

BORROWED RECIPES

Migrant Food Worlds of the Silk Roads

Thursday, April 7, 2022

Friends of the USC Libraries
Lecture Hall & Alumni Park

University of Southern California

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Food makers, media makers, and scholars will discuss the roles of migration and exchange in culinary history, followed by tastings of dishes from the areas traversed by the ancient Silk Roads.
- This event is presented in conjunction with the exhibition *The Silk Roads Connecting Communities, Markets, and Minds since Antiquity*, which is on display in Doheny Memorial Library through May 31, 2022

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS

JOSEPH NAGY is a professor of Irish studies at Harvard. His research focuses on medieval Celtic languages and literatures. Prior to his move to Harvard, he was for many years an English professor at UCLA, where he helped establish a minor in food studies.

BUGHRA ARKIN is the chef/owner of Dolan's Uyghur Cuisine, a restaurant in Alhambra. Arkin moved to California in 2015 to study public policy management at USC. He is one of about 1,000 members of the Uyghur diaspora living in Southern California.

FARRELL MONACO is editor-in-chief of *Tavola Mediterranea*. She is a baker, food writer, and Classical archaeologist who focuses on food, food preparation, pastries, and bread in the Roman Mediterranean. She has worked on academic archaeology projects related to food, and outside of her academic work is known for her public education work and experimental archaeology projects where she recreates Roman recipes using instruction and ingredients sourced from archaeological, written, and pictorial records. She wrote a history of the date palm fruit with the Getty Museum, among other projects.

ELINA SHATKIN is the producer of the KCRW podcast and radio show *Good Food*. Well known for her food writing, she also writes restaurant reviews for *Westways* and was previously the food editor at *LAist.com* and *KPCC*, and a secondary restaurant critic under the late, beloved food writer Jonathan Gold at *LA Weekly*. Shatkin also writes about pop culture, art, and much more for a variety of publications.

THE SILK ROADS

What is often called the Silk Road was actually a network of trade routes between Asia, Africa, and Europe, along which merchants transported goods including leather, spices, metals, chemicals, and silk for centuries, from about 500 BCE to 1500 CE. The term "Silk Road" was coined in the nineteenth century. As the route network connected many cities and villages, and travel happened in multiple directions, over land and sea, not only goods but also people, cultures, knowledge, languages, and technologies intersected along the Silk Roads—all of which profoundly shaped the history of the world.

FOOD AND CULTURE

Food preparation is recognized as "intangible cultural heritage" by UNESCO. Intangible cultural heritage refers to things like music, dance, and, yes, culinary traditions that are essential parts of culture to be celebrated and protected. Unlike tangible cultural property such as art objects or buildings, intangible cultural heritage is protected and preserved by people doing it, remembering it, teaching it, sharing it, and passing along the knowledge and skills related to it. Recipes and ways of preparing food transmit cultural knowledge and skills from one generation to the next, or from one community to another.



