

Chapter 1 : Culture of Iran - history, people, clothing, traditions, women, beliefs, food, customs, family

Iran has an ancient history which provides many Iranian culture and customs. The Iranian's new year's ceremony is Nowruz which is an ancient Iranian custom. In fact, the new year starts at the beginning of spring in Iran and the solar calendar.

Iranian, Persian Alternative Names The term "Persian" is used as an adjective especially pertaining to the arts and to designate the principal language spoken in Iran. The term is often used to designate the larger cultural sphere of Iranian civilization. The terms "Iran" as the designation for the civilization, and "Iranian" as the name for the inhabitants occupying the large plateau located between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf have been in continual use for more than twenty-five hundred years. They are related to the term "Aryan" and it is supposed that the plateau was occupied in prehistoric times by Indo-European peoples from Central Asia. Through many invasions and changes of empire, this essential designation has remained a strong identifying marker for all populations living in this region and the many neighboring territories that fell under its influence due to conquest and expansion. Ancient Greek geographers designated the territory as "Persia" after the territory of Fars where the ancient Achaemenian Empire had its seat. Today as a result of migration and conquest, people of Indo-European, Turkic, Arab, and Caucasian origin have some claim to Iranian cultural identity. Many of these peoples reside within the territory of modern Iran. Outside of Iran, those identifying with the larger civilization often prefer the appellation "Persian" to indicate their affinity with the culture rather than with the modern political state. Iran is located in southwestern Asia, largely on a high plateau situated between the Caspian Sea to the north and the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman to the south. Its area is , square miles 1,, square kilometers. Its neighbors are, on the north, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Turkmenistan; on the east, Pakistan and Afghanistan; and on the west Turkey and Iraq. Approximately 30 percent of this boundary is seacoast. The capital is Tehran Teheran. It forms a basin surrounded by several tall, heavily eroded mountain ranges, principally the Elburz Mountains in the north and the Zagros range in the west and south. The geology is highly unstable, creating frequent earthquakes. The arid interior plateau contains two remarkable deserts: These two deserts dominate the eastern part of the country, and form part of an arid landscape extending into Central Asia and Pakistan. Temperatures range from as high as degrees Fahrenheit 55 degrees Celsius in the southwest and along the Persian Gulf coast to degrees Fahrenheit degrees Celsius. Rainfall varies from less than two inches five centimeters annually in Baluchistan, near the Pakistani border, to Iran more than eighty inches two hundred centimeters in the subtropical Caspian region where temperatures rarely fall below freezing. Recent population estimates range from sixty-one to sixty-five million. The population is balanced 51 percent male, 49 percent female , extremely young, and urban. This marks a radical shift from the mid-twentieth century when only 25 percent lived in cities. Iran is a multiethnic, multicultural society as a result of millennia of migration and conquest. It is perhaps easiest to speak of the various ethnic groups in the country in terms of their first language. Approximately half of the population speaks Persian and affiliated dialects as their primary language. The rest of the population speaks languages drawn from Indo-European, Ural-Altaic Turkic , or Semitic language families. The principal non-Persian Indo-European speakers include Kurds, Lurs, Baluchis, and Armenians, making up approximately 15 percent of the population. Turkic speakers constitute approximately 20 to 25 percent of the population. The largest group of Turkic speakers lives in the northwest provinces of East and West Azerbaijan. Semitic speakers, constituting approximately 10 percent of the population, include a large Arabic-speaking population in the extreme southwest province of Khuzestan, and along the Persian Gulf Coast, and a small community of Assyrians in the northwest, who speak Syriac. The remains of a miniscule community of Dravidian speakers lives in the extreme eastern province of Sistan along the border with Afghanistan. It is important to note that, with some minor exceptions, all ethnic groups living in Iran, whatever their background or primary language, identify strongly with the major features of Iranian culture and civilization. In English, "Persian" is the name for the primary language spoken in Iran. It is incorrect, but increasingly common in English-speaking countries to use the native term, "Farsi," to identify the language. This is somewhat akin to using "Deutsch" to

describe the principal language of Germany. Modern Persian, a part of the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European languages, is a language of great antiquity. It is also a language of extraordinary grace and flexibility. Over many centuries, it absorbed Arabic vocabulary and many Turkish elements, swelling its vocabulary to well over , commonly used words. At the same time, over the many centuries when Arabic was dominant, Persian lost much of its grammatical complexity. The resulting language is mellifluous, easy to learn, and ideally suited for the unsurpassed poetry and literature Iranians have produced over the ages. The language is remarkably stable; Iranians can read twelfth century literature with relative ease. The majority of Iranian residents whose first language is not Persian are bilingual in Persian and their primary language. Persons whose first language is Persian are usually monolingual. Iranian culture is rich in cultural symbolism, much of which derives from prehistoric times. Iran is the only nation in the Middle East that uses the solar calendar. It is also the only nation on earth marking the advent of the New Year at the spring equinox. The Islamic and the pre-Islamic world have both provided national symbols for Iran, and these have come in conflict in recent years. Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the shah who was deposed in , tried to make the twenty-five-hundred-year-old monarchy itself a central symbol of Iranian life. He designed a series of lavish public celebrations to cement this image in the public imagination. The ancient emblem for the nation was a lion holding a scimitar against a rising sun. This emblem was a symbol not only of Iran, but also of the ancient monarchy, and was prominently displayed on the national tricolor flag of red, white, and green. The Persian lion is now extinct, and since the Revolution, so is this emblem. It has been replaced by a nonfigurative symbol that can be construed as a calligraphic representation of the basic Islamic creed, "There is no god but God. It is essential to note the central symbolic importance of Imam Hassain, the grandson of the prophet Muhammad, who was martyred in Karbala in present-day Iraq during the Islamic month of Muharram in the seventh century. His martyrdom is a "master symbol" in Iranian life, serving as an inexhaustible source of imagery and rhetoric. History and Ethnic Relations Emergence of the Nation. The Iranian nation is one of the oldest continuous civilizations in the world. Upper Paleolithic and Mesolithic populations occupied caves in the Zagros and Elburz mountains. The earliest civilizations in the region descended from the Zagros foothills, where they developed agriculture and animal husbandry, and established the first urban cultures in the Tigris-Euphrates basin in present day Iraq. The earliest urban peoples in what is today Iranian territory were the Elamites in the extreme southwest region of Khuzestan. The arrival of the Aryan peoples—Medes and Persians—on the Iranian plateau in the first millennium B. Under the rulers Darius the Great and Xerxes, the Achaemenid rulers extended their empire from northern India to Egypt. Down to the present, one pattern has repeated again and again in Iranian civilization: In a word, they become Persianized. The first of these conquerors was Alexander the Great, who swept through the region and conquered the Achaemenid Empire in B. Alexander died shortly thereafter leaving his generals and their descendants to establish their own subempires. The process of subdivision and conquest culminated in the establishment of the entirely Persian Sassanid Empire at the beginning of the third century C. The Sassanians consolidated all territories east to China and India, and engaged successfully with the Byzantine Empire. They gradually melded with the Iranian peoples, and in , a revolution emanating from Iranian territory assured the Persianization of the Islamic world through the establishment of the great Abbassid Empire at Baghdad. The next conquerors were successive waves of Turkish peoples starting in the eleventh century. They established courts in the northeastern region of Khorassan, founding several great cities. They became patrons of Persian literature, art, and architecture. Successive Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century resulted in a period of relative instability culminating in a strong reaction in the early sixteenth century on the part of a resurgent religious movement—the Safavids. Their empire, which ranged from the Caucasus to northern India, raised Iranian civilization to its greatest height. The Safavid capital, Isfahan, was by all accounts one of the most civilized places on earth, far in advance of most of Europe. The conquerors came and became Persianized. Iranian rulers responded by selling "concessions" for agricultural and economic institutions to their European rivals to raise the funds needed for modernization. A series of public protests against the throne took place at regular intervals from the s to the s. These protests regularly involved religious leaders, and continued throughout the reign of the Pahlavi dynasty — These protests culminated in the Islamic Revolution of —, hereafter referred to as "the Revolution. The

