

A RECIPE TO WELCOME THE SPRINGTIME

The spring festival Holi calls for joyous merrymaking and the eating of sweets to welcome the new season.

Celebrants douse each other with colored water and colored powders until they become as gaudy as rainbows. It's all in good fun, although the antics can become so rambunctious that the cautious may choose to take shelter indoors.



In Bengal, one would be treated to the famous milk-based sweets. Here is one of them, firni, a soft rice pudding. The recipe is based on one in "The N.I.A.W. Cookbook" put out by the National Indian Association of Women in Calcutta.

The author of the recipe is Ira Chakravarti, who edited the cookbook. Firni is easy to make, although it does call for patience while stirring the mixture.

FIRNI

¼ cup basmati or jasmine rice
½ cup water
1 quart whole milk
½ cup sugar
1 to 2 teaspoons rose water
2 tablespoons pistachios, crushed
2 tablespoons raisins

Rinse the rice, then soak it in the water for at least 1 hour. Drain the soaked rice, reserving the water. Place it on a work surface or in a heavy mortar and crush it with a rolling pin or pestle until broken into crumbs.

Place the soaking liquid and milk in a 2-quart saucepan and add the rice. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat slightly and boil gently, stirring, until the rice is cooked and the mixture starts to thicken. Add the sugar, a third at a time, and stir until dissolved.

Continue to boil gently, stirring, until the mixture is thickened but still fluid enough to pour. The total cooking time can take up to 45 minutes and requires constant stirring so that the mixture does not stick to the pan. Remove from the heat and stir in as much rose water as desired.

Pour the firni into 6 individual serving dishes or one large bowl. Sprinkle the surface with the pistachios and raisins. Cool to room temperature before serving.

Upcoming events

Sister Cities of Los Angeles & the Original Farmers Market International Spring Festival

Saturday, April 9th • 12pm - 5pm
Farmers Market Plaza

A celebration of the rituals of spring featuring
live performances from five international cities.

Salvador, Brazil - CACHÊ - 12PM
The Brazilian Afro-Cuban and Latin Jazz of Carlos Edwards Verde Jr. and his trio.
Lusaka, Zambia - THE DANCE OF LIFE - 1PM
Drummers and dancers perform rituals of the West African cultures of Gambia and Guinea.
Mumbai, India - RONOBIR LAHIRI - 2PM
Traditional Indian ragas music combined with ambient, house, techno, and club tracks.
Nagoya, Japan - I. A. MATSURI TAIKO - 3PM
The renowned Taiko Drum ensemble explores the spirit and intensity of Japanese culture.
Berlin, Germany - CHRISTINA LINHARDT & MICHAEL TUBA HEATHERTON - 4PM
A celebration of the vibrant music and culture of East West and Germany's Weimar Republic.
Master of Ceremonies & special performances by Ken O'Halley

Visit the American Red Cross table to find out how
you can support their relief efforts in Japan.

DCA DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA AFFAIRS
CITY OF LOS ANGELES



INTERNATIONAL SPRING FESTIVAL AT FARMERS MARKET PLAZA

The Sister Cities of Los Angeles and the Original Farmers Market are sponsoring an upcoming free concert of original music from five international cities.

Date & Time: Saturday, April 9, Noon – 5 p.m.

Location: Farmers Market Plaza, 6333 W. 3rd St., Los Angeles

Music from Salvador, Brazil; Lusaka, Zambia; Mumbai, India; Nagoya, Japan; and Berlin, Germany will be featured. Ronobir Lahiri will be the performer from Mumbai and will perform traditional Indian ragas music combined with ambient, house, techno, and club tracks. That performance will begin at 2:00 p.m.



INDIAN/IRANIAN MUSIC FEATURED IN UCLA CONCERT

When: Thursday, April 21, 8:00 p.m.

Where: Royce Hall, UCLA

Price: \$28/33/43 (\$15 UCLA students)

In a stunning marriage of Indian and Iranian classical music, sitar virtuoso Shujaat Husain Khan, son of the legendary Ustad Vilayat Khan and Kayhan Kalhor, master of the kamancheh (the traditional fiddle of Persian classical music) present an evening of inspired improvisation. The duo performs together for the first time in seven years and are accompanied by traditional tabla percussion from Samir Chatterjee. The name Ghazal reflects the artists' inherent cultural link: in the Persian tradition, a ghazal is a genre of poetry, characterized by a blend of ecstatic spirituality and earthly desires. In India, ghazal has evolved into a form of semi-classical popular music and usually takes the form of a love ballad.



Indian Film Festival of Los Angeles

2011 LA INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL
SET FOR APRIL 12 – 17

This year's LA Indian Film Fest runs from April 12–17 at the ArcLight Cinemas in Hollywood at 6360 Sunset Blvd. Visit www.indianfilmfestival.org for more information about purchasing tickets or festival passes.

LA SISTER CITIES CULTURAL DAY RESCHEDULED TO AUGUST

Cultural Day at The Grove, sponsored by LA Sister Cities and originally set for June 26, has been rescheduled to Sunday, August 7, from noon – 5 p.m. This popular free event features exciting music and dance performances from numerous LA sister cities around the world.

GILMORE ADOBE FUNDRAISER SUPPORTS LA SISTER CITIES

Help support the goals of the LA Sister Cities organization while enjoying a celebration of Los Angeles in the 1960s! Join us Thursday, June 9th, from 5:30–10:00 p.m. at the historic Gilmore Adobe at Farmers Market for an evening of food, fun, and music. Features of the event include:

- ♦ All-you-can-eat buffet
- ♦ Wine & cocktail bars
- ♦ Costume contest: Best Beach Boy & Best Beach Girl
- ♦ Free validated parking at The Grove
- ♦ Pink's Hot Dogs
- ♦ Silent auction & raffle drawings
- ♦ A salute to the Beach Boys starring *The Beach Toys*

Attendance is limited to 250 guests. Tickets are \$60 per person or \$500 for a group of 10. You can order tickets online at www.sistercitiesofla.com or contact Kamilla Blanche at (213) 978-0638.

Tickets may also be purchased at the door.



Cliff Meyer and Cathy Root admire a giant embellished hookah

Lucknow exhibit tour at LACMA
February 3, 2011

LA Mumbai Sister City Board members David Salazar, Pamela Wrona, Cliff Meyer, Mira Advani Honeycutt, Kirk Honeycutt, and Cathy Root, along with Asha Puthli (seated, left) pose in front of a giant photo of Lucknow.



Gorgeous, intricate paintings were a highlight of LACMA's Lucknow exhibit

