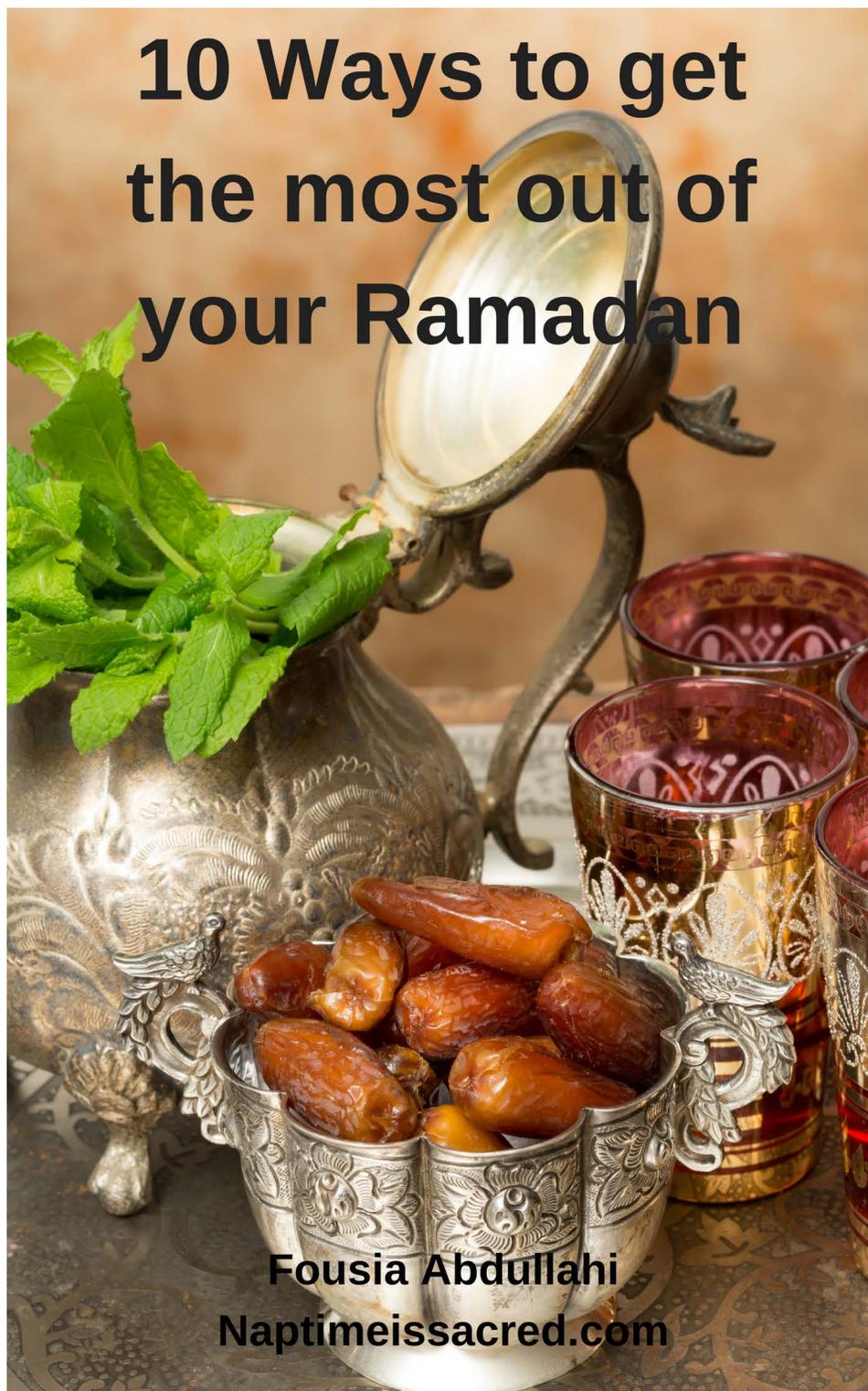


10 ways to get the most out of your Ramadan

By Fousia Abdullahi <http://naptimeissacred.com>

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Intro

Growing up, my best memories of Ramadan and Eid were celebrating with family and friends. As a wife and mom, Ramadan joy and peace doesn't come as easily because now the primary concern is worrying about everyone else. Over the years, I've had to figure out ways to make it easier to get the most out of my Ramadan. This was hard at times especially all those years of missing fasts because of pregnancy, nursing, or illness.

