

THE TUNISIAN POMEGRANATE; THE FULL RICHNESS OF FRUIT





The Roman soldiers, who discovered the pomegranate for the first time during the Punic wars (third century BC), had never seen such fruit, and called it *malum punicum* (the apple of Carthage) or the Punic apple, or otherwise *malum granatum* for its abundant seeds. The botanical name of the species, *Punica granatum*, has remained faithful to these two names.

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The expression “Feet in the water, head in the sun” applies as much to the pomegranate as to the date palm. In Gabes, a city in the **south of Tunisia** and the only **seaside oasis** in the Mediterranean, the pomegranate tree grows in the shade of the date palm, in a unique terroir at the crossroads of the desert and the sea.



A Byzantine stele
(Museum of Lamta- Tunisia)

In the hinterland of Carthage, the **Phoenicians** began **cultivating** the **pomegranate**, a tree which no doubt existed in its wild form in the Maghreb.

The earliest representations of the pomegranate, date back to 1500 BC, are found in **Egypt** where the Egyptians were the first to praise its virtues. The pomegranate also features strongly in African and Byzantine **mosaics** and **steles**.

Throughout history, the pomegranate has been **steadily on the move**. On their trips across the deserts, the nomads quenched their thirst thanks to the pomegranate's refreshing pulp, gorged with water. In the tenth century, the Moors introduced the pomegranate to Spain; indeed the city of **Granada** was later named after this fruit tree.

African mosaic, third century
(Sousse Museum- Tunisia)



INTRODUCING THE POMEGRANATE

Originally from the vast areas stretching from Iran to the Himalaya and the north of India, the pomegranate tree has been cultivated for thousands of years. It is a beautiful **thorny, bushy**, flared and branched shrub from the ground becoming more rounded towards the top. Depending on the climate and the region, the pomegranate may reach up to 4-6 meters or more in height, with a spread of about 2 meters. The tree's **foliage** with beautiful dark green, lanceolate, rigid and leathery leaves becomes tinted with a yellow or luminous color as the fall season dies out.

The pomegranate, a tree that ages well, is hardy, and can withstand conditions that few other plants could. It resists drought and temperatures as low as -15°C . Pomegranates cope with saline soils but needs a **great deal of heat** to bear fruit and a **cold snap** in winter to bloom generously. However, it is best to water the pomegranate tree for decent yields and fruit quality.



Whether in the Hanging Gardens of Babylon or in the Garden of Hesperides, the pomegranate had pride of place. It is notable by its dazzling appearance, its beautiful bright red leaves and the many virtues of its fruit. Known as *jullanar*, the pomegranate's blossom has been hailed by Arab and Persian poets.





GLORIOUS BLOSSOM

Towards the end of the spring season and through to the summer, the pomegranate gradually blossoms in distinct flushes of blooms. On the tree, the blazing, vermillion red blossoms are escorted by large red, and **leathery flower** buds.

The blossoms, single or bunched in axillary pairs or five's, have fleshy sepals that support the corolla and are made up of five to seven crinkled petals.

Being partly **autogamous** (self-fertilizing), the tree has both bell-shaped, sterile or almost sterile male flowers (the ovary of which is atrophied), and base-shaped **hermaphrodite** (fertile) flowers. During Pollination the ovum is fertilized partly by its own pollen, and partly from neighbouring trees (cross-pollination).

The flowers, like the fruits, bear anthocyanins, phenolic compounds of the group of flavonoids which are partly responsible for the red color.



The trunk of the pomegranate's tree and the skin of the pomegranate fruit (epicarp) have **tannins** that shield the fruit against rodents and diseases. The bark of the trunk, the fruit's skin and the blossoms are used to dye fabric, including carpets. The **dye** obtained is lemon-yellow to reddish brown.

From blossom to fruit

The **fruiting** of the pomegranate occurs towards the beginning of the third or fourth year. The most splendid pomegranates ripen on the outer side of the tree canopy most exposed to sunlight. The **fruit** is a spherical **drupe** that may reach up to more than twelve centimeters. The pomegranate tree can bear twenty to thirty kilograms of fruits. To **ripen**, the pomegranate needs a **sunny sky**, particularly in the fall season. Tunisians use the expression «Qouayel erroman» to refer to this climate condition. Often translated as the back-end of the season or an Indian summer «pomegranate siestas», this time of the year coincides with the advent of the last heavy heat waves that bring the pomegranate's cycle of ripening to an end.



A wintertime fruit

The pomegranate **harvest** season kicks off at the beginning of the **fall season**. For the early-maturing varieties, however, the season may start earlier and extend until mid-November for the late-maturing varieties.

The fruit ripens at **different times** on the same tree. Thus, a tree is never harvested in one go. The fruit should be **hand-picked** at **maturity** at a time when the rind turns reddish. The most beautiful ones are those with a soft, glossy skin, free of brown spots.

For the sake of **improved shelf-life**, the fruit should be picked in a timely manner because, once picked, the pomegranate **stops** ripening. If picked late, however, it may crack open.



On average, **harvest** takes place 130 to 160 days after the blooming depending on both the variety and the weather conditions. Once the fruits start to lose their chlorophyll, (i.e. their green color) turning yellowish or reddish (depending on the variety), and before they crack open, the harvest season can get started!





The **fruit** with a thousand **legends**

Along the shores of the Mediterranean, the pomegranate stands for **prosperity** and **wisdom, love** and **fertility**. To convey their passion, lovers would offer pomegranates to one another; and the seeds of the fruit, sown on the path of the newly wed, are harbingers of fertility. It is even told that the apple that tempted Adam was in fact a pomegranate!

