

English Translation:

According to the Iraqi traditions, when a family invites another, the customs are very beautiful honestly. For instance, if a family invites another for a dinner, it becomes responsible for all the arrangements and cooking. Sometimes, they [the host] ask: “Would you like us to cook something special for you? Is there a food that you like?” and sometimes, not.

In Iraqi society, it is shameful to take your food with you if you are invited; in fact, it is very shameful to do that. However, many things have changed after the Gulf War [in 1991] because the blockade came, a matter which has caused people to alter many of their traditions. For instance, there are people who want to help if the number of people invited is big. Sometimes, they bring with them some cooked rice, or a little bit of stew, or something else; bread and yogurt¹ is also a possibility. In other words, they [people invited] bring something with them, which is really nice.

Yet, the family in charge of the invitation does not expect its guest to bring something with him when he comes honestly.

During a conversation in general among the families [hosts and guests] at a dinner, usually men separate themselves; i.e. two fathers or brothers get together or something like this. Each one goes with a similar age level. Women generally [do the same] because their conversation is different.

After dinner is over, cleaning comes and the meal is over. Sweets follow, fruits for instance follow, or Iraqis like tea a lot directly after the meal even if it is ten o'clock at night.

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¹ Yogurt is a staple dinner and supper item.