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In the name of God

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Iran’s Ancient Festivals

**Farvardingan**

*Date: Farvardin/19- April, 8th*
*Flower’s Name: Cock’s comb/wool flower*
*In Persian: Taj Khorooes*

Festival of Farohars; in honor of the spirits of the dead
In Zoroastrian tradition each day of the month has a name. These names are the names of gods and goddesses. Each month in the calendar has thirty days and each has its own name. For example the first day is called Hormazd, the second Bahman (Vahman), the third Ardibehesht, and so forth. Some days have the same name as the months. So there are twelve monthly traditional religious festivals. The first one is called Farvardingan (Farvardin day and Farvardin month).
Festival of Farvardingan is the Remembrance Day for the Fravahars and the souls of the departed.
From the morning of the 19th of Farvardin, Zoroastrians from different neighborhoods head to the graves of their dear ones.
They spread tablecloths to pay respect and homage to the departed souls and bring flowers, fruits and sugar with them.
The words Farvardin and Fravahar are from the same root. It means a spirit which dwells in every human for guidance and protection.

**Ordibeheshtgan**

*Date: Ordibehesht/3- April, 23nd*
*Flower’s Name: Wild Marjorm*
*In Persian: Marzangoosh*

In ancient Persia people believed that the second day of Ordibehesht Month belonged to honesty and purity goddess.
In Persian calendar, ‘Ordibehesht’ is the second month of spring; when in most parts of Iran flowers have blossomed. In this way ‘Ordibeheshtgan” became a flower festival as well, a festival which is now popular in the Netherlands, too.
In Ordibeheshtgan festival, Persians used to dress in white to symbolize cleanliness, purity and truth.
Khordadgan is about celebrating and honoring water. This festival shows the importance of water in our world and also the endless struggle between drought and rain. In Avesta, Orvatata (Khordad), means health and well-being. It protects water in any form in rivers, lakes, seas, and oceans.

The Rain Festival, also Festival of Tir (Arrow)
The day before Tirgan Day, people used to clean their houses and on Tirgan Day, they wore new clothes and a silken thread around their wrists. Tir in Avesta is Teshtar, which is the name of a bright star. On this day, people used to enjoy throwing water at each other. There is a legend that during the war between Iranians and Touranians, in the kingdom of Manuchehr, the Pishdadian King, Afrasiab was about to win the war and had encircled Manuchehr with his forces. They agreed that someone would throw an arrow from the top of the Damavand Mountain. Wherever the arrow landed, that would become the borderline between the two countries. Aarash who was great with the bow and arrow, went to the top of the Damavand and threw an arrow. It is said that the arrow landed on a tree near Jaihoon River. This is where they selected as the borderline between the two countries.

Without Death
This mythical god protects the plants and vegetables.

In Avesta, Shahrivar is Khashatra Vairya, this goddess protects the minerals.
MehrEgan
Date: Mehr/16- October 8
According to Avestan texts, the Iranian year was divided to two equal parts: the beginning of summer was celebrated with Nowruz and the beginning of winter with Mehregan. Celebrated on the 16th day of Mehr Month, Mehregan was the national thanksgiving festival at the time of autumn harvest, symbolically beginning of the second half of the year. This feast was held for six days, starting on “Mehr Ruz” and ending on “Raam Ruz”. On these days, farmers used to complete their harvest and thanked God for it.
On the 5th day of the holidays (“Raam Ruz” in the Zoroastrian calendar), villagers and especially young people used to gather at the temple of fire or around a spring or well, and then went around the village, while musicians followed the procession. The group used to go door-to-door and in front of each house, they were greeted happily by the hosts. The hostess would invite the guests in and poured rose water into their hands. Then she had a mirror in front of the guests and would brought them treats. Then, one of the musicians would call aloud the names of the dead people who once lived in the house, then everyone prayed for them, at this moment visit ended and the group left its hosts to go to the other neighbors.