establishment of the theocratic Islamic Republic of Iran under Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini marked a return to religious domination of Iranian culture. Its youthful population is demanding liberalization of the strict religious rule of its leaders, and a return to the historic balance of religion and secularism that has characterized the nation for most of its history. Iran has been somewhat blessed by an absence of specific ethnic conflict. This is noteworthy, given the large number of ethnic groups living within its borders, both today and in the past. It is safe to conclude that the general Iranian population neither persecutes ethnic minorities, nor openly discriminates against them. Some groups living within Iranian borders do assert autonomy occasionally, however. Fiercely independent, they have pressed the Iranian central government to grant economic concessions and autonomous decision-making powers. However, outside of the urban areas in their region, the Kurds already have formidable control over their regions. Iranian central government officials tread very lightly in these areas. The Kurds in Iran, along with their brethren in Iraq and Turkey, have long desired an independent state. The immediate prospects for this are dim. The nomadic tribal groups in the southern and western regions of the Iranian central plateau have likewise caused problems for the Iranian central government. Because they are in movement with their sheep and goats for more than half of the year, they have historically been difficult to control. They are also generally self-sufficient, and a small minority are even quite well-off. Attempts to settle these tribes in the past have met with violent action. At present they entertain an uneasy peace with Iranian central authorities. The Arab population of the southwestern trans-Zagros Gulf province of Khuzestan has entertained political aspirations of breaking away from Iran. These aspirations have been encouraged by Iraq and other Arab states.

Chapter 2 : A HISTORY OF PERSIAN LITERATURE | Ehsan Yarshater Center for Iranian Studies

In Part 3, a brief general introduction to present day Iran is provided; the general customary patterns of life in large and small cities, villages, and tribes in past, present. This chapter also gives a sketch of Persian mythology and religious beliefs of early Aryan inhabitants of the Iranian plateau.

Add orange peel and simmer for 2 minutes. Drain and set aside. Heat oil in skillet. Add almonds and pistachios, and stir over low heat until almond is light brown 3 minutes. Stir over low heat for 1 minute more. Cover and simmer for 3 more minutes. Remove from heat and set aside. Cover 2 cups of rinsed rice with cold water. Add 1 teaspoon salt. Allow to soak for 30 minutes. Bring 4 cups of water to a boil. Drain rice and rinse with cold water. Shake the pan briskly to mix. Add about one-half of the cooked rice. Cover with about one-half of the orange mixture. Repeat with two more layers, and form the combination into a pyramid-shaped mound. Cover and cook over low heat for 10 minutes. Sprinkle the mounded rice mixture with 2 tablespoons oil and 2 tablespoons of water. Cover with a clean towel and the skillet cover. Cook over very low heat for 30 minutes to allow the rice to crisp. This is called *tadiq*. Mix all the layers together and serve warm. These influences can be seen in such dishes as *shish kabob*, stuffed grape leaves, spicy curry stews, and dishes made of lamb, dates, and figs. Bread and rice are a must at an Iranian table. Breads come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. Iranians make a popular skewered kabob known as *chelo kebab*. Boneless cubes of lamb are marinated in spicy yogurt and arranged with vegetables on metal skewers. These are then grilled over hot coals and served on a bed of rice. The cook prepares a sauce made of orange peel, shelled almonds and pistachios. The sauce is cooked for about five minutes and then added to partially cooked steamed rice. The rice is then cooked for another thirty minutes. A recipe for a version of this dish can be found on the previous page. Yogurt is a main part of the Iranian diet. Tea, the national beverage, is made in metal urns called *samovars*. It is served in glasses. When Iranians drink tea, they place a cube of sugar on the tongue and sip the tea through the sugar. Pork and alcoholic beverages are forbidden in Islam. At this level, education is free, with pupils also receiving free textbooks. Students take a major examination to determine if they qualify to attend secondary school. Secondary education is also free, except for small fees. Secondary schools are academically demanding. Students take a major examination at the end of each school year. Failing one of the subjects could mean repeating the whole year. The throne bears more than 20, precious gems. Occupations include mining, steel and cement production, and food processing. About 40 percent of the work force is employed in agriculture. This category includes farming, raising livestock, forestry, and fishing. The typical urban workday in Iran is eight hours long, often starting at 7: Workers commonly take a two-hour lunch break. The *Zur Khaneh*, or House of Strength, is a physical training and wrestling center where young men undergo vigorous training with heavy clubs and perform in wrestling matches for spectators. Tennis and squash are popular, especially among urban Iranians. Camel and horse racing are popular in rural areas. They dramatize important episodes and highlight the lives of famous Iranians. In urban areas, men enjoy spending their leisure time in teahouses, socializing and smoking the hookah, or water pipe. Women enjoy entertaining family and friends in the home. They often spend time engaged in crafts. Iranians enjoy the game of chess, and many argue that chess was invented in their country. Many Iranians attend the mosque every Friday, both for prayer and to socialize with friends. They come with many designs and patterns that vary from region to region. Geometric shapes are the most common. The cities of Shiraz and Tabriz, known for their rugs, are also famous for their metalwork. Metals such as silver and copper are crafted into ornamental plates, cups, vases, trays, and jewelry. Picture frames and jewelry boxes are embellished with a form of art known as *khatam*. This involves the use of ivory, bone, and pieces of wood to create geometric patterns. Calligraphy decorative lettering is also a fine art in Iran, as it is in much of the Islamic world. Verses from the Koran sacred text of Islam are skillfully handwritten and painted in beautifully flowing lettering. On August 19, , thousands of people in the city of Tabriz rioted, in addition to riots elsewhere. A woman still does not have the right to divorce her husband unless there is proof that he has done something wrong. However, in the event of divorce, women have the right to be repaid for the years they were married. The role of women in the work-place has improved since

