

THE NATURAL BEVERAGES OF THE IRANIAN CUISINE

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4.1 Introduction

Today, the people throughout the world are interested in consuming not only for survival, but also for having a healthful life. Therefore, the researchers are focusing more on the natural, traditional, and ethnic foodstuffs of different regions. Ethnic food is considered as foodstuffs originating from a culture and heritage of a special group who apply their information about local ingredients of animal and plants sources (Ray et al., 2016b). Also, ethnic food may be defined as a region's cuisine that is accepted by people that live outside of that region. For instance, the Iranian foodstuff is known as ethnic food outside Iran. The different types of beverages are an important part of the Iranian national cuisine (Karizaki, 2016).

Any potable liquid (usually other than water) that may quench the thirst are considered beverage. Milk, tea, coffee, fruit juice, and any kind of drinks are listed in beverage. The consumption of different varieties of beverages is a way of increasing the nutritional significance. Furthermore, social relationships for people from different areas are improved (Lee et al., 2015). In everyday life, the Iranian people enjoy beverages, especially when having guests. Iran has a great history of ethnic and traditional beverages with different tastes, flavors, and compositions linked with cultural diversity. Recently, numerous works have been made on the issue of the Iranian beverages (Azarikia and Abbasi, 2010; Kiani et al., 2010; Joudaki et al., 2013a,b; Meybodi et al., 2016; Sarlak et al., 2017).

Currently, hundreds of different types of beverages are consumed by people throughout the country, including the wide varieties of tea, water-based beverages, herbal drinks, fruit-based beverages, vegetable-based beverages, mixed drinks, milk-based beverages, etc. Adding ethnic beverages to the consumption pattern of people is recommended for having a pleasant workplace, favorite leisure time activity, and healthy life. In the recent years, several investigators have introduced and documented the different beverages to the global community.

For example, one of the most popular traditional Ethiopian alcoholic beverage named tella was considered by [Lee et al. \(2015\)](#). The characteristics of this beverage were compared with the western beer and Korean makgeolli. [Ray et al. \(2016a\)](#) have presented an explorative overview of ethnic rice-based beverage in India. This review was also related to the traditional processing, preparation of raw materials, and medicinal importance of each foodstuff. Some of the common ethnic beverages of India were documented by [Narzary et al. \(2016\)](#). The sociocultural significance of the beverages was also considered. [Misihairabgwi and Cheikhoussef \(2017\)](#) introduced the fermented beverages of Namibia in a review article. Commonly produced fermented beverages in Namibia include fruit-, vegetable-, cereal-, and milk-based drinks. The authors mentioned that these types of beverages play an important role in the diet, cultural activities, and economy of the Namibian population.

Due to high production of raw materials such as milk, different types of fruits and vegetables, and herbal plants, the numerous kinds of beverages are prepared and consumed in Iran. The great diversity of the Iranian beverage and its popularity result in creation of an extensive trade market on Iran. In spite of the growing attention to the preparation and consumption of different types of the Iranian beverages, there are limited scientific reports in the literature on this subject. The objective of this chapter was to introduce and document the most popular types of the Iranian beverages. Also, some of the nutritional and medicinal properties of the beverages are highlighted, as well as the cultural and social aspects of these foodstuffs are reviewed.

4.2 Materials and Methods

A questionnaire-based survey was designed and performed among domestic people, producers, consumers, and sellers of the Iranian beverages. Traditionally, personal visit discussions were conducted for gathering the required data. In addition, the scientific publications, online databases, Persian literary texts, Islamic religious books, and the historical documents were reviewed ([Karizaki, 2016, 2017](#)).

4.3 Results and Discussion

4.3.1 Beverage Types

There are various kinds of beverages in the Iranian national cuisine. The food consumption pattern of people in Iran shows that the Iranians consume wide varieties of beverages in daily diet. There are many reasons why the high quantity and wide variety of drinks are used by the people. One of the main causes lies in the fact that Iran is a country with great extremes of climate, and therefore, many diverse

plant and animal species may be found in this country. Subsequently, preparation and production of diverse beverages and drinks by these edible species is easy and possible.

The next reason is the people's attention to the Islamic medicine and the Iranian traditional medicine. Islamic medicine is usually referred to as medicine of the Prophet Mohammad and the other Islamic leaders such as Imam Sadiq and Imam Reza. The Iranian traditional medicine is also referred as medicine of Persian physicians of previous centuries such as Muhammad ibn Zakariya al-Razi, Abu Ali Sina, Farabi, and Sayyed Isma'il ibn Husayn Jurjani. All of these eminent leaders and physicians have different prescriptions for patients to consume various beverages. For example, drinking brewed barberry, turmeric, saffron, and coriander for improving the performance of stomach, liver, heart, and kidney are recommended in the Iranian traditional medicine, respectively.

