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## Harbourfront - Tirgan Festival 2008

Posted by Geraldine on July 20th, 2008



Tirgan, an ancient Iranian celebration, was revived at the Harbourfront Centre this July 17 – 20th in Toronto. The festival of Tirgan has been disappearing through the centuries, but as the four day event docked at the Harbourfront, it came back to life, with colours, culture and cuisine.



The legend of Tirgan has many versions. One version tells us the story of two long standing enemy nations, Iran and Turan. The rulers of both countries decided to settle upon borders and declare peace. So, Arash, the most famous archer in the Iranian army climbed Mount Damavand and took aim at the skies. The arrow traveled from dawn to noon, descending finally upon the banks of Jihun. The people of Iran were overjoyed, as the arrow has expanded the borders and riches of Iran and thus gave the people a cause for celebration.



Mehrad Arainnejad, the CEO of the Tirgan festival says, "There is so much value in the old civilization, and we need our intellectuals and artists to expose it to the masses." In the mosaic that is Toronto, the organizers of the festival recognize the importance of promoting their culture. As Toronto is continuously shaping its definition of culture, Iran participates in the dialogue. And what better way to participate than to feature theatre, film, dance, music, visual art, and cuisine from internationally and locally renowned Iranian artists.



When the first festival was held in 2006 it celebrated the first day of spring, and the Iranian new year, Nowruz. It was set up to host 5,000 people, but a remarkable 22,000 people showed up. This year, the event organizers decided to hold the festival a little later in the year, to take advantage of the summer weather. The festival was planned on a much larger scale than in previous years for an anticipated audience of 100,000 people over its four day period.



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1. *Simon Oullet* wrote,

I'm curious, was there any good persian food at this event to accompany the cloth sell?

[Link](#) | July 21st, 2008 at 11:40 am

2. *Shadi* wrote,