As women, we are always on call for our families needs and we go above and beyond making it a great experience for them - whether that's making all your husbands favorite dishes and catering to his diet plan, or its inviting guests over for iftar and going overboard with the amount of food you make. You may have kids that are starting to practice fasting for the first time, and you spend time making sure you keep them motivated. These are all part of Ramadan, but don't forget the true reason for Ramadan. Use this month and the blessings that come with it to use for the whole next year.

I always tell other moms when they are conflicted with what's good for them or what they feel obligated to do for others that we have been created by Allah (SWT) as well and that we came into this world on our own, and we will return to Him on our own. We have been created to worship Him and do good on earth, and although taking care of other people is an important responsibility, it should not come at the expense of our own ibadah and good deeds. You have an obligation to Allah and yourself to do your absolute best for your akhirah.

This is the time to make small habit changes that will have a lasting impact on your life now and in the Hereafter. It is not the time to go hard and than go back to your regularly scheduled habits. If praying is hard, then now is time to start with the obligatory prayers. If you don't normally pray the

sunnah prayers, Ramadan is a good time to develop the habit of praying them regularly. If you don't read the Quran everyday, then now is the time to start with a few verses or pages a day. This is not the time to start praying all your sunnahs, plus staying up late for all of taraweeh, and then peace out until next Ramadan.

These ten tips that follow are things that I have been using the last few years that have helped me make the most out of my Ramadan even when I wasn't fasting. I hope that you find them as useful as I did and that you are able to have a life changing Ramadan this year.

1. Set your expectations

Prayer, Quran, Dua, Charity - it would be nice if we could go 100 percent on all of them, and maybe we even could in the 1st week, but realistically it would just cause burnout and all of them would suffer.

Set yourself up to succeed from day one by: adding to your already existing nafl prayers, and if you don't pray the Sunnahs, start with the sunnahs of one salah and add others as you get into the groove. If you start with praying all from day one you might not be able to keep it up.

The same goes for duas. Get a journal or use an app like [Evernote](#) or even simply the notes app on your phone and write down the duas most important to you. They should be the ones that you make dua for in the last 10 nights.

The same goes for charity and how much Quran you hope to finish. The key is to set your expectations so you don't get overwhelmed and underachieve by the middle of Ramadan. This will help you go through the first three weeks with plenty of steam left for the last 10 nights.

A great place to keep up with charity throughout the month is this year's [LaunchGood Ramadan Challenge](#).

2. Plan ahead

This is where you tie your camel. In order to succeed this Ramadan you have to plan plan plan! How many iftars will you be attending? Do you need to get or do a deep clean of your house done? How many meals should your freeze for quick and simple iftars and dinners? These are just some of the questions you should ask yourself before Ramadan So you can get the most out of it without having to stress over the details while you're fasting and taking care of your family.

3. Call A Family Meeting

I don't know about you guys, but if I don't get any help for my family during Ramadan I have no energy left for worship. It's important to get everyone on the same page and give everyone some work so that it's divided in a way that no one person is overburdened with too much work. That means if you're cooking that someone is in charge of clearing the table, another empties and loads dishwasher. If you're taking care of a baby than someone takes charge of loading and unloading the washer and dryer. Your Ramadan is just as important as anyone else. So make sure to concentrate on your own acts of worship and not spend your whole day and not catering to everyone else's needs. You husbands and children's Salah, Quran, dua and charity are just as important as yours so please give it the same consideration.

4. Get your bulk groceries ahead of time

Everyone who knows me knows I hate shopping. Nothing is worse than spending your valuable time and energy in stores when you could have stocked up on your dry and canned goods ahead of time. My family usually makes a Costco trip for all the cleaning, bulk groceries and water bottles (our tap water randomly tastes funny sometimes, especially in the summer).

I also try to get all of my halal meat ahead of time as well especially if I know that I will be hosting iftars or even joining a potluck iftar. If you don't have a deep freezer, you can still stock up and make pre made meals with some of the meats that way you have meals ready you can warm up as well as some more space in freezer for the rest of the meat.

5. Buy eid clothes and gifts online

So yeah this totally goes back to my hate for shopping. I try to buy all the kids clothes ahead of time just to avoid the mall headache. And I mean a real headache, nothing is worse than wandering the mall while you're hungry, thirsty, and low on energy. We're blessed to have the internet and you no longer have to leave the comfort of your own home to shop. Most hijab fashion stores will have great sales at least 2 weeks before Eid, if not sooner. Another tip that might help for the next Ramadan is to buy these gifts and clothes during the sales season. You can easily get gifts for the whole family right after the holiday season and save a ton of time and money.