Several classifications of beverages types may be applied throughout the country, due to the different favorites of people and the wide varieties of products. The Iranian beverages may be classified in different ways as follow: (1) by the type of main ingredient: water-, fruit-, vegetable-, cereal-based, etc. For example, milk is the main ingredient of a milk-based beverage, while the main component of a water-based drink is water. Fig. 4.1 shows schematically this classification of the Iranian beverages.

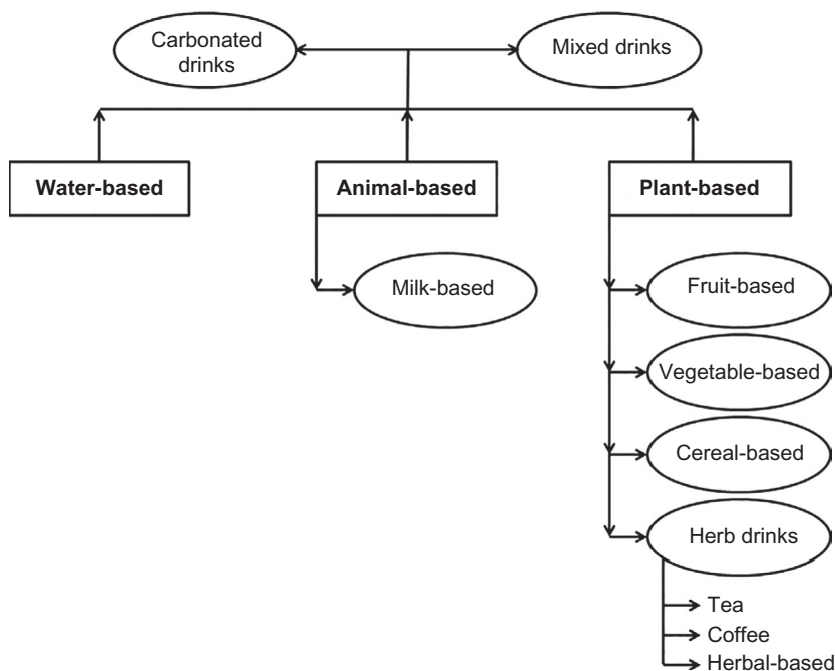


Fig. 4.1 The various categories of the Iranian beverages.

Primarily, there are three main groups including water-, animal-, and plant-based beverages. Each drink can be put in one of these categories. As shown in this figure, the three mentioned groups can be divided to other branches, or combined with together for creation of mixed drinks and carbonated drinks; (2) by whether or not the beverage contains sugar: sweet and non-sweet (sugar-free) beverage; and (3) by whether or not the beverage is alcoholic: alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverage. Under the Iran's law, it is forbidden for the Iranian people to consume alcohol. Thus, the classification of this group is mainly symbolic, and a slight practical usage may be found; (4) by temperature of beverage (serving temperature): hot or cold beverage. Hot drinks may be used for every occasion; from hot tea after waking up in the morning, to hot milk before going to bed. Cold beverages can also be consumed in different occasion, and may be used to fill out the lunch, evening meal, and dinner menu; (5) by nature of the beverage: the drink with hot nature and cold nature; (6) by whether or not the beverage contains gas: carbonated and gas-free beverage; (7) by whether or not the beverage is used for medicinal purposes: herbal and nonherbal beverage; and (8) by distribution place: national and local. This group is based on the geographical distribution (that shows observed spread range) and popularity of beverages throughout Iran. The first group (national beverages) includes those beverages that are commonly prepared and consumed in all urban and rural regions. In other words, the national beverages are the most popular and may be produced in each part of the country. The second group (local beverages) consists of beverages that are produced and used in a special region, or by an ethnic group. For instance, valesh (raspberry syrup) is the name of a popular beverage that is prepared in north provinces especially in Gilan. Valesh is seldom produced and consumed by people of south and central parts of Iran. The most important and popular types of the Iranian beverages are introduced and discussed further.

4.3.2 Water-Based Beverages

As mentioned earlier, water itself is usually not categorized as a beverage. The beverage has not been often defined as referring to water. However, numerous kinds of drinks and beverages can be produced by mixing water and other food materials, or constituents. As a result, a common and popular group of drinks named as "water-based beverage" is formed. The main ingredient of this group is water.