In Persian mythology, the pomegranate stands for **might** and **invincibility**. In ancient times, it was a symbol of Goddesses, including Tanit, the Goddess of Carthage. For the Jews, the Christians, the Muslims and the Buddhists, the pomegranate is a **sacred fruit**. For the Chinese, its seeds are the incarnation of **immortality** and **long life**.



How many seeds in a pomegranate?
365. One per day, every day of the year.



«I am neither the King nor the Queen, but I have a crown on my head. Guess who I am?

- The pomegranate!»

The pomegranate's **crown** is made up of what remains of the calyx of the blossom.

When the pomegranate is split into two halves, we can see a multitude of **seeds** under the thick **rind** (also called arils), embedded in shells separated by thick yellowish inner walls. While this **yellowish gangue** is too **bitter** for some people, the seeds, **blush** white or red-colored with unique shades, wrapped in a red, translucent and juicy **pulp**, are **sweet** with a **tint** of tartness. This **pulp**, which is about **55% of the total weight of the fruit**, is the refreshing, edible part of the pomegranate full of antioxidants.

HOW TO SELECT AND KEEP THE POMEGRANATE



A pomegranate is at peak **ripeness** when the **rind** clearly turns **red**. The rind must be **smooth, glossy** and **free** of brown **spots**. The **heavier** the fruit weighs in the palm of the hand, the juicier and more sugary it is. Knock the fruit. If a metallic sound rings out, then it is ripe. Take the ripest pomegranates, since they stop to ripen the very moment they are picked.

A pomegranate cracked **open** must be eaten immediately. Otherwise, the red pulp wrapping the seed dries out.

At **room temperature**, the pomegranate can be kept for one to two weeks. In the **fridge**, it can stay fresh for one month. In a cool and dry place, the pomegranate can remain edible for up to six months without any alteration/detriment to its nutritious and medicinal properties.

When stored, keep pomegranates away from any other fruits since any potential emission of ethylene would speed up the ripening process.

“ A well-kept treasure wrapped in tulle ”.
André Gide



HOW TO DESEED THE POMEGRANATE



«Patience is like a pomegranate; its skin is bitter, but its fruit is succulent». For some people, cracking a pomegranate in half to carefully deseed it, using one's fingers, and tasting the seeds one by one as the fruit unfolds, is like a ritual; for others, this amounts to an inconvenience...

Two ways to deseed a pomegranate

Using a small sharp knife, cut the pomegranate's crown then the fruit base until the first seeds can be seen.

Without cutting the pomegranate entirely, gently cut the skin vertically into five quarters. Don't cut too deep beyond the skin's depth.

To avoid stains on your clothes or fingers, dip the pomegranate into a salad bowl full of water; separate the quarters, and peel off the skin. Deseed the pomegranate using your fingers. The white membranes will float on the surface of water; remove these then drain in a sieve.

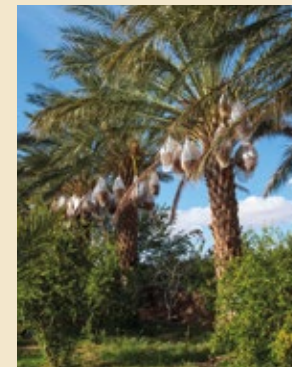
Alternatively: Cut the pomegranate in half, then gently tap with a wooden spoon. The seeds will fall out by themselves.

THE UNIQUE QUALITY OF TUNISIAN POMEGRANATES



The pomegranates of Gabes

have a unique quality that has been recognized and guaranteed by the Tunisian authorities since 2009 through an Indication of Origin "IO" label (Indication de Provenance "IP"). All the pomegranates that bear the **IO Pomegranate of Gabes** are grown in the oases using well defined cultivation techniques and have distinct characteristics (light pink, juicy, sugary and softly textured seeds).



The pomegranates of Testour,

known for their vivid pink to light red colored seeds and their sugary slightly tart taste, are currently in the process of receiving a Controlled Designation of Origin "CDO" label (Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée "AOC").



The pomegranates of Beni Khalled with their sugary and dark colored seeds are a typical variety of the Cap Bon region.

See the map at the end of the book for the geographical distribution of the varieties grown in Tunisia.

THE POMEGRANATE ON YOUR TABLE



A **super food** rich in **antioxidants**

A Super food! And for good reason... the nutritional profile of the pomegranate is outstanding. Its vitamin content consists mainly of **vitamin C** (20 mg per 100 g), a far higher content than most fresh fruits. One hundred grams of fresh pulp covers 10% of the daily recommended vitamin C intake. Group B vitamins are also well present, especially **vitamin B3** (0.3 mg), **B5** (0.6 mg) and **B6** (0.2 mg) as well as **vitamin E**. Minerals and trace elements (750 mg per 100 g) make pomegranates a good source of **magnesium, calcium, potassium** (12% of DI) and **fiber, iron** (1mg), **zinc** (0.4mg), **manganese** (0.13 mg) and **copper** (0.12 mg per 100 g).

The tangy taste of the pomegranate results from the fruit being rich in **organic acids** (puniceic and citric acid). The caloric value of the pomegranate is moderate (an average of 71 calories for 100 g of the edible part). It is perfect for people **on a diet** and its high water content makes of it an ideal **thirst-quencher**.

