

Chaharshanbe Suri Festival, a prelude to Nowruz



● surfiran.com

Festival of Fire (Chaharshanbe Suri) is held on the last Tuesday evening of every Iranian calendar year. This is the ancient festival of Iran, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Turkey, dating back to 1700 BCE.

Iranians come out with friends and family to celebrate and enjoy this occasion. Chaharshanbeh Suri is a prelude to Nowruz, which marks the arrival of spring in Iran, surfiran.com reported.

Jumping over the fire

The celebration usually starts in the evening, with people making bonfires in the streets and jumping over them. Some believe jumping over bonfires is a way expelling negative energy, sickness, and problems, and in turn getting fulfillment, warmth, and energy. Chaharshanbe Suri serves as a cultural festival for many Iranians. Jumping over the fire, which is an ancient Zoroastrian tradition, is a central part of the festival and is believed to bring good luck and ward off evil spirits.

It is said that the flames of the fire represent the burning away of the previous year's misfortunes, and the purification of the soul. Jumping over the fire is believed to symbolize the leap from darkness into the light, from winter into spring.

Preparations for Chaharshanbe Suri begin days before the festival, with people gathering firewood, preparing firecrackers and fireworks, and making special foods for the occasion. On the night of the festival people gather to light bonfires in their backyards or in public places.

The tradition of jumping over the fire is performed by people of all ages, from young children to the elderly. Before jumping, people recite the phrase "sorkhi-ye to az man, zardi-ye man az to," which means, "may your redness be mine, and my paleness be yours".

However, it is important to note that the tradition is not without its risks, and caution should be taken to ensure the safety of participants.

Spoon-banging

Another unique aspect of the Chaharshanbe Suri Festival is the practice of spoon-banging.

This tradition involves children and young adults taking to the streets with spoons and other kitchen utensils to bang on pots and pans, creating a cacophony of noise and excitement.

with colorful ribbons, flowers, and other decorations. Spoon-banging takes place in the evening on the night of Chaharshanbe Suri. Children and young adults gather in groups, armed with spoons



▲ Spoon-banging
● ISNA



▲ Burning wild rue seeds
● surfiran.com

The origins of spoon-banging are not entirely clear, but it is believed to have been a way for young people to celebrate the arrival of spring and to drive away evil spirits. The noise of the banging is said to scare away any malevolent forces and to bring good luck for the coming year.

The tradition of spoon-banging has evolved over time, with some participants adding firecrackers and other noisemakers to the mix. It has also become a way for young people to express their creativity, with some designing and decorating their spoons and other utensils

and other utensils, and move through the streets, banging on pots and pans and making as much noise as possible. It is a lively and boisterous celebration, with participants shouting and singing traditional songs as they go.

Burning wild rue seeds

One of the most ancient and significant traditions during the Chaharshanbe Suri Festival is the burning of wild rue, or "esfand" in Persian. This tradition involves the burning of dried leaves and twigs of the rue plant to ward off evil spirits and negative energy.



● IRNA

The burning of wild rue is a significant and ancient tradition during the Chaharshanbe Suri Festival. Whether for spiritual or medicinal purposes, the use of wild rue continues to play an important part in

been shown to have antibacterial, antifungal, and anti-inflammatory properties.

A wish-granting snack

Ajeel-e Chaharshanbe Suri is a traditional snack that is

pare the snack. The ingredients are mixed together and placed in small bowls or trays, which are then distributed among the participants.

As the snack is consumed, individuals are encouraged to make wishes and set intentions for the coming year. It is believed that the wish-granting powers of the snack can help manifest these intentions and bring good fortune and prosperity.

The consumption of the *ajeel* is seen as a way to align oneself with these principles and to attract positive energy and good fortune in the coming year.

In addition to its spiritual significance, the *ajeel* is also a delicious and nutritious snack. The mix of dried fruits, nuts, and seeds provides a range of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that are essential for good health.

What to eat

One of the traditional foods of Chaharshanbe Suri is *aash reshteh*, a thick and hearty soup made with beans, lentils, and noodles. It is typically garnished with fried onions, dried mint, and *kashk*, a type of fermented yogurt. *Aash reshteh* is believed to bring good fortune and prosperity to those who consume it during Chaharshanbe Suri.

Another popular dish is *sabzi polo ba mahi*, a fragrant rice dish that is served with grilled fish. The rice is typically flavored with herbs such as dill, parsley, and coriander, and is cooked with fragrant saffron. *Sabzi polo ba mahi* represents the hope for a bountiful harvest in the coming year.

Kookoo sabzi is also a popular dish during Chaharshanbe Suri. It is a type of herb fritatta, made with eggs, parsley, coriander, and chives. *Kookoo sabzi* is typically served with flatbread and yogurt, and is believed to represent new beginnings and growth.

Finally, *halva* is a sweet treat that is often prepared during Chaharshanbe Suri. It is made with sesame paste, sugar, and rose water, and is typically served with tea. *Halva* is believed to symbolize happiness and joy, and is a delicious way to end the festivities.



▲ Aash reshteh
● orkidehrestaurant.com



▲ Ajeel-e Chaharshanbe Suri
● pestaco.com

Iranian culture and tradition. In ancient times, it was believed that the burning of rue could purify the air and protect against various diseases.

It is believed that the smoke from the burning rue can ward off evil spirits and negative energies, clearing the way for a fresh start and new beginnings in the coming year.

In addition to its spiritual significance, the use of rue in traditional medicine has also been studied and recognized by modern science. Rue contains several bioactive compounds, including alkaloids and flavonoids, which have

consumed during the Chaharshanbe Suri Festival in Iran. This snack is believed to have wish-granting powers, and its consumption is said to bring good luck and prosperity in the coming year.

The snack is typically made up of a mix of dried fruits, nuts, and seeds, such as pistachios, almonds, raisins, and pumpkin seeds. The ingredients are carefully selected to represent different aspects of life, such as health, wealth, and happiness. The process of making *ajeel-e* Chaharshanbe Suri is a communal one, with families and friends coming together to pre-