There are two important groups of beverages in this category. The first group consists of beverages that are prepared by soaking of dried foodstuffs in cold water. The most common of food materials are dried slices or pieces of plum, fig, cherry, barberry, apricot, and jujube. Usually, the time of soaking process can be varied from several hours to one day, or even more. These beverages have considerable

medicinal and nutritional values. For instance, the soaked plum in water creates a beneficial beverage named plum-water (Ab-alu in Persian) for different patients. Plum-water beverage may be used for the treatment of various diseases, for example, constipation, as well as is recommended for weakness and fatigue treatment. Fig-water (Ab-anjir in Persian) is also the name of a favorite beverage that is proposed for anemia treatment, and consumed as constipation remedy.

The second group includes numerous types of constituents, additives, or foodstuffs that are added, solved, or mixed in the cold water. One of the most common beverages of this group is lemonade (Sharbat ablimu in Persian). It is a homemade drink prepared with water, lemon juice, and sweetener such as sugar. The use of honey instead of sugar is recommended in the Islamic medicine. Regular consumption of this beverage gives health beneficial, and results in improving digestive system, boosting immune system, and liver cleansing. Chia seed drink (Sharbat tokhme sharbati in Persian) is the other common beverage of second group that is usually consumed with ice cubes. The main ingredients of chia seed drink are water, chia seed, and sugar. Adding saffron, rose water, and lemon juice to drink are optional. Descurainia sophia drink (Sharbat khakshir in Persian) is also a popular traditional beverage of the Iranian cuisine. Consumption of this beverage results in kidney stone removal, weakness and fatigue treatment, and heatstroke treatment. Offering these types of beverages to the guests are very common and popular between the Iranian families, especially in hot days.

4.3.3 Tea and Herbal-Based Beverages

Tea is one of the most widely consumed drink in the world. In the previous decades, the black tea was often consumed as tea beverage in Iran. Although currently, the black tea is usually regarded and known as tea beverage, there are numerous kinds of herbal-based beverages that are consumed instead of black tea (Table 4.1). Tea is the second most important edible liquid in Iran after water. The largest producer of tea in the world is China with a production of 1.9 million metric tonnes (MMT). The other principal tea producers are India, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Turkey, and Indonesia. Iran is also the world's eighth major producer with a production of 116,818 tonnes (FAO, 2013), mostly cultivated in the Northern provinces.

Tea is usually the first foodstuff offered by the Iranian people to a guest. It is prepared by pouring boiling or hot water over dried leaves of the tea plant. Many ways have been developed for the preparation of tea beverage. In one of the most popular ways, different ingredients such as cinnamon, cardamom, ginger, rock candy, or sugar are added to black tea leave. A list of 12 common tea beverages of the Iranian cuisine is presented in Table 4.1. The medicinal uses and properties of the tea beverages are also shown in this table. Although the brewing

Table 4.1 Tea and Herbal-Based Beverages of the Iranian Cuisine

Category	No.	Persian Name	English Equivalent	Medicinal Use(s)/Property(ies)
Tea beverage	1	<i>Chay</i>	Black tea	Fatigue treatment, cancer prevention
	2	<i>Chay Nabat</i>	Rock candy tea	Anti-Alzheimer, fatigue treatment
	3	<i>Chay Sabz</i>	Green tea	Hypertension remedy, cancer prevention
	4	<i>Chay Darchin</i>	Cinnamon tea	Sexual ability enhancement, improving digestive system
	5	<i>Chay Zanjebil</i>	Ginger tea	Sexual ability enhancement, detox
	6	<i>Chay Albaloo</i>	Sour cherry tea	Appetizing, hypertension remedy
	7	<i>Chay Zaféran</i>	Saffron tea	Anti-depressant, anti-anxiety
	8	<i>Chay Behlimoo</i>	Lemon Beebrush tea	Antimigraine, improving nervous system
	9	<i>Chay Beh</i>	Quince tea	Improving digestive system, improving nervous system
	10	<i>Chay Sib</i>	Apple tea	Cancer prevention, detox
	11	<i>Chay Hel</i>	Cardamom tea	Appetizing, improving digestive system
	12	<i>Chay Albaloo</i>	Sour cherry tea	Appetizing, hypertension remedy

