

CULTURE AND TRADITIONS ASSOCIATED WITH PALOV

Palov (or *osh*) is the most beloved and highly regarded food among Uzbeks; it would not be a mistake if we say *palov* accompanies people through lifetime. It is spread in all regions of Uzbekistan. It is prepared on different occasions. These are: on the occasion of the birth of the first child (*aqiqa oshi*); on the occasion of circumcision ceremony (*sunnat toyi oshi*); on the occasion of engagement ceremony (*fotiha toyi oshi*); on the occasion of seeing off a bride to the house of a groom (*qiz oshi*); in connection with wedding, for men only (*nikoh oshi*); in connection with wedding, for women only (*khotin oshi*); after wedding, only for friends of a groom (*kuyov oshi*); on the occasion of child's birth and carrying out "beshikka solish" ritual (*beshik toyi oshi*); on the occasion of commemoration of the deceased (*ehson oshi*); on the occasion of anniversary of death day (*yil oshi*). During all

these events, *palov* makes people closer. As a rule, many people participate in *palov* preparation. And it is not the process of feasting itself, but the one associated with preparation or the one, which takes after it (when people communicate with each other), plays an important role in bringing people together.

Palov, with time, turned into a kind of social phenomenon that unites family (for example, each family at least once a week, i.e. on Thursdays, or even 2–3 times a week prepares *palov*; guests are never let go without eating *palov*). Friends, neighbours, colleagues and relatives often form a group and regularly prepare *palov* in tea-houses (*chaikhana*); in a similar vein women gather and prepare *palov*. *Palov* is considered the main food in all family-related ceremonies and rituals. *Palov* is also prepared during celebration



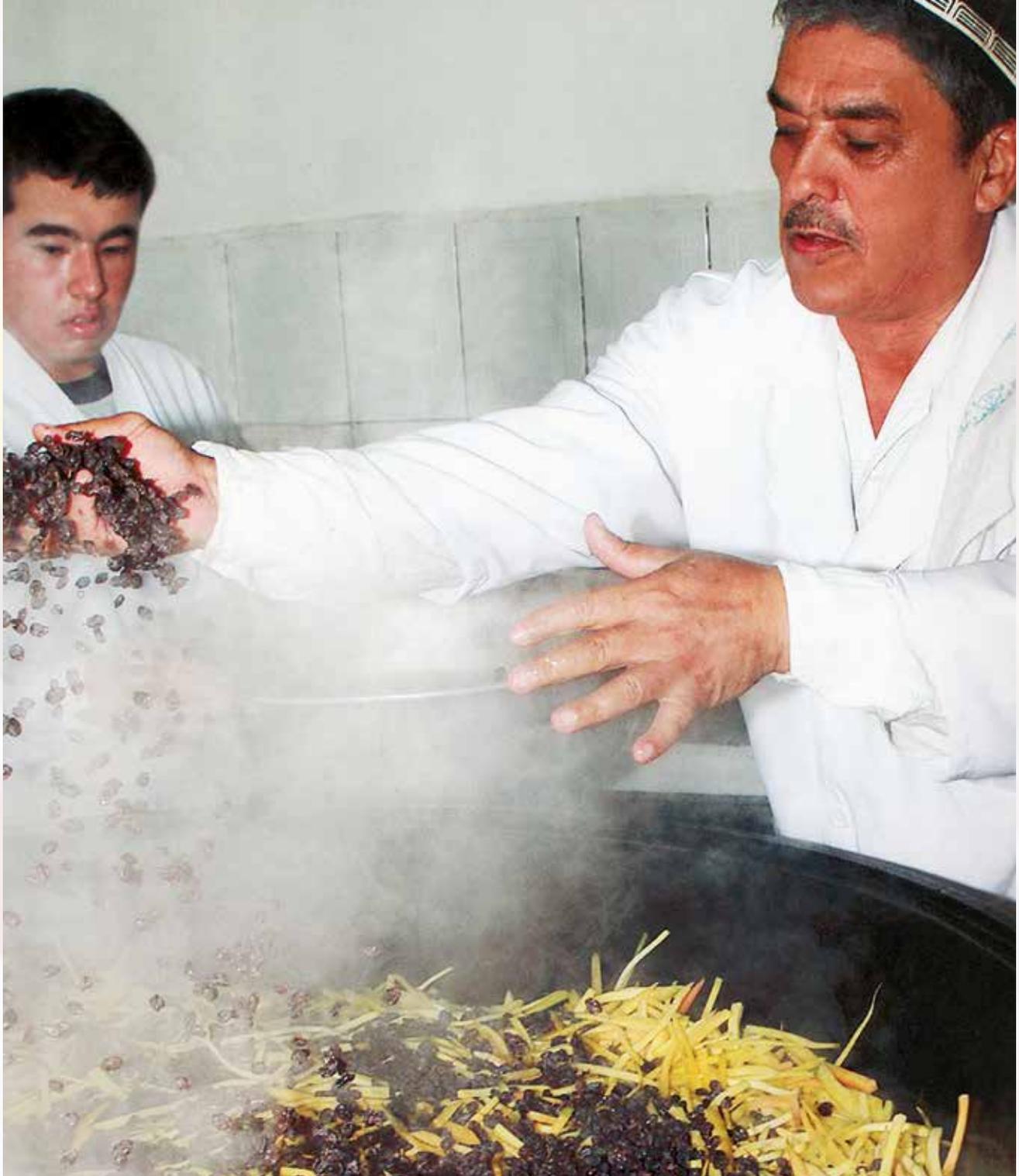




of national holidays (such as Memorial Day, etc.), folk promenades, *hashars* and on any other occasions, for which people gather. Regardless the volume and place of *palov* many people participate in its preparation. In the household someone peels the onions, cleans the rice, and prepares *shakarob* (vegetable salad). For *palovs*, cooked in weddings and large festivals, the ceremony of peeling carrots is held, which turns into a big ceremony. Men usually prepare large

palovs, whereas women prepare *palov* only for the family.

The specialists who prepare *palov* are called "*oshpaz*" and it is passed from masters to apprentices, from generation to generation. Consumption process also has its own traditions. The elderly people start eating first, others follow them. Despite it requires much effort, even at present the habit of eating *palov* with hands is being preserved.



Palov-osh is one of the most ancient type of meal and it is difficult to determine time and place of its origin. According to some sources, methods of *palov* preparation were founded in 2–3rd BC in the Middle East, Central Asia and Indian peninsula. The most distinct representatives of ancient Arabic and Farsi literature “1001 nights” composition and in the manuscripts of IX–X centuries, some information was given about festiveness of *palov* food. For instance, in some of them, it is called *pilav*, *pilaf*.

Uzbek *palov* is considered Uzbek national food. According to the methods of preparation and ingredients used in it, more than 40 types of *palov* exist nowadays. For example: fried *palov*, steeped *palov*, *palov* with raisin, quail *palov*, qazi *palov*, quince *palov*, toghrama *palov*, wedding *palov*, sofaki *palov* (Samarkand region), qorma *palov* (Qashqadarya), suzma *palov* (Khorezm), ugra *palov* (Surkhandarya) and others.