the time of the Shah. Unemployment is a severe problem, swelling the numbers of urban and rural poor. Human rights abuses suffered by the press and by intellectuals in Iran are a source of concern for human-rights activists both within the country and abroad. Library of Congress, Persia, Islam and the Soul of a Nation. Rajendra, Vijeya, and Gisela Kaplan. Cultures of the World: Land of the Peacock Throne. Iranian Embassy in Canada. Also read article about Iranians from Wikipedia User Contributions: Zeynab Apr 22, I think Iran is a great country after the revolution. He was no different from the gutless Arab rulers and a boot-licker of the West. Shiva Feb 5, 3: The Pahlavi times while Shah was ruling was the best times of Iran. Every body misses those times and wish the revolution never happened. Also, university is not free, unless they apply to specific universities that require major exam results, contain specific programs, and qualify mostly men. Also, the most important food is not Shereen polo, its ghormeh sabzi, herbs, beef, and rice. OTher facts are correct, but some editing is needed.

Chapter 3 : An Introduction to Old Persian

The cultural and administrative traditions of these bureaucratic families went back far into Sasanian times, and this class was the most loyal supporter of pre-Islamic Persian traditions of nationalism and culture.

Sudden, often violent, changes left a sense of passivity and a feeling that one must hold on to what one can, while one can. This Iranian characteristic of national insecurity has affected the motion picture industry which requires long-term investments in technical facilities and production costs. As various sections of the country are walled off from each other by high mountains, deserts, climatic extremes, families are walled off from each other by high mud-brick walls. This, and unique historical developments, has made the Iranians extreme individualists. Despite national traits of charm, friendliness and hospitality, the unspoken law is still basically "Every man for himself. Nonetheless, archaeological discoveries have shown that the people who lived in that area before the Aryans were people of peace-loving, agricultural, and artistic nature. Airya or Aryans came to Iran about 3, B. At first they carried their new culture and Indo-European language to north-central Iran. After settling, they called their homeland "Aryana," the Indo-European word for "courageous," "noble," and the name Iran has been derived from Aryana. There was not a major cultural disruption until B. Cyrus introduced many revolutionary concepts of government and social reform. Unlike many of his contemporaries, Cyrus governed the peoples of his vast territory through their own established institutions while at the same time he honored their local customs and beliefs. He issued a declaration of the rights of man that is very similar to the one that has been adopted by the modern United Nations. The Achaemenid dynasty ruled over the civilized world of the day until 33 B. At this time Iranians accepted the conquering influence, but they synthesized it and transformed it into their own. As will be seen, Iranians have been ruled by many conquering powers from outside throughout their long history, but there has always been an internal resistance. In a sense, they conquered their conquerors by a process of assimilation. Iranian culture and traditions, which had weakened under the pressure of Hellenism were restored by the Parthian dynasty, who brought a unique form of government. The country was ruled by local kings, under the supreme leadership of a king of kings, the Shahan-Shah. The official language became the Pahlavi language and the official religion, Zoroastrianism. The Parthian dynasty lasted about years. They maintained independence and cultural heritage for Iranians against the ever-increasing pressures of the invaders from the east and the Romans from the west. But rebirth of a nationalistic pattern started about when the Parthians were succeeded by the Sassanian dynasty. This regime changed the government from feudal and non-religious to a centralized and religious one. During the years of their dynasty they expanded the boundaries of the country almost to the extent of the Achaemenid period. They established a well-organized administrative system and continued Zoroastrianism as the official religion of the state. During their leadership, the culture and the civilization that was introduced by the Achaemenids reached the highest degree of perfection. But most of these accomplishments, along with many great monumental works of art were destroyed by the barbaric nomadic Arabs in the name of their God and Islam. However some of the learning centers remained, and changed their language of instruction from Pahlavi to Arabic, becoming centers of Moslem learning. During the reign of Khosrow I Iran was struggling with internal problems. Corruption in government was at its highest. Active Zoroastrians became an establishment whose main concern was to preserve a formal structure. Thus it was possible for Monism, a more political movement for social and individual liberation and antithetical to Zoroastrianism, to attract many rebellious followers. But before Monism was able to change the shape of social structure in Iran, Khosrow I invited all its followers, somewhere around , to the capital for the sake of honoring their religion as an official religion. Iranians celebrated every opportunity to gain their independence and used every effort to weaken the Islamic government and to free themselves from its control. When resistance became useless, Iranians took over the new religion and moulded it according to their own political, social, and religious ideas. Later, during the Safavid dynasty, it became the state religion. All along, Islam has changed; risen, or fallen at the convenience of one political power or another. Over works dealing with nearly every branch of science are attributed to him. Abu Ali Ibn Sina , his great work The Canon, was an encyclopedia of medical knowledge, he is known in

