

IRAN, The Best of Persian (9D/8N)

Tehran | Kashan | Isfahan | Shiraz | Kish | Tehran



Detailed Itinerary:

DAY 1: BEIRUT - TEHRAN

After arriving at Imam Khomeini International Airport (IKA) in Tehran, our representative will meet and greet you; then, you will be transferred to the hotel to rest.

DAY 2 : TEHRAN

This morning, we will take you to a World Heritage Site, the **lavish Golestan Palace**. Built during the Qajar Dynasty, that rose to power in the late 1700s, this fabulous walled complex is centered on a landscaped garden with tranquil pools.

Then, we will walk around **Tehran Bazaar**, a few steps far from Golestan Palace. Walking along the Bazaar route, we go to Timche Akbarian. Timche Akbarian dates back to the Qajar era (almost 260 years old) when its main purpose was to exchange money. Later it was developed into the first bank of Iran and was ran mainly by Jews who were the prominent residents of Oudlajan neighborhood. As of today, there's no bank or money exchange but the place has been delicately restored into a Dizi Sara and a tea house where tea comes in thin waist cups and along with sugar canes.

In the afternoon, you will visit the **National Museum of Iran**, where you can see fabulous historical items from 5000 BC to the advent of Islam in Iran.

We will also visit the **Carpet Museum of Iran**, home to a dazzling collection of Persian carpets collected from around the country and representing centuries of extraordinary art and skill.

DAY 3: TEHRAN - KASHAN - ISFAHAN (5H/465KM)

Leaving Tehran behind, we'll travel south to Kashan, a town originally famous for its textiles and ceramic production, but now better known for Fin Garden and its extensive bazaar and hammams.

Fin Garden (A UNESCO World Heritage Site) is our first stop; a relaxing and visually impressive Persian garden with water channels all passing through a central pavilion. There is also the chance to buy some rose water, a local specialty, outside of the site.

Then, you will visit Boroujerdi Traditional House. It was built about 130 years ago in the reign of Qajar dynasty (1857) by Iranian famous architect Ustad Ali Maryam. The owner was Haj Seyed Hasan Natanzi, a well-known merchant who mostly dealt with people of Boroujerd city. That's why the house is known as Boroujerd's House.

Afterwards, we will visit the bazaar area, a widespread complex filled with hammams and mosques; one hammam has been converted to a traditional teahouse where we will stop for those who need a break from shopping.

Late in the afternoon, we will move towards Isfahan.

DAY 4: ISFAHAN

As the 17th-century capital of the Safavid Empire, Isfahan was one of the world's greatest cities...

Your exploration starts in **Imam Square**. This 17th-century site is one of the largest public spaces in the world. Here in the square, you'll visit the 17th-century Shah Mosque, revered as a masterpiece of Islamic architecture and easily recognized by its magnificent tile-work and soaring cupola and minarets.

You will also visit **Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque**, also known as the Ladies Mosque, as it was built for the Shah's harem, renowned for a brightly colored domed ceiling, where the light creates the image of a peacock. In the Ali Qapu Palace, you'll marvel at its beautiful music rooms and the balconies where Safavid kings would sit to enjoy the polo matches unfolding in the square below.

You'll end your exploration of the square by visiting the **Qeisarieh Bazaar**. With hundreds of local vendors that specialize in traditional arts and crafts, it's a wonderful place to shop for pottery, enamel, jewelry, and delicately inlaid board games.

Next up is **Chehel Sotun Palace**. Set in a landscaped and forested park in front of a tranquil reflecting pool, this graceful pavilion was built by Shah Abbas II for entertainment and court receptions. Entering through a portico with twenty slender wooden columns, you'll discover soaring halls embellished with frescoes, paintings, and mosaics; the Hall of Mirrors is especially breathtaking!

In the city's **Armenian quarter**, you'll delve more deeply into the region's complex history as you will visit several churches including the 17th-century **Vank Cathedral** with its lavishly decorated interior and unique blend of Islamic and European architectural elements.

If time permits, visit Si-o se pol and/or Khaju Bridge(s).

Overnight: Isfahan

DAY 5: ISFAHAN – SHIRAZ (5H45MIN /495KMS)

Today, we have a full day of driving to reach our destination of Shiraz; it is a good idea to stock up on locally bought and easily found dates and pistachio nuts for the journey.

First, you will visit **Pasargadae**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Tomb of Cyrus the Great and former capital of the Achaemenid Empire. We will spend some time exploring the site and though not as striking as Persepolis, there is a great viewpoint where we can look over the site and the surrounding area.

From here, we will drive a couple of miles to **Naqsh-e-Rustam**, the Necropolis where Darius and his successors are buried. Carved into the side of a cliff, the site is extraordinary in its magnitude and sheer ambition and does not disappoint even after the impressive Persepolis.

Then, we will have some stop on our way to visit the Legendary City of **Persepolis**, the former capital of Darius the Great which was founded in 512 BC. There was no more impressive construction in the ancient world than Persepolis, except perhaps the Karnak in Egypt. Darius built the terrace, Apadana (great audience hall), Tachana (a palace), and the Monumental Staircases; his son, Xerxes, added the Harem and the Hall of 100 Columns. Alexander the Great entered Persepolis in January 330 BC and then committed an uncharacteristic act of wanton destruction that still mystifies historians today, burning the mighty city to the ground. Though a shadow of its former self, the soaring pillars, terraces and sculptures of Persepolis still remain, but probably most impressive are the bas reliefs which line the site, telling the story of ancient governors and kings that came to Persepolis to pay tribute to the Persian Emperors.

Continue to Shiraz and check into the hotel.

Overnight: Shiraz

DAY 6: SHIRAZ

After breakfast, you will visit **Nasir-al-Mulk Mosque** (Pink Mosque) which is a few steps far from Vakil Bazaar. It was built at Mirza Hassan Ali Nasir-al Mulk’s command (one of the lords of the Qajar Dynasty); it took 12 years to complete it in 1888. Its interior reveals a magnificent masterpiece of design with stunning colors. This is a space where light and worship intertwine. The mosque comes to life with the sunrise and the colors dance throughout the day like whirling Dervishes. It reflects on the ground, walls, the arches, and the towering spires. It even reflects on the visitors as if a colorful ball is hit by the first sun ray and has exploded into thousands of butterflies all around.

Continue your exploration in Shiraz at the beautiful orange-scented **Narenjestan Garden**, laid out in the 19th century during the Qajar Dynasty. Then, you will visit **Karim Khan Citadel** which was built during the Zand Dynasty.

You’ll have time to explore and shop in the bustling **Vakil Bazaar**, home to hundreds of stores, beautiful courtyards, and even an ancient caravanserai.

You will end your visit on a tranquil note in the lovely garden-tomb of Sa’adi and garden-tomb of Hafez, two of our most outstanding poets to feel the taste of Persian Literature.

DAY 7: SHIRAZ – KISH

Departure in the morning for Kish Island in the morning. The duration of flight will be less than an hour. Whole day is dedicated to visit Shopping centers, beach and any other extra activities which clients may like to do.

Day 8: KISH - TEHRAN

Visiting the old part of Island and give free time to tourists to enjoy their stay and relax. In the evening, flight to Tehran and having direct transfer to the hotel of airport to get ready for departure.

Day 9: TEHRAN - BEIRUT

Our representative will transfer you to Imam Khomeini International Airport according to your flight time.

Selected hotels: (or similar)

Nights.	Regions/Cities	4-STAR	5-STAR
2	TEHRAN	Simorq	Espinaz Palace
2	ISFAHAN	Safir	Kowsar
2	SHIRAZ	Karim Khan	Zandieh
1	KISH	Ariana	Toranj
1	TEHRAN	Ibis	Novotel

Quotation:

Rates are person sharing double room in **Euros:**

Period	Category	2pax	4pax	6pax	8pax	10pax	Single suppl.	1pax travelling alone
01/09/19-31/03/20	4-star	€ 945	€ 825	€ 695	€ 630	€ 585	€ 215	€ 1,665
	5-star	TBA	TBA	€ 910	€ 840	€ 800	€ 410	TBA

Included & Excluded:

Above rates include:

- ✓ Arrival & departure airport transfer from/to Imam Khomeini Airport (IKA)
- ✓ 2 Domestic flights
- ✓ 8-nights' accommodation at hotels 4* or 5* on bb Basis
- ✓ Land travel in Iran by an air-conditioned coach
- ✓ Services of an English/ French guide throughout the tour for 4 persons and above
- ✓ Meals: 9 breakfasts, and 1 dinner
- ✓ Assistance of our representative in Iran
- ✓ Travel Insurance from Iran

Above rates exclude:

- ✓ International air fares, taxes and surcharges
- ✓ Lunched and dinners
- ✓ Travel insurance from the country of origin
- ✓ Items of a personal nature such as laundry or phone calls
- ✓ Visa costs
- ✓ Visa code fee
- ✓ Entrance fees
- ✓ Tips to local guides and drivers

Booking Terms & Conditions:

- Deposit of 50% per person upon reservation / Non-refundable
- Full payment is requested to be settled 02 weeks prior to departure /Non-refundable

“Globally Local”

CTS/ W20 (7SEP, 2019)