

Iran World Heritage Trail (17 Day Tour)

DETAIL

- THEME: CULTURE
- LENGTH : 17 DAYS
- PRICE: -
- PHYSICAL RATING: 3
- CULTURAL RATING: 4
- CITIES: TEHRAN, SHIRAZ, ISFAHAN, URMIA, AHVAZ, ZANJAN, TABRIZ, KERMANSHAH, ARDABIL, SAREIN
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DESCRIPTION

- Thousands of years of history, rise and fall of great empires, the creative genius of ambitious artistes along with a hunger for immortality has bestowed Persia with some of the greatest monuments ever built in the world. Though Persia enjoys hundreds of universally valuable sites, it just has 22 sites registered on UNESCO World Heritage Sites List. In this trip we visit 13 out of 22 world heritage sites designated from Iran. The trip starts from Tabriz in north-west; we get to know different sites from various historical periods ranging from Elamite in Southwest to Qajar in Tehran. The variety in this list is amazing! We have the chance to see the ruins of ancient temples and palaces, mind-boggling mosques and churches, busy bazaars and soulful Persian Gardens.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Visiting 13 world heritage sites in Iran
- Learning about the Elamites, a 5 millennium civilization in Susa (SHUSH)
- Feeling the glory of Achaemenid Empire in Persepolis and Pasargadae
- Learning about Armenian religious heritage in Isfahan
- Experiencing local lifestyle with amazing bazaars in Tabriz, Isfahan and Shiraz

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DAY 1: FULL DAY CITY TOUR OF TABRIZ AND EXCURSION TO KANDOVAN

Have arrived in Tabriz, we are transferred to hotel. Today we have a full day city tour of Tabriz. We begin our tour with Tabriz Grand Bazaar, its only world heritage site and the largest vaulted bazaar in the world. Exploring the bazaar with its numerous labyrinthine alleys, gives us a sense of being lost! Tabriz House of Constitution is the next stop. It was the Tabriz revolutionaries' headquarters almost a century ago during Iran Constitution Movement. In the afternoon, we drive some 60 km out of Tabriz to visit the Kandovan, a unique village where people live in houses carved into rocks. Then, we drive back to Tabriz. Overnight: Tabriz

DAY 2: FULL DAY CITY TOUR OF TABRIZ

We begin our city tour with Azerbaijan Museum. This museum is said to be the second most important archeological museum in Iran after National Museum in Tehran. The foundation of museum goes back to almost 80 years ago. Objects from pre-Islamic era and Islamic era are

displayed in two floors. Blue Mosque, known as the turquoise of Islam, close to the museum is a must-see. This 5 century old museum which has survived some horrific earthquakes is ascetically matchless. In the afternoon we visit El Goli, a large park with over a century age. It is a main venue for people of Tabriz to spend their free time. Overnight: Tabriz.

DAY 3: DRIVE TO HAMEDAN

In the morning, we drive to Hamedan and en route we stop at Zanjan to visit the Gonbad-e Soltaniyeh (Soltaniyeh dome), a world heritage site, one of the tallest adobe domes in the world with 50m height built in the 14th century. Then we continue driving to Hamedan. In the afternoon, we visit the unearthed remains of ancient Ecbatana, and Tomb of Avicenna, the author of “Canon of Medicine” the most famous book in the Medicine world, as well as 2500-year-old inscription of Ganjnameh. Overnight: Hamedan

DAY 4: DRIVE TO KERMANSHAH

In the morning, we leave Hamadan towards Kermanshah, a large Kurdish city. En route we visit Anahita Temple in city of Kangavar. We drive on to visit Bisotun and Taq-e Bostan. The former, a world heritage site, is a highly significant historical bas-relief and inscription displaying and recounting how Darius the Great (526 BCE) crushed his enemies; The latter belongs to the second major Persian Empire, the Sassanids (224-651 CE), the main rival of Romans in the East. Overnight: Kermanshah

DAY 5: DRIVE TO KHORRAMABAD

In the morning we drive to city of Khorramabad and we stop to visit Falak-ol-Aflak Castle, a gigantic structure built by the Sassanids in the city of Khorramabad in Lorestan Province. Then we will be transferred to the hotel. Overnight: Khorramabad

DAY 6: DRIVE TO AHVAZ

In the morning we drive to city of Ahvaz over and across the Zagros Mountains down to the lowlands of Khuzestan Province, the cradle of civilization in Iran, the birthplace of Elamites (2800-500 BCE). we drive through Pol Dokhtar where we will visit a third century bridge of the same name. Then, we drive on to Ahvaz. Overnight: Ahvaz

DAY 7: EXCURSION TO SUSA AND SHUSHTAR

Today, we have an excursion, archeological in nature! First, we visit the remains of Susa, the capital city of the Elamite, a world heritage site. Chogha Zanbil located close to Susa is the crown jewel of the region: a huge temple over 3000 years old and a world heritage site. On our return route to Ahvaz we pass through the Shushtar which houses an amazing Hydraulic System, a world heritage site, whose construction dates back to Sassanid period. Overnight: Ahvaz

DAY 8: DRIVE TO SHIRAZ

In the morning, we drive to Shiraz, the pride of Persia, the capital of Zand dynasty. The route from Ahvaz to Shiraz is long but worth taking. We have two stops on our way to Shiraz: the remains of ancient City of Bishapour and the bas-reliefs of Tang-e Chogan (meaning The Valley of Polo where Royal Sassanids used to play polo) where like Taq-e Bostan in Kermanshah you can see the carved images of Sassanid kings. Overnight: Shiraz

