



## ĀLŪČA

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**ĀLŪČA**, garden plum (*Prunus domestica*), a fruit with a wide range in size, flavor, color, and texture. Both *ālūča* and a variety called *gowja baraġānī* (*hālū zīgarh* in Kurdistan) appear to have originated somewhere in northern Iran or around the Caucasus, at least 2,000 years ago. Dried *gowja baraġānī* are black, wrinkled, ovate, with a sweet, pleasantly acid pulp; on account of their acidity they are preferred for cooking, and in some places are used for cleaning metal. The plant is not well adapted to regions with hot, dry summers or dry, cold winters. It is at home in Gīlān and Gorgān, Kermānšāh, Fārs, and some places in the Alborz. Throughout Iran plums are dried in the sun. Along with Turkey and Japan Iran is the leading plum producer in Asia. A variety called *ālū-boḳārā* (*ālū-ye Boḳārāʿī*, *gowja gīlānī*, or *sīāhrang* (*ārū* in Baluchistan) belongs to the same family as the English or American sloe or blackthorn. But the true *ālū-boḳārā* of Iran is a variety of sloe that I have not seen so far in the United States or Europe. Dried *ālū-boḳārā* of Khorasan is eaten in winter after soaking in water. *Ālūča* is used in a variety of traditional dishes (e.g., *āš*, *kūfta*, *qalya*, *polow*, *mosamman*). It is also pickled (*toršī-e ālūča*) and preserved (*morabbā-ye ālūča*). In Fārs a stew is made with *ālū-boḳārā* and served with rice.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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