Nowruz

The Persian New Year
Nowruz started in Persia/Iran.
Today it is also celebrated in:

- Afghanistan
- Azerbaijan
- Central Asian countries (Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan)
- Kurdish minority in Turkey, Iraq, and Syria
- Some parts of India and Pakistan
It is a *secular* (not religious) holiday, but its origins and symbols are in the ancient Zoroastrian religion.

*Good thoughts, good words, good deeds.*
Basics

• Dates back at least 2,500 years (to the 6th century BCE)

• Begins at the exact moment of the vernal equinox – 1st day of spring, when day and night are the exact same length

• Celebrations last for 2 weeks
Preparations (in Iran):

• Spring cleaning

• Growing “greenery” for the festival table

• The Wednesday before: People jump over bonfires saying something equivalent to “out with the yellow [sickly pallor of winter], in with the red [healthy skin color of spring/summer].”
Growing Greenery (You can spread lentils on a plate and grow them!)

http://www.chiff.com/home_life/holiday/nowruz.htm
Iranian Nowruz table

- Greenery
- “Haft sin” – 7 things that start with the letter “s” in Persian (such as garlic, apples, etc.)
- Book (Quran for religious Muslims, Persian poetry for non-religious ones)
- Goldfish or dyed eggs to represent new life
- Mirror to reflect good fortune
- Flowers
Iranian Nowruz table

https://surfiran.com/all-about-haft-sin-the-7-s-of-iranian-new-year/
In Iran:

• Children get off of school for 2 weeks.
• Children get presents.
• People visit relatives and party. (But unlike the US New Year’s celebrations, these are family parties. Often, because it’s a Muslim country, there is no drinking, just lots of eating!!)
On the last day, Sizdah Bedar (13\textsuperscript{th} day):

• People picnic outdoors.

• They take the greenery with them to throw into running water (stream, river) to take away bad luck.

• Unmarried girls and boys tie a knot in the grass first to wish to find a partner in the next year.
Some short (5 minutes or less) celebration videos of Nowruz:

• Silk Road Dance Company: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uq40CGTB1eg

• Nowruz in Iran: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSljMxxBKO8

• Nowruz in Azerbaijan: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSljMxxBKO8
Some short celebration videos of Nowruz (continued):

• Nowruz in Iraqi Kurdistan: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGsCx1nx9-Q and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YyakC8mJKEM

• Nowruz in Uzbekistan: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnoxzyy0D_M
Some short celebration videos of Nowruz (continued):

- Nowruz in Tajikistan: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KF-Cmpz1-c
- Nowruz in Afghanistan: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRqKBDYHL3Y