Nowruz
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**History of the tradition/ holiday with an analysis of why it is significant.**

Nowruz translates to “New day” which has been celebrated for over 3,000 years. Spring is seen as a victory over darkness. It’s a celebration of a new year and the return of spring in the Middle Eastern area in the Hijri Calendar on the first day of Farvardin. Which lands on the 21st of March. It symbolizes good over evil, and happiness over sadness. Nowruz has Rituals, Ceremonies, and events. Such as jumping over fires to purify ourselves during sunset. The origins of Nowruz were from the Iranian religion of Zoroastrianism. Nowruz is celebrated for 13 days because each day represents a month and that they overcame the year. Nowruz is celebrated by Muslims, Baha’is, Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians.

**Explanation of how it is celebrated.**

Nowruz is prepared in vernal equinox, starting in March 21. Before Nowruz is celebrated, families clean for the weeks before the day is started, it was said to be spring cleaning, they clean to top and bottom windows, carpets, and curtains. Iranians will often be spending time with family members, relatives, and friends. Exchanging gifts with one another and children are given small toys and play with painted eggs for the entire traditional holiday. It also believes there will be earning fate for the rest of the year. Nowruz values peace and solidarity between generations as reconciliation and neighborliness, contributing cultural diversity and friendship among people with different cultures and communities. People will become more religiosity and prevent their sinful acts, as it promises to stay faithful and avoid any temptations. Nowruz can be practiced in different ways in Central Asian and Caucasus countries.

**Explanation of important symbols, songs, foods, regalia, makeup**

There are many important symbols, food and regalia for the celebration of Nowruz. During the celebration, the half-seen table is very important because it represents the seven items of renewal and springtime. These include Seeb (apple)- representing beauty, Seer (garlic)- representing good health, Serkeh (vinegar) - representing patience, Sonbul (hyacinth) - representing spring, Samanu (sweet pudding)- representing fertility, Sabzeh (sprouts) - representing rebirth, and Sekeh (coins)- representing prosperity. There are other items as well such as eggs: the symbol of fertility, mirror: the symbol of self-reflection, candle: the symbol of enlightenment, goldfish: the symbol of progress, and book: the symbol of wisdom. These are important symbols because it is the start of the new year and are wanted to be brought with them. Nowruz also has many traditional dishes that are made for the celebration for example sabzi polo (an aromatic herb rice), mahi (fish), plus kuku sabzi, kotlet, salad shirazi, reshteh polo, and plenty of fresh sabzi (fresh herbs, usually mint, basil and tarragon), paneer (feta), naan (Persian lavash flatbread) and many more. The food is important because if you are the host of the celebration, you must be ready to feed people at every hour of the day. Lastly, for the celebration, it is said to wear all new clothing for the day. As this time is to begin fresh and clean and new clothing solidifies a fresh start to the new year.

**Maps with areas of the world where it is most practiced/ celebrated.**

Nowruz is most celebrated in Iran, Afghanistan, Iraq & Turkey (Kurdish Regions) Pakistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, India, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (Red parts of the map). Some other places do practice Nowruz as well (The minority Communities/Pink parts of the map).

**How is it associated with important historical events.**

According to the Iranian mythology, the most important figure is King Jamshid. He is an amazing king who defeated the winter and rescued humanity from the cold. He created a throne of gems and grew up with demons. Zoroastrians and creatures will praise him for the brights he shines and the new day of spring he brings. This is the holiest day of the year; Zoroastrians believe this was the day of the earth was created. The celebration will last for one to two weeks because its holiness is important. Nowruz is once year event that is celebrated by many people around the world, its rich history goes back 3,000 years. United Nations recognizes Nowruz as their international festival public holiday all over the world. They continue to spread values of peace and unity within families, generations, and communities. Nowruz is now officially starts on March 21, but it depends on the vernal equinox's calculations. Celebrations can start early on March 19 and 2.

