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DATES

A Global History

Nawal Nasrallah

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ISBN: 978-1-86189-796-1 136 pages; 66 illustrations; 60 in color Cloth ■ \$15.95

In *Dates*, Nawal Nasrallah draws on her experience of growing up in the lands of ancient Mesopotamia, where the date palm was first cultivated, to explore the history behind the fruit. Dates have an important role in their arid homeland of the Middle East, where they are a dietary staple and can be consumed fresh or dried, as a snack or a dessert, and are even thought to have aphrodisiac qualities.

In this history, Nasrallah describes the central role the date palm has played in the economy of the Middle East. This informative account of the date palm's story follows its journey from its land of origin to the far-flung regions where it is cultivated today. Along the way, Nasrallah weaves many fascinating and humorous anecdotes that explore the etymology, history, culture, religion, myths, and legends surrounding dates. For example, she explains how the tree came to be a symbol of the Tree of Life and associated with the fiery phoenix bird, the famous ancient goddess Ishtar, and the moon, and how the medjool date acquired its name.

This delightful and unusual book is generously illustrated with many beautiful images, and supplemented with more than a dozen delicious date recipes for savory dishes, sweets, and wine.

Nawal Nasrallah is an independent researcher and food writer who resides in Salem, New Hampshire. She is also the author of *Delights from the Garden of Eden: A Cookbook and a History of the Iraqi Cuisine* and *Annals of the Caliphs' Kitchens: Ibn Sayyar al-Warraq's Tenth-Century Baghdadi Cookbook*, and many of her recipes have been featured in publications such as the *New York Times*, *Boston Globe Magazine*, and *Food and Wine*. She is available for interviews. Please contact Carrie Olivia Adams for more information: cadams@press.uchicago.edu / 773.702.4216.