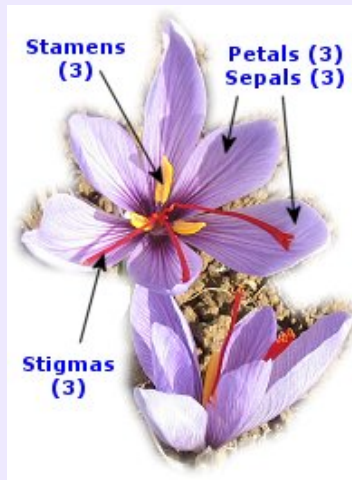


# The Culture of Saffron

**Agrin Davari**



- ***Crocus sativus***
- **The name saffron derives from the Arabic za'faran, meaning 'yellow'.**
- **Each flower has to be hand picked and the three delicate stigmas removed and carefully dried.**
- **It takes approximately 150-200 flowers to produce 1 gram of dried saffron.**



# History of saffron



**The first images of *Crocus sativus* we know of have been found on earthenware pots in Minoan palaces of Knossos on the island of Crete (2000 – 1800 BC, so 3800 to 4000 years ago)**



**Saffron flowers, represented as small red tufts, are gathered by two women in a fragmentary Minoan fresco from the Aegean island of Santorini.**

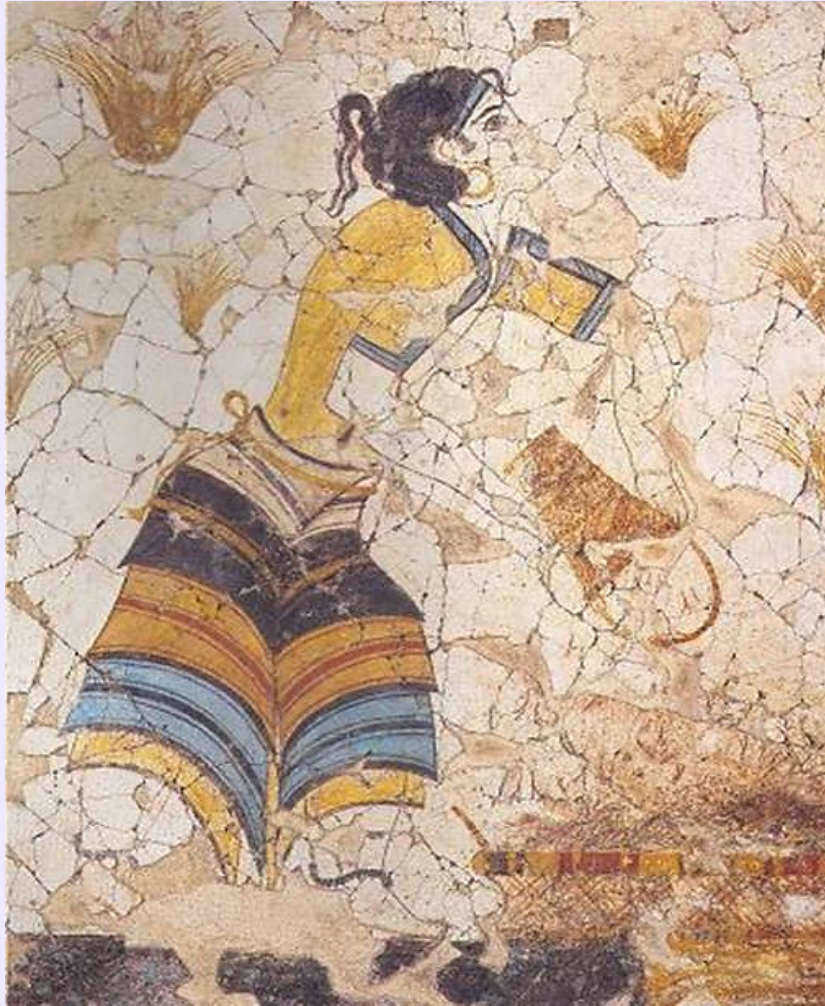


**The goddess in this scene oversees the harvesting of the Saffron. This fresco makes clear how important Saffron was to the Minoan civilization.**



Her blood runs into the Crocus flower and makes the stigma red. There might be links here with other Greek mythological stories about the origin of the *Crocus sativus*.





