

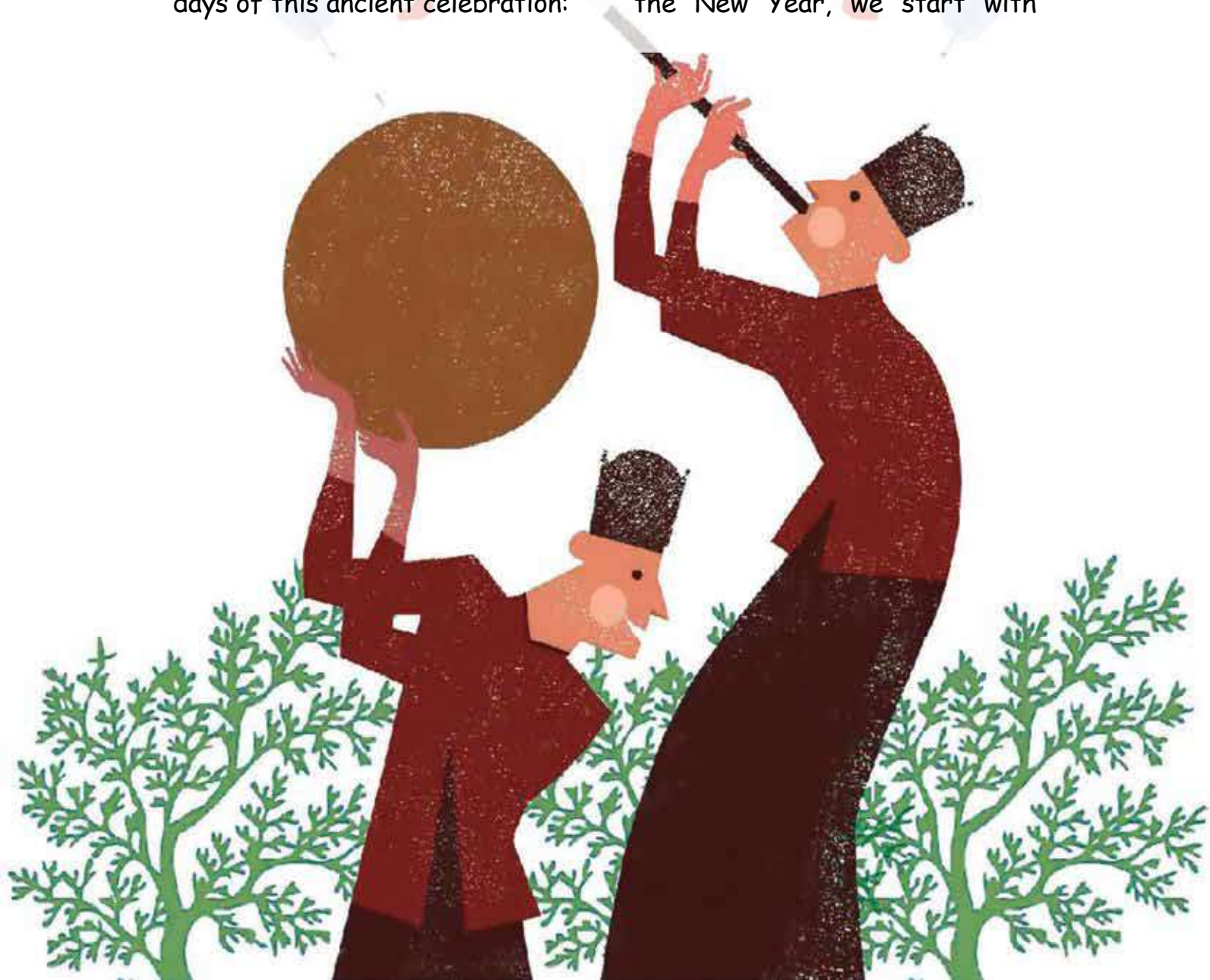
Unforgettable Customs

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As you know, we are on the way to celebrating the coming New Year, Nowruz. The celebrations begin the moment the earth crosses the vernal equinox. Here are a few things we do during the days of this ancient celebration:

- Khaneh Takani; cleaning the house

Everybody likes cleanliness and dislikes dirt. It is part of man's God-given nature. So, to celebrate the coming of spring and the New Year, we start with



cleaning the house. It is part of the preparations for the New Year celebrations.

● Deed-o-baz-deed; this literally means 'to see and see again'. During the 13 days of the beginning of spring, the tradition is to visit friends and relatives, and they, in turn, come to your house to see you. Everyone is ready to be a gracious host during these days and welcome their guests with plenty of sweets, tea, and fruits, of course (which Iranian household doesn't have a giant bowl of fruit ready at all times?). It's customary to visit elders of the family first, and then make your way

through the list of all close relatives, friends, and even acquaintances.

● Wearing new clothes; Iranians usually wear a set of new clothing for Nowruz. This is because spring is a time for freshness and newness and this practice is symbolic of letting go of the old and displaying the new.

● Haft-seen; during these days,



Iranians have a special table set up in the house called the haft-seen table, filled with symbolic items that represent spring, and seven items the names of which begin with the Persian letter 'seen'. These include items that represent prosperity, freshness, rebirth, love, and

life, and that represent the new start provided by the new season. One of the most important elements of the Nowruz haft-seen table is wheatgrass, which is sprouted from grains a few days before the new year and is thrown into water on the 13th day of Nowruz.

- Seezde- Bedar; 13th day of the first month of spring, namely the month of Farvardin (according to the Iranian calendar) is the last day of the Nowruz celebrations. On that day, Seezde-Bedar (out with 13) Iranian families go out for a picnic and enjoy the fresh spring



breeze. They firmly believe that all blessings, including the nicest springs, should be enjoyed with thankfulness to God - the Source of all goodness.

Hopefully, those who celebrate Nowruz, have an opportunity this year to visit some new friends and make some fresh starts in their life!

