

TIMELESS

TOURS & TRAVEL

FOR THE DISCERNING TRAVELLER

Ozturk Boutique Tours 2015

TREASURES OF PERSIA (IRAN) TOUR (12 Days) *10-21 October*

Saturday 10 October, Day 1: Arrive in Tehran

We arrive in Tehran either early this morning (for example overnight from Turkey) or sometime during the day. We will be met at Imam Khomeini Airport by our representatives and transferred to our hotel. Those arriving overnight or very early this morning will need to book extra night's accommodation, preferably at the time of booking flights.

The rest of the day is free. You could go to see sights not included in our programme, go on an orientation walk or just relax in cafes in and outside the hotel. Dinner is at the hotel. **(D)**

Overnight in Tehran

Sunday 11 October, Day 2: In Tehran

Today we have a full day of sightseeing in Tehran. Our first visit is to the magnificent **Golestan Place** that with its many halls and treasures is simply breathtaking. Built by **Shah Abbas** of the Safavid Dynasty and expanded by **Karim Khan** during the Qajar period, Golestan Place represents the most authentic and the very best of Persian architecture.

After lunch in a local restaurant we visit the magnificent **National Jewels Museum** which houses the cream of Iran's national treasures including some belonging to the late Shah and is a must-see sight.

We then visit the **Iranian National Museum** which has a marvellous collection of pottery, ceramics, stone figures, carvings, etc. dating back to the 5th millennium BC. Rest of the day is free. Dinner is in a traditional restaurant with live music. **(B/L/D)**

Overnight in Tehran

Monday 12 October, Day 3: Tehran to Abyaneh (Distance: 300km)

We leave Tehran after breakfast and head for the charming town of **Kashan** via the religious city of **Qom**. Renowned for its ceramic tiles, textiles, carpets and silk, Kashan is an attractive oasis city. It was once a favourite of **Shah Abbas I** who beautified it and asked to be buried there. Its attractions include the beautiful **Fin Garden** (17th century), **Safavid** royal palaces and the **Brujerdi House** originally built as a private residence in the early 19th century but later turned into a museum. **Sialk Hill** near Kashan is one of the richest archaeological sites in central Iran. After lunch and sightseeing in Kashan, we travel to **Abyaneh** which dates back to the Safavid period (1502-1722) and is one of the most fascinating villages in Iran. Serenely situated at the foot of **Mt Karkas** (3899m), Abyaneh is cool in the summer but cold in the winter. It faces the east for maximum sun. The houses have been built in a huddle to increase their security against frequent raids by marauders. We will have free time to explore the village and sights such as the **Jame Mosque**. **(B/L/D)**

Overnight in Abyaneh

Tuesday 13 October, Day 4: Abyaneh to Yazd (Distance: 420km)

After breakfast, we leave Abyaneh and travel to **Yazd**, Iran's oldest inhabited city. On the way, we stop at **Nain** for lunch and see the historic **Jame Mosque**. Situated in central Iran on the Silk Road, Yazd was once visited by Marco Polo in the 13th Century. Originally founded in the Sassanian period (AD 224-637), Yazd's heyday as a commercial and trading city was in the 14th and 15th centuries. Rising out of the desert, the winding alleys and high mud walls of the houses of the town are straight out of the pages of a fairy tale. On arrival in Yazd we check into our charming hotel. Any remaining time is free. **(B/L/D)**

Overnight in Yazd

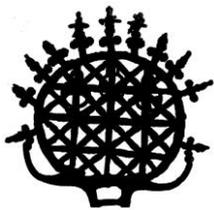


travel accredited

2/197 Military Road (PO Box 146), Neutral Bay NSW Australia 2089
Phone: (02) 9904 1239 Fax: (02) 9904 1809 Toll Free Phone: 1800 671 610
travtour@timeless.com.au www.timeless.com.au

Travel and Tourism Marketing Consultants Pty Ltd ACN 060 419 169 ABN 62 060 419 169 ATAS A10446





TIMELESS

TOURS & TRAVEL

FOR THE DISCERNING TRAVELLER

Wednesday 14 October, Day 5: In Yazd

After breakfast we visit the fascinating **Jame Mosque** that dominates the city. Its remarkably high, tiled entrance, flanked with two magnificent minarets and adorned with an inscription from the 15th century, is simply superb. We then go on a walk to discover Yazd's unique **desert architecture** and its '**Badgirs**', the wind towers designed to catch and circulate the merest breath of wind.

After lunch in a local traditional restaurant, we see more of Yazd's sights including the unusual **Amir Chahmaq Complex**. Built in the 13th century, it is used to perform the Ashura rituals to commemorate the martyrdom of the Imam Hossein (the third of the twelve successors to Prophet Mohammed). Linked to the Zoroastrian faith, the **Ateshkadeh Fire Temple** has a flame which has reputedly been burning continuously for 1500 years. In the outlying southern suburbs of the town high up on a hill are the **Towers of Silence**, where the bodies of believers were once left to de-flesh after death ready for burial later. Time permitting you may be able to walk up the hill to have a closer look. Otherwise we will see them from a distance.

The rest of the day and evening are free. For the evening, there is an optional visit to a **Zoorkhaneh** (House of Strength) to watch this traditional Iranian sport - a combination of physical and spiritual aerobics, with participants chanting to the powerful drums of their master. **(B/L)**

Overnight in Yazd

Thursday 15 October, Day 6: Yazd to Shiraz (Distance: 450km)

This morning we travel to **Shiraz**, the 'cultural capital' of Iran. We have lunch on the way to Shiraz and also see the remains of the ancient capital of **Pasargadae** and the tomb of Cyrus the Great. On arrival, we check into our hotel and the rest of the day and evening are free. **(B/L)**

Friday 16 October, Day 7: In Shiraz

At an altitude 1491m and with a population over 1,200,000, Shiraz is a city of nightingales, poetry and roses. It is also the centre of Persian culture and home to some of Persia's best known poets, including **Hafez** and **Saadi**. Shiraz is also famous for the **Vakil Bazaar** and its gardens. As you might have guessed, the Shiraz grape originates from the region.

This morning we drive about 60kms along the Shiraz-Isfahan highway to see the magnificent UNESCO World Heritage site of **Persepolis** followed by **Nagsh-e Rostam** and **Nagsh-e Rajab**. A visit to the ancient city of Persepolis is one of the highlights of any trip to Iran. It is the best preserved of Persia's ancient cities and the finest legacy of the great **Achaemenid Empire** which ruled Persia between 559 and 330 BC.

The most impressive features of the ruins are the splendid bas-reliefs, which adorn many of the staircases and palaces on the site. At the nearby Necropolis you will find the tomb of the three powerful Achaemenian Kings carved into huge rocks overlooking one of the oldest Zoroastrian fire temples.

After lunch, we continue sightseeing in Shiraz which has a lot to offer in its own right, including the **Narenjestan** (Citrus Garden) **Palace**. Built in 1879-1886 as a reception hall for visitors, Narenjestan Palace was used as the governor's residence during the late Qajar period.

We also see **Nasir-ol-Molk Mosque** and the mausoleum of the famous Iranian poet **Hafez** and **Eram Garden**. There will be free time to visit Shiraz's famous **Vakil bazaar**. **(B/L)**

Overnight in Shiraz

Saturday 17 October, Day 8: Shiraz to Esfahan (Distance: 485 km)

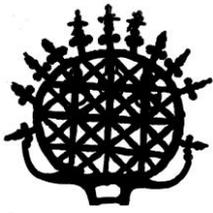
This morning we depart early and travel to **Esfahan**, the gem on Iran's tourism crown. Esfahan's splendour began with the reign of the Safavid **Shah Abbas I** (1587-1629), who made the city his capital and built the huge bazaar, which was strategically located on the **Silk Road**. Under Abbas, Isfahan enjoyed great prosperity and flourished as a centre of art, architecture and commerce based on carpet, textile and silk production. It had a well deserved reputation as one of the greatest and most beautiful cities in the whole of Asia. So much so that it was known as **Nesw-e Jahan**, meaning 'Half of the World'. On arrival we check into our magnificent **Abbasi Hotel** which itself is a must-see-sight. Dinner is at the hotel **(B/L)**

