



## BĀMĪA III. THE SWEET

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### iii. The Sweet

*Bāmīa* is a sweet, sticky confection made with a deep-fried dough shaped like finger-length buns, coated with a treacly syrup, often dyed pink or gold. As with most Iranian confections it is served principally between meals, with afternoon tea, or any time of the day when visitors might drop in. In addition, it is strongly associated with Ramažān, the Muslim month of fasting, when there is a great deal of visiting among relatives, and when special sweetmeats are served at *eftār*, the breaking of the daily fast at sundown. Traditionally, sweet delicacies are served at this time, before the evening meal, providing a quick surge of energy, a much-needed lift at the end of a day of alimentary abstinence.

A less well-known variety of *bāmīa* is *bāmīa-ye pīčī*, dark in color, very thin, and shaped like a conical spiral coil. It is usually sold in street-corner stalls in provincial towns or in the poorer sections of big cities. A popular game among children is to vie with each other to lift and uncoil as large a piece of the brittle confection as possible before it breaks, the broken piece of *bāmīa* being the reward.

*Bāmīa* is not usually prepared at home. However, a recipe for doing so may be found in N. Ramazani, *Persian Cooking*, Charlottesville, Virginia, 1982, pp. 231-32.