THE POMEGRANATE SUBLIMATED BY TUNISIAN CHEFS

Zucchini and pomegranates

Ingredients:

1 pomegranate
3 zucchini
basil leaves
olive oil
balsamic vinegar
aleppo pine nuts
salt to taste.

Preparation:

- Deseed the pomegranate.
- After cutting off both ends, wash the zucchini under water and cut lengthwise.
- Season generously with salt and olive oil.
- Grill the zucchini on a plate.
- Place in a salad bowl.
- Season with two tbsp. of olive oil and two tbsp. of balsamic vinegar. Add some basil leaves, pomegranate seeds and pine nuts.
- Serve.

– Asma Laajimi Bey, Tunisian Chef –

Quinces stuffed with whiting and pomegranate seeds on a bed of squash and pomegranate molasses

Ingredients:

1 deseeded pomegranate
pomegranate molasses
2 quinces
250 g of squash
4 whiting fillets of 100 g each
1 egg

Preparation:

- Wash the quince and cut the ends.
- Cut the quinces in half widthwise; dig out the interior to stuff the quinces.
- Peel and finely chop the onions. Peel and chop the garlic.
- **Prepare some stock:** heat the oil in a saucepan with an onion and the whiting fillets.

2 onions
2 cloves of garlic
fresh coriander
1 handful of dried mint
2 tbsp of olive oil
1 tbsp of turmeric
1 tbsp of ground cumin
1 tbsp of starch
pepper
salt.

Season with turmeric, salt and pepper and add two glasses of water. Bring to the boil and cook on a low heat for five minutes. Remove the whiting fillets; set aside. Put the quinces in the remaining stock and cover with water. Simmer for fifteen minutes once boiled. Take the quinces out as soon as they are cooked; put aside. Put the slices of squash in the remaining broth for fifteen minutes, drain and mash with a fork.

■ **Preparing the stuffing:** flake the whiting fillets into a bowl; add the onion, chopped garlic, mint, coriander; and four tbsp of pomegranate seeds, a raw egg and cumin. Mix well. Stuff the quince and add some pomegranate seeds. Put in the oven at 180° for ten minutes.

In a small pan, heat the pumpkin puree, add two spoonfuls of stock and starch and cook for two to three minutes. Plate the stuffed quince on the pumpkin coulis and add two spoons of pomegranate molasses on the side to serve.

– Creative Cuisine of Dar Salah –



THE POMEGRANATE SUBLIMATED BY TUNISIAN CHEFS

«Mesfouf» with pomegranate seeds

Ingredients:

2 pomegranates
500 g of couscous semolina
500 g of fresh dates
100 g of butter
100 g of unsalted pistachio nuts
10 cl of hot water
olive oil
3 tbsp of orange flower water.

Preparation:

- Pour the couscous semolina into a large salad bowl. Add hot water and a dash of olive oil, then cover.
- Allow the semolina to swell for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Meanwhile, pit the fresh dates and chop them into pieces.
- Finely chop pistachios.
- Deseed the pomegranates.
- Crush half of the seeds in a mortar reserving the other half.
- Melt the butter over a low heat. When the semolina is well swollen, add the pieces of fresh dates, crushed pomegranate seeds and chopped pistachios; add the orange flower water.
- Add the melted butter and mix again.
- Serve this «mesfouf» in cups topped with the pomegranate seeds previously reserved.



– Mounir Al-Arem, Tunisian Chef –

A «Mesfouf» dish to relish at the Pomegranate Festival in Testour.

Couscous with fish and pomegranates from Sfax

Ingredients:

2 pomegranates
1 beautiful filleted sea bream
6 tomatoes
3 tbsp of tomato paste
4 peppers
2 cloves of garlic
3 onions
olive oil
cumin
1 tbsp of turmeric
paprika
pepper and salt.

Preparation:

- Wash the bream fillets and season with salt, cumin, paprika and olive oil; cool.
- Make a small slit in the peppers and add a little salt and cumin.
- Fry the peppers in the couscous maker for a few minutes and reserve.
- Put the paprika in the oil (1 minute maximum).
- Roughly chop and brown the onions.
- Add mashed fresh tomatoes, tomato paste, a tablespoon of turmeric and cumin, salt and pepper and crushed garlic cloves. Let simmer; we then get the "takliya" that we will divide into two parts.
- Add the pepper to one-third of the takliya and set aside.
- In the remaining two thirds, pour two liters of hot water; add the bones of the sea bream; cover and leave to boil; put the couscous on to steam as indicated on the package.
- Meanwhile, in a pan cook saute the sea bream fillet on flesh side down over a low heat.
- Pour the couscous into a large container; put the sauce in a colander for sprinkling; mix well.
- Serve decorated with fish and peppers and a little "takliya", and of course, plenty of pomegranate seeds.

– Mounir Al-Arem, Tunisian Chef –

FALL SALADS

– Four servings –



Cucumber, radishes and pomegranate salad

For a sweet-savory surprise, add some seeds of folly to your salads

Ingredients:

*1 pomegranate
1 cucumber
radishes
fresh mint
sprigs of fresh cilantro
olive oil
balsamic vinegar
salt and pepper.*

Tip:

Sprinkle with roughly crumbled feta cheese.

Preparation:

- Cut the cucumber into small cubes without peeling.
- Salt slightly to let them drain off.
- Wash the radishes; cut them into small cubes.
- Rinse the mint leaves and coriander.
- Cut them very thinly.
- Deseed the pomegranate.
- When the cucumber has drained off, rinse with clear water. Mix the cucumber with the radishes, mint, and coriander.
- Let stand for 15 minutes in the fridge.
- Season with olive oil and balsamic vinegar.
- Add the pomegranate seeds.