Category	No.	Persian Name	English Equivalent	Medicinal Use(s)/Property(ies)
Herbal-based beverage	13	<i>Avishan</i>	Thyme	Anti-colds, anti-parasite, appetizing
	14	<i>Ostokhodos</i>	Lavender	Antimigraine, anti-colds
	15	<i>Marzanjosh</i>	Marjoram	Tranquilizer, antimigraine
	16	<i>Golpar</i>	Heracleum persicum	Anti-Alzheimer, diarrhea remedy
	17	<i>Zirfon</i>	Linden	Detox, anti-anxiety
	18	<i>Sonbol-tayeb</i>	Valerian	Insomnia treatment, epilepsy treatment
	19	<i>Banafshe</i>	Violaceae	Tranquilizer, antimigraine
	20	<i>Ghasedak</i>	Dandelion	Kidney stone removal, cancer prevention
	21	<i>Babooneh</i>	Chamomile	Ulcer treatment, Improving digestive system
	22	<i>Badrani-boya</i>	Lemon balm (bee balm)	Improving nervous system, exhilarating
	23	<i>Boomadaran</i>	Yarrow	Regulating menstrual cycles, epilepsy treatment
	24	<i>Bahar narenj</i>	Citrus Aurantium	Exhilarating, improving nervous system
	25	<i>Bidmeshk</i>	Willow	Sexual ability enhancement, improving digestive system
	26	<i>Puneh</i>	Pennyroyal	Appetizing, improving digestive system
	27	<i>Chehel-giyah</i>	Forty-herbs	Improving digestive system, heartburn remedy
	28	<i>Khar-shotor</i>	Camel's thorn	Kidney stone removal, boosting immune system
	29	<i>Kharkhasak</i>	Tribulus terrestris	Kidney stone removal, sexual ability enhancement
	30	<i>Raziane</i>	Fennel	Painful menstruation remedy, improving eyesight
	31	<i>Zireh</i>	Cumin	Sexual ability enhancement (for women), painful menstruation remedy
	32	<i>Shanbalileh</i>	Fenugreek	Anemia treatment, appetizing
	33	<i>Shevid</i>	Dill	Improving digestive system, Painful menstruation remedy
	34	<i>Shirin-bayan</i>	Liquorice	Constipation remedy, anti-colds
	35	<i>Golab</i>	Rosewater	Improving digestive system, tranquilizer
	36	<i>Nana</i>	Mint	Diarrhea remedy, Weakness and fatigue Treatment
	37	<i>Gazaneh</i>	Nettle	Diarrhea remedy, prostate treatment
	38	<i>Gol-gavzaban</i>	Borage	Tranquilizer, sexual ability enhancement
	39	<i>Kasni</i>	Chicory	Appetizing, detox
	40	<i>Geshniz</i>	Coriander	Appetizing, diarrhea remedy
	41	<i>Rozmari</i>	Rosemary	Improving digestive system, cough treatment
	42	<i>Kakoti</i>	Ziziphora	Weakness and fatigue treatment, sexual ability enhancement
	43	<i>Zenyan</i>	Ajwain	Constipation remedy, slimming agent

process may be done without the black tea, the original name of the product will be Chay (tea). For example, the two types of brewing process of cinnamon with and without tea leave are common and popular. However, both of them are called cinnamon tea beverage. The possibility of using several different ingredients for making tea resulted in creation of hundreds recipes for tea beverages.

Sometimes, the herbal ingredients (other than black tea) can be brewed for preparation of a favorite beverage. The most common and popular of these herbal-based beverages are also introduced in [Table 4.1](#). On the one hand, a significant increase in the overall rate of cancers in the recent decades and on the other hand, the incensement of knowledge and information of people about the herbal plants have resulted in growing interest in the production, and consumption of herbal-based beverages.

4.3.4 Milk-Based Beverages

Milk itself is known as the most important beverage of this group. The published statistics of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) of the United Nation shows that Iran produced over 9 MMT of milk annually. The food consumption pattern of people in Iran shows that the Iranians consume an average of 90 kg of milk per year.

In spite of the World Health Organization recommends that the annual per capita consumption of this nutrient beverage should be at least 165 kg, the average values in several countries of the European Union (e.g., Finland, Sweden, and the Netherlands) exceed 300 kg per year. The cow milk is the most common and popular type of milk in Iran.

Although using the milk of other animals such as camel, sheep, goat, and even donkey are reported in the Iranian national cuisine, the per capita consumption of these types of milk is negligible, due to the high price and low production values. There are three main categories of milk-based beverages in the Iranian cuisine including (1) milk: the milk alone is a complete beverage and regarded as one of the vital and original drinks, because it is rich in vitamins, proteins, and carbohydrates. The hot or cold milk may be consumed at breakfast, evening meal, or even as dinner meal; (2) combined milk: the milk is a beverage with cold nature. This drink is equilibrated by using hot nature foodstuff such as date and rock candy. Milk may also be flavored with various additives. The hundreds types of milk-based beverages can be produced by adding the different ingredients and components to milk; (3) converted milk: milk can be changed and converted into other beverages by various processes such as fermentation.

[Table 4.2](#) introduces several kinds of milk-based beverages produced and consumed all around the Iran. It presents the Persian name, and English equivalent, and explanation about each beverage. The most popular and common milk-based beverages are discussed as follow.