the West as Avicenna, the Renaissance man. The stories of Shahnameh have been used by storytellers and orators in Persian coffee houses as a form of entertainment for the people who have gathered to hear the myths, legends, and historical reminiscences of the Iranian empire one of the most popular form of mass entertainments before the advent of cinema in Iran. Nezam al-Molk , served Alb-Arsalan and his son Malek Shah as prime minister for thirty years. He was a superb statesman who founded the first university in Islamic world at Baghdad to promote religion and education. Six thousand students were in attendance. He reformed the calendar and made it more accurate than that ordered by Pope Gregory some years later. Shams al-Din Mohammad Hafez , universally acclaimed as one of the greatest lyric poets in the world of literature, created a masterpiece called Divan-e Hafez which consists of separate poems deeply immersed in Sufi doctrine. His is the only book revered by Iranians as much as the Koran. Throughout the turbulent history of Iran then, while various cultures have predominated, Persians have adapted and contributed importantly to the prevailing society of the time. Repeated introductions of new cultures through conquerors and traders from Aryan civilization until today have developed a kind of social subconscious filtration system which absorbs only the useful aspects of the frequently imposed, ever newer external cultures. This factor made it easier for Iran to adopt the western-originated cinema, in spite of Moslem religious beliefs that opposed it. Yet, although superficially adaptable, deep down a majority of Iranians remain Persian, i. Before the advent of cinema in Iran, entertainment was a luxury afforded by only a small, well-to-do segment of the population while the great majority of the people had no money to spare. Morteza Ravadi, Iranian historian expresses this point very well: Obviously, under such circumstances entertainment and recreation were of secondary importance But in Iran, cinema virtually replaced most forms of mass entertainment for various political, economical, historical and cultural reasons. When cinema came to Iran it was a diversion for the well-to-do for about ten years or so before it turned into a mass entertainment medium. Since , when the first movie theater opened in Tehran, the Iranian government has made a special point of keeping ticket prices low so that all segments of the population, at any economic level, might have access to this source of recreation. The early history of film making in Iran is far from clear because of a lack of easily accessible data, death of the early motion pictures pioneers and loss of almost all the early footage. It is claimed that the first film made in Iran was of the coronation of Muzaffar al-Din Shah in photographed by Rusi Khan. However there is no evidence to substantiate the claim. But it is certain that Shah during his visit to Paris in saw moving pictures, liked them, ordered his official photographer to purchase motion picture equipment. Thus cinema became a diversion for royal court and well-to-do section of the society when it came to Iran The early film making in Iran was often supported by the royalty of the time who were interested only in the entertainment value of the medium. Therefore, most of films of this period are news reels of activities, such as various royal and religious ceremonies which were mostly screened in the royal palace. One could see these newsreels at the homes of dignitaries during weddings, circumcision celebrations and birth ceremonies. The first pioneer of this film era is Mirza Ebrahim Khan Akasbashi who was the official photographer in the court of Muzzafar-e Din Shah, the fifth Shah of the Qajar dynasty. He converted the backyard of his antique shop into an open air movie house; the first movie theater in Iran came into being in The customers were mostly members of upper class families or royalty. Khan Baba Motazedi, an Iranian electromechanical engineering student, brought home from Paris a 35 mm Gaumont camera, some raw stock, film processing chemicals and projector. Later, by order of the Minister of War, he became involved in filming the various ceremonies at the court of Reza Shah, the father of the last Shah of Iran. Nonetheless the era of democracy did not last long. Considering that Reza Shah was one of the more progressive monarchs in the recent history of Iran, and since he was fascinated by the means of modernization, it is odd that he could not conceive the role and the importance of the motion picture industry in society. While he patronized the arts, revived ancient arts and crafts, preserving them from extinction, and even encouraged the modern arts, his efforts toward cinema were very small. Besides a few documentary films which were made to record the royal ceremonies and a few newsreels of the events, the rest of the film which were exhibited in theaters were imported from Europe, the United States, and Russia. From the very beginning he realized that making movies without a professional cast and crew is something next to impossible. Ohanian, with the help of Motazedi as cinematographer; Sako Elidzeh, producer; two of his students, Zarrabi and

Sohrabi as leading actors, wrote and directed the first Persian silent feature movie. It was shown in Cinema Mayak, where it was well received. However, no copy of this film is known to exist. Imitation of foreign films of mostly comedy and melodrama genres and almost total displacement of any realism in later films were the results of his early influence. At the time Iran was in an awakening stage, when the society was in desperate need of social consciousness and a modern understanding of life, and at a time when the formation of its modern economy was taking place. Entertainment in general and entertainment and escapist film in particular was the last thing that Iran needed at that time for progressive social growth. Spending hours in a movie theater and watching nonsense melodrama, Hollywood-Style and accomplishing nothing, was a luxury that Iranians could not afford. But a series of obstacles, including lack of adequate technical equipment and trained motion picture personnel, government restrictions on importation of cinema equipment, and lack of proper production funds prevented the film from reaching completion. This unsatisfactory experience motivated Moradi to establish the third Iranian film studio, Iran Film Company, Limited. From about 1929, the challenge of modernization of the big city against the simplicity and purity of the traditional way of life in Iranian society became a theme upon which to build stories that were popular with cinema-goers and safe from governmental censorship. The star and script writer was a poet and a writer, Abdulhossein Sepanta who has been acknowledged as the father of Iranian sound movies. Some of the subjects were the arrival of Reza Shah at the National Constituent Assembly December 15, 1925, horse races, and Army parades. Also, opening ceremonies of the trans-Iranian railway system, the Pahlavi communication center, the Bank Melli Iran National Bank of Iran, and the opening of the installations of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in Khuzestan were typical topics. All of these newsreels were shot, processed and printed by Khan Baba Motazed. Some of these newsreels were shown at the Royal Court but most were shown in the army compounds as well as in the theaters. Later, with financial aid from the government and with the supervision of Motazed, the first movie theater was built in the southern part of Tehran where the poor lived. It is called Tammadon and is still operating. Overall social and political conditions at this period militated against the growth of the motion picture industry and audience size. For years, the Moslem clergy prejudiced the vast majority of people against anything new. There was social pressure against the showing of films and the establishment of movie theaters. Women were not allowed to go to movie theaters later one theater created by Ali Vakili in the Zoroastrian school hall in Tehran was devoted to showing films to women only. Upon the completion of the last film, Sepanta returned to Iran, hoping to continue his film-making activities in his home country. But various obstructions and lack of financial support by the government or the private sector, forced him to part with cinema. Throughout his life Tehran Esfahan he wrote or translated eighteen books and made five Iranian feature films which for many years will be remembered because of their themes, quality, and technique.

Chapter 4 : Culture of Iran - Wikipedia

Although the majority of Iranians are Persian, Iran has a varied population that includes different ethnic groups, each with their own language, tradition, 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.

