

# THE **Nation**.TRAVELS

## *Iran: Crossroads and Complexities*

### ITINERARY | **SEPTEMBER 5 – 17, 2018**

Join the *Nation* as we seek to understand a country that few Americans have experienced. Our carefully crafted program focuses on the cultural richness and magnificent beauty of Iran while also providing an opportunity, through conversations and engagement, to get a better sense of the country's future and to experience the warmth and hospitality of the Iranian people.

