

Egyptian Arabic transcript:

صوت المرأة: دي عيلة مصريه، بنحضر الغدا. حنسأل ميرفت بتحضر أيه وليه؟ طب أوليلي بتعملي أيه يا حبيبتني؟
ميرفت: أنا بحضر الغدا، بثلي السمك، عشان إحنا في صيام العذراء.
الصوت: أيه صيام العذراء؟
ميرفت: صيام العذراء بنصومه عشان العذراء، وبصيام العذراء مابنكولش أي حاجة غير ما فيهاش روح. يعني مابنكولش لحمه، ما بنكولش فراخ، مابنكولش لبن، مابنكولش بيض، ما بنشربش لبن...
الصوت: وأد أيه الفتره ديه؟
ميرفت: خمسطاشر يوم، من يوم سبعة ليوم تنتين وعشرين. واحنا في المصيف دلوقتي، في العين الصفرة، وبحضر لهم الغدا، وفي رز، وفي جمبري، وفي كشرى، باننجان مقلي.
الصوت: الساعة كم دلوقتي يا ميمي؟
ميرفت: الساعة سته ونص...
الصوت: ودي (...) عاديه عشان ناكل؟
ميرفت: أه عادي، عقبال ما رحنا البحر وجينا وبقا وكدا يا دوك يعني بنتغدا دلوقتي..
الصوت: معظم المصريين بياكلوا متأخر كدة ولا؟
ميرفت: مهو تقريبا عقبال ما بيرجعوا من الشغل وكده بيبقى على الساعة اربعة ونص، خمسه، سته، حسب كل واحد بيشغل فين يعني.
الصوت: طيب مرسي يا ميمي.
ميرفت: مرسي يا حبي.

English translation:

Woman voice: This is an Egyptian family. We are preparing lunch, and we are going to ask Mervatte what she is preparing and why she is preparing this. So tell me, what you are doing, my dear?

Mervatte (blue top): I am preparing lunch, frying fish, because we are in the fast of the Virgin Mary.

Woman voice: What is the fast of the Virgin Mary?

Mervatte (blue top): We fast the fast of the Virgin Mary in honor of the Virgin Mary, and during the fast of the Virgin Mary, we don't eat anything except things that do not have a spirit. That means we don't eat meat, we don't eat chicken, we don't eat cheese, we don't eat eggs, and we don't drink milk.

Woman voice: And how long is the period?

Mervatte (blue top): 15 days, from the 7th to the 22nd,¹ and now we are in the summer residence, in Ain al Sukhna,² and I am preparing lunch for them and there's rice, shrimps, koshary,³ and fried eggplant.

¹ The Coptic Fast of the Virgin Mary takes place during the month of August.

Woman voice: What time is it now, Mimi?

Mervatte (blue top): The time now is 6:30.

Woman voice: And this is a regular time for us to eat, right?

Mervatte (blue top): Yes, it's normal. By the time we go to the beach and come back ... it's just time for us to eat now.

Woman voice: And do the majority of Egyptians eat late like this or ...?

Mervatte (blue top): Yes, approximatively, by the time they come back from work and such it's about 4:30, 5:00, or 6:00, depending on where each person works.

Woman voice: All right. Thank you, Mimi!

Mervatte (blue top): Thank you, my dear!

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 every day. 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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² Ain al Sukhna is a summer resort and port in front of the Suez Canal, about a hour and a half by car from Cairo.

³ Koshary is a traditional Egyptian meal that consists of a combination of macaroni, spaghetti, rice, black lentils, chick peas, garlic sauce and a spicy tomato chili sauce, all topped with fried onions.