Bread[edit] Second only to rice is the production and use of wheat. The following table lists several forms of flatbread and pastry-bread commonly used in Iranian cuisine. Type and description Type and description Type and description Lavash: Thin, flaky, and round or oval. It is the most common bread in Iran and the Caucasus. Plain, rectangular, or triangle-shaped leavened flatbread that is stone-baked. Thin, soft and round-shaped leavened flatbread that is thicker than lavash. Leavened bread baked in an oven called tanur. A sweet bread, sometimes brioche -like and sometimes flat and dry. Thick and oval flatbread; also known as Tabrizi, referring to the city of Tabriz. A long, narrow French loaf, typically filled with sausages and vegetables. A sweet pastry-bread, also widely known as shirmal "milk-rubbed". A sweet date bread with turmeric and cumin, similar to nan e gisu. Thus, a bowl of fresh fruit is common on Iranian tables, and vegetables are standard sides to most meals. These are not only enjoyed fresh and ripe as desserts, but are also combined with meat and form accompaniments to main dishes. Vegetables such as pumpkins , spinach , green beans , fava beans , courgette , varieties of squash , onion , garlic and carrot are commonly used in Iranian dishes. Tomatoes , cucumbers and scallion often accompany a meal. While the eggplant is "the potato of Iran", [21] Iranians are fond of fresh green salads dressed with olive oil , lemon juice , salt , chili , and garlic. Fruit dolma is probably a specialty of Iranian cuisine. The fruit is first cooked, then stuffed with meat, seasonings, and sometimes tomato sauce. The dolma is then simmered in meat broth or a sweet-and-sour sauce. Unripe grapes are also used whole in some dishes such as khoresh e qure lamb stew with sour grapes. As a spice, verjuice powder pudr e qure is sometimes reinforced by verjuice and then dried. A spice bowl in a shop at the Vakil Bazaar of Shiraz. A spice shop at the bazaar of Isfahan. One of the traditional and most widespread Iranian spices is saffron , derived from the flower of *Crocus sativus*. Rose water , a flavored water made by steeping rose petals in water, is also a traditional and common ingredient in many Iranian dishes. Persian hogweed golpar , which grows wild in the humid mountainous regions of Iran, is used as a spice in various Iranian soups and stews. It is also mixed with vinegar into which lettuce leaves are dipped before eating. Some other common spices are cardamom "made from the seeds of several *Elettaria* and *Amomum* plants, shevid "an annual herb in the celery family *Apiaceae* , mahleb "an aromatic spice made from the seeds of *Prunus mahaleb* , and limu amani "lime that has lost its water content. There are also several traditional combinations of spices, two of which are arde "made from toasted ground hulled sesame seeds, and delal sauce "made of heavy salted fresh herbs such as cilantro and parsley. Typical food and drinks[edit] Typical Iranian cuisine includes a wide variety of dishes, including several forms of kebab , stew , soup , and pilaf dishes, as well as various salads , desserts , pastries , and drinks. Kebab[edit] In Iran, kebabs are served either with rice or with bread. A dish of chelow white rice with kebab is called chelow kabab , which is considered the national dish of Iran. The rice can also be prepared using the kateh method, and hence the dish would be called kateh kabab. The following table lists several forms of kebab used in Iranian cuisine.

Chapter 5 : Iranians - Introduction, Location, Language, Folklore, Religion, Major holidays, Rites of passage

Note: Citations are based on reference standards. However, formatting rules can vary widely between applications and fields of interest or study. The specific requirements or preferences of your reviewing publisher, classroom teacher, institution or organization should be applied.

Portrait of Fath Ali Shah Qajar , Brooklyn Museum A Persian miniature depicting a polo-match, Iran has one of the richest art heritages in world history and encompasses many disciplines including architecture , painting , weaving , pottery , calligraphy , metalworking and stonemasonry. There is also a very vibrant Iranian modern and contemporary art scene. Iranian art has gone through numerous phases. The unique aesthetics of Iran is evident from the Achaemenid reliefs in Persepolis to the mosaic paintings of Bishapur. The Islamic era brought drastic changes to the styles and practice of the arts, each dynasty with its own particular foci. The Qajarid era was the last stage of classical Persian art, before modernism was imported and suffused into elements of traditionalist schools of aesthetics. Language and literature[edit] See also: Persian language and Persian literature in Western culture Several languages are spoken in different regions of Iran. The predominant language and national language is Persian , which is spoken across the country. Azerbaijani is spoken primarily and widely in the northwest, Kurdish primarily in the west as well as Luri , Mazandarani and Gilaki at the Caspian Sea coastal regions, Arabic primarily in the Persian Gulf coastal regions, Balochi primarily in the desolate and remote far southeast, and Turkmen primarily in northern border regions. Smaller languages spread in other regions notably include Talysh , Georgian , Armenian , Assyrian , and Circassian , amongst others. Persian literature inspired Goethe , Ralph Waldo Emerson , and many others, and it has been often dubbed as a most worthy language to serve as a conduit for poetry. Dialects of Persian are sporadically spoken throughout the region from China to Syria to Russia, though mainly in the Iranian Plateau. Contemporary Iranian literature is influenced by classical Persian poetry, but also reflects the particularities of modern-day Iran, through writers such as Houshang Moradi-Kermani , the most translated modern Iranian author, and poet Ahmad Shamlou. Zoroastrianism was the national faith of Iran for more than a millennium before the Arab conquest. It has had an immense influence on Iranian philosophy , culture and art after the people of Iran converted to Islam. This data is from the government of Iran and most likely contains false information. Followers of the Christian faith comprise around , Armenians, around 32, Assyrians , and a small number of Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Protestant Iranians that have been converted by missionaries in earlier centuries. Thus, Christians that live in Iran are primarily descendants of indigenous Christians that were converted during the 19th and 20th centuries. Judaism is an officially recognized faith in Iran, and in spite of the hostilities between Iran and Israel over the Palestinian issue, the millennia old Jewish community in Iran enjoys the right to practice their religion freely as well as a dedicated seat in parliament to a representative member of their faith. In addition to Christianity and Judaism , Zoroastrianism is another officially recognized religion in Iran, although followers of this faith do not hold a large population in Iran. In addition, although there have been isolated incidences of prejudice against Zoroastrians, most followers of this faith have not been persecuted for being followers of this faith. If the equinox falls after noon, then the next day is the official first day of the Persian year. The Persian Calendar , which is the official calendar of Iran, is a solar calendar with a starting point that is the same as the Islamic calendar. According to the Iran Labor Code, Friday is the weekly day of rest. Government official working hours are from Saturday to Wednesday from 8 am to 4 pm. Persian wedding There are two stages in a typical wedding ritual in Iran. Usually both phases take place in one day. The first stage is known as "Aghd", which is basically the legal component of marriage in Iran. In this process, the Bride and Groom as well as their respective guardians sign a marriage contract. After this legal process is over, the second phase, "Jashn-e Aroosi" takes place. In this step, which is basically the wedding reception, where actual feasts and celebrations are held, typically lasts from about 3â€”7 days. The ceremony takes place in a decorated room with flowers and a beautifully decorated spread on the floor. This spread is typically passed down from mother to daughter and is composed of very nice fabric such as " Termeh " cashmere , "Atlas" gold embroidered satin , or " Abrisham " silk. Iranian Wedding Ceremony Items

are placed on this spread: These herbs and spices play specific roles ranging from breaking spells and witchcraft, to blinding the evil eye, to burning evil spirits. While the people of Iran have been trying to legally change this practice by implementing a higher minimum in marriage, there have been countless blocks to such an attempt. Although the average age of women being married has increased by about five years in the past couple decades, young girls being married is still common feature of marriage in Iran— even though there is an article in the Iranian Civil Code that forbid the marriage of women younger than 15 years of age and males younger than 18 years of age. Antique Persian Mashad Rug Iranians were some of the first people in history to weave carpets. As time progressed, the complexity and beauty of rugs increased to a point where rugs are now bought as decorative pieces. Around various places in Iran, rugs seem to be some of the most prized possessions of the local people. Iran currently produces more rugs and carpets than all other countries in the world put together.