Table 4.2 Milk-Based Beverages of the Iranian Cuisine

Category	No.	Persian Name	English Equivalent	Explanation
Milk	1	Shir	Milk	In Iran, milk is usually marketed by fat content. It is labeled and available in different varieties such as whole milk or full fat milk (about 3% fat), semi-fat milk (about 2.5% fat), and low fat or light milk (about 1.5% fat).
Combined milk	2	Shir moz	Banana milk	Banana milk is one of the most desirable beverages in Iran.
	3	Shir khorma	Date milk	It is a beneficial beverage for increasing the sexual ability.
	4	Shir asal	Honey milk	Drinking honey milk is one of the most effective home remedies to treat fatigue and tiredness.
	5	Shir nargil	Coconut milk	Coconut milk may be referred to three different types of food materials by the Iranians including: (a) the mixture of milk, coconut powder, and sugar; (b) the liquid that is obtained from the grated meat of ripe coconut; (c) the milky liquid within the seed of a coconut.
Milk	6	Shir anbeh	Mango milk	It is a nourishing and energizing beverage.
	7	Shir tutfarangi	Strawberry milk	Strawberry milk is a very delicious and luscious beverage of the Iranian cuisine.
	8	Shir kakau	Cocoa milk	Cocoa milk is a very popular and best-selling beverage in Iran.
	9	Shir ghashveh	Coffee milk	Coffee milk is a mixture of coffee powder and milk that is sweetened with sugar, rock candy, or honey.
	10	Shir havij	Carrot milk	It is one of the most popular and common milk-based beverages.
	11	Shir pesteh	Pistachio milk	Pistachio milk is an energizing and exhilarating beverage.
	12	Shir talebi	Cantaloupe milk	Cantaloupe milk is an exhilarating beverage.
	13	Shir badam	Almond milk	Almond milk is a very nourishing and energizing beverage.
	14	Shir zaferan	Saffron milk	Saffron milk is prepared by adding saffron and a little sugar or rock candy to the milk. Although the preparation of this beverage is very simple, it has numerous beneficial properties such as sedative effect.
	15	Shir sib	Apple milk	Apple milk is an exhilarating beverage.
Converted milk	16	Shir ananas	Pineapple milk	Pineapple milk is an exhilarating beverage.
	17	Shir anjir	Fig milk	The Fig milk is known for its good nutritional and medicinal properties.
	18	Shir khormalu	Persimmon milk	Only a few percent of the Iranians have tasted persimmon milk, because it is recently popularized.
	19	Doogh		Doogh is known as the traditional and ethnic beverage of the Iranian cuisine.

4.3.4.1 *Cocoa Milk*

Cocoa milk (shir kakau in Persian) can be made by mixing cocoa powder with milk. In addition to milk and cocoa, a sweetener such as sugar or rock candy is used for preparation of the beverage. Also, other ingredients such as chocolate and gelatin powder are sometimes added.

This popular beverage is generally served hot in family celebration, wedding ceremony, funeral anniversary, death anniversary, and religious ceremony (e.g., Tasoia and Ashura). Mixing the ingredients with cold milk is also a common way of homemade production. Before adding the cocoa powder to the milk in this type of preparation, it should be completely solved in a little hot water.

4.3.4.2 *Banana Milk*

The weight percentage of milk in the banana milk beverage (shir moz in Persian) is about 60%. The other principal ingredients are banana and sugar. Using date, or honey instead of sugar is very common in homemade production. The two main components (milk and banana) should be cold or even frozen. This delicious and popular beverage is prepared by mixing well all ingredients in a mixer. The banana milk is an appetizing and exhilarating beverage, as well as is beneficial for sexual ability enhancement. It is usually served in family celebration and party celebration. Furthermore, banana milk is one of the most popular beverages are sold in juice shops.

4.3.4.3 *Doogh*

Doogh is a savory milk-based beverage of the Iranian cuisine. Although the milk fermentation can directly result in production of Doogh, changing the yogurt to Doogh is easier and more popular. There are different types of Doogh that are prepared in homemade or commercial mode: (1) Doogh or conventional Doogh: mixing yogurt with cold or iced water is the most common method for homemade production. Doogh will be ready to drink by adding a little salt to the mixture. It is sometimes seasoned with numerous types of herbs and spices such as mint, pennyroyal, ziziphora, and pepper. Also, flavoring with different kinds of herbal essences is very usual in commercial production. (2) Carbonated Doogh: the carbon dioxide can be injected to the conventional Doogh for preparation of carbonated Doogh. (3) Heat-treated gas-free Doogh: the pasteurization process as a heat treatment is performed for increasing the shelf life of Doogh. (4) Heat-treated carbonated Doogh: in addition to the pasteurization, the fermentation process is carried out for gas generation in the beverage.