Date: Aban/10- November 1
Flower’s Name: Spatterdock, Yellow-White Lily
In Persian: Nilufar, Nilufar e Abi- Zard
Abangan
Aban in the literal sense is a combination of two words “Ab” and “Ban”, which in total means the Guardian of the water, and refers to the Guardian angel of the water, “Anahita”, that is praised on this day.
In the Avesta, prophet Zarathustra’s holy book, Anahita or Anahiteh is composed of “A”, the attributes of negation and “AHYTH”, dirty and filthy.
"A", denotes the negate in the Avestaic grammar, therefore, the meaning of Anahita is “unconditionally pure.”
The Ancient Abangan Festival was the manifestation of thanksgiving for the Almighty and the desire for rain in the new season, the autumn, which will spark the abundance of blessings in the coming seasons. Hence, the old Persians used to celebrate this day in praise of Almighty's power in protecting and increasing the blessings.
On the pretext of this celebration, the Persians gathered along the rivers to pray, and asked God to grant them more blessings by rain and water.

Date: Azar/9-November 30
Flower’s Name: Sunflower
In Persian: Azargoon, a kind of sunflower
Azargan
Fire symbolizes life and purity. Fire creates warmth in life. Therefore Azargan can be named as one of the feasts of fire just like Sadeh, and Chahar Shanbeh Suri.
**Daygan**

Day or Datooshu means the creator in Avesta literature. In the Persian 30-day month calendar, there are three days using the word Day. Hence, in every month, there are three days named for God. So in Day Month, there are four feast days.

**Esfandgan**

Or Sepandarmazgan, the Women's Day
This angel protects the Earth. In Zoroastrian religion, the whole month and especially this day marks commemoration of women, the oldest of its kind in the world. Sepandarmaz is also Earth Guardian Angel. It is the symbol of humbleness. It means modest toward the entire creation. These are the qualities attributed to Earth that spreads beneath our feet, thus it is the symbol of modesty and love. Earth embraces all creatures the same and loves them the same; like a mother who loves all children alike. In ancient Persian culture, mother was symbolized by Sepandarmaz or Earth.

To mark the day, females of the household used to sit on the throne and males had to obey them and offer them gifts and presents.
21 March

International Day of Nowruz

Iran's Ancient Festivals
The United Nations’ International Day of Nowruz, celebrates the start of the Persian spring festival on March 21 every year. It occurs on or around the time of the March equinox. International Nowruz Day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution of 2010, at the initiative of several countries that share this holiday (Iran, Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan).

Inscribed in 2009 on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity as a cultural tradition observed by numerous people, Nowruz is an ancestral festivity marking the first day of spring and the renewal of nature. It promotes values of peace and solidarity between generations and within families, as well as reconciliation and neighborliness; thus contributing to cultural diversity and friendship among people and different communities.

More than 300 million people worldwide celebrate Nowruz, with traditions and rituals particularly strong in Iran, the Balkans, the Black Sea and Caspian Sea regions, the Caucasus, Central and South Asia, and the Middle East. Events may include folk dance performances, special concerts, and tree planting ceremonies.

"Nowruz reminds us of the values and aspirations we all share for peace through tolerance, respect, and mutual understanding."

Pre-UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon
Traditional Clothes in Iran

Although the majority of Iranians speak Persian, Iran has a varied population that includes different ethnic groups, each with their own language, traditions, and clothes, all of which add to the richness of the country’s culture. Traditionally marked in women’s clothes, it’s easy to identify which region or tribe the person belongs to, based on the colorful fabrics, embroidered patterns, and decorative jewelry.

Bakhtiari
The clothes of the Bakhtiari nomadic tribe are rather versatile, due to the extreme weather conditions they may encounter during migration. Men wear tunics, wide trousers fastened at the ankle, and wool skullcaps. Colorful, layered skirts paired with matching vests are common for women. Their long scarves are embellished with hand-stitched designs or ornaments.

Qashqai
The Qashqai are a nomadic tribe. Women are distinguished by their voluminous, multi-layered, colorful skirts and long headscarves pinned under the chin, which allows loose pieces of hair to frame their face. Men’s round hats are made of sheep hair, which is unique to this tribe.

