


**Life and Time**

By Sa'adi

A king asked a hermit, "How do you spend your precious time?" He replied, "I'm all night engaged in prayer, during the morning in supplications and the rest of the day in restricting my expenses." Then the king ordered a sufficient allowance to be allotted to him so as to relieve him of the cares of his family.

*O thou who art encumbered with a family,  
Think no more of ever enjoying freedom.*

*Cares for children, raiment and food  
Restrain thee from the heavenly kingdom.*

*Every day I renew my determination  
To wait upon God until the night.*

*In the night, while tying the knot of prayer,  
I think what my children will eat on the morrow.*


**Iranian Recipe**
**Pumpkin Stew**

Serves 4

**Ingredients**

Stew meat, 500 grams (lamb or beef)

Pumpkin, 1 medium or small pumpkin

Dried prunes, 1/2 cup

Tomato paste, 3 tablespoons

Turmeric, 1 teaspoon

Cinnamon, 1/4 teaspoon

Onion, 1 medium, chopped

Oil, 4 tablespoons

Salt and pepper to taste

Saffron, 1 pinch dissolved in 1/4 cup warm water (optional)


**Directions**

Saute onion in oil. Stir in meat for 5 minutes. Mix tomato paste, turmeric, cinnamon, saffron, salt and pepper.

Add about 1 and a 1/2 cup water and cover. Cook for about 1 and a 1/2 to two hours on medium heat.

Meat should be tender and nearly falling apart stage. You may need to add water during cooking but you shouldn't end up with more than the stated amount. The stew should neither be watery nor dry.

In the meantime, seed the pumpkin and slice into 2X2-inch pieces and peel. Brown on both sides in rest of the oil. The pumpkin should become brown in some places but not totally cooked.

Add to meat and cook covered for an additional 20-30 minutes. A fork should go into the pumpkin easily but not break it up.

Add the prunes in the last 5 minutes of cooking. They shouldn't really cook too much but should become softer. Serve over hot rice.

**Health Benefits of Pumpkin**

Pumpkins owe their bright orange color to the high amount of carotenoids present in them. Carotenoids assist in staving off the free radicals in the body and help prevent premature aging, cardiovascular diseases and other infections.

They are also high in lutein and zeaxanthin, which protect the eyes against free radical damage and prevent formation of cataracts and degeneration of eye tissues.

**Protein:** Pumpkin seeds also known as pepitas are a rich source of protein; 500 grams of pumpkin seeds contain approximately 7 grams of protein. Their oil is high in phytosterols or plant-based fatty acids and their chemical composition is the same as cholesterol. Phytosterols can replace cholesterol in the body and help reduce blood cholesterol levels.

**Essential Fatty Acids:** Pumpkin seeds are a rich source of essential fatty acids, which have numerous health benefits. From providing protection against serious health diseases such as high blood pressure, arthritis and cancer to promoting healthy skin and improving brain power, essential fatty acids present in pumpkin oil offer several health benefits.

**Vitamin A:** Pumpkin is a rich source of vitamin A. Regular consumption of pumpkin (both seeds and flesh) can promote the health of your eyes and boost your immune system remarkably.

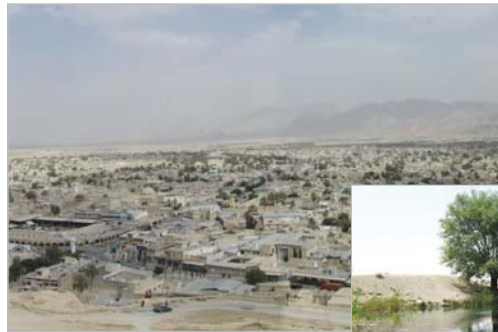
**Vitamin C:** Vitamin C helps fight free radicals, improves immunity and promotes the production of collagen. The high vitamin C content in pumpkins also offers protection against various forms of cancer.

**Magnesium:** Both the pulp and seeds of pumpkin are rich in magnesium, which is an important mineral required for various biological functions. Magnesium is also required for the maintenance of bones and teeth.

**Potassium and Zinc:** Pumpkin is loaded with potassium and zinc. Studies show that eating a potassium-rich diet can prevent onset of cardiovascular diseases and hypertension. Zinc is important for providing bone density support for people at risk for osteoporosis. It boosts the immune system and promotes reproductive health.

**Fiber:** Pumpkin's flesh is very low in calories and contains abundant quantities of extremely good dietary fiber. It is extremely effective for treating gastrointestinal disorders such as constipation, indigestion, etc. The high amount of fiber also helps lower the LDL (bad) cholesterol levels in the blood and regulate blood sugar levels.

# Visiting Lar



Lar is the central city of Larestan County in Fars province.

The city was originally called 'Lad' after the person who established the city. A person by the same name is also one of the famous heroes of Ferdowsi's epic poetry book Shahnameh.

Around 16th and 17th centuries, Lar was considered a major stop along the road leading to Persian Gulf, Iran-tourism.com wrote.

In the 2006 census, it had a population of 51,961, most of whom were predominantly Muslim.

**Language**

The prominent feature of Lar is the people's dialect. The Lari vocabulary (also known as Achomi or Ajami) holds many words in common with Persian. However, the syntax is considerably different from the current Persian language.

Some believe that the Lari dialect is based on an older dialect that survived the impact of Arabic on Old Persian.

Larestani is derived from the medieval Iranian Pahlavi language, the language of the Parthians, which is also the source of Modern Persian and all other dialects in the southwest branch of the Iranian language group.