Joseph Nagy



Bughra Arkin



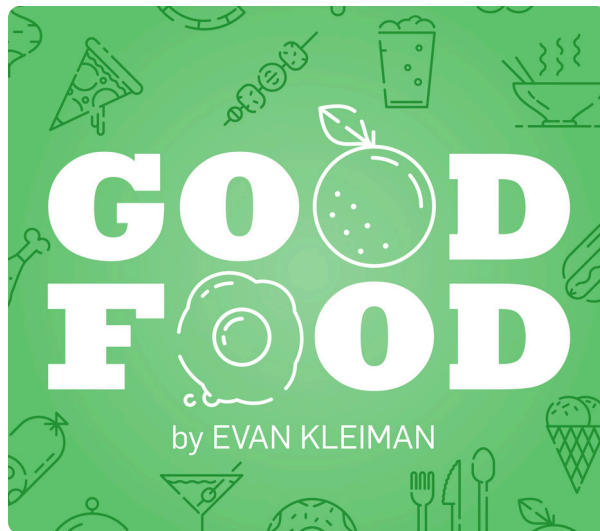
Farrell Monaco

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

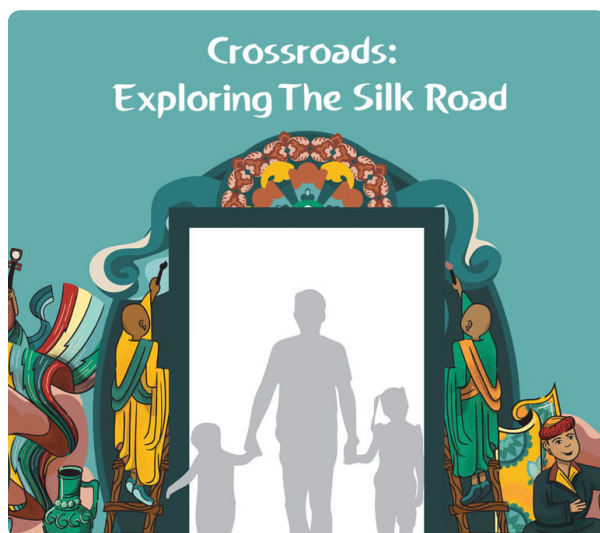
- What cultural knowledge do you hold in the form of recipes or ways of preparing food?
- What food-related cultural knowledge have you learned from others, or passed along to others?
- What forms of cultural exchange have you participated in as a member of the USC community? As a resident of Southern California?

IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- Tavola Mediterranea | tavolamediterranea.com
- Good Food | kcrw.com/culture/shows/good-food
- Dolan's Uyghur Cuisine in Alhambra | ladolans.com
- Azla Ethiopian Eatery in Leimert Park | azlavegan.com
- Noush | noush.net
- Momed in Atwater Village | atmomed.com
- Crossroads: Exploring the Silk Road at the USC Pacific Asia Museum
pacificasiamuseum.usc.edu/crossroadsatpam
- The UNESCO Silk Roads Programme
<https://en.unesco.org/silkroad/>
- Upcoming Visions and Voices events:
4/15: Make Mend: Kintsugi Hack
4/29-30: South of Expo: Art, Artists, and Cultural Spaces since the 1960s



Good Food - KCRW.com



USC Pacific Asia Museum

RECIPE FROM CHEF MOJDEH

Morasa Polo (Persian Jeweled Rice)

Ingredients (10 Servings)

5 lbs boneless chicken	1/2 cup oil
10 cloves garlic	1 1/2 cups almond slivers
3 large onions, finely chopped	1 1/2 cups barberries
4 tsp turmeric	1 cup roasted chestnuts
Salt and pepper as needed	1 cup pistachio slivers
2 tbsp tamarind paste dissolved in 1/4 cup hot water	1 1/2 cups rose water
5 cups rice	2 tbsp sugar
	2 tbsp butter
	1 tsp saffron dissolved in 6
	tbsp hot water

Vegetarians can eliminate chicken or replace with plant-based substitute.

Chicken

- Sauté garlic and onion until light brown (about 5 minutes), then add the chicken and turn up heat.
- Add turmeric, salt, and pepper. Stir and fry for 5 minutes.
- Add boiling water. Turn down the heat and let the chicken cook for 40 minutes.
- Add carrot, celery, and saffron, and cook for another 15 minutes.

Rice

- Rinse rice and repeat. After the third wash, drain as much water as possible.
- Add water, butter, oil, and salt. Bring the water to a boil over medium heat. Cook the rice covered until the water has evaporated.

- Remove lid, reduce heat, cover the pot with a kitchen paper towel, and put the lid back on. Cook for 30 minutes or until ready.

Garnish

- Soak the almond slivers in rose water for one hour.
- Sauté the soaked almond slivers in oil for a couple of minutes, until shiny.
- Wash barberries, place them in a pan and add butter, sugar, and saffron. Sauté for a couple of minutes.
- Mix the almonds, barberries, pistachio slivers and chopped roasted chestnuts together.
- Place the mixture on top of the rice and serve with chicken.

