

**English Translation:**

Ramadan in Iraq is a very special month. We call it “the month of goodness and graces”. Ramadan comes and brings all the graces, and you feel that people change during this holy month, honestly. I mean their deeds become good, Thank God. You see the rich remember the poor more than any other time. I wish the whole year would be Ramadan days because many people in Iraq suffer financially in fact and that’s why you see the rich always remember them and help them. It is a very blessed month.

Sweets are what distinguish the month of Ramadan. Iraqis are well-known for *baqlawa*<sup>1</sup>. You can find different types of baklava that are very delicious.

In Iraq we also have a huge Palestinian community. The Palestinian sweets that we love to buy during Ramadan is *basbusa* and *katayef*, we can never spare them. They are very delicious.

The regular schedule for Ramadan is usually very short especially for governmental departments. Those departments in general start their business hours at 8:00 or 8:30 AM and close at 2:00 PM or 3:00 PM. However, during Ramadan, everything gets reduced. I mean after 12:00 PM or 1:00 PM, there are no employees. Work gets minimized and people start going home as one can barely make it for dinner. The dinner is usually at 4:30 PM or 5:00, sunset. One can barely catch up with the transportation and go home.

**About CultureTalk:** CultureTalk is produced by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages and housed on the LangMedia Website. The project provides students of language and culture with samples of people talking about their lives in the languages they use everyday. The participants in CultureTalk interviews and discussions are of many different ages and walks of life. They are free to express themselves as they wish. The ideas and opinions presented here are those of the participants. Inclusion in CultureTalk does not represent endorsement of these ideas or opinions by the Five College Center for the Study of World Languages, Five Colleges, Incorporated, or any of its member institutions: Amherst College, Hampshire College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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<sup>1</sup> *Baqlawa*: the Iraqi term used for baklava.