6. Don't sleep all day

I hear this time and time again - "Man, the days are so long I'm going to stay awake all night and sleep during the day." Don't waste your whole day. Now don't get me wrong, one of the perks of summer break is sleeping in, but don't go crazy with it. Changing of your internal clock where you switch your day and night settings will have a serious impact on your concentration, stamina, and barakah of your Ramadan. This doesn't mean not to use shortcuts to make life easier, but Ramadan was not intended to a month of rest while you just also happen to be fasting. Wake up each day striving to make your day more beneficial than the last.

7. Don't go to too many iftars

Here is another mistake we make. we go overboard with the socializing. Eid is there to meet and greet one another. Everyone always says it's good to feed a fasting person, but we should strive to have some balance by making sure we also feed people who are in need of food. If you invite your friends and family, make sure to also give some money towards the iftar of the poor. You can, and should, also include the members of your community who don't have family or friends nearby. Many people who have accepted Islam have left everything to be a part of this Muslim family. We get on their case about celebrating things like Christmas and Thanksgiving with their families but we fail to invite them to our Ramadan and Eid get togethers. We should build a much more inviting community for them so they are a part of our Ramadan and Eid Gatherings.

8. Keep the kids busy

We all want to give our kids the best Ramadan experience ever. Sometimes we go all out with the decorations, lesson plans and activities and we get so stressed and tired that we're not able to do anything else on a daily basis. Some easy ways to keep the kids busy is to pre-order or gather the supplies for the activities and crafts so you're not wasting time each day coming up with ideas. Also enlist them in helping you decorate the house. One way I always keep my kids busy is to load up on the books and change them out once a week at the library. This gives them hours of reading time each week and more time for you to sit and read the Quran or pray extra, etc. Another idea is stocking up on games and coloring books, and puzzles they can do themselves.

9. Don't Overdo Tarweeh

Who doesn't love the buzz of Tarweeh prayers? We love the feeling of praying shoulder to shoulder, our much-needed tea breaks, and catching up with friends you haven't seen in a while. But all of these should not be at the expense of your rest. The key to Ramadan is steady life changing habits not going hard for a month and calling it a year. Our family loves all of us going to tarweeh together, but after a few nights we can all start feeling the drain. So we figured out what works for us - we all go Fridays and Saturdays and maybe once or twice during the week. This way my kids are not overly tired from staying up late every night, and same for my husband because regardless of when we come home he will still have to work at 8am. Set tangible goals.

10. Give extra charity

We all know what kind blessings come with giving in charity they are endless. This is one way to make up for our shortcomings during Ramadan. What better way to get in the spirit of Ramadan than feeding someone who doesn't have food or contributing to a local Masjid project or even sponsoring an orphan? These will all boost your iman and help your Ramadan. Not everyone can afford to give money all of Ramadan, so giving back to your community is a form of charity too. You can help serve iftars at the Masjid or help with the clean up or help at a local shelter or food pantry this is sometimes more effect and important than monetary charity.

Resources

Thank you for taking the time to read this short ebook. Here are some resources for a beneficial Ramadan.

Adult Resources

- Sh. Yaser Birjas - [Roadmap to a Successful Ramadan](#)
- [Productive Muslim Book](#)
- [The Qur'an \(Oxford World's Classics\)](#)
- [My Halal Kitchen: Global Recipes, Cooking Tips, lifestyle and inspiration](#)
- [Are You Ready For Ramadan?: Make it Your Best One Yet!](#)
- Productive Muslim: [Your Ultimate Ramadan Preparation resources](#)
- Saira Siddiqui M.Ed.: [Ramadan Tips for Mothers](#)

Ramadan Activities and Decorations

- Hafsa Creates: [Decorations, Activities and Gifts](#)
- Salam Shop: [Decorations, Activities and Gifts](#)

Charities

- [Launchgood: Ramadan Challenge](#)
- [Islamic Relief USA](#)
- [Amaanah Refugee Services](#)
- [Maruf Dallas](#)

Books for kids

- [My 30 Days Ramadan Activity and Coloring Workbook](#)
 - [It's Ramadan: Curious George](#)
 - [Under The Ramadan Moon](#)
 - [Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns: A Muslim Book of Colors](#)
 - [My First Ramadan \(My First Holiday\)](#)
 - [Night of the Moon: A Muslim Holiday Story](#)
 - [Owl & Cat: Ramadan Is...](#)
 - [Ilyas & Duck & FANTASTIC FESTIVAL OF EID-AL-FITR](#)
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