



Sacred inspiration for a fresh start

NOWRUZ PREP & TRADITIONS

Nowruz, literally translating into “New Day,” marks the first day of spring and new year for many in Iran, Afghanistan and across Central Asia.

It is the other end of the Shabe-Yalda/ Winter Solstice marking the Spring Equinox. While families across the region celebrate in their own ways, there are some traditions that many share.

Nowruz preparation

SPRING CLEANING

Meticulous cleaning, purging or repair of outdated items and even purchasing of new outfit for the day.

HAFT SEEN TABLE

Adorned with 7 (haft, meaning 7) symbolic items on the table—all of which start with the S sound and set the intention for the year to come:

- Sabzeh: sprouted wheat grass for birth and renewal
- Samanu: sweet wheat pudding, for affluence and fertility (often takes hours to make and women gather, sing and take turns stirring the pot)
- Senjed: a sweet dried lotus tree fruit, for love
- Serkeh: vinegar, for patience and wisdom gained through aging
- Seer: garlic, representing medicine and maintaining good health
- Saab: apples, for health and beauty
- Sumac: crushed spice to represent the sunrise

Additional items on the table include:

- Mirror: to reflect on the past year
- Live goldfish in a bowl: to represent new life
- An orange in a bowl of water: to symbolize the Earth
- Decorated eggs: for fertility
- Coins: for future prosperity
- Books of classical poetry and/or the Quran: for spirituality

Nowruz traditions

- Egg painting
- Fire jumping (on the Wednesday before the new year) as a figurative purification before entering the new year
- Soaking nuts and dried sweets for a chilled sweet fruit nut medley: includes shelled pistachios, walnuts, peeled almonds, dried apricots, various raisins
- Lots of sweets
- Dressing up & visiting family