Baluchi
Baluchi dress also uses bright and colorful materials. The emphasis in this style is more on the overall garment which is similar to a loose fitting dress. Underneath the dress, which falls below the knees, women tend to wear trousers. The trousers are generally straight and long and made from cotton or easy-fitting materials. A small head covering may be worn with gold or silver ornaments landing gently on the forehead. The head covering is also accompanied by a larger shawl. Along with pants and colorful embroidered knee-length dresses, women adorn themselves with gold bracelets, necklaces, and brooches, and a second, longer shawl often covers their head and shoulders.

Baluchi men also wear long tunics with matching color pants. Sometimes hats are worn to protect them against bad weather.
Turkmen

Earthy tones dominate Turkmen men's and women's traditional clothes. Wearing long dresses with open robes, women often conceal part of their faces with a cloth hanging just below the nose. Wool hats, worn to protect against cold weather, are the prominent feature of men's garments.

Kurds

Kurds have varying styles, as reflected by their residence in different regions. Both men and women tend to wear baggy clothes shaped at the waist by a wide belt. Men wear matching jackets, and women decorate their headscarves with dangling coins and jewels.

In contrast to Lur men, who favor neutral colors in their baggy clothes, women lean towards bright, feminine colors, with the trademark stripes hemmed on the pant cuffs. A vest reveals the sleeves of the long dress worn over the pants. After wrapping the headscarf around the head, neck, and shoulders, a long piece is left hanging down the back.

Gilaki

Worn with long shirts and matching vests, floor-sweeping skirts with colorful horizontal stripes at the bottom are the determining feature of the traditional Gilak wardrobe in the northern Gilan Province. Men are distinguished by the wide cotton belt around the waist.
Mazandarani
With pants worn underneath, the traditional skirts of the northern Mazandaran Province are known to be much shorter and puffier than in other regions. Cotton shirts and hunting trousers with the socks and/or boots worn just below the knees are typical for men.

Quochani
Quochan lies about 150 kilometers from Mashhad City. With hot summers and cold winters, the clothing in this area has to be multi-functional and versatile. Women’s skirts tend to be shorter and the shoes tend to be made for long walks, and climbs. Vests and head covers are also common and lots of bright colors and lines are used in the patterns of the garments throughout.

Abyaneh
In Abyaneh Village, the aging population have maintained their traditional clothes. Women continue to wear below-the-knee skirts and their signature long, white floral scarves that cover the shoulders. Traditional men dress in wide-legged black pants, colorful vests, and wool skullcaps.
The Persian Gulf Region

People on the shores of Persian Gulf wear different types of dress concerning three provinces named; Khuzestan, Hormozgan and Bushehr.

Black scarf of thin silk wrapped around the head and fastened on the top with a metal pin is a common head covering among women. Some women in the South of Iran usually cover their face and it is completely different with the culture of people in the North of Iran.

Women in the South of Iran are used to color their hands, it is famous as Hana in Persian and Arab cultures. Men put on a small white or colored cap, over which a 2-meter-long cloth is wrapped around the body. Older men prefer to wear white and on the other hand, young men usually put on colored ones.

Women in the southern port town of Bandar Abbas and Qeshm Island are notable for their brightly colored, floral chadors and niqabs (Burqa), which come in two types. The first gives the impression of thick eyebrows and a mustache from afar, a ruse used in the past to fool potential invaders into mistaking women for men. The other is a rectangular embroidered covering revealing only the eyes. Many women choose not to wear the niqab today, but it is part of a centuries-old tradition that helped protect the face from the wind, sand, and scorching sun in these areas.
In the past there were musicians who congratulated people on the arrival of Nowruz and spring. They used musical instruments like Sorna (woodwind instrument), Karna (another woodwind instrument), Buq (horn), Tabl (drum) and Dohol (Iranian double drum). Sorna is made up of two parts: Sur (feast) and Nay or Ney (flute). It has been used at festivities and wedding ceremonies since old times. Buq and Karna were used at the time of war or great events, but they also began to be used at happy events. The woodwind and percussion instruments are still in use during Nowruz and before that. The players of these instruments happily give the tidings of the advent of spring.
Nowruznameh – report of Nowruz – the writing of which is attributed to Omar Khayyam, the celebrated Persian-speaking poet, mathematician, astronomer, and philosopher, is the only classical Persian text on the historical Nowruz Feast, even though the Persian poetry is overloaded throughout its history with the topic of Nowruz and the related issues. This ancient feast has visited hearts and homes of the people in this geographical region, discarded the violence of winter, and has planted the green leaves of love in its place. There is a wealth of information in Nowruznameh about names of horses and explanations about them, names of different types of swords, beliefs of our predecessors about beauty, styles of the kings, signs of treasures, and the characteristics that our ancestors attributed to silver, gold, and etc. All that information, in the beautiful prose style of the fifth century after Hegira (11th AC), wrapped in the context of mesmerizing stories and fables, has attached high literary value to this book.
People attend Nowruz celebrations, the traditional Iranian festival of spring which starts at the exact moment of the vernal equinox. The Persian New Year is called Nowruz and marks the first day of spring. The holiday is celebrated by Iranians of all religions.