Chapter 6 : Cross Cultural Business Training & Cultural Awareness Courses

The documentary is great as both an introduction to Persian culture and history and the phenomenon that is Jerry Lewis. A film that is so personal and at the same time universal is very difficult to achieve, but Saeed-Vafa pulls it off.

Mirrored with permission from www.iranianculture.com. Iranian culture, except in the most superficial aspects of food and etiquette, is less well known to them. The Iranian contexts in question, moreover, go back several thousand years. The modern state of Iran is centered on the Iranian Plateau, a high arid plain surrounded on most sides by mountains. The center of the plateau contains several regions of almost impassable desert. Most of the population of the plateau lives in oases near the mountains where water is available, often conveyed to the irrigation works by long tunnels called qanats, an irrigation system that has been in use for several millennia. The bulk of the population of the plateau is Persian-speaking. In the past large parts of the population have been nomadic, with most of the rest of the population living in agricultural villages. In the twentieth century most of the nomadic population has become sedentary, and the proportion of the population living in cities has greatly increased. The modern state of Iran also includes several adjacent geographical areas. In the northwest, Azerbaijan is a region of mountains and high plains. North of the plateau are Mazandaran and Gilan along the south and southwestern shores of the Caspian. These areas, below sea-level, contain rainforests. Though the predominant language is Persian, these areas remain somewhat distinct from the rest of Iran. South and west of Adharbajan is Iranian Kurdistan, an area inhabited by the semi-nomadic Kurds and closely related by culture to the Kurdish areas of Iraq, Turkey, and Syria. Separatist movements have flourished in this area. The corner formed by the Iraqi border and the Persian Gulf is an ethnically Arab lowland, geographically contiguous with Iraq, of which it has often been a part. Though Arabic remains the predominant language, there are large Persian settlements there and the region has become much more culturally integrated with the rest of Iran since the discovery of oil at the turn of the century. The extreme southeast of Iran is inhabited by the Baloch, a nomadic people also living in neighboring areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Finally, northeastern Iran is a continuation of the plains of Central Asia. It should be noted that just as all Iranians are not Persian speakers, not all speakers of Persian live in Iran. Persian is one of the two main languages of Afghanistan, and Tajik, a closely related dialect, is spoken in Tajikistan and parts of Uzbekistan. Persian was also the lingua franca of Islamic India and survived in India and Pakistan as a literary language into the twentieth century. A large country, the climate of Iran varies from region to region. On the Iranian Plateau, summers are hot and dry. In the northern areas and in the mountains winters can be quite severe. Even in Tehran, snow is common in the winter. The Iranians are an Indo-European people. Sometime, probably in the early second millenium B. These people worshipped a pantheon of gods preserved both in Hindu and Zoroastrian mythology. Their economy seems to have been based on cattle-raising. One group, the Indo-Aryans, went southeast into northwestern India, where they apparently conquered the native population. Their religion formed the nucleus of modern Hinduism. Another group, the Iranians, moved southwest into Iran, eventually settling a region including much of Afghanistan, Iran, and the area east of the Caspian. There is no direct evidence of the movements of the Aryans, but something can be deduced from comparing the languages and mythology of the Aryans of India and Iran. The Indo-Aryans, for example, used a word for "god" that the Iranians use to mean "devil," thus indicating a religious split between the two groups early in their histories. Likewise, the oldest myths of both peoples preserve something of their early culture. By the early first millenium B. At some time before or during the migrations of the Iranians, a prophet named Zarathushtra "Zoroaster," the usual English form, derives from the Greek rendering of his name arose among them. He was a priest of the traditional religion. On the basis of visions of the supreme god Ahura Mazda probably meaning "Lord Wisdom" , he denounced abuses and taught a religion in which believers were to carry out various rituals, particularly concerning purity, in order to aid Ahura Mazda in his battle against the devil, Ahriman. Zoroaster formulated his teachings in the form of a series of hymns known as the Gathas. These were committed to memory by his followers and passed down by them until they were finally written down, together with much additional traditional material, sometime around the fifth century C. For his teachings Zoroaster was persecuted until he

finally found refuge with King Vishtaspa, who established Zoroastrianism as the state religion of his kingdom and fought the enemies of the new faith. Though there is no direct evidence about Zoroaster until much later, there cannot be much doubt that he lived and preached. There is great controversy about where and when he lived, the traditional date and place— years before Alexander B. Various modern authorities place him in Sistan on the border between modern Iran and Afghanistan, Choresmia south of the Aral Sea, and Kazakhstan. Dates range from the early second millennium to the early first millennium. The Medes and the Persians. The Iranians come into written history with the rise of the Median empire, an Iranian dynasty, in western Iran in the ninth century B. In the seventh century one of the Iranian vassals of the Medes, Cyrus II the Great of Persis in southwestern Iran, overthrew his master and went on to conquer a vast empire, which eventually stretched from Libya to the gates of India and from the Bosphorus to the Indian Ocean. The Persian or Achaemenid Empire, as it is known, was the greatest state the world had yet seen, and its efficient administration set the pattern used throughout the Middle East for centuries to come. It was by means of the Persian Empire that Iranian culture and religious ideas were conveyed to the Mediterranean world. Alexander himself died before he could establish his dynasty, and the empire was divided by his generals, Iran falling to the descendants of Seleucus, who also ruled Iraq, Syria, and the Holy Land. Though the Greek culture brought by Alexander influenced the Iranians, there was only a thin Greek veneer on what was still an Iranian nation. By the second century B. This dynasty, known to the West as the Parthians and to themselves as the Arsacids, ruled a loose confederation controlling a territory from Iraq and the borders of Syria to Afghanistan and the Aral Sea. Their famous mounted archers were the most formidable opponents of the Roman legions. Though more Iranian than the Seleucids, they were still much under the influence of Greek culture. In the third century C. Occupying much the same territory as the Parthians, the Sasanians were militantly Zoroastrian in religion and continued the Parthian tradition of opposition to the Romans. The Sasanian empire was well-organized and centralized. At their high point in the early seventh century, the Sasanians were able to occupy much of the Byzantine Empire and besieged Constantinople itself. Whereas the Persians nearly forgot the Achaemenids and Parthians, the Sasanian kings have remained well-known figures in many aspects of Iranian culture: The Arab Invasion and Empires. In the years when Muhammad was preaching his new religion and establishing a Muslim state in Medina and northwestern Arabia, the Sasanians faced military defeat and civil unrest. Thus when the Arabs invaded Sasanian Iraq, resistance was ineffective. The provincial nobility failed to unite to support the central government against the invader. Thus, the Arabs were soon able to occupy both Iraq and Iran. Yazdegerd III, the fugitive Sasanian emperor, was killed in Marv, in the far northeastern corner of his empire. Thereafter, Iran was ruled first from Medina and then until from Damascus. Persians quickly came to play a key role in the Islamic state. The first Arab occupiers were dependent on Persians to administer the old Sasanian provinces: Persian was the official language of administrative records in the eastern part of the Islamic world through the seventh century, and Persian officials carried on the routine of tax collection and administration under the eyes of their new Arab rulers. By the end of the century considerable numbers of Persians had become Muslims. The Abbasids, the new caliphs, were descendants of an uncle of the Prophet. They moved the capital to Iraq, building the new city of Baghdad. Their chief power base was the eastern empire—Iraq and Iran, the Sasanian lands—and Persians played an ever-greater role in administration and cultural life. The administrative system and court rituals of the Sasanian empire were to a considerable extent resurrected by the Abbasids. The Military Successor States. By the end of the ninth century the Abbasid caliphs in Baghdad could no longer exercise full control over their dominions. Governors of distant provinces became independent while still acknowledging the nominal authority of the prestigious but powerless caliphs in Baghdad. The example of independent provincial governors was soon followed by military adventurers who carved out ephemeral empires for themselves. Frequently drawing their strength from nomadic Turkic or Mongol tribes, such states characterize Iranian history into modern times. Often these rulers were little more than adventurous gangsters whose states prospered so long as the founder lived and fell apart under less ruthless heirs. Under such rulers life continued unchanged in the Persian cities, for a change of ruler usually meant nothing more than a change of tax collector. Only in a few cases did these states have lasting effects on Iranian life. Iran as a political entity can scarcely said to have existed in this period. Political boundaries bore