Recipe courtesy of Chef Mojdeh, NOUSH CATERING

DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

Micaela Rodgers and **Melissa Miller** of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this event. Electronic resources are accessible through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu but may require the user to log in using their USC credentials.

BOOKS

Christopher I. Beckwith, *Empires of the Silk Road: A History of Central Eurasia from the Bronze Age to the Present* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2009).

Jonathan Bloom, *Paper before Print: The History and Impact of Paper in the Islamic World* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2001).

Paul D. Buell, *Crossroads of Cuisine: The Eurasian Heartland, the Silk Roads and Food* (Leiden: Brill, 2020).

Philippe Forêt and Andreas Kaplony, *The Journey of Maps and Images on the Silk Road* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

Peter Frankopan, *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).

Valerie Hansen, *The Silk Road: A New History* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2012).

Robert N. Spengler, *Fruit from the Sands: The Silk Road Origins of the Foods We Eat* (Oakland: Univ. of California Press, 2019).

DATABASES

[Food Studies Online](#)

[Food and Drink in History](#)

JOURNAL

[The Silk Road Journal](#)

ONLINE RESOURCES

[Aga Khan Foundation: The Silk Road, A Living History](#)

[American Museum of Natural History: Traveling the Silk Road](#)

[Hagia Sophia: Sound, Space, and Spirit in Byzantium](#)

[The Sogdians: Influencers on the Silk Roads](#)

[UNESCO: The Silk Roads Programme](#)

STREAMING MEDIA

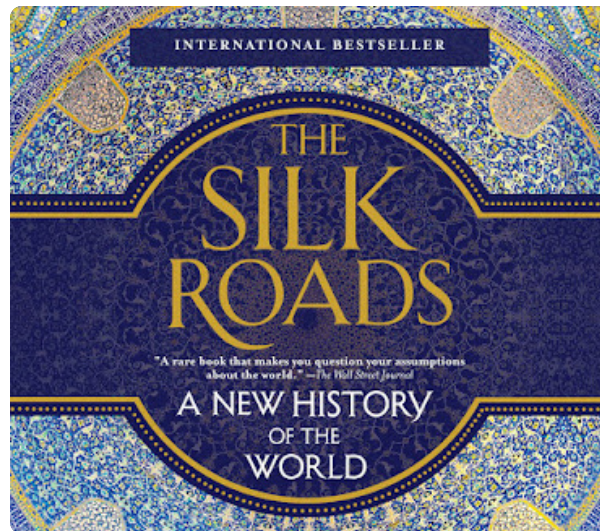
[The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble](#)
[Silk Roads—Rome and Roads from the West](#)

[Marco Polo, China, and Silk Road Trade](#)

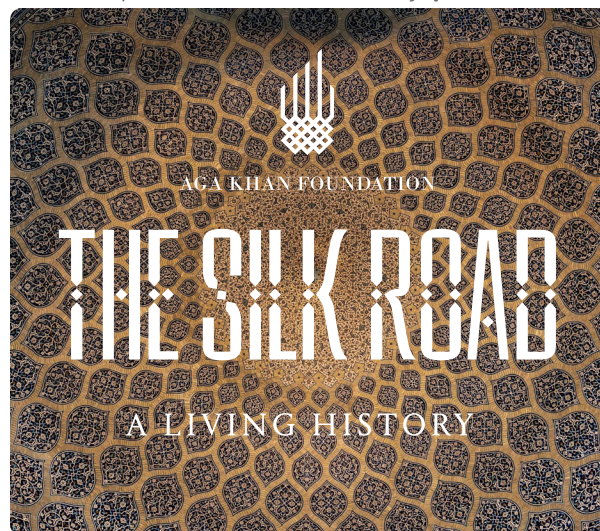
[Silk Roads—Perils of Camels and Caravans](#)

[Languages of the Silk Road and Beyond](#)

[New Ideas along the Silk Road](#)



Peter Frankopan, *The Silk Roads: A New History of the World*



Aga Khan Foundation: *The Silk Road, A Living History*



The Music of Strangers: Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble