

- 👑 ARMENIAN — Folklore artistic expressions
- 👑 GOLDEN AGE OF PERSIA — It signifies the artistic architectural expression of middle Persian; two lovers on the Persian carpets depicting the philosophical expression of love by the quatrains of Omer Khayam next to his tomb.
- 👑 POETRY (RUMI) CARRIAGE — Rumi (13th century), improvising his poetry as recognized as the best selling poetry collection in the west and the US in the past decade.
- 👑 PERSIAN CARPET CARRIAGE — The historical art of hand crafted carpet making framed on the loom.
- 👑 MUSIC WAGON — Playing Armenian and Kurdish music, with dancers from Kurdistan of Iran in motion
- 👑 SPORT CARRIAGE — Iron Sheik, the World Wrestling Champion displays the historical Persian sports (zoorkhaneh)
- 👑 COLORFUL IRAN I — Display Folkloric costumes from various regions of Iran; Bakhteyari, Balouchi and Guilani
- 👑 MARCHING BAND II
- 👑 PROFESSIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONS II
- 👑 SPRING FLOAT — Decorated with colorful flowers, it signifies rejuvenation of life through Spring Vernal Equinox, while dancers are performing around it. Pop music and dance mix by Aatash Group of George Washington University.
- 👑 WOMEN CARRIAGE — Showcases the multifaceted immense contributions of Iranian and Iranian American women.
- 👑 FILM CARRIAGE — Depicts the contributions of movie making.
- 👑 MUSIC WAGON — Banderi Dance and Music of Persian Gulf seaside regions.
- 👑 COLORFUL IRAN II — Display Folkloric costumes from various regions of Iran; Ghashgahei, Khorasani & Mazendarani
- 👑 MARCHING BAND III
- 👑 PROFESSIONALS AND ORGANIZATIONS III
- 👑 HORSES 5, 6, 7, 8 — The Achaemenian Cavalry soldiers of circa ~500 BC.

Disclaimer: The sole purpose of this informational pamphlet is to provide the general perspective of the sequence of events on 2004 Persian Parade Day in New York. Whereas it has been endeavored to ensure the accuracy of the material presented herein, we nonetheless, do not accept any liability as to its accuracy or events subject to change without prior notice.

Persian Parade Day

**Madison Avenue
New York City
Saturday March 27, 2004**

- 👑 Commemorating *NOWRUZ*, the Persian New Year
- 👑 Showcasing and celebrating 3,000 years of contributions of Iranians to the World
- 👑 Highlighting the multifaceted contemporary advancement of the world and the US by Iranians, especially the one million Americans of Iranian heritage.

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Decree of Cyrus the Great, founder of the Persian Empire, granting national and religious freedom to the peoples of Babylon in 542 B.C.:

“When I entered Babylon ... I did not allow anyone to terrorize the land... I kept in view the needs of Babylon and all its sanctuaries to promote their well-being. The citizens of Babylon... I lifted their unbecoming yoke (slavery). Their dilapidated dwellings I restored. I put an end to their misfortunes.”

....Thus said the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden...

(Isaiah, XLV-1-3)

Nowruz, new day or New Year as the Iranians refer to it, is the celebration of spring *Vernal Equinox*. It is the most cherished of all Iranian festivals, as celebrated continuously by all peoples living on the Iranian plateau and the surrounds for at least 3000 years. This occasion has also been observed in one form or another since 3000 BC by all the major cultures of the ancient Mesopotamia, southwest and south central Asia including Sumerians, Babylonians, Elamites, Akaddians, Chaldeans and the Persians. Today, this celebrative region of *Nowruz* is extended from the Aral Lake and Sind River on the east, Caspian Sea to the north, Black and Mediterranean Seas to the west, and the Persian Gulf to the south. So, diverse peoples of Persian, Iranians, Kurdish, Turkish, Afghani, Tajik, Armenian, Assyrian, Kazakhs, Beluchi, Luri, Keshmiri, Turkmen and Guilani to name a few are among the most avid celebrants of *Nowruz*. It is also worth noting that the first day of spring season was also observed by the Europeans through the middle ages and by the American pilgrims through the early 18th century as “common” new-year and even the Aztecs in Latin America. *Nowruz* has its roots deeply embedded in Zoroastrianism, the first monotheistic religion that considers it as the last day of seven-day creation epoch, thus the ritual of *Hafi Sin*, or seven life related, mostly plant based symbolic heralds that begin with the letter “S” in Persian language. During *Nowruz* holiday seasons, family and friends visit each other, pay respect to the elderly, donate to the impoverished and the sick, give and accept presents in the thirteen days period that ends with April fool’s day when everyone spends the whole day in the orchards or on the prairies dancing, singing and playing. Hence, the commemoration of *Nowruz* denotes the seventh day of creation for people to pay homage to the creator, or Mother Nature. It is celebrating the Lord of Wisdom and the holy fire at the time of *Spring Equinox*. The oldest archaeological record for *Nowruz* celebration comes from the Achaemenian dynasty heralded by Cyrus the Great over 2500 years ago, and as inscribed in Persepolis where Cyrus is depicted accepting gifts from a parade of peoples of diverse nationalities from one end of the world to the other. Cyrus is cited as the first major super emperor who ruled justly the vastest country ever founded in the history of mankind.