**"The Saffron Harvesters"  
back in 2000 - 1550 BC**



**A woman holds a bowl of Saffron in front of her.  
The lips are colored with Saffron, as are the ears.**



**“Spend the day merrily, O priest.**

**Put unguent and saffron oil together to thy nostrils,  
and garlands and lotus flowers to your beloved’s body”**

**Ancient Egyptian Banquet Song**



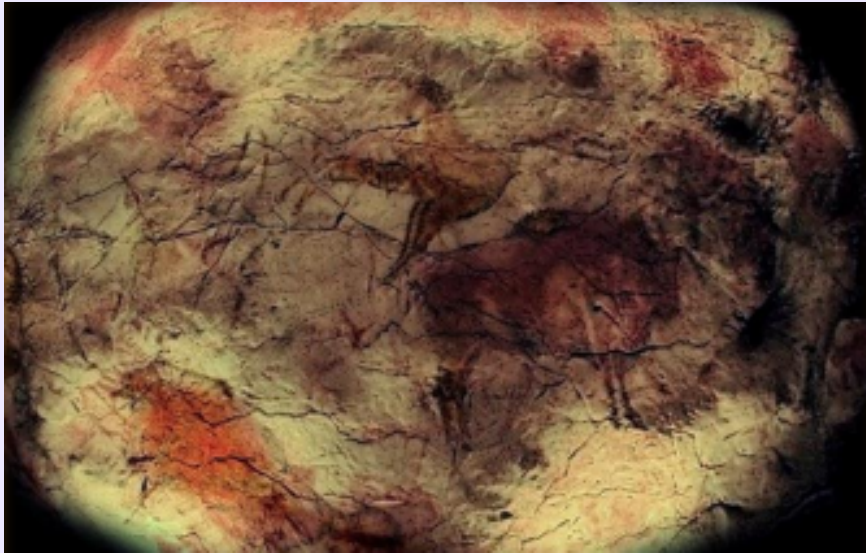


**Cleopatra** used saffron in her warm bath because of the coloring and cosmetic properties. History says she also used saffron before encounters with men, thinking the scent would be enchanting.

# Middle Eastern and Persian

Saffron-based pigments have been found in the prehistoric paints used to illustrate beasts in 50,000-year-old cave art found in modern-day Iraq.

The Sumerians used saffron as an ingredient in their remedies and magical potions.



**Traces of saffron on the walls of Iraqi caves**



**Example of caves in Iraq**



Saffron was introduced in Spain during the Arabic domination.

Arabic cooking was very rich in herbaceous flavorings and saffron was the most important, used as coloring and seasoning in most of their recipes.

In France, saffron production became very important in the 17th and 18th centuries. By then, saffron farming had spread throughout the entire Kingdom.