The word Nowruz is a compound word that blends together the Persian words “now” which means “new,” and “ruz” which means “day.” The exact moment of the New Year is called Saal Tahvil. Nowruz lasts 13 days in Iran. Nowruz is determined according to the spring equinox and coincides with March 21, or the previous/following day, marking the start of the spring in the northern hemisphere.
House cleaning and shopping
House cleaning is commonly performed before the arrival of Nowruz. People start preparing for Nowruz with a major spring-cleaning of their house and the purchase of new clothes to wear for the New Year, in particular during Nowruz holidays.

Chahar Shanbe Suri
On the night before the last Wednesday of the year, Chahar Shanbe Suri is celebrated in order to symbolically get rid of all the misfortunes and bad luck of the past year. People light small bonfires and jump over the flames, shouting “Zardi ye man az to, sorkhi e to az man,” which means, “May my sickly pallor be yours and your red glow be mine.” Trail mix and berries are also served during the celebration.

Haji Piruz (Haji Firuz)
Nowruz’s characteristic herald, the old tambourine man, Hajji Firuz, with black-painted face and a red garb on, goes out in the cities and villages and while dancing and singing cheerful songs, spreads high spirits and delight among the public. He is the messenger of health, power, happiness, and abundance in New Year. His traditional musical instruments are trumpet and tambourine; while his traditional song is "Hajji Firuz-e, Saali Ye Ruz-e", which means "It is Hajji Firuz, coming only once a year". Along with his troupe of musicians, he strolls on the streets, alleyways, and other passages entertaining people. Generous people impressed by the performance often present the artists with some tip.

Qashoq zani (Banging spoons)
Qashoq zani is an Iranian tradition practiced on Chahar Shanbe Suri. It is practiced by children wearing disguises and going door-to-door to bang spoons against plates or bowls and receive snacks.
Haft Sin Spread
Haft Sin, the seven "s"s is the traditional table setting of Nowruz in Iran. Typically, before the arrival of Nowruz, family members gather around a table, with the Haft Sin set on it, and await the exact moment of the March equinox to celebrate the New Year and exchange gifts. The setting includes seven items starting with the letter S or Sin in Persian alphabet. This table remains for 13 days after the start of the holiday.
It’s important that at the exact moment of the equinox, the family sit around the table, because you want the family to be together for the rest of the year.

Additional items on the table may include: golden coins representing prosperity and wealth, a basket of painted eggs for fertility, live goldfish in a bowl of water for life, a flowering hyacinth for its lovely smell, lit candles for enlightenment and happiness, a mirror to represent truth or reflection, a platter of special pastries, and the Iranian great poet, Hafez’s Divan (collection of poems).

The seven traditional foods are:

- **Sabzeh:**
  lentil, barley or wheat sprouts growing in a dish, symbolizing renewal
- **Samanu:**
  a thick, sweet pudding made from wheat germ, symbolizing affluence
- **Senjed:**
  dried fruit of the lotus tree, symbolizing love
- **Sir:**
  garlic, symbolizing medicine
- **Sib:**
  apple, symbolizing health and beauty
- **Sumac:**
  sumac berries, symbolizing sunrise
- **Serkeh:**
  vinegar, symbolizing old age and patience.
Sizdeh be dar
In Iran, Nowruz lasts thirteen days. On the thirteenth day of the New Year, Iranians leave their house on Sizdah be-dar, the greenery (Sabze) grown for the Haft Sin setting is thrown away. It is also customary for young single people, especially young girls, to tie the leaves of the greenery before discarding it, expressing a wish to get married.