The name Pahlavi was applied to a number of different dialects spoken in a vast area extending from Ctesiphon in modern-day Iraq to the southern coast of Persian Gulf. The area corresponds to the greater Pars province.

In its widest extent, Pahlavi is applied to all the varying forms of the medieval Persian language, from the time when the grammatical inflexions of ancient Persian were dropped till the invention of the modern alphabet.

The language became corrupted into Modern Persian with the adoption of numerous Arabic words and phrases. However, Larestani has kept lots of words from Pahlavi and grammatical peculiarities that distinguish it from its sister Modern Persian.

There is considerably less Arabic influence in the dialect of Lari than there is in Modern Persian, suggesting that Lari descends from a purer Iranian tongue.

Arabic words have mostly been imported indirectly by the influence of Modern Persian.

Certain grammatical properties of Lari are also found in other Iranian languages such as Lori and also in more distanced languages such as Gilaki and Kurdish, both of which are included in the northwest branch of Iranian languages.

Another important feature of Larestani is that it has kept its strong ties with Old Persian. This is perhaps due to the fact that being a local language there is less need to

be dynamic, less need for development and less need for interaction with other local languages.

Larestani is an oral language and has a small body of literature. Written and official language has always been Modern Persian.

**New and Old Cities**

Lar is divided into two areas: the new city called Shahr-e Jadid and old city called Shahr-e Qadim.

The new city, which was established after the earthquake of 1960, now accommodates the main population and is considered to be modern in terms of civil and transport engineering.

However, the residents of Lar are tradition bound and observe their customs religiously.

The local men and women largely dress in their traditional costumes.

The old city contains the Bazaar of Qaisariyeh, a pre-Safavid dynasty creation, which was proposed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site on August 9, 2007.

**Tourism Attractions**

Balangeshtan is a garden and castle about 8 kilometers north of Fedagh that boasts of good weather.

Fedagh is one of the attractive villages of Larestan County.

Balangeshtan is a noted tourist attraction with a service station, recreational area for picnics and tourist amenities. Mount Balangeshtan is a continuation of the south Zagros Mountain Range. It is one of the tallest mountains of Larestan.

Trees and plants such as lotus, Persian turpentine tree, garden thyme and pennyroyal grow on the mountain, which are irrigated by a local spring. The mountain is the habitat of animals like hyena, wolf, porcupine and rabbit.

Lar is also famous for its delicacy called Masqati, which is made with starch, sugar and nuts.

## Indonesia Eager To Expand Tourism Ties

Iranica Desk

Iran is ready to attract one million Indonesian tourists a year, it was announced on Sunday.

Iranian ambassador in Tehran, D'ian Wirengjuri, met with Hussein Jafari, the head of Iran's Automobile Racing and Tourism Center, on Sunday and discussed ways of expanding bilateral tourism ties.

"Iran is ready to attract 4 million tourists by the end of the current Iranian year (March 20, 2013)," Jafari said.

Jafari also said expansion of tourism ties with Muslim nations is on the agenda of Iran's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization.

"Iran has many cultural, historical and natural

attractions," Jafari said, adding that Indonesians can become acquainted with the culture of Iranians through these tours.

Jafari noted that tourism agreements will be signed between the private sectors of the two countries in the near future to ease the exchange of tourists.

The ambassador of Indonesia said his country is ready to expand tourism ties with Iran.

"Iran and Indonesia are two Muslim countries with a lot of cultural and religious commonalities," he said, adding that Indonesia wants to enjoy Iranian experience in different cultural fields, particularly in the field of cinema.

Wirengjuri hoped that a direct flight between Tehran and Jakarta will be launched in the near future.

## Funds for Restoring Masouleh Houses

Iranica Desk

Ten historical houses in Masouleh, northern Gilan province, will be restored in collaboration with Iran's Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization and the owners of houses.

These houses belong to the late Qajar and early Pahlavi eras.

Over 20 billion rials have been allocated to the project, which includes the historical houses of Kamran, Azargashb, Babaei, Azar, Salehizadeh and Sha'bani.

Wet weather and years of negligence have damaged these houses to a large extent such that some of them are not habitable any longer.

Masouleh is approximately 60 km southwest of Rasht and 32 km west of Fuman. The village

is 1,050 meters above sea-level in the Alborz mountain range, near the southern coast of Caspian Sea. The village itself has a difference in elevation of 100 meters.

The first village of Masouleh is approximately established around 1006 AD, 6 km northwest of the current city and it is called Old Masouleh (Kohneh Masouleh in Persian).

People moved from Old Masouleh to the current city because of pestilence and attacks by hoodlums. Some of old families have documents showing ownership of ancestral trees as old as 100 years.

Roudkhan is the river passing through the city with a waterfall 200 meters away from the village. Many other springs are found around Masouleh, which is also surrounded by a forest.

## Sudoku

No. 177

Sudoku was inspired by the table devised by Iranian mathematician Al-Kharazmi. Fill 9x9 grid with digits so that each column, each row and each of the nine 3x3 sub-grids that compose the grid, contains all of the digits from 1 to 9.

5			9					7
	6		1		7			8
	7							9
6			8		5			2
				1				
3			7		4			1
	2							6
	1		9		3			7
9				7				5

5	1	8	2	7	9	4	3	6
4	7	2	3	5	6	9	1	8
6	9	3	1	8	4	5	2	7
1	5	6	4	9	7	2	8	3
8	3	9	6	1	2	7	5	4
2	4	7	5	3	8	1	6	9
9	6	4	8	2	5	3	7	1
3	8	5	7	4	1	6	9	2
7	1	2	9	6	3	8	4	5