

## Chaharshanbeh Suri (چهارشنبه سوری)

Last Wednesday of Winter

The celebration usually starts in the evening, with people gathering in their neighborhood, making bonfires, and jumping over them. The origin of the festival dates back to more than 3,500 years ago, when ancient Iranians celebrated last five days of the year in honor of their deceased loved ones.

The festival has also a custom similar to Trick-or-treating, in which people travel door-to-door to bang spoons against plates or bowls and receive treats. The custom is called *Qashoq zani*, translated as "Banging spoons."



## New Year's Eve (شب سال نو)

Dinner with Family & Friends

Herb Rice with Fish & Persian Herb Frittata



## Nowruz (نوروز)

First Day of Spring

Nowruz which means "New Day" is the first day of solar calendar. Nowruz is the day of the vernal (spring) equinox, and marks the beginning of spring in the Northern Hemisphere.



## Haft-Seen (هفت سین)

Seven S's

Haft-Seen is a tabletop (sofreh) arrangement of seven symbolic items all starting with the letter Seen (س) in the Persian alphabet.

The Haft-Seen items are selected from the following list: **Sabzeh** (سبزه) – wheat, barley, mung bean or lentil sprouts growing in a dish - symbolizing rebirth, **Samanu** (سمنو) – sweet pudding made from wheat germ – symbolizing affluence, **Senjed** (سنجد) – dried oleaster wild olive fruit – symbolizing love, **Seer** (سیر) – garlic – symbolizing the medicine and health, **Seeb** (سیب) – apple – symbolizing beauty, **Somac** (سماق) – sumac fruit – symbolizing (the color of) sunrise, **Serkeh** (سرکه) – vinegar – symbolizing old age and patience.

The following items may also appear on the Haft-Seen table as ornaments or for the sake of completeness: a mirror and two candles, a goldfish

in a bowl represents life and the end of astral year-picas, painted eggs, coins as a symbol of wealth, and hyacinth.



## Eyd Didani (عید دیدنی)

Visiting One Another

During the Nowruz holiday, Iranians traditionally visit their families, friends, and neighbors in the form of short house visits, which are usually reciprocated. Typically, the youth will visit the elders first, and the elders return their visit later. For many, this is the time to meet and catch up with their families and friends. They drink tea, eat sweets and mixed nuts, and wish a year full of joy and prosperity for each other.





## Countries Celebrating Nowruz

The United Nation's General Assembly recognized the International Day of Nowruz in 2010, describing it as a spring festival of Iranian origin, which has been celebrated for over 3,000 years. However, the celebration of Nowruz is not limited to Iran and it is a national holiday in several countries including Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and etc.



### Sizdah Be-dar (سیزده بدر)

13<sup>th</sup> Day of Spring

The Haft-Seen table remains in the house for thirteen days after Nowruz. The thirteenth day of spring is called "Sizdah Be-dar", which in Persian literally means "getting rid of the thirteenth", as thirteen is known to be unlucky.

On this day, families leave their houses to join the nature and picnic outdoors, enjoy food, singing, and dancing with other families.

Lie of the Thirteen: Lie of the Thirteen is the Iranian version of the April Fools' Day.

Throwing away the greenery: A ritual performed at the end of the picnic is to throw away the greenery (Sabzeh) collected for Haft-Seen, particularly into a running water as a symbolic act of making the

nature greener. Sizdah Be-dar marks the end of the Nowruz celebrations.

### Amu Nowruz and Naneh Sarma

Papa Nowruz & Grandma Frost

Amu Nowruz is a fictional figure in Iranian folklore. According to the folklore, he appears annually at the beginning of spring to mark the beginning of Nowruz. He is the husband of Naneh Sarma, who shares a traditional love story with him, in which they can meet each other only once a year.



### Nowruz Celebration at the White House

Since 2014, the White House annually celebrates Nowruz in attendance of notable Iranian-Americans. Annually, the president also sends out a Nowruz message to the Iranian-Americans and the Iranians in Iran and globally through a video.

### New York Persian Parade

This is an annual parade held in New York City that focuses on the culture, arts, and history of Iran. The colorful parade includes 15 floats, which each represent different Persian festivities or a figure from Iranian history accompanied by folkloric dance. This year, the 14<sup>th</sup> Persian parade will be held on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

# Persian New Year Festival

سال نو مبارک