Overnight in Esfahan



2/197 Military Road (PO Box 146), Neutral Bay NSW Australia 2089
Phone: (02) 9904 1239 Fax: (02) 9904 1809 Toll Free Phone: 1800 671 610
travtour@timeless.com.au www.timeless.com.au
Travel and Tourism Marketing Consultants Pty Ltd ACN 060 419 169 ABN 62 060 419 169 ATAS A10446





TIMELESS

TOURS & TRAVEL

FOR THE DISCERNING TRAVELLER

Sunday 18 October, Day 9: In Esfahan

As well as being a historical city, Esfahan is a clean, green, dynamic city. We stay 2 full days and three nights here taking in the city's magnificent sights. Our first visit is to the **Naqsh-e Jahan** which translates as "pattern of the world" (nowadays referred to as Imam Square) and is the jewel in Isfahan's crown. Containing some of the finest Islamic architecture in the world, it was started in 1602 and formed the centerpiece of Shah Abbas's new capital. The scale is vast and the space is the second largest square in the world behind Tiananmen Square in Beijing.

Imam Mosque at the Eastern end of the square is rightly noted for the beauty of its blue-tiled mosaics and fine Safavid architecture. The huge **entrance portal** is 27m in height and delicately designed with superbly executed geometric and floral patterns in mainly blue and yellow colors.

The **Sheikh Lotfullah Mosque** on the eastern side of the square was dedicated by Shah Abbas to his father-in-law, **Sheikh Lotfullah**, a noted Islamic scholar from the Lebanon. The tiled dome changes color through the day from pale cream to a pink hue at sunset. The mosque was built as a place of worship for the women of the Shah's harem and the building is considered the most beautiful of Iran's mosques.

Another masterpiece of 16th century Persian architecture is the six-story **Ali Qapu Palace**, built as a residence for the great Shah. The palace's terrace offers fine views of the square and although some of the interior mosaics and plaster work were destroyed in the Qajar period and later in the 1979 revolution, much of the fine craftsmanship remains.

The historic bridges over the **River Zayandeh** are the city's other great attractions. There are several of them but the best known ones are the **Khaju Bridge** built in the mid-17th century by Shah Abbas and the 300m, 33-arch **Si-o-She Bridge**, which also serves as a dam. Strolling along the river near the two ancient bridges is a pleasant way to spend an evening in Esfahan. The bridges which are close to the city centre and to our hotel are illuminated at night. In the evening we have a panoramic tour of Isfahan including the **Khaju** and the **Si-o-She Bridges**. **(B/L/D)**

Overnight in Esfahan

Monday 19 October, Day 10: In Esfahan

Today our first visit is to the **Chehel Sotun Palace** (or Forty Column Palace). Set in a lovely garden, it was originally built by Shah Abbas as a pleasure palace but was destroyed by fire in 1706 and later rebuilt. The **Great Hall** has a rich display of frescoes depicting the triumphs of the Safavid kings. Our last organised visit is to the **Jame Mosque**, the largest in Iran, containing architecture from over 800 years of Persian history. The rest of the day and evening are free. You will have time to visit **Bazar-e Bozorg** which is a huge market several kilometers long and dates from the 16th century. The bazaar stretches all the way from the **Jame Mosque** to **Naqsh-e Jahan**. The main entrance is the **Qeysarieh Portal**, which has some fine, recently restored frescoes, showing the victories of Shah Abbas against the Uzbek armies. **(B)**

Overnight in Esfahan

Tuesday 20 October, Day 11: Esfahan to Tehran

After breakfast we take the morning flight back to Tehran. First visit is to the nearby **Carpet Museum** which has a unique architecture with the facade resembling a carpet-weaving loom. Inside you will have access to many of the masterpieces woven in the important carpet weaving centres of Iran. We then visit **Sad Abad Palace**, one of the palaces belonging to the late Shah and his wife Princess Farah and the nearby **Niavaran Palace** which was home to both the Qajar and the Pahlavi dynasties.