Pomegranate stains are very **stubborn**. Put a stained cloth under cold water to remove the juice from the cloth fibers. Soak the stained part in milk and let sit for a few hours before washing.

Goat cheese salad with pomegranates

Ingredients:

1 pomegranate
pomegranate molasses (or
balsamic vinegar)
75 g of goat cheese
75 g of lamb's lettuce
2 firm beets
walnut kernels
olive oil
salt, pepper.

Preparation:

- Brush the beets under the water tap. cook them unpeeled in boiling salted water.
- Cooking is complete when the skin is most easily removed.
- Cool and peel. Cut into pieces.
- Deseed the pomegranate. Wash the lamb's lettuce.
- In a salad bowl mix the lamb's lettuce with the beets.
- Add the cubes of goat cheese, walnut kernels and pomegranate seeds.
- Season with olive oil, molasses, salt and pepper. Serve.

Eggplant, yogurt, mint and pomegranate

Ingredients:

2 pomegranates
3 large eggplants
2 yogurts
fresh mint
2 tbsp. of olive oil
lemon juice (optional)
salt.

Preparation:

- Slice the eggplants into 0.5 cm thick slices.
- On a sheet of baking paper, bake for thirty minutes in an oven at 180°.
- Cool and refrigerate in a bowl covered with plastic wrap to keep them moist.
- Chop mint finely and mix in a bowl with yogurt, olive oil, a little salt and a little lemon juice.
- Cover the eggplant slices with this mixture.
- On the top, lay out the pomegranate seeds.



Tip:

Cut eggplants in half instead of slicing them.

Pomegranate lentil salad

Ingredients:

3 or 4 pomegranates
240 g of green lentils
1 Granny Smith apple
1 lemon
mint leaves
3 tbsp. of hazelnut oil
1 tbsp. of apple cider vinegar
2 tbsp. of honey
10 g of mint powder
salt and pepper.

Preparation:

- If the lentils are not this year's, soak them in warm water for one hour before cooking.
- Pour the lentils into a pan of cold, unsalted water.
- Bring to a boil and cook on low heat for about twenty minutes.
- Drain off and let cool.
- Peel the apple, cut into small sticks and generously sprinkle with lemon.
- Deseed the pomegranates.
- Prepare the seasoning with

oil, vinegar, honey, mint powder, salt and pepper.

- In a bowl, mix the lentils with apple sticks and pomegranate seeds.
- Season. Decorate with mint leaves.



POMEGRANATES AND FISH



Flatfish fillets with pomegranate and parsley

Ingredients:

1 pomegranate
8 thin fillets of flatfish (or
lemon-sole)
2 tbsp. of chopped parsley
2 tbsp. of olive oil
1 lemon
salt and pepper.

Preparation:

- Steam the flatfish, until it turns pearly.
- Deseed the pomegranate.
- Mix the seeds with parsley.
- Spray the fish with olive oil and sprinkle with parsley and pomegranate seeds.
- Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve.

Tip:

At the moment of tasting, you can add lemon juice.

Fish marinade with pomegranates

Ingredients:

2 pomegranates
800 g of whitefish (sea bream,
cod)
5 tbsp. of grape seed oil
3 tbsp. of white wine vinegar
salt and pepper.

Preparation:

- Deseed one pomegranate. Squeeze the juice from the second (like an orange).
- Cut the fish into very thin small pieces. Put them in a deep dish.
- Mix the oil, vinegar, salt and pepper. Add the pomegranate juice then the seeds. Pour over the fish.
- Leave to marinate for 1 hour in a cool place. Serve.

Tip:

Serve with young lettuce, arugula, spinach or beet leaves.

Salmon papillotes with pomegranate

Ingredients:

2 pomegranates
4 salmon steaks
2 lemons
watercress
olive oil
salt, pepper
rice.

Preparation:

- Preheat the oven to 180°C.
- On large sheets of baking paper, arrange the salmon.
- Drizzle with olive oil and a few drops of lemon juice.
- Salt and pepper.
- Deseed the pomegranate.
- Sprinkle the seeds over each steak and add a little watercress.
- Close the papillotes and bake for fifteen minutes.
- Cook the rice.
- When out of oven, sprinkle with pomegranate seeds and serve with rice.



Seabream papillotes with pomegranates

Ingredients:

1 pomegranate
4 fillets of gray seabream
3 zucchini
2 limes
olive oil
salt and pepper.

Preparation:

- Preheat the oven to 200°C.
- Wash the zucchini and cut into thin sticks.
- Deseed the pomegranate.
- Put one third of the pomegranates in a bowl and reserve the rest.
- Slice a lime.
- zest the second lime then squeeze out the juice.
- On a sheet of baking paper, prepare a bed of zucchini on which to rest the sea bream fillets.
- Cover with two slices of lime, a drizzle of olive oil and some pomegranate seeds.
- Season with salt and pepper.

- Close the papillote and bake for fifteen minutes.
- Mix the remaining pomegranate seeds with five tablespoons of olive oil, the zest and lime juice. Pour over the top and serve.



POMEGRANATE MOLASSES

■ This sweet and sour syrup is used as balsamic vinegar and imparts a sour taste to marinades, salads, cakes, cheese, ice cream and sorbets, etc. You can make the molasses yourself: one liter of pomegranate juice is enough for about 250 ml of pomegranate molasses. In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, cook pomegranate juice, lemon juice and sugar. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring occasionally. Reduce to a low heat until the liquid is reduced to a syrupy appearance. As soon as the molasses juice begins to thicken, remove from the heat and let cool. Pomegranate molasses can be kept refrigerated for one month in a sterilized and tightly closed jar.

