



For Immediate Release

Re: **Chaharshanbeh Souri: Festival of Fire**

Event Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2019 at 2029 Durant Avenue

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Photo Attached

PRESS RELEASE

CALENDAR LISTING

PERSIAN NEW YEAR - **Chaharshanbeh Souri: Festival of Fire**

The Persian Center will be hosting its 20th *Annual Chaharshanbeh Souri* at the 2000 block of Durant Avenue in Berkeley. Jump over bonfires to celebrate the change of seasons and welcome spring. Enjoy Persian food, music, dancing, and children's activities on Tuesday, March 19, 2019 from 6-10 PM, at Persian Center, 2029 Durant Ave., Berkeley. Rain or shine. Free. <https://www.facebook.com/PersianCenterOrg/> www.AnotherBullwinkelShow.com 510.334.6523

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JUMP OVER BONFIRES AT **CHAHARSHANBEH SOURI: FESTIVAL OF FIRE**

Berkeley, CA – Persian Center will be hosting its 20th *Annual Chaharshanbeh Souri* at the 2000 block of Durant Avenue in Berkeley: Jump over bonfires on Tuesday, March 19, 2019, at Persian Center, 2029 Durant Avenue in Berkeley from 6-10 PM, to celebrate the change of seasons and welcome spring. A Persian ritual passed down since ancient Zoroastrian times, the Persian New Year Festival of Fire, called **Chaharshanbeh Souri**, (which means 'Eve of Wednesday') is held on the last Tuesday night in winter, just before the Vernal Equinox or first moment of spring. This is the time of year when Persians around the world will be celebrating **Nowruz** (New Year).

As the sun sets, people **jump over bonfires** to say farewell to the coldness, paleness, and sickness of winter, and welcome the redness, warmth and energy of spring; they sing, "*Zardi-ye man az toh, sorkhi-ye toh az man,*" which translates to, "May your rosy red glow be mine, and my sickly yellow pallor be yours." The tradition, rooted in *Zoroastrianism* (which predates Islam), serves as a cultural festival for Iranian and Iranic people and holds no religious significance.

Outside, in addition to the bonfires, there will be Persian music, food, arts & crafts booths for children, and stations for various cultural organizations. Inside the Persian Center, there will be a traditional altar display called **haftseen** (seven 's's), with seven items beginning with the letter 's': **sabzeh** (barley/lentil sprouts) symbolizing rebirth, **samanu** (wheat germ pudding) symbolizing affluence, **senjed** (dried oleaster fruit) symbolizing love, **seer** (garlic) symbolizing health, **seeb** (apple) symbolizing beauty, **somāq** (sumac fruit) symbolizing sunrise, and **serkeh** (vinegar) symbolizing longevity & wisdom. The display also includes a mirror, colored eggs, sweets, and candles.

By engaging the non-Persian community in the **Festival of Fire**, the organization hopes to allow a glimpse into beautiful Persian traditions and the culture of the Iranian-American community in the US. The event which is hosted by the **Persian Center** is a free, family-friendly, non-alcoholic event held outdoors on the **2000 block of Durant Avenue**, rain or shine.

Persian Center, celebrating its 27th anniversary, is a non-profit, charitable 501(c3) organization whose mission is to create an environment in which to conduct social, cultural, educational, and recreational activities designed to strengthen the sense of identity and integrity of all Iranians and Iranian descendants, and to engage individuals interested in or related to Persian community and culture. It is one of a few secular Persian organizations in the United States. For more information contact info@PersianCenter.org or www.AnotherBullwinkelShow.com 510.334.6523.

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