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Years of political feuding put aside with Ramadan dishes Morocco's "cooking mistress" delights Algerians



Shmisha's clientele include the wives of senior officials from both countries (File)

(ALGIERS) Ramadan Belmary

Uniting Algerians and Moroccan's is a task most politicians have failed to do, but this Ramadan the "Mistress of Maghreb Cooking," or Moroccan cook Shmisha, has lured people from both sides of the border with her tasty Ramadan dishes.

Shmisha's sweet and salty dishes are so popular Moroccans and Algerians, especially in border areas, are flocking to break fast together to get a taste of the now famous Moroccan cook who has signed several contracts with Algerian companies to sell her recipes.

Shmisha's clientele include the wives of senior officials from both countries despite the on-going political disagreement between Morocco and Algeria over the Western Sahara region.

Last Ramadan, Shmisha signed a contract with the Algerian daily newspaper al-Chorouk al-Youmi to publish her recipes every day of the Muslim holy month and this year she is signed to an Algerian radio station.

Despite her huge success, Smisha visited Algeria for the first time in June and was impressed by the legendary welcome she received.

Food over politics

Smisha told Al Arabiya despite the political issues between the two countries, Moroccans and Algerians like each other, she cited the example of the Rabat-based Mawazine Music Festival where King Mohamed IV honored Algerian singer Warda.

"I am just glad that I am doing something that unites Algerians and Moroccans," she told Al Arabiya in a

phone interview from Paris, where she went on a business tour.

"This shows how artists and bearers of noble causes transcend politics."

Samir Boudjaja, Commercial Manager at al-Chorouk al-Youmi, said that the circulation of the newspaper has remarkably increased since Shmisha started publishing her recipes last Ramadan.

"That is why renewing the contract with Shmisha was a lucrative deal with the paper," he told Al Arabiya.

Boudjaja added that a competition will be held for Algerian women. The winner will get a flight to Morocco where she will be taught how to cook by Shmisha herself.

"This will allow more rapprochements between the Moroccan and Algerian people," he concluded.

(Translated from Arabic by Sonia Farid)