי איתמר נמי אמר רב אסי א"ר יוחנן כל שהוא כמאכל בן דרוסאי אין בו משום בישולי נכרים תניא חנניא אומר כל שהוא כמאכל בן דרוסאי מותר להשהותו ע"ג כירה ואע"פ שאין גרופה וקטומה :

MISHNA: This mishna enumerates actions that may only be performed on Shabbat eve if the prohibited labor will be totally or mostly completed while it is still day. **One may only roast meat, an onion, or an egg if there remains sufficient time so that they could be roasted while it is still day. One may only place dough to bake into bread in the oven on Shabbat eve at nightfall, and may only place a cake on the coals, if there is time enough that the surface of this cake or bread will form a crust while it is still day.**

GEMARA: We learned in the mishna that one may only roast meat and other food items if there remains sufficient time so that they could be roasted while it is still day. The Gemara asks: **And how much** do they need to be roasted in order to be considered sufficient, so that it will be permitted to complete their cooking afterward? **Rabbi Elazar said that Rav said: So that they will be roasted while it is still day like the food of ben Drosai...It was taught in a baraita, Hananya says:** With regard to **anything that is already cooked like the food of ben Drosai, it is permitted to keep it on the stove on Shabbat and even though this stove is not swept of coals and the burning coals are not covered with ashes.** Since the food was already cooked to that extent, there is no concern that he will come to stoke the coals.

Rashi, ad loc

גמ' בן דרוסאי -לסטים היה ומבשל בישולו שלישי

Ben Drosai- a bandit who cooked his food one third through.

Rambam, Hilkhhot Shabbat 9:5

הניח בשר על גבי גחלים אם נצלה בו כגרוגרת אפי' בשנים ושלשה מקומות חייב. לא נצלה בו כגרוגרת אבל נתבשל כולו חצי בישול חייב. נתבשל חצי בישול מצד אחד פטור. עד שיהפך בו ויתבשל חצי בישול משני צדדין. שכח והדביק פת בתנור בשבת ונזכר מותר לו לרדותה קודם שתאפה ויבוא לידי מלאכה :

When a person places meat over coals, and a portion the size of a dried fig becomes thoroughly roasted, he is liable...When there is not a portion the size of a dried fig that has become thoroughly roasted, but the entire piece of meat becomes half-cooked, one is liable. If, however, it is half-cooked from one side only, one is not liable until one turns it so that it becomes half-cooked on both sides.

Mishna Berura, S.A., O.Ch. 253:38

כמשכל בן דרוסאי- י"א חצי בישול וי"א שליש בישול והשו"ע לקמן חצי בישול ובמקום הדחק אפשר להקל

"Ben Drosai food"- there are those who say half cooked. And there are those who say one third cooked. The Shulchan Arukah further on rules half cooked. But in an emergency, one may be lenient.

Ben Drosai's Food

by, Naomi Libicki aka "Aethereal Girl"

Ben Drosai, the bandit chief, would take his meals rare
He ate sashimi, steak tartare, and never turned a hair
It wasn't boast or braggadocio
To prove that he was tough and macho
That made him relish beef carpaccio
It was simply savoir-faire

And so, on erev shabbos, with the minutes ticking by
And you'll never finish cooking howsoever hard you try
Just shove your eggplant parmesan
Onto the plate, still half done
And with the setting of the sun
Raise a glass to Ben Drosai

Ilana Kurshan, *If All the Seas Were Ink*

When I come home starving and I'm tempted to devour anything in sight, I remind myself not to eat like Ben Drosai, but to stop to sit down like a civilized human being and take pleasure in my food. "Food is Kadosh [holy]," I will later tell my son when he tries to throw his supper or leave too much on his plate; and I'll repeat this so many times that when I then take him to synagogue and point to the Torah and tell him it's Kadosh, he'll look at me earnestly and ask, "Can we eat it?" Still, I find it appropriate that the order of the Talmud that includes the laws of kashrut is known as Kodashim, holy things. The rabbis teach that following the destruction of the Temple, a man's table resembles the altar (Menahot 97a) – a reminder that in a world without sacrifices, the food that we eat has the potential to bring us close to the sacred.