POMEGRANATES AND POULTRY



Chicken with pomegranates (6 servings)

Ingredients:

5 pomegranates

One 1.5 chicken

3 onions

250 g of pine nuts

4 tbsp of olive oil

3 pinches of cinnamon

1 pinch of saffron

1 lemon

1 tbsp of honey

salt and pepper.

Preparation:

■ Preheat the oven to 160°C.

■ Rinse the chicken with water and drain off well.

■ Rub with salt and pepper.

■ In a casserole, brown in two tbsp of hot olive oil. Then roast in the oven for thirty minutes.

■ Remove from the oven.

■ Chop two-thirds of the pine nuts and brown them, stirring constantly, in a pan.

■ Peel and slice the onions.

■ In the remaining oil, fry them until translucent.

■ Cut four pomegranates in half and squeeze.

■ Remove the seeds from the fifth pomegranate and add them to the onions in their cooking juices as well as cinnamon, pine nuts and saffron.

■ Simmer the sauce over medium heat for ten minutes, season with salt and pepper.

■ Wash the lemon under cold water and dry it.

■ Grate the zest in the sauce and pour over the chicken.

■ Return the chicken to the oven for 40 minutes, turning and spraying regularly.

■ Continue cooking for five minutes at 220 ° C. When cooked, slice in half.

■ Add the lemon juice and honey to the sauce and coat with the chicken.



Poultry with pomegranates and walnut sauce (6 servings)

A smooth, sweet and sour delight to serve with rice.

Ingredients:

half a pomegranate
50 cl of pomegranate juice
1 chicken (or duck or guinea fowl)
36 cl of tomato coulis
300 g of ground walnuts
peeled pistachios
1 clove of garlic
2 onions
sugar
1 large pinch of coriander powder
1 small pinch of cinnamon
1 pinch of sumac
flat parsley leaves
olive oil
salt and pepper.

Preparation:

- Cut the chicken. Peel and slice the garlic and onions
- In a large casserole, lightly heat the olive oil and add the chicken pieces. Brown on all sides.
- Remove the chicken and set aside.
- In the same casserole dish, pan fry the onions and garlic, scraping the bottom thoroughly.
- When they start to brown add pomegranate juice, tomato sauce, spices, sugar and about 20 cl of water. Add salt and pepper.
- Add the nuts, mix and bring to a simmer then return the chicken pieces.
- Reduce heat, cover and let simmer for a about an hour (meat should come away easily from the bone). If necessary, add a little water.



- Remove and cover the chicken.
- Bring the sauce to a simmer and let reduce for 15 minutes (it should thicken a little and become smooth while remaining creamy).
- Add the chicken again; heat for a few minutes.
- Serve hot, garnished with parsley, pomegranate seeds and pistachios.
- Serve with rice.

Quail with pomegranates and black rice

Ingredients:

2 pomegranates
1 quail and a half per person
2 to 3 tbsp of acacia honey.

Tip:

Serve with blanched slices of white cabbage with just enough crispness (cooked for three minutes in boiling salted water).



Preparation:

- Take the quail thighs and fillets (breast with only the largest part of the wing that remains attached to the breast). Remove the skin if necessary.
- Cut the pomegranates in half and squeeze the juice out after putting some seeds aside for decoration.
- In a pan pour a little olive oil.
- Brown the quails starting with the thighs then add the fillets.
- Cook on low heat for about ten minutes.
- Set aside.
- Melt the honey in the pan.
- Deglaze with the pomegranate juice.
- Reduce to two-thirds.
- Put the quail back into the sauce. Serve hot.

THE POMEGRANATE IN YOUR DREAMS

■ If you see a pomegranate tree in your dreams then you will earn money. If the tree is blossoming, then someone will declare his/her love to you. If full of fruits, then you will experience love and all the joys that come with it. If you're eating a pomegranate in your dream then you will receive sincere compliments and praises. If you pick pomegranates in your dream then this is a harbinger of good things to come. If you drink pomegranate juice then you will fall wildly in love.

■ It is often said that if you're offered a pomegranate with red seeds then you will get one thousand dinars; if the seeds are white, you will get one thousand dirhams.

POMEGRANATES AND LAMB



Lamb shoulder with pomegranates

The pomegranate adds tangy sweetness to cooked lamb, which complements the natural fatty taste

Ingredients:

1 pomegranate
2 tbsp of pomegranate molasses
800 g of lamb shoulder
2 red onions
4 cloves of garlic
2 limes
80 g of mixed walnut kernels
1 tbsp of sugar
olive oil
1 tbsp of 7 spice mixture (Ras el hanout)
salt, pepper.

Preparation:

- Deseed the pomegranate.
- Peel and slice the onions and garlic.
- Fry the onions in olive oil for two minutes, add the garlic. Keep cooking for another two minutes.
- Add walnuts, pomegranate molasses, sugar, 50 cl of water, the 7 spice mix and salt and pepper.
- Mix and cook on medium heat, keep covered, stirring regularly until sauce thickens.
- Dice the lamb shoulder. Brown the cubes in olive oil.
- Pour over the sauce. Mix and continue cooking covered for about 40 minutes, stirring regularly. If necessary, add a little water.
- Fifteen minutes before the end of cooking, add the lemon juice.
- Five minutes before the end of cooking, add the pomegranate seeds. Serve hot.