Nowruz Dishes
Nowruz has its own particular dishes, too. "Sabzi-Polo Mahi" (rice with green herbs and fish) is served on the night just preceding Nowruz, or on the same Nowruz Day. On the next day "Reshte Polo" (rice cooked with noodles) is prepared. "Kuku Sabzi" is served for the dinner and is made out of herbs and vegetable soufflé.

Visiting Others
During Nowruz holidays, people are expected to visit one another (mostly limited to 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.
伊朗新年 — 诺鲁兹

春三月，伊朗将迎来一年里最重要的节日 —— 伊朗新年诺鲁兹。与中国一样，伊朗人也有自己的历法，根据伊朗历法，今年是 1398 年（是不是有一种穿越的感觉）。这个时候来到伊朗，你会发现街头巷尾充斥着节日气氛，伊朗人通过跳火、守岁、花车游行等方式庆祝新年，普通伊朗人在新年之际购置一些象征新年的物件，如金鱼、彩蛋、苹果、扁豆等（传统要摆七样）。这些物品被认为象征着光明、温暖、生命、爱、生产、繁荣与自然。

诺鲁兹的来历

诺鲁兹起源于一个古老的宗教 —— 拜火教，时间可追溯到 3000 年前。在亚述德诞生的拜火教是世界上最古老的一种教，被认为影响了后来的基督教、天主教和伊斯兰教。在伊朗阿契美尼德王朝，大流士王将拜火教奉为国教，所以拜火教的习俗，包括历法和节日也就随着波斯帝国的扩张传播到了帝国疆域的每个角落。诺鲁兹节也从黑海传到了整个中亚，成为那里普遍庆祝的节日。

诺鲁兹的正确拼写

那些历史上被波斯文化影响到的国家，还记得诺鲁兹节，一些国家将其记录在文献里，另外一些至今还保留节日传统。甚至在印度和中国这样的大国家也有关于其的记载。跨文化的传播使得诺鲁兹节的拼写千变万化。大众对如何翻译波斯语争论不休，最终也没有一个准确确定。所以诺鲁兹有许多不同的名字，根据维基百科，普遍的诺鲁兹拼写有：

Norooz, Nowrooz, Nawruz, Nowruz, Navrooz, Nowruz, Nawroz, Nahruz, Noruz, Navrooz, Nawroz, Nauroz, Nauryz, Nawroz, Nawruz

你可以选择自己喜欢的拼写！

星期三之光 — 跳火节

跳火节是每年诺鲁兹的前奏，在诺鲁兹前一个星期三（也就是星期二晚上）进行跳跃火堆的喜庆活动。古代伊朗人崇拜火，认为火是神圣、圣洁的象征。在跳火的时候要唱一句俗语：带走我身上的病，赋予我你的火。意味着让火带走我的身体里罪恶和负能量，给予我新的正能量，为新的一年做好准备。

不过欢庆的同时也要注意安全，据伊朗警方报告，17 年的跳火节有 2500 人受伤，3 人死亡。千万不要让新年的光辉沾上悲伤的眼泪。
新年怎么能少了大扫除

Khanesh-tekani，波斯语的字面意思是“雪一覆盖”，就是我们常说的大扫除。古代伊朗人认为他们的死去的祖先在春节期间会光顾每个家庭，所以通常会在春节之前把家里从里到外打扫一遍，迎接祖先的到来，祈求家庭平安幸福。

在Khanesh-tekani节期间，所有的家庭成员都会参与进来并相互合作来打扫家里的每一寸空间。家里人会精心的清洗地板，擦拭窗户，清洗窗帘，维修家俱。他们会把陈旧的家俱扔掉或捐赠出去，并且购买新衣服来迎接新的春天。

