



ḤARIRA

ḤARIRA, a very light and diluted farinaceous Persian dish made of fine wheat flour or wheat starch, or with rice flour or rice powder; sugar, oil, saffron, ground pistachios, or almonds may also be added. Because of its lightness, most dictionaries consider ḥarira to be a suitable diet for sick people (Dehḵodā, *Loḡat-nāma*, s.v.; Şafipuri, p. 235). Recipe books, however, sometimes consider it to be a kind of ḥalwā (q.v.; Richard Khan, p. 93) and sometimes a kind of light *āš* (q.v., a kind of thick soup; Āšpaz-bāši, pp. 81-82) helpful against fever, colic, vomiting, and diarrhea. In fact many authors have attributed curative qualities to ḥarira (Aḵawayni, pp. 41, 652; Montazami, p. 638; Bāmdād, p. 28; Honarestān-e kāna-dāri, p. 70).

Recipe: Usually one measure of starch and one measure of sugar mixed with five measures of water or milk is slowly boiled until it thickens, and then, as the case may be, rose-water, cardamoms, almonds, and/or saffron is added, and the heat is turned off.

Different types of ḥarira are designated by their most prominent ingredient, such as *ḥarira-ye ārd* (wheat flour), *ḥarira-ye ārd-e berenj* (rice flour), *ḥarira-yebādām* (almond), *ḥarira-ye fandoq* (filbert), *ḥarira-ye nešāsta-ye gandom* (wheat starch), and *ḥarira-ye šira-ye ḵorfa* (purslane juice).

Other than its old medicinal uses, ḥarira is really a kind of Persian dessert, which, according to its thickness and use, is variously called *masqaṭi*, *masqaṭi-e kāsa'i*, *mahlabbīya*, *yakò dar behešt*, *larzānak*, *maškufi*, and *fereni*.



The most characteristic aspect of ḥarira is the gelatinous quality of its flour. Some sorts of ḥarira are reserved for particular occasions, such as *larzānak*, *maškufī*, and *yaḳ darbehešt*, which are generally used for breaking fast (*eḟṭār*) during the holy month of Ramażān. *Ḥarira-ye bādām* (almond), on the other hand, if cooked with almond juice, rice flour, and sugar but without aromatic spices, is reserved for those having gastric problems and is usually given to children with diarrhea.

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