The use of the pomegranate in cooking dates back to ancient times. In the Middle Ages, pomegranate juice was used to season meats.

“ My name is the pomegranate and they call me «mostoxo»,
He who is sick and thirsty, I rejoice,
At any time, I marry well with the roast,
And my astringent juice in must will be transformed ”.

Die due poesie del secolo XIV - F. Novati

VITAMIN-RICH AND COLORFUL DESSERTS!



Pomegranate and apple salad

Ingredients:

- 1 pomegranate
- 4 golden apples
- 40 cl of water
- 3 tbsp of sugar
- 1 lemon
- 1 tbsp of brandy (optional).

Preparation:

- Peel the apples. Remove the seeds and cut into small cubes. Deseed the pomegranate.
- Put everything in a salad bowl.
- Melt the sugar in the water, add the lemon juice, a few drops of brandy to taste, and add to the fruits.
- Keep cool before serving in cups.

Tip:

To decorate, add strawberries and a slice of pineapple cut in four.



Pomegranate and fruit salad

Ingredients:

1 pomegranate
oranges
mandarins
black grapes.

Preparation:

- Deseed the pomegranate.
- Peel the oranges, mandarins. Peel the quarters.
- Cut the grapes in half and deseed them.
- Mix all the fruits in a salad bowl and serve.



Tip:

the pomegranate also pairs well with strawberries in a wonderful salad of strawberries, pomegranates, and oranges, all perfumed with rose water.

Pomegranates and lime

Ingredients:

1 pomegranate
4 greek yogurts (sweet or plain) or cottage cheese
2 mint leaf stems
2 cm of fresh ginger
2 limes
2 tbsp of grated coconut
2 tbsp of maple syrup.

Preparation:

- Deseed the pomegranate.
- Put the seeds in a large bowl.
- Add the maple syrup, the lime zest
- Grate the fresh ginger and chop the mint leaves.
- Mix and keep cool.
- Pour the yogurts in verrines.
- When serving, cover with the pomegranate preparation
- Add the grated coconut.

Pomegranate and white cheese

Ingredients:

1 pomegranate
white cheese and sugar
sponge biscuits.

Preparation:

- Deseed the pomegranate.
- In a bowl, mix the white cheese and sugar.
- Arrange the crumbled biscuit, pomegranate seeds and white cheese in layers.



Pomegranate crumble

Ingredients:

3 pomegranates
500 g of red berries
150 g of flour
80 g of almond powder
80 g of powdered sugar
80 g of softened butter.

Preparation:

- Preheat the oven to 200°C.
- Mix the flour, almond

powder, sugar and butter to obtain a sandy dough. Put aside.

- In a bowl, mix the pomegranate seeds with the red berries.
- Butter a baking dish and add the red berries and pomegranate mixture.
- Crumble on top of the dough. Bake for 25 min.
- Relish while still warm.

POMEGRANATE COULIS

Pomegranate coulis will lend a touch of color to your desserts (white cheese, panna cotta...)

Ingredients:

2 pomegranates
30 g of sugar.

Preparation:

- Deseed the pomegranates.
- In a food processor, reduce the seeds to juice by mixing them.
- Strain through a fine sieve to keep the juice only.
- Put the juice in a saucepan with the sugar and let reduce on low heat, stirring constantly.
- Cool and keep in the fridge until ready to serve.

POMEGRANATE JUICE AND SYRUP

Perfumed pomegranate juice

Ingédients :

8 pomegranates
1 bunch of fresh mint
8 cl of rose water
ice cubes.

Préparation :

- Squeeze and sieve the pomegranates
- Pour the juice mixture in 4 large glasses
- Add 2 cl of rose water in each.
- Add the ice cubes and spread the fresh mint in the four glasses.
- Mix and drink fresh.

– Rafik Tlatli, Tunisian Chef –

Pomegranate juice

A glass of pomegranate juice every morning is excellent for your health

■ Cut the pomegranate in half and squeeze it like an orange.

No added sugar, no water, no preserving agents... Nothing but the fruit to obtain a wonderful burgundy pomegranate juice with, extremely rich in antioxidants.

■ This is how you have a nice hand-squeezed pomegranate juice always close at hand!

■ **Recipe:**

Deseed pomegranates. Put the seeds in a colander and rinse with water. If you do not have a juicer, crush the seeds in a large bowl, lined with gauze, using a pestle or a potato masher. Then pick up the corners of the gauze and squeeze carefully to collect the juice. Drink simply as it comes!

Pomegranate syrup

Ideal for topping desserts but also in salads and sweet and savoury dishes

Ingredients:

2 kg of pomegranates
sugar
1 lemon
1 tbs of orange flower water
2 or 3 drops of vanilla extract.

Preparation:

- Deseed the pomegranates.
- Put the seeds in a bowl with 300 g of sugar and let marinate for three hours.

■ Mix and centrifuge the mixture. Weigh the juice obtained and add 500 g of sugar for 500 g of juice. Bring to the boil for three minutes while skimming off any surface scum. Continue to boil for another two minutes before letting the syrup cool.

■ When the temperature of the syrup returns to 40°C, add a tablespoon of orange flower water, two or three drops of vanilla extract and the juice of a lemon.

■ Pour the syrup into a bottle previously rinsed with boiling water. Close the bottle and cool quickly under cold water then put it in the fridge.

■ The syrup can be kept for several months in a cool place away from direct light.