little relation to ethnic boundaries. Religious identities were often stronger than identities based on language or nation. His state occupied the territory of modern Iran and some parts of Iraq, the Caucasus, and Afghanistan. The cultural achievements of the Safavids were considerable. The Safavid kings and their courtiers were often lavish patrons of art, literature, and scholarship. Islamic philosophy reached its highest level of sophistication under the Safavids. After a series of weak rulers the Safavid state collapsed in the early eighteenth century in the face of an invasion from Afghanistan. This event triggered a half-century of instability in Iran. Two rulers in this period managed to gain control of the bulk of the old Safavid territories. The first, Nadir Shah, was a Sunni soldier from Khorasan, who in the classic pattern of military rulers in Iran, rose through his bravery, charisma, and luck to become a conqueror. His greatest achievement was his invasion of India in , in which he sacked Delhi and brought back to Iran a fabulous treasure, including the famous Peacock Throne.

Chapter 7 : Iranian culture and customs: a useful summarized introduction for tourists - Mah Card

My first week in Iran opened my eyes to the charm of Iranians and the beauty of their cityscape. As I discovered its capital city and got acquainted with the local lifestyle, the landmarks and the helpful approach of the people, I instantly fell in love with Tehran and made life-long friends who I would come back throughout my two-month backpacking journey in Iran.

The Iranian revolution has had a far-reaching impact on several Islamic regions and countries, especially in the Persian Gulf region and the Levant. As the Iranian revolution has matured, the founding principles and institutions of the Islamic Republic themselves have now come under severe scrutiny in Iran by a young generation whose increasingly cosmopolitan outlook and aspirations are at odds with the theocratic ideas and ideals of the founders of the Islamic Iran.

Historical Context The start of the sustained popular demonstrations that led to the overthrow of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi dates back to late 1970s. However, the genesis of the anti-Shah movement and the subsequent regime delegitimization dates back to the oil nationalization crisis and the establishment of a dictatorial system by the Shah. As explained in Gasiorowski and Byrne , Kinzer , and Katouzian , in the early 1970s, Mohammad Mossadeq, the democratically elected prime minister of Iran, nationalized the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company AIOC after a prolonged period of dispute with that foreign firm. Both the AIOC and the Shah viewed Mossadeq as a threat to their interests and undertook measures to destabilize his administration. Partly due to a strong and cohesive base of nationalism existing in Iran Cottam , Mossadeq succeeded in generating enthusiasm among the Iranian populace, ultimately causing the Shah to flee the country in August 1979. *The Iranian Constitutional Revolution, 1906-1911* Columbia University Press, Afary analyzes the cohesiveness of grassroots alliances that led to a massive social movement for democratization of Iranian authoritarian rule and societal structures. *Modern Iran since 1979: The Pahlavis and After. The Quest for Democracy in Iran: A Century of Struggle against Authoritarian Rule.* Harvard University Press, University of Pittsburgh Press, *Mohammad Mosaddeq and the Coup in Iran.* Syracuse University Press, It is rich in primary sources. Gheissari, Ali, and Vali Nasr. *History and the Quest for Liberty.* Oxford University Press, This is a highly readable and well-researched book on the long struggle between state building and democracy in Iran and the triumph of the state during the Pahlavi monarchy. *Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern Iran.* Yale University Press,

Chapter 8 : Persian Art | Essential Humanities

Iranian culture is rich in cultural symbolism, much of which derives from prehistoric times. Iran is the only nation in the Middle East that uses the solar calendar. It is also the only nation on earth marking the advent of the New Year at the spring equinox.

