

Iran North to South

Get behind the headlines as we uncover Iran's rich heritage and explore the art, culture and lifestyles of Persian society today. This **touring style** journey will take you away from the standard tourist routes to explore Kurdistan, the 'Gulf' and around the south east. The itinerary also includes the key sites of cultural and historic interest and provides a chance to get to some less travelled regions in safety and comfort. The programme tours extensively so as to include opportunities to meet people of many ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Visit Tehran, Tabriz, Urumiyeh, Sanandaj, Hamadan, Kashan, Esfahan, Shiraz, Yazd, Bam, Kerman, Bandar Abbas.



Length of trip	23 days
Accommodation	Hotels.
Meals included	Yes
Travel Style	Tourist Coach, 1 domestic flight.
Escort	SRA tour leader for more than 6 travellers. Local English speaking escort for 6 or less travellers.
Sightseeing and entry fees	Included
Maximum group	12
Commences	Tehran 28th September 2012
Concludes	Bandar Abbas 20th October 2012
COST	NZ\$9,800 based on twin share. Single Rm Sup NZ\$915 <i>(prices subject to change)</i>



There are no foreign lands. It is only the traveller who is foreign.
- Robert Louis Stevenson

Itinerary at a Glance :

Fri, 28 September 2012 Arrive Tehran

Met on arrival at airport and transfer to hotel.

Sat, 29 September 2012 Tehran

Full day sightseeing in and around Tehran to include Sad Abad Palace, the National Jewels Museum, Glass museum and the National Museum of Iran.

Sun, 30 September 2012 To Kandovan

Morning flight to Tabriz, short sightseeing in Tabriz including the Blue Mosque and the Azerbaijan Museum. Late afternoon drive to Kandovan Village a "mini Cappadocia" where we stay in a cave hotel.

Mon, 1 October 2012 To Urumeiyh

Morning sightseeing around Kandovan. Afternoon drive across Urumeiyh Lake causeway to Urumeiyh.

Tue, 2 October 2012 Urumeiyh

City sightseeing in Urumeiyh and surrounding area.

Wed, 3 October 2012 To Sanandaj

En route to Sanandaj we will visit Takht-e-Soleiman (UNESCO site) ancient temple and shrine dating from King Solomon's era. Sanandaj is the main city of Kurdistan and home to Kurds, Armenian, Chaldean and Jewish minorities.

Thur, 4 October 2012 To Howraman Valley

Full day excursion into the spectacular mountainous tribal region of the Iraq/Iran border. Late afternoon return to Sanandaj

Fri, 5 October 2012 To Hamadan

Visits en route today include Bisotun (UNESCO site) to view the rock inscriptions, Anahita Temple dating from 200 BCE and Ester and Mordikhay Tomb, tomb of the first Jewish Queen of Iran.

Sat, 6 October 2012 To Kashan via Qom

A full day's drive today to Kashan. Enroute visit Qom, Iran's second holiest city, home of the magnificent Hazrat-e Masumeh Shrine.

Sun, 7 October 2012 To Esfahan

Sightseeing in Kashan this morning before driving south to Esfahan. Enroute visit Abyaneh Village and the Jame Mosque in Natanz.

Mon, 8 October 2012 Esfahan

A full day sightseeing around Esfahan is planned for today including Naghsi-I Jahan Square, Iman Mosque, Sheikh Lotf Allah Mosque and the bridges of Esfahan. We will also visit Esfahan bazaar.

Tue, 9 October 2012 Esfahan

Sightseeing today will include the Jame Mosque, Vank Cathedral, Chehel Soutoun and Hasht Behest. Free time this afternoon to explore the bazaar around Imman Square.

Wed, 10 October 2012 To Yazd

This morning drive to Yazd. We will stop in Na'in for a look at the 10th century mosque and the traditional houses which are dotted throughout the town.

Thur, 11 October 2012 Yazd

Sightseeing in Yazd including a Zoroastrian Fire Temple and Tower of Silence. This afternoon drive to Zeinodin Caravanserai – a traditional Caravanserai; our accommodation for the night.

Fri, 12 October 2012 To Shiraz via Pasargarde

Full day's drive today to Shiraz. Visit Pasargad UNESCO World Heritage Site en route.

Sat, 13 October 2012 Shiraz – Persepolis

Visit to the ancient ceremonial capital of the second Iranian dynasty. Archaeological evidence suggests that the earliest remains of Persepolis date from around 518 BC.

Sun, 14 October 2012 Shiraz

Sightseeing today will include Narenjestan (Qavam House), Nasir mosque, Vakil Mosque, Bazaar, Shahe Cheraq, Eram Garden, Sadi tomb, Karimkhan citadel.

Mon, 15 October 2012 To Kerman

Full day's drive to Kerman.

Tue, 16 October 2012 To Bam

Visit the old town of Kerman, including a visit to the bazaar and traditional tea house. Late morning drive to Bam via Mahan. In Mahan visit to the Dervish Shrine (Shah Nematollah Shrine) and the Prince (Shazdel) Garden.

Wed, 17 October 2012 To Minab

This morning visit the ruins of the Arg Fortress in Bam before driving across the Halil Rud plain to Jiroft and Minab.

Thur, 18 October 2012 To Bandar Abbas

Leisurely morning visit Minab bazaar—a good place to see the unique handcrafts produced by the local Bandari women. Late afternoon drive to Bandar Abbas.

Fri, 19 October 2012 Excursion to Qeshm Island

This morning we depart by local speedboat to Qeshm Island (30-45min) Visit Laft fishing village and boat building workshop where traditional dhows are built. Return to Bandar Abbas for late afternoon sightseeing.

Sat, 20 October 2012 Bandar Abbas and conclude