We will then have a farewell lunch at a local restaurant before checking into our centrally located comfortable hotel. The rest of the day is free to do as you please. You could go for a walk, check out the local markets or simply relax in your comfortable hotel. **(B/L or D)**

Overnight in Tehran

Wednesday 21 October, Day 12: Tehran to ongoing destinations

After breakfast, the tour finishes. You will be transferred to the airport for ongoing destinations. People with late departures may need to arrange a late check out or, if necessary, an extra night's accommodation at the time of booking. **(B)**



travel accredited

2/197 Military Road (PO Box 146), Neutral Bay NSW Australia 2089
Phone: (02) 9904 1239 Fax: (02) 9904 1809 Toll Free Phone: 1800 671 610
travtour@timeless.com.au www.timeless.com.au

Travel and Tourism Marketing Consultants Pty Ltd ACN 060 419 169 ABN 62 060 419 169 ATAS A10446





TIMELESS

TOURS & TRAVEL

FOR THE DISCERNING TRAVELLER

TOUR DETAILS: 12-DAY TREASURES OF PERSIA (IRAN) TOUR 2015

(This tour starts and finishes in Tehran, Iran)

Tour Dates:	Saturday 10 to Wednesday 21 October 2015 <i>(This tour may be combined with our Allure of Azerbaijan tour starting in Baku on 4 Oct)</i>
Duration:	12 days/11 nights
Price (AUD):	\$3,550 for group of 15 – 16 per person twin share \$3,700# for group of 10 – 14 per person twin share \$3,850 for group of 8 – 9 per person twin share Single Supplement \$795 Deposit amount is 10% of the price marked (#).
Group Size:	Minimum 8, Maximum 16
Combined Treasures of Persia/ Allure of Azerbaijan tour price:	\$5,495 for group of 15 -16 per person twin share. \$5,595 for group of 10-14 per person twin share. \$5,695 for group of 8-9 per person twin share. Single Supplement: \$1,195

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Tour price includes:

- Accommodation in special category or four-star hotels or the best available.
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (**B** = Breakfast, **L** = Lunch, **D** = Dinner)
- Transportation in modern air-conditioned coach or minibus with spare seats.
- Flight from Baku to Tehran if doing the combined tour.
- Arrival transfers on **Day 1** on meet-and-assist basis and departure transfers on **Day 12**.
- All entrance fees, **tips** to hotels & restaurants and other charges.
- Services of **Australian** tour leader who is with the group **24/7**.
- Services of professional English speaking tour guide.
- Drinking water on the coach.

Tour price does NOT include:

- International flights (i.e. flights to and from Tehran)
- Travel insurance, departure taxes, levies and other charges
- Single supplement surcharge for garden-view room at the Abbasi Hotel in Isfahan. The surcharge amount will be advised at the time of booking.
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, beverages at meal times, minibar, phone calls, etc.
- Tips for guides and drivers.

IMPORTANT NOTES

1. *Deposit amount is 10% of the price marked #.*
2. *Tour details including the itinerary, tour dates and prices may change without notice.*
3. **Tour prices** which are based on current and expected future exchange rates are subject to change. *Once full payment has been received, the tour price will not be varied.*
4. *Australian passport holders are **required to obtain a visa** before entering Iran. You may obtain these visas from Iranian diplomatic missions in Australia. Please contact us for details and assistance regarding visas.*
5. *This tour may be combined with our **Allure of Azerbaijan** tour, which immediately precedes the **Treasures of Persia** tour. You may also do our 17-Day **Grand Sultan** tour of Turkey which commences around early September each year.*
6. *Where two or more tours are taken in the one trip, there will be a **discount of 4%** on the lower priced tour (or tours).*
7. *The itinerary is **current** as at **16 August 2014**.*



2/197 Military Road (PO Box 146), Neutral Bay NSW Australia 2089
Phone: (02) 9904 1239 Fax: (02) 9904 1809 Toll Free Phone: 1800 671 610
travtour@timeless.com.au www.timeless.com.au
Travel and Tourism Marketing Consultants Pty Ltd ACN 060 419 169 ABN 62 060 419 169 ATAS A10446