However, some history experts believe that Nowruz has been enshrined and observed for more than 15, years, well before the official establishment of the Persian Empire. Like Christmas, Nowruz is an elaborate festival that brings millions of people together, but there are certain elements in Nowruz that make it a distinctive tradition, and one of these important elements is its historicity. Cyrus the Great, the first king of the Persian Empire, came to throne in BC, but for almost years before him, when In-Su-Kush-Siranna was the ruler of the Kingdom of Aratta, Nowruz had been celebrated in Greater Iran, which consisted of several provinces that currently constitute modern countries like Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Pakistan, Iraq, and parts of India and Turkey. Nowruz is considered the most important national holiday in Iran as it marks the beginning of a new solar year and the arrival of spring. According to the Persian calendar, Nowruz begins on the vernal equinox, which starts on March 20 or The beauty and wonderfulness of Nowruz is that it starts on a unique moment each time and people excitedly and breathlessly wait for the announcement of what is known as the moment of the transition of the year. This moment is astronomically calculated according to the Jalali solar calendar and officially inaugurates the New Year. Unquestionably, Nowruz is one of the prominent hallmarks of the Persian culture and Iranian civilization. It represents the glory and magnificence of ancient Iran and manifests a sense of national pride and dignity for Iranians around the world. In his long epic poem, Shahnameh, the 10th century Iranian poet and philosopher Ferdowsi talks in detail about the origins and roots of Nowruz. He says that when the legendary, prehistoric Iranian king Jamshid Jam conquered the world and ascended the throne, he declared that day as Nowruz and the beginning of Iranian New Year. On that day, Iranians from across the country would come to visit Persepolis the ancient capital of the Persian Empire to hold festivals, receive rewards and gifts from the king, enjoy eating festive meals of dried nuts, fruits, and sweetmeat, sing happy songs, and perform plays. Nowruz is important in that it comes as winter ends, and that is why Iranians believe Nowruz is a feast of rebirth and rejuvenation that injects fresh and warm blood into the veins of the frosty and frozen nature. Iran, which is famous for its climatic diversity and unique nature, is very beautiful in the spring, and especially during the 13 days of Nowruz festivals. Fragrant flowers and attractive plants grow in large quantities in northern, central, and southern parts of Iran, and the weather is predominantly mild and moderate in the majority of the cities all around the country. One of the common traditions of Nowruz that the Iranians are strongly committed to is paying visit to the elderly and meeting the other members of the family. In such meetings, Iranian families entertain each other with delicious Iranian cuisines, spring fruits, dried nuts, candies, confections, deserts, rice-cakes, pastries, and cookies. Each of these seven items signifies a certain meaning. Iranians also put colored eggs and a bowl of goldfish on their traditional Haft-Seen table and consider these two elements as signs of fertility, welfare, and happiness. One of the other elements placed on the beautiful Haft-Seen table is a mirror, a symbol of purity, reflection, and honesty. Iranians never forget to put a beautifully adorned and decorated mirror on their traditional table setting. They also put a copy of the Holy Quran on their Haft-Seen table, which they believe will guard their life in the coming year. Possibly, in the first five days, the festivities were of a public and national nature, while during the rest of the month it assumed a private and royal character. Even the foreign tourists who travel to Iran to take part in the celebrations prefer to visit Shiraz or Isfahan during the 13 days of Nowruz. But why is Nowruz extended for 13 days? According to the ancient belief of the Iranians, 13 is an inauspicious number. On the 13th day of Farvardin, Iranian families gather in parks, gardens, farms, and other green places to eat cuisines containing certain local herbs and have friendly conversations. In Nowruz, the adults in the family pay the younger members certain amounts of cash as a gift for the New Year. The same year, the UN General Assembly recognized March 21 as the International Day of Nowruz, describing it as a spring festival of Persian origin which has been celebrated for thousands of years. Nowruz is a relic of past

days, a remnant from the dawn of human civilization. It removes religious, cultural, lingual, and national boundaries and connects the hearts of millions of people who want to take part in a unique ceremony marking not only the beginning of New Year, but the end of the distressed winter and arrival of the delightful spring.

Chapter 9 : An Introduction to the History and Culture of Iran

To study the development of cinema and the motion picture industry in Iran it is first necessary to understand certain elements of Iranian history, culture, religion, and social structure, i.e. the major influences bearing on the development of cinema and the motion picture industry in Iran.

Communication is the tool for solving your problems, getting help, avoiding loneliness, and having a better trip in general. Meeting new people and making friends with them is one other advantage of the ability of communication which develops good feelings and experiences during your journey. The ability of communication includes not only knowledge of the language but also the culture and customs of people. Many misunderstandings come from the differences between cultures and lack of knowledge about these differences. Iran is a culturally varied country with so many subcultures in it. Knowing the general Iranian culture and customs can help you a lot in communication and setting your timetable for visiting. In the following, we will explain some parts of Iranian culture and customs: Communication culture

The most important thing in communicating Iranian people is to be familiar with Taarof. If you want them to accept it, you have to insist. In fact, Taarof is a way of greeting and salutation for the respected guests. Taarof in Iran Iranian people also greatly respect their elders. You can show respect to them by greeting them first. There are many other communication rules in Iran such as respecting guests and elder people, chatting about general things while greeting, no handshakes or touches with people who have opposite gender, kiss on cheeks as a greeting with people who have the same gender, etc. Of course, you learn many parts of Iranian culture during your journey to Iran. In fact, the new year starts at the beginning of spring in Iran and the solar calendar. Nowruz is a day-period of time in which Iranians celebrate the new year and the nature being reborn. They visit all their relatives and friends and take their time to reunite with people. In fact, people try to get away from their daily routines and bond with each other in these 13 days. Table of Nowruz, Haft Sin Nowruz starts in an accurate time on the first day of spring which is different every year. Right after this time, people start visiting each other with visiting elders at first. All Iranians arrange a table for Nowruz on which they put seven things. Every one of these things is a symbol related to happiness, well-being, nature, etc. Sizdah be dar

At the end of Nowruz on the 13th day, people have a ceremony named Sizdah be dar. Sizdah is the Persian name for 13 and Sizdah be dar means keeping the bad luck of 13 away. In Iranian culture, the number 13 is a negative number with bad luck. Iranians go to a natural place such as a park, jungle, and mountain to keep bad luck away from their homes. The young people especially girls tie grasses and wish to get married in the following year, and the elder people take their time to talk and barbecue. Visiting Iran at this time of year gives you the chance to experience these customs and ceremonies in person. Therefore, many Iranian culture and customs are Islamic ones. The most specific religious custom in Iran is the mourning of Muharram. Muharram is the first month of the Islamic calendar in which the battle of Karbala took place. In this battle, the forces of the second Ummayyad caliph killed Imam Hussein ibn Ali, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad. Muslims believe that Imam Hussein fought for justice and the caliph killed him brutally, so they mourn for Imam Hussein every year at the time that battle of Karbala happened. There are many different rituals in the Islamic countries for this mourning. If you are interested in experiencing new spiritual rites and intend to visit Iran, consider planning your trip in Muharram. Rowzeh is a ritual in which people listen to Noha and beat their chests to display their grief for Imam Hussein. Noha is a poem and story about the events in the battle of Karbala and the death of Imam Hussein which a person reads in a plaintive voice. While listening to Noha Shia people weep for Imam Hussein as much as they can to offer their condolences to his family. Rowzeh in Iran Taziya

One other rite which people perform in many different ways in different cities and regions is Taziya. Taziya is a theatrical re-enactment of the battle of Karbala. The people who play in Taziya mostly sing their dialogues in a way that is proportional to their characters. They also use many tools and costumes. In rural regions and some cities, the group of Taziya walks in the streets with people accompanying it before it gets to the place of the show. In the southern cities and villages, people perform this rite in a glorious way. They also play a unique and professional music while playing the Taziya. Taziya, the theatrical re-enactment of Karbala battle.