4.3.5 Fruit- and Vegetable-Based Beverages

The two important groups of plant-based drinks are fruit- and vegetable-based beverages. There has been an increase in the consumption of these beverages by the Iranians in the last few years, due to the natural abundance of essential vitamins, minerals, carbohydrate, fibers, and other nutrients in plant-based foodstuffs.

These types of beverages possess several health benefits, such as anti-inflammatory properties, high antioxidant, and disease-fighting properties. In addition, consumption of these plant-based beverages can help to improve digestion. There are different methods for preparation of a beverage with fruit or vegetable taste. Fig. 4.2 shows the top three methods of preparation.

Although the all groups introduced in this figure consist of beverages with fruit or vegetable taste, the first group is usually considered as a fruit- or vegetable-based beverage. As mentioned earlier, the two other groups (i.e., the second and third groups) are classified as water-based beverages, due to the high percent of water in the beverage.

According to the combinatorics formulas, millions types of plant-based beverages may be produced. Combinatorics is a branch of mathematics concerned with counting, and combinations of objects or elements belonging to a finite set. For instance, preparation of a

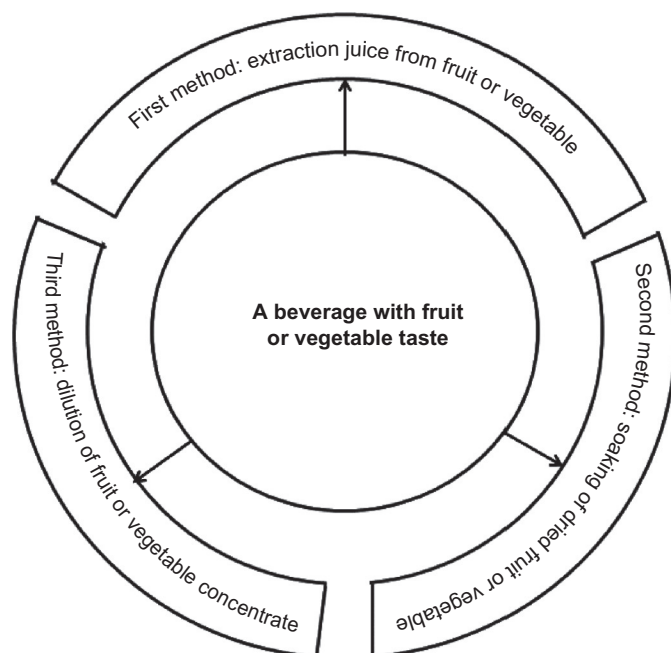


Fig. 4.2 The three methods for preparation of a beverage with fruit or vegetable taste.

fruit-based beverage is planned with four types of fruits (apple, orange, grape, and pomegranate), and three sugar contents (0%, i.e., sugar free, 5%, and 10%). Also, two choices for the beverage type (gas-free drink or carbonated drink) are considered. As it is shown in Fig. 4.3, the total possible beverages are 24. In the other example, a ternary beverage of fruits and vegetables (e.g., apple-carrot-beet drink) is planned for production. In all, 100 types of fruits and vegetable, and five sugar contents (0%, 2.5%, 5%, 7.5%, and 10%) are selected for the preparation of the beverage. Also, two selections are considered by whether or not the beverage contains gas (i.e., carbonated or gas-free drink). According to the permutation formulas in combinatorics, the total possible numbers of beverages are determined as follow:

$$\boxed{100} \times \boxed{99} \times \boxed{98} \times \boxed{5} \times \boxed{2} = 9702000$$

Therefore, about 10 million types of beverages can be prepared just in this example. Table 4.3 introduces the most popular

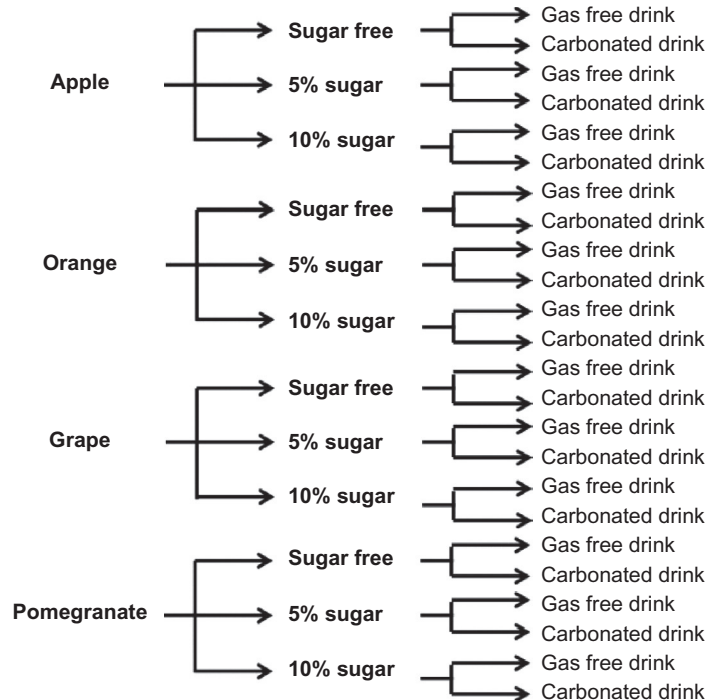


Fig. 4.3 Considering the possible numbers of beverages according to the combinatorics.