摆个七喜桌吧

节日当天，伊朗人会在家中拜访一张诺鲁兹桌。通常称为“7S”桌，也就是在一张桌子上摆放7样在波斯语里以“S”开头的物品，来象征光明、温暖、生命、爱、安宁、生产、繁荣与自然。通常伊朗人会在桌上摆放一盆绿色植物（一般是麦草或豆苗）、一碗甜麦糖、果、苹果、蒜头、洋葱和硬币。同时，这张桌上还会摆放金鱼、彩蛋、镜子、蜡烛、锄等物品。其中苹果、蒜头、硬币等象征物质世界，而镜子、蜡烛、水中的金鱼象征精神世界，所以在新年之际摆放这些物件，也意味着物质与精神的连接。

金鱼的艰难时刻

每年，数以万计的伊朗人购买活金鱼，以便在他们的节日七喜桌上展示。据说这条鱼象征着生命，不难看出原因：如果得到很好的照顾，它们可以活30年。但在伊朗，大多数商店都将金鱼养在混浊的环境里，以至于当人们把它带回家后过了几天就会死掉。近年，一些年轻的伊朗人发起了一场宣传活动，呼吁人们购买经典伊朗儿童文学作品“小黑鱼”，将其放入碗中，来代替活着的金鱼。

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新的一年从野餐开始

Sizdah Bedar 被认为是波斯新年庆祝活动的最后一天（农历经过 13 天）。在这一天，伊朗人恢复了作为“世界上最喜欢野餐的人”的传统。伊朗人来到他们能找到的任何公园、绿地和空地，家庭成员围坐在一起，神奇的是，这一天是传统上的祈祷日，但伊朗人又不会放弃野餐，真是矛盾啊！

伊朗人还会趁 Sizdah Bedar 来临，将七盘桌上已经发芽的扁豆带出来扔掉，这象征着摆脱所有不祥事物。而未婚女性经常会把它扔进自来水中，象征着她们希望与未来的丈夫好好相处。
在山的那边有一群“黑精灵”

诺鲁兹新年来到伊朗。在你停车的时候，在你逛街的时候，身边也许会出现这样一群人。他们一张黑脸，身穿红色的衣服，给我们高歌欢笑。

他们的装扮其实是在模仿一位伊朗民间传说中的人物——哈吉督鲁兹。每年的第一天，他们在各个诺鲁兹的旁边，来到城市的大街小巷告诉人们新年诺鲁兹已经到来。他是一个又瘦又黑的男子。带着细长的胡子，穿着尖尖的鞋和红色的外套，拿着手鼓和小铃鼓在街道上唱歌、跳舞，欢度这个美好的节日。

有关哈吉督鲁兹的来历众说纷纭。伊朗作家、研究学者Mehrdad Behar认为哈吉督鲁兹的形象来源于与Sievash（列王记中无辜被杀害的一个正面人物的名字）有关的仪式和传说。后来他又推测哈吉督鲁兹是出自于美索不达米亚神话中的塔玛兹神话（宇宙之母伊斯塔（Istar）或阿斯托尔（Astarte）之子，是巴比伦的谷神）。

他声称哈吉督鲁兹的黑脸象征着他从死者的世界上归来。他的红色衣服是Sievash的鲜血和牺牲精神复苏的标志，而他的快乐是重生的喜悦。演变至今它代表了能够为人们带来复苏和祝福的人。他推测，Sievash的名字可能意味着“黑人”或“黑面男子”。

神话学家、语言学家Katagoun Mnazopur在接受采访的时候也说到，在他翻译阿卡德语的过程中，他发现Mehrdad Behar的说法，故事讲述的是：主角为伊斯塔，其丈夫为塔塔兹，伊斯塔下冥界是为了要将死她的丈夫，不过最后没有办法将塔塔兹完全带回人间。每年塔塔兹还是要在人间待一段时间。而塔塔兹此时穿着红色的外套，拿着手鼓和小铃鼓迎接他的妻子。

哈吉督鲁兹演变至今演变成人们对新年美好祝福的表达。