

Sumanakpazi

Sumanakpazi refers to the cooking of *sumanak* a dish prepared during the *Navruz* festival. *Sumanak* is made of juice extracted from the wheat sprouts and is cooked in flour mixture and oil. The process of *sumanak* preparation is as following: certain amount of wheat is taken and washed and soaked in the water than the extra water is drained and the wheat is left under the rain (if it is rain season) and is kept in the shade or a humid place for few days until the wheat sprouts.

When the wheat has grown to a desired size then 3 or 4 women will be gathered in the house of one who hosts the *sumanak* cooking. The preparation starts by extracting juice from the wheat sprout by means of hammering it in a pounder. The juice than is poured through a sieve to clean it. Afterwards a fire is lit and big cauldrons are heated with the oil in them. Than the wheat juice is poured into them and seven small stones or walnuts are added. The later elements has both practical and symbolic significance: the seven is a perfect number and is meant for the new year to be perfect it also helps during the mixing the *sumanak* in the cauldron it helps the substances not to stick in the cauldron. After the *sumanak* is in cauldron the women take frame drums and begin singing the traditional *sumanak* song, which is sung by everyone present:

Sumanak dar jush mo kafcha zanem,
Digaron dar khob mo dafha zanem.
Sumanak bui bahor ast,
Sumanak avju baror ast,
Melai shabzindador ast,
Idi Navruzi muborak!

Sumanak is being boiled and we are clapping.

Everyone goes to sleep we play our frame drum.

Sumanak is a scent of spring,
Sumanak gives strength and prosperity,
Sumanak is a fruit cooked in sleepless night,
Happy Navruz!

Sumanak is cooked overnight i.e. 8 to 12 hours. When it is ready one of the elderly women prays over the dish and pours it into bowls for the host family. Afterwards than *sumanak* is distributed in the neighborhood and it is believed that it counts as a good merit for distributing it widely among elderly, sick, and poor families.

Sumanak is exclusively prepared in the spring in Navruz season and it is never prepared in other seasons. There is variety of modes of how *sumanak* is cooked, such as small bread backed in the charcoal, as a soft paste in the cauldrons.