Table 4.3 The Most Popular and Common Plant-Based Beverages Consumed All Around Iran

Category	No.	Persian Name	English Equivalent	Medicinal Use(s)/Property(ies)
Fruit-based	1	<i>Ab-sib</i>	Apple juice	Prevention of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases
	2	<i>Ab-anar</i>	Pomegranate juice	Using for decreasing inflammation
	3	<i>Ab-porteghal</i>	Orange juice	Skin protection, cancer prevention
	4	<i>Ab-gripfoot</i>	Grapefruit juice	Atherosclerosis prevention, cholesterol reduction
	5	<i>Ab-anbeh</i>	Mango juice	Sexual ability enhancement, improving digestive system
	6	<i>Ab-hendevehaneh</i>	Watermelon juice	Improving digestive system, cancer prevention
	7	<i>Ab-ananas</i>	Pineapple juice	Boosting immune system, improving blood circulation
	8	<i>Ab-angur</i>	Grape juice	Boosting immune system, treatment of kidney disorders
	9	<i>Ab-talebi</i>	Cantaloupe juice	Skin protection, improving digestive system
	10	<i>Ab-limushirin</i>	Sweet lemon juice	Boosting immune system, cancer prevention
	11	<i>Ab-khiyar</i>	Cucumber juice	Fighting inflammation, supporting heart health
	12	<i>Ab-golabi</i>	Pear juice	Improving bone health, improving heart health
	13	<i>Ab-holu</i>	Peach juice	Prevention of brain disorders, cholesterol reduction
	14	<i>Ab-alu</i>	Plum juice	Osteoporosis prevention, combating diabetes
	15	<i>Ab-tuffarangi</i>	Strawberry juice	Boosting immune system, cancer prevention
	Vegetable-based	16	<i>Ab-shatut</i>	Berry juice
17		<i>Ab-havij</i>	Carrot juice	Improving eyesight, improving digestive system
18		<i>Ab-karafs</i>	Celery juice	Blood pressure reduction, combating diabetes
19		<i>Ab-rivas</i>	Rhubarb juice	Improving bone health, improving blood circulation
20		<i>Ab-esfenaj</i>	Spinach juice	Improving eyesight, strengthening muscles
21		<i>Ab-choghondar</i>	Beet juice	Improving liver health, energizing
22		<i>Ab-kahu</i>	Lettuce juice	Cholesterol reduction, cancer prevention
23		<i>Ab-gojehfarangi</i>	Tomato juice	Heart protection, improving eyesight
24		<i>Ab-shaigham</i>	Tumip juice	Boosting immune system, improving digestive system
25		<i>Ab-jafari</i>	Parsley juice	Combating diabetes, fighting inflammation
26		<i>Ab-kadu</i>	Pumpkin juice	Skin protection, cancer prevention
27		<i>Ab-kalam</i>	Cabbage juice	Improving brain health, fighting inflammation
28		<i>Ab-zereshk</i>	Barberry juice	Blood pressure reduction, boosting immune system
29		<i>Ab-torob siyah</i>	Black radish juice	Improving overall skin health, cholesterol regulation
30		<i>Ab-torob sefid</i>	Daikon juice	Improving bone health, boosting immune system

and common plant-based beverages prepared and consumed throughout Iran. It shows the Persian name, English equivalent, and medicinal uses/properties of each beverage.

4.3.6 Carbonated Drinks

Carbonated drinks refer to beverages which have carbon dioxide. The process of dissolving carbon dioxide in drink can be occurred naturally through fermentation or artificially by the injection of carbon dioxide to the beverage. Due to the different interests of people, various types of fruit-, vegetable-, water-, and milk-based beverages may be carbonated. One of the most consumed carbonated beverages of the Iranian cuisine is Doogh.

4.3.7 Mixed Drinks

There is not an exact and unique definition for mixed drinks. As mentioned earlier, the combination of different components creates numerous types of beverages. Usually, a multiple mixture that is obtained from water-, plant-, and animal-based beverages is considered as mixed drink. Adding other constituents to the mixture such as sweeteners and flavors is very common and popular.