POMEGRANATE JAMS AND JELLIES



Pomegranate jam with oranges

Ingredients:

1 kg of pomegranates
500 g of sugar for jams
2 oranges
2 tbsp of orange flower water
200 g of roasted almonds,
pine nuts, pistachios or sesame
seeds.

Preparation:

■ Deseed the pomegranates and remove the white skins.
■ Rinse the seeds with water.
■ Squeeze and sieve the juice of the oranges.
■ In a large pot, pour the seeds, add the sugar, the orange juice and the orange flower water.

■ Add a little water to cover the fruit.
■ Heat and bring to a boil for five minutes.
■ Reduce heat and simmer for about 20 minutes, stirring regularly until the fruit is well melted and covered with a nice sugar syrup.
■ Mix with the dried fruits.
■ Pour your still boiling jam into glass jars that have already been boiled for sterilization. Immediately close the jars tightly and leave to cool upside down, keeping the jars on their lids.

■ You can keep your jam for several months, preferably in a cool place and away from light.

■ To heighten the taste and add a hint of acidity, add a dash of lemon juice to your pomegranate jam.

■ To make good jam, it is important to stir the jam throughout the cooking process to avoid sticking. To do it the royal way: use a copper basin.

■ To check whether your jam has cooked, pour some droplets on a cold plate; if they freeze, then your jam is ready.

“ The rind cracks open; the seeds fall.
Seeds of blood in cups of azure;
And other drops of gold, in enameled
bronze dishes ”.

La ronde des grenades - André Gide

Pomegranate Jelly

Ingredients:

1 kg of pomegranate seeds
granulated sugar
2 granny Smith apples
½ untreated orange
1 small lemon.

Preparation:

- Extract the juice of the lemon and the zest of the orange. Cut apples in four pieces without peeling them or removing the seeds.
- Pour 50 cl of water in a pan with the apple quarters, orange zest and pomegranate seeds. Slowly cook for 10 minutes over medium heat.
- Remove from heat and sieve. Let the juice seep through slowly for an hour, pressing the fruits slightly with a slotted spoon. Weigh the amount of juice obtained and get an equivalent quantity of sugar.
- In a jam bowl, pour the pomegranate juice, lemon

juice and granulated sugar. Heat gently, stirring constantly until the sugar is completely dissolved. Bring to a boil and cook on high heat for 10 minutes, skimming regularly until the mixture jellies. The cooking process is finished when the temperature reaches 105°C on the sugar thermometer. Pour into pots.



Kharraz Ceramic,
Nabeul - Tunisia

Tip:

If you do not like fruit pieces or pips, prefer jelly to jam. Unlike jam, which is obtained from cooked fruit pieces with added sugar, the jelly is made from sieved fruit, to keep only the juice. This juice is then mixed with sugar and cooked slowly until it thickens. The word marmalade is best suited to citrus jam, made from juice and citrus peel boiled with sugar and water.



THE THOUSAND AND ONE VIRTUES OF THE POMEGRANATE

The use of the pomegranate for **medicinal** purposes dates back more than **three thousand years**. However, it is only very **recently** that scientists have discovered the effectiveness of the pomegranate in preventing and slowing the progress of severe diseases (**cancers**, including prostate, breast or lung cancers, **HIV** virus transmission...).

The pomegranate is yet to reveal all its secrets. Eating it regularly could protect against **Alzheimer's** disease.

The pomegranate is one of the richest fruits in **antioxidants** (soluble polyphenols, tannins, anthocyanins) that destroy the reactive species and help protect the DNA against various sorts of degradation. Thanks to its high content in potassium, vitamin C and antioxidant compounds, the pomegranate is increasingly being incorporated into **food** and **cosmetic** products, particularly in skin products to protect skin against cancer.

It is often recommended to drink a glass of **pomegranate juice** each morning. However, you should check with your doctor **for any potential contraindications**.



Nothing is **wasted** in the **pomegranate**: the **rind**, the **leaves**, the **skin** of the fruit are **all used** for **therapeutic** purposes

A POMEGRANATE-BASED TREATMENT to regain a bright and radiant complexion and to fight fatigue, burnout and stress: Just drink a liter of fresh pomegranate juice every day, every other week for three months. While it is recommended for pregnant women and babies, the pomegranate is paramount to **children's** growth, to the elderly, the anemic, the malnourished and the **obese**.

DEWORMING ACTION. The skin and the yellowish inner lining of the pomegranate are excellent dewormers and cures for intestinal burns and **ulcers**. Tannins inhibit the excessive production of gastric juice. The richness of the fruit in organic acids, in particular citric acids, helps regenerate the intestinal bacterial flora. A pomegranate-based treatment that consists of ingesting the **pulp** with the **yellowish inner lining**, which must be chewed, relieves stomach pains and acts as a gastric bandage.

A POWERFUL ANTIOXIDANT AND ANTI-INFLAMMATORY. The pomegranate, rich in antioxidants and potassium and low in sodium, is beneficial to **cardiovascular health**. The juice concentrate and the pomegranate pulp delay the aging of the arteries and help prevent infarction, arterial hy-pertension and atherosclerosis. It relieves pain caused by **rheumatism** and **osteoarthritis**. The pomegranate is recommended for gout, renal, respiratory, and liver problems as well as erectile dysfunction.

A HEALING ACTION. To soothe and dry a burn, mix pomegranate peel powder with honey or simply water. Spread on the burn. Renew several times a day.