Historically speaking, back in 1821 a young Englishman, following the passion for unearthing the lost world of the ancient east, came upon a peculiar monument in the heart of the Iranian plateau. He wrote in his diary:

The very venerable appearance of this historical ruin instantly awed me. I found I had no right conception of it. I sat for near an hour on the steps contemplating it until the moon rose on it, and I began to think that this, in reality, must be the tomb of the best, the most illustrious, and the most interesting of Oriental sovereigns.

The resting place of Cyrus the great, the founder of the Achaemenian Empire in 550 BC had been identified, to be followed by the identification of the ancient Passargadae the capital of the Empire in the nearby plain. The few sources on Cyrus portrayed not just the empire builder, but more, a man of rare qualities, rooted deeply in his ancestral skills of horseback riding, mobility, and appreciation of earth bounties, diversities of cultures and celestial objects in sky. In the Bible (Old Testament) for instance, the Book of Ezra tells of his liberating the scattered Jews of Babylon, restoring their temple after it had been burnt down to ashes the second time by the Assyrian king Nabopolassar, and inviting the scattered Jews back to Jerusalem to practice their cultural and religious rituals freely and without any apprehensions whatsoever.

Indo-European Medean and Persian tribes have settled in the Iranian plateau since about the eleventh century BC. This significant plateau has always been regarded as the crossroad between central Asia, India, western Asia, Mesopotamia, Africa and Asia Minor; it has served as the bridge between the east and the west for cultural, scientific, and technological discourse. The name *Iran* is derived from the ancient Iranian genitive plural *aryanam*, meaning [land] of the *Aryans*. It is interesting to note the manifestation of the same terminology in Europe as *Ireland*, again meaning the [land] of the *Aryans*.

Cyrus’s ultimate dream of unifying nations from south Asia to Asia minor and North Africa was finally realized during the reign of his successor, Darius. In Choga Zanbil, a “ziggurat” or sacred city multi-level high rise urban structure, built by Elamite king Untash-Gal around 1250 BCE, substantiates the vast contributions of these inhabitants. Going back farther, one can discern the existence of organized hunters/gatherers tribes in northwestern Iran, dating back as far as 12,000 years ago. This has for instance, led to the discovery of early successive settlements built atop one another, and excavated in northwestern Iran’s Godin Tepe that dates back to at least 8,000 years ago. Iran has by and large maintained independence and a central government, therefore, for at least 2500 years.

The Parade Sequence

PERSIAN PARADE BANNER and HAPPY NEW YEAR BANNER

- 🏆 **FLAGS of IRAN and the US** — The Persian Parade starts with the US and Iranian flags, followed by Derafshe Kaviyan- a historical leather piece mounted on staff by Kaveh the nationalist legendary ironsmith, and recorded as the 1st Iranian flag, & as recited by Poet Ferdowsi the Persian “Homer” in the 11th century.
- 🏆 **HORSES** — Achaemenian cavalry soldiers 4 (500 BC) or mailmen who covered 2500 miles of distance for postal delivery in a week and inspired the USPS express delivery 2500 years later.
- 🏆 **DIGNATARIES** — Prominent American and Iranian American Civic Leaders
- 🏆 **MARCHING BAND I** — Playing Iranian nationalistic anthem, and other modern music.
- 🏆 **CHARIOT** — Sassanian Dynasty chariot (350 AD); this chariot was used in the movie Ben-Hur.
- 🏆 **The ANGELS OF IRAN** — Second and third generations American children of Iranian ancestry, 5-11 years.
- 🏆 **HISTORICAL FLOAT** — The gate depicts Persepolis, and the Human Rights Charter by Cyrus the Great which is anchored next to Passargadae, his tomb. Two Achaemenian soldiers drawn on back signifying ancient Persian history (Joseph DJ).
- 🏆 **ZOROASTRIAN CARRIAGE** — The three fundamental principles of this faith, Good Deeds, Good Thoughts and Good Words are illustrated. Farahvahr angel symbolizes the ultimate ascension of soul. Magi the priest is accompanied by two children, symbols of innocence.
- 🏆 **Haft Cin** — The Seven Angelic Heralds of life as displaced during the vernal equinox (New Year epoch)
 - 1 - Sabzeh & Sonbol (greens & hyacinth): Rebirth, purity
 - 2 - Seeb (apple): Health and beauty
 - 3 - Samanu (malted flour): Sweetness, fertility
 - 4 - Senjed & tokhme morgh (Oleaster and Eggs): Love
 - 5 - Seer & Mahi (garlic & fish): Medicine
 - 6 - Serkeh (vinegar): Age and patience
 - 7 - Somaq (sumac): the sunrise color
- 🏆 **TRADITIONAL MUSIC WAGON** — A presentation of traditional Persian instruments playing classical music with children participations.
- 🏆 **PROFESSIONALS AND ORGANIZATIONS 1** — A representative sample of vast number of Iranian American Professionals and cultural organizations.