**CA 1440- Paris**

# Growing saffron is a culture



# Saffron uses...



**Cooking**



**Medicinal Use**



**Fragrance**



**Coloring/Dye of textile**

# Popular recipes with Saffron



**Paella**



**Saffron Rice**



**Saffron Pudding**



**Saffron Ice cream**

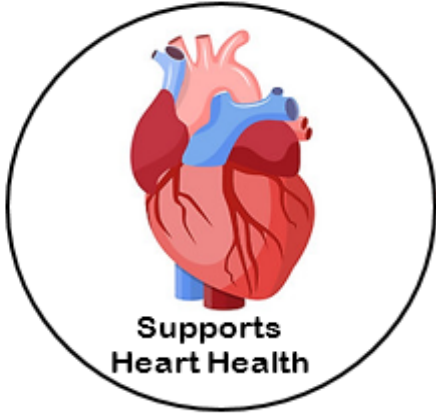


**Saffron Chicken**



**Zarda**

# Health benefits of Saffron

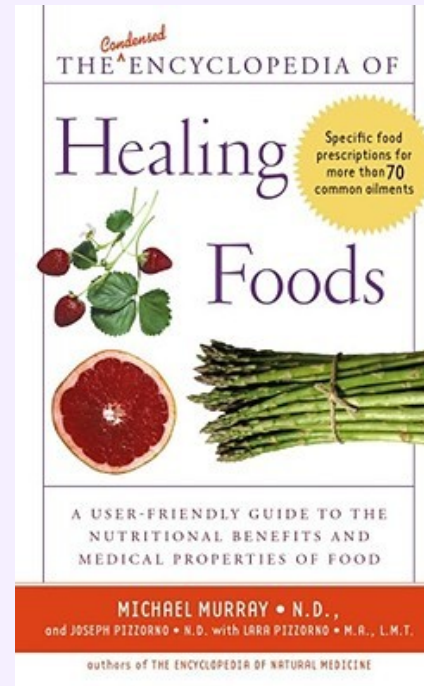




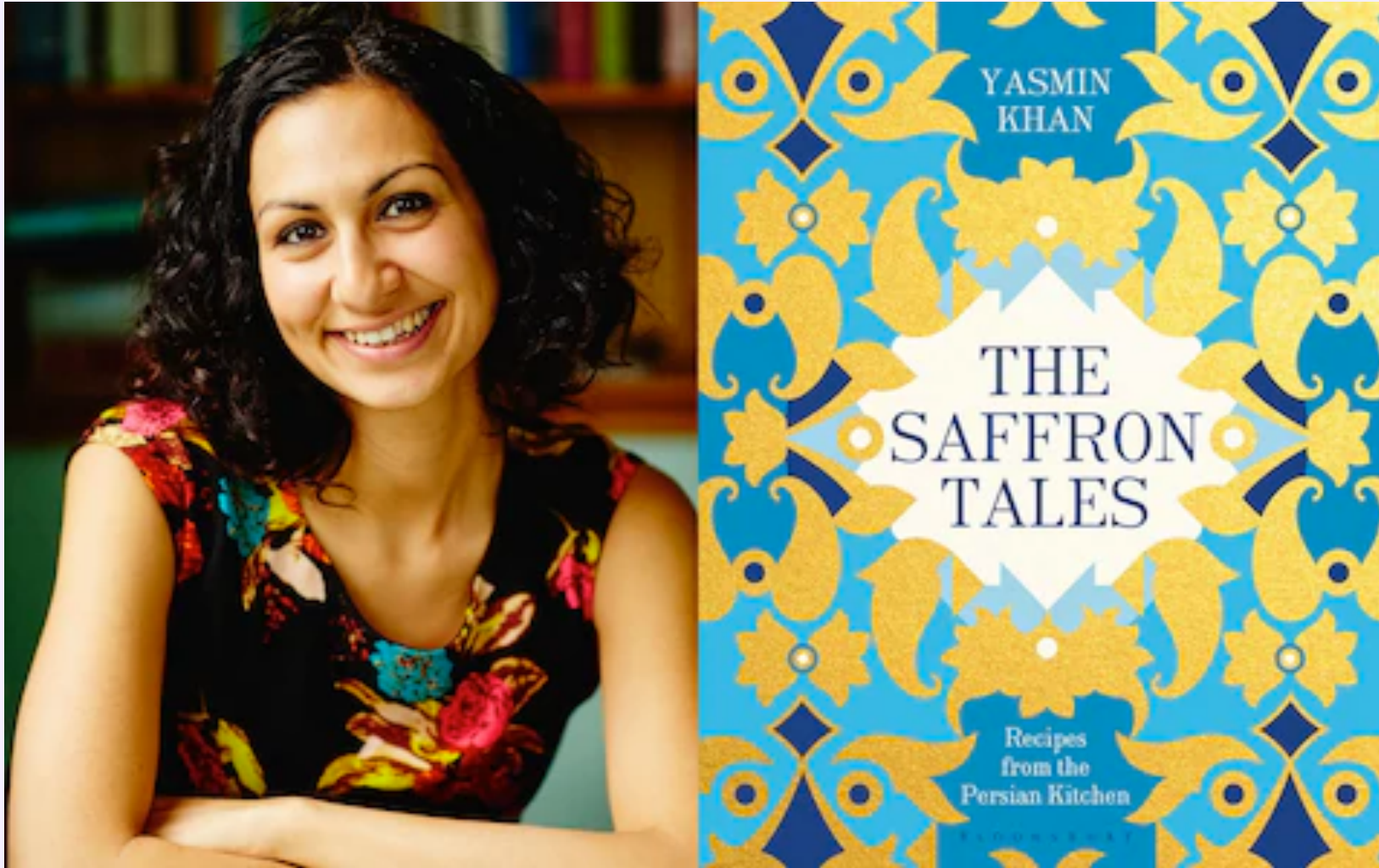
# The Healing Powers of Saffron Tea

- Heart disease protection
- Anti-cancer properties
- Mild to moderate depression and anxiety

SaffronStore.com.au



Michael Murray, N.D author of “The Encyclopedia of Healing Foods”



**This is a book that tells a story, both cultural and personal, and her voice is as engaging as her food." --Nigella Lawson**

# “Remedy for all evils”

- In Northern Africa, especially Morocco, the mixture of honey and saffron is used to treat infants during early teething, by massaging the gums.
- For massaging tensed muscles, when combined with essential oils.
- For people who have digestive problems. When infused and drunk, it soothes cough and cold.
- Saffron makes childbirth easier: prepare a drink with saffron and coat the belly of the mother.