THE POMEGRANATE AND TEETH HEALTH. To prevent or treat **gingivitis**, rinse your mouth regularly with pomegranate juice, or massage your gums with pomegranate skin powder. This will effectively reduce the amount of microorganisms in the dental plaque. To prevent **cavities**, mix a pinch of black pepper powder with pomegranate skin powder. Apply the mixture with your fingers on the teeth. After ten minutes, rinse your mouth with water.

To relieve **sore throat**, bring pomegranate skin powder to a boil with mineral water. Let cool and gargle with this water. This also helps in getting rid of **bad breath**.

To prevent the appearance of **osteoporosis** after menopause, eat the pomegranate skin. In a glass of hot water, mix two spoons of pomegranate skin powder. You can add a tablespoon of lemon juice and a pinch of salt to enhance the taste. Drink this mixture in the evening.



TRADITIONAL MEDICINE

Do not forget to dry left over rind (skin) in the sun.

*In case of **severe diarrhea**, mix 50 g of crushed rind with one liter of water. Heat for fifteen minutes. Sieve and drink a glass of the liquid with honey before each meal. In case of **intestinal pain**, immerse the pomegranate peel in water sprinkled with cinnamon. Bring to a boil then drink.*

*For **better eyesight**, mix honey with pomegranate juice. In case of **herpes**, apply the juice of fresh crushed leaves on the lesions.*

The pomegranate leaves tea prevents **anemia**.

The pomegranate flowers tea helps fight **asthma**.

Eaten raw, the **fruit** can be **diuretic**.

Pomegranate seed oil is often recommended to relieve **skin rashes** of an allergic origin or intolerance to the sun.



THE POMEGRANATE, THE QUEEN OF BEAUTY

The pomegranate, three times richer than tea in vitamins and antioxidants, **takes very good care** of your skin and delays the effects of aging on it. The pomegranate **leaves**, with very concentrated **tannins**, have an **antimicrobial** and **astringent** action and facilitate healing. The **seeds** give an **oil** rich in punicic acid, with **anti-inflammatory** and **soothing** properties, which helps reduce the breakdown of collagen fibers and promotes cellular regeneration. Pomegranate oil maintains tissue hydration at very good levels. It takes five hundred kilograms of fruit to obtain a liter of pomegranate seed oil.

A FRESHER AND RESTED GLANCE

Pomegranate seed oil is **anti-aging** and **anti-puffiness**. It should be applied pure on the face and around the eyes to fight against under-eye shadows and puffiness.



Kharraz Ceramic, Nabeul- Tunisia

SELF-MADE RECIPES

■ *Exfoliation and masks to be applied once a week*

Pomegranate and oatmeal based exfoliation

Getting rid of dead cells

- Mix two tablespoons of pomegranate seeds with a tablespoon of dry oatmeal. Add a tablespoon full of honey and olive oil. If it's a little dry, add olive oil.
- Apply on the face in small circular motions with a little more emphasis on the forehead and the sides of the nostrils. Rinse with warm water.

Pomegranate and honey mask

Brighten up your complexion

- Mix three tablespoons of pomegranate seeds with two tablespoons of honey. Apply this mask on the face for half an hour. Clean with warm water.

Honey and Yoghourt mask

Deep moisturizing

- Crush two tablespoons of pomegranate seeds with a fork. Add two tablespoons of plain yoghurt. Apply on the face for twenty minutes. Rinse.

Pomegranate and green tea mask

Anti-aging mask

- Prepare a green tea. Extract juice from half a pomegranate using a juicer. Mix with four tablespoons of the tea. Soak large cotton patches and apply on the face. Every five minutes, renew the patches by pressing them to remove the juice and soak them again.

Pomegranate and Lemon mask

Brighten up your complexion and reduce freckles

- Mix two tablespoons of pomegranate seeds with a spoon of honey and add a dozen drops of lemon juice. Apply twenty minutes on the face and rinse with cold water.

The pomegranate skin, a slimming food

- The pomegranate contains only 75 calories per 100 g; its skin, a lot less. It is rich in antioxidants and vitamin C. You will feel less hungry, have more energy and your intestinal transit will be much better.

HOW TO USE POMEGRANATE SKIN?

Prepared as an infusion, the pomegranate skin is full of benefits. For a better result, add ginger, mint and green tea. However, no matter how miraculous a slimming food is, it can't act on its own and should be part of a balanced diet.



THE ULTIMATE DETOX DRINK

Pomegranate skin tea

Ingredients:

50 g of pomegranate skin
1 L of water

Preparation:

- Dry the pomegranate skins in the oven for two hours at 50°C.
- Bring water to a boil.
- Place the dried skins in the bottom of a carafe, pour the hot water.
- Cover and let stand for 30 minutes.
- If you prefer your drink sweet, use honey instead of sugar.





THE POMEGRANATE ON ALL STALLS AT THE POMEGRANATE FESTIVALS



In October of every year, since 2016, the Pomegranate Festival in the Spanish-Moorish town of **Testour**, 80 kms westward from Tunis, is home to an ever growing Festival crowd. In the south, in the Oasis of Gabès, cradle of the pomegranate, the oasis of **Kettana** also organizes its Pomegranate Festival. In a festive and friendly atmosphere, hundreds of visitors spend the four-day festival time buying pomegranates at farm price, enjoying fresh pomegranates and pomegranate-based dishes, including the famous Mesfouf of Testour. In addition, meetings with farmers, exhibitions, and scientific symposiums around

the pomegranate are organized. The success of the two festivals is evidence to how much Tunisians are attached to this fruit as well as to the know-how these pomegranate-producing regions have developed over the ages.