DAY 9: CITY TOUR OF SHIRAZ

Today, we have the opportunity to see the highlights of Shiraz ranging from colorful mosques to the beautiful gardens and charming mausoleums: Marvelous Mosque of Nasir al-Mulk; Arg-e Karim Khan, an 18th century citadel; Pars Museum, the burial place of Karim Khan Zand, the founder of Zand dynasty; Vakil Complex with its bazaar, mosque and hammam; Eram Garden, an exemplary Persian Garden and a world heritage site; and the tombs of Sa'di and Hafez, the two greatest Persian poets. Overnight: Shiraz

DAY 10: DRIVE TO YAZD AND VISITING PERSEPOLIS, NAQSH-E ROSTAM AND PASARGADAE

We drive to Yazd, the Islamic city of art and architecture. Before getting to Yazd we have two must-see attractions of Iran and world heritage sites, to see. The remains of Persepolis, the glory of Achaemenid Empire and their ceremonial capital city; and Pasargadae, the first Persian capital city, where Cyrus the Great, the founder of Achaemenid Empire is buried. Naqsh-e Rostam where the tombs of four Achaemenid emperors have been cut into the cliff and Naqsh-e Rostam the Sassanid bas-relief are two other sights on our way. Overnight: Yazd

DAY 11: CITY TOUR OF YAZD

Today, we explore the attractions in and around the Old City of Yazd. The 14th century Jame Mosque with its lofty minarets and high portal is the starting point. Then, we enter the old city where in addition to enjoying its amazing texture and atmosphere we will visit Fahadan neighborhood. Water Museum and Amir Chakhmaq Complex, Dowlatabad Garden, a world heritage site, and Zoroastrian sites of Fire Temple and Towers of Silence are the other places we will visit. Overnight: Yazd

DAY 12: DRIVE TO ISFAHAN

Isfahan is our next main destination. En route to Isfahan we pass through two desert towns of Meybod and Nain. In Meybod we visit a citadel, a caravanserai, traditional ice storage, a beautiful pigeon house (a sort of dovecote). In Nain, we experience traditional wool-weaving process, a 10th century mosque and the Ethnological Museum of Nain. Then, we keep on driving to Isfahan! Overnight: Isfahan

DAY 13: FULL DAY CITY TOUR OF ISFAHAN

Today, we intend to see the unique Naqsh-e Jahan Square, a world heritage site, where we visit the splendid mosques of Abbasi and Sheikh Lotfollah with extraordinarily beautiful and delicate tiles, colors and patterns as well as creative architecture; Ali Qapu Palace Pavilion with its huge porch gives you the opportunity to fully absorb the square and its vastness. Chehel Sotoun, Hasht Behesht Palaces, located inside beautiful gardens are the next stops. Then, we enjoy The 17th century bridges of Si-o Se Pol and Khaju as well as Sassanid Era Shahrestan Bridge. Overnight: Isfahan

DAY 14: FULL DAY CITY TOUR OF ISFAHAN

In the third day, we visit other appeals of Isfahan. We probe into mysteries of Jame Mosque, righteously called museum of Islamic art and architecture, a world heritage site. Then, we take a deeper look into the Armenian heritage in Isfahan. This heritage is best manifested in the Vank Cathedral (17th century) with its beautiful frescos, interesting museum and also library. After having lunch in a local restaurant we have our afternoon at leisure. Shopping in Qeysarieh Bazaar is a rewarding option to take. Overnight: Isfahan

DAY 15: DRIVE TO TEHRAN, VISITING KASHAN AND QOM

Today we drive to Tehran, capital of Iran but we will not miss the noble history of Kashan, the delightful Fin garden which has been registered on the world heritage is our first destination after departing from Isfahan. When you walk through Fin garden, you will be in love with the calmness and impressive scenery. Then we probe into old Tabatabaei house which was built in the early 1880s for the affluent Tabatabaei family. After we got impressed by Kashan's majesty we drive to Qom to pilgrimage Fatima Masoumeh Shrine who is the daughter of the seventh Imam of Shia Muslims Musa Al-Kadhim and the sister of eighth Imam, Imam Reza. We continue driving to Tehran and we will be transferred to the hotel. Overnight: Tehran

DAY 16: FULL DAY CITY TOUR OF TEHRAN

Full day city tour of Tehran to visit its main attractions including Golestan Palace, Tehran's only world heritage site and the most historic one; Archeological Section of National Museum as the most important archeological and historical Museum of Iran; Crown Jewels Museum housing the most priceless valuables; Abgine Museum containing the superb Persian dishes and ceramics going back centuries before; and then if we had time Milad Tower, the tallest free-standing structure in Iran allowing us to see the Tehran from above. Overnight: Tehran

DAY 17: FLY BACK HOME

INCLUSIONS & EXCLUSIONS

- INCLUSION
- Visa Application Process
- All transportation including transfer from/to hotel, Best quality land vehicle
- Professional escorted Tour Guide of your choice language and trained driver
- All entrance fees, sightseeing, permits, excursions and activities as per the itinerary
- Mid-day refreshment including drinking water throughout
- EXCLUSION
- International flight
- Visa fee payable when collecting your visa from an Iranian embassy or consulate or upon arrival
- Tip for guide and/or driver
- Entrance fees for sights not included in the itinerary

NOTES

- Depending on the group size, the tour price will change. Tour size can vary from one person to above 20.
- You will be accommodated in top-rated hotels, Mostly 5 stars.
- Hotels could be replaced with similar hotel in the same category.
- Upon your request the itinerary can be extended or shortened.
- States offices, administration, post office and banks are generally open from 7:30 - 12: 00 and reopen after a lunch break until 16:00. Thursdays are the working hours until 12:00.
- Friday is weekend in Iran.