**Does saffron have any side effects?**

**When used in quantities exceeding 10 gr., saffron becomes toxic.**



**Saffron compares favorably to donepezil in the treatment of mild-to-moderate Alzheimer's disease.**



**Saffron (at least in the short term) is both safe and effective in mild to moderate AD.**



**Saffron may be of therapeutic benefit in the treatment of mild to moderate depression and has similar efficacy as the drug imipramine.**



**Saffron is efficacious in the treatment of premenstrual syndrome.**

**Saffron extract may have a protective effect against diabetic neuropathy.**



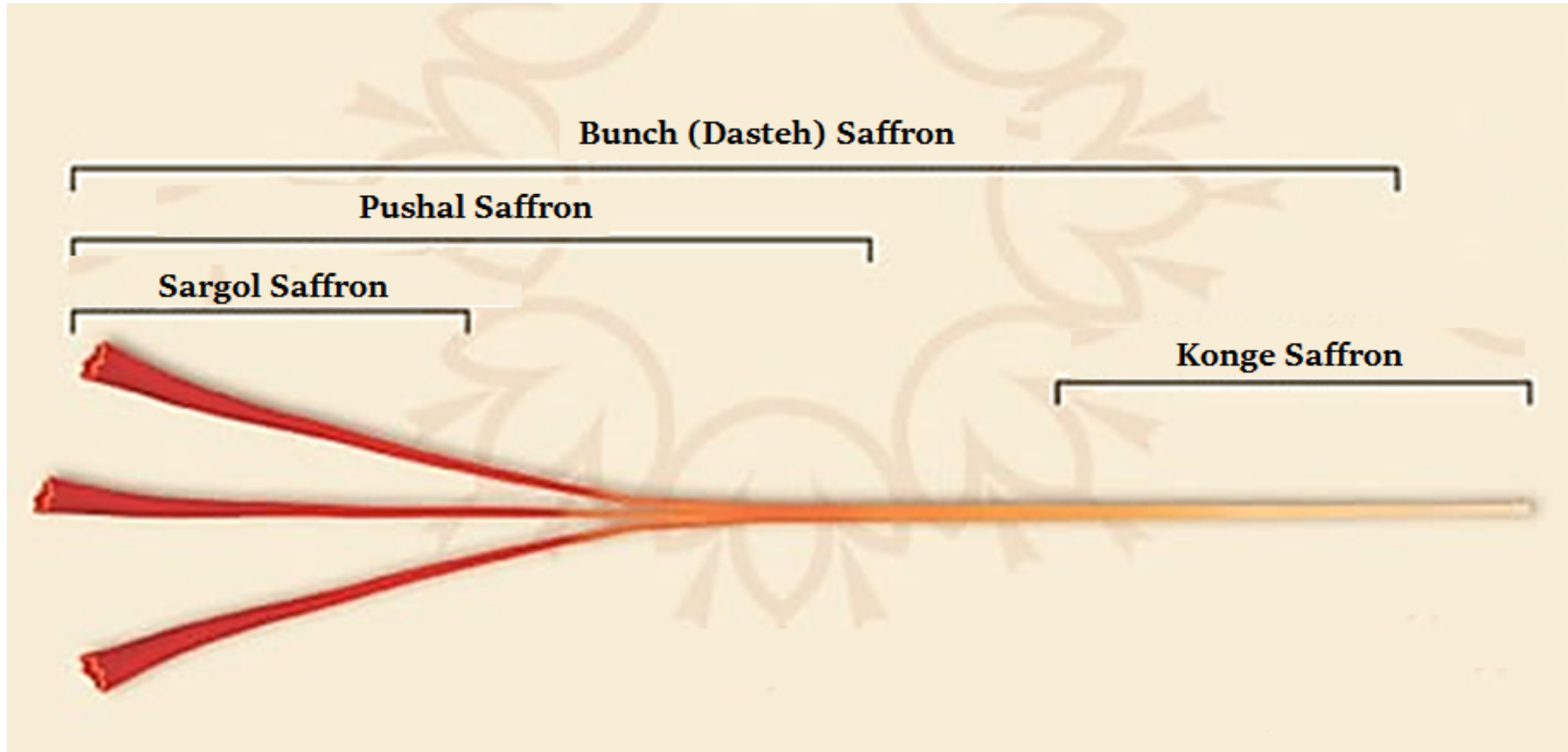
**Buddhist adepts wearing saffron-colored robes, pray in the Hundred Dragons Hall, Buddha Tooth Relic Temple and Museum, Singapore.**

# Saffron Quality!

- ✓ Saffron threads (Stigmas) are all red (no other color).
- ✓ Saffron threads must be dry and brittle to the touch.
- ✓ Saffron aroma is strong and fresh, never musty.



# Saffron Classification



**Use caution with your purchase!!**



**This plant is not saffron, but is often sold as the real thing!  
*Carthamus tinctorius* Safflower**





**Thanks for your attention!**