**What is the special spiritual or religious importance of this holiday**

Nowruz celebrating the rise of the beginning of spring; it spiritually symbolizes good over evil and joy over sorrow. They do traditional activities such as ritual dancing, pouring water vessels into their home to be protected from bad luck, singing songs, and doing performances. They also do ceremonies and cultural associating the life of harmony with nature awareness between construction labor and nature cycles of renewal and a solicitous and respectful attitude towards natural sources of light. The importance of spending time with your loved ones and Neighbours within diversity among others to show friendship, generosity, bringing good luck, health, and happiness.

**How important is it to many people? How does it have a widespread impact?**

Nowruz is important to many people because it’s a celebration that promotes values of peace and also presents solidarity between generations as well as within families. They celebrate new beginnings and the return of spring which is of great spiritual significance. People from different religious and cultural backgrounds now celebrate Nowruz. It has a very symbolic meaning of good over evil as well as joy over sorrow. Nowruz marks the new year and announces spring and the rebirth of nature. It's an important day because of the traditions that take place and the symbolism. Their practices are a good way to socialize with loved ones and strengthen deep rooted bonds of friendship. Nowruz has a widespread impact because of its historical background and the impact it had on many countries. Nowruz is a rite dating back to at least the 6th century BCE marking the new year and the return of spring. There are many countries along the Silk Road that take part in this celebration including Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, India, Iran, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Even though different countries celebrate it a bit differently it has such a large impact on them because of the messages and significance it has had on these countries throughout the year. It’s a time for family and friends to get together around the half-seen table and appreciate as well as encourage such values.

**How does it have or how has it had a long-lasting impact.**

In all over the world, each country that celebrate of Nowruz is Iran, Persia, Afghanistan, India, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Mostly Iran is the place that Nowruz is celebrated, they practice on fire and water, ritual dances, gift exchanges, serving food, and much many more. Bringing a great spiritual influence around the world, therefore triumph of good over evil and joy over sorrow. Nowruz changes and develops different traditions. It continues the holiday from the old years to the new years to come. Nowruz continues to promote love and friendship and peace. This builds an international community of light and hope among families and friends. Kuku Sabzi is one of the traditional foods of Nowruz, it is made of herbs, spinach, and frittatas. The herbs are hard to reproduce because it only be grown in certain times like spring. At the end, there will little amounts of herbs, left for next season. Another traditional food for dessert is Noon Gerdui is a walnut cookie. It was baked by families and it’s gluten free, it will lasted until fall. It can be good snack for family members who can't eat gluten cookies and it could be fun if family members can learn how to make it too. The traditional holiday will keep going for years.

Links we looked at:

<https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/general-english/magazine-zone/nowruz>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/nowruz-ancient-festival-celebration-springtime-new-year>

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/international-nowruz-day>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/nowruz-ancient-festival-celebration-springtime-newA-year#:~:text=Nowruz%20has%20been%20celebrated%20in,as%20a%20victory%20over%20darkness>.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nowruz#Overview>

<https://guides.libraries.indiana.edu/c.php?g=1016304&p=7366460#:~:text=Sabzeh%20(%D8%B3%D8%A8%D8%B2%D9%87)%3A%20sprouted%20wheat,%2D%2D%20the%20symbol%20of%20sunrise>.

<https://en.unesco.org/silkroad/content/nowruz-celebrating-new-year-silk-roads#:~:text=Variously%20known%20as%20Novruz%2C%20Nowrouz,%2C%20Turkey%2C%20Turkmenistan%20and%20Uzbekistan>.

<https://www.childrensalon.com/stories/nowruz-traditions#:~:text=Nowruz%20is%20the%20time%20to,worn%20must%20be%20brand%20new>.

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/all-about-persian-new-year>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nowruz>

<https://www.dialogueperspectives.org/blog/what-we-celebrate-and-why-nowruz-the-persian-new-years-celebration/#:~:text=It%20is%20not%20a%20primarily,International%20Nowruz%20Day%20since%202010>.