4.3.8 Alcoholic Beverages

Since the [Islamic Revolution](#) of 1979 in Iran, buying, selling, possession, consumption, serving, distribution, or production of any alcoholic beverages is illegal. The people who violate the rules will be punished under Iran's Constitution.

There are some verses in the Holy Quran and episodes from the Prophet Mohammad's life that order Muslims to avoid consuming the alcoholic beverages. For instance, the prohibition of alcohol drinks is verified from following verse of the surah al-Maidah: "They ask you about intoxicants (all kinds of alcoholic beverages such as wine and beer) and gambling: say, In them there is a great sin, as well as some benefits for the people. But their sinfulness is greater than their benefit."

However, nonalcoholic beers are the only beverages that are available from legal outlets. According to the official statistics, nearly 1 billion dollar worth of alcoholic beverages is smuggled into the country annually. Anti-smuggling decisions by the Iranian Government have created a large demand for consumption for non-alcoholic beer.

4.3.9 The Social and Cultural Aspects of the Iranian Beverages

Generally, the all types of foodstuffs can be divided into cold or hot nature foods. The cold or hot nature of a food is characterized by different parameters including the preparation procedure, main ingredients, and the properties such as taste and aroma. From a healthy point of view, consumption of a balanced diet of cold and hot foodstuffs is preferred by the Iranian people. They believe that the hot foodstuffs should be consumed accompanying cold constituents, or foodstuffs, and vice versa. This eating behavior is a well-accepted principle in the country. For instance, Doogh is a popular milk-based beverage of the Iranian cuisine with cold nature. In some parts of the country, addition and use of hot constituents such as dried mint is common for equilibrating this beverage.

The majority of the people in Iran are Muslim (approximately 80 million people that is ~98% of total population). Therefore, there is a deep and firm relation between the Islamic culture and the Iranians. Several Hadiths have been narrated from Prophet Mohammad and other Islamic leaders about drinking and the beverages. These valuable words of imams include the important issues about habits before, through, and after eating. The most important points and advices are presented in [Table 4.4](#). Today, the medical science confirms these mentioned points from more than 1400 years ago. The Islamic leaders believe that the prevention is better than cure. Performing the recommendations leads to have a fresh spirit and a strong body.

Table 4.4 Some Points and Advices from Islamic Leaders About Drinking and the Beverages

No.	Leader's Name	Birth-Death Date	Points/Advices
1	Prophet Mohammad	c. 570–632	Health comes by drinking and eating less.
2	Imam Baqir	677–733	Drinking in three breaths is better than drinking in one breath.
3	Imam Sadiq	c. 702–765	Drinking water with greasy foodstuff leads to pain. Blowing in the drinks is execrable and unpleasant.
4	Imam Reza	766–819	To keep stomach healthy, it should be prevented from drinking through eating until eating gets finished. Otherwise, blood cannot take in the properties of food. Drinking cold water after eating sweats or hot foodstuffs, damages teeth.

Table 4.5 Cultural Aspects of Drinking and Beverages in Persian Literature

No.	Author	Book	Author's Birthdate	The Mentioned Point
1	Razi al-Din Artimani	Diwan-e-Ashar	c. 1570	Do not worry about eating and drinking, because serious grief causes death.
2	Saib Tabrizi	Diwan-e-Saib	1601	Finally, everyone should drink poison cup of death.
3	Amir Khusrow Dehlavi	Diwan-e-Ashar	1253	If you receive water from God, it will be fresh and clear.
4	Ferdowsi Tusi	Shahnameh	c. 940	The universe brings us beverages of poison and nectar.
5	Hafez Shirazi	Diwan-e-Hafez	1315	The lover drinks everything in the cup, paradise wine or alcoholic beverage.
6	Molana Rumi	Diwan-e-Shams	1207	Even if the seas catch fire on the way to achieving the lover, we will drink them.
7	Nizami Ganjavi	Khosrow and Shirin	1141	Not only the milk, but also the poison will be nectar in drinking with the lover.
8	Saadi Shirazi	Diwan-e-Ashar	1210	The poison from God is similar to cure beverage.

Persian literature is an immensely rich source of culture. It is origin of several basic principles related to the Iranian culture. [Table 4.5](#) shows several viewpoints about drinking and beverages in Persian literature from eminent Iranian literary men.

4.4 Conclusion

Natural, traditional, and ethnic beverages as nutritious and beneficial foodstuffs are very important in the Iranian national cuisine. Different classifications related to this popular foodstuff including water-, plant-, animal-based beverages, carbonated drinks, and mixed drinks were introduced. Additionally, the cultural and social aspects of the beverages were investigated. Due to the nutritional, medicinal, and healthy properties of different types of beverages, further studies on the issue of the natural and traditional beverages of the ethnic groups are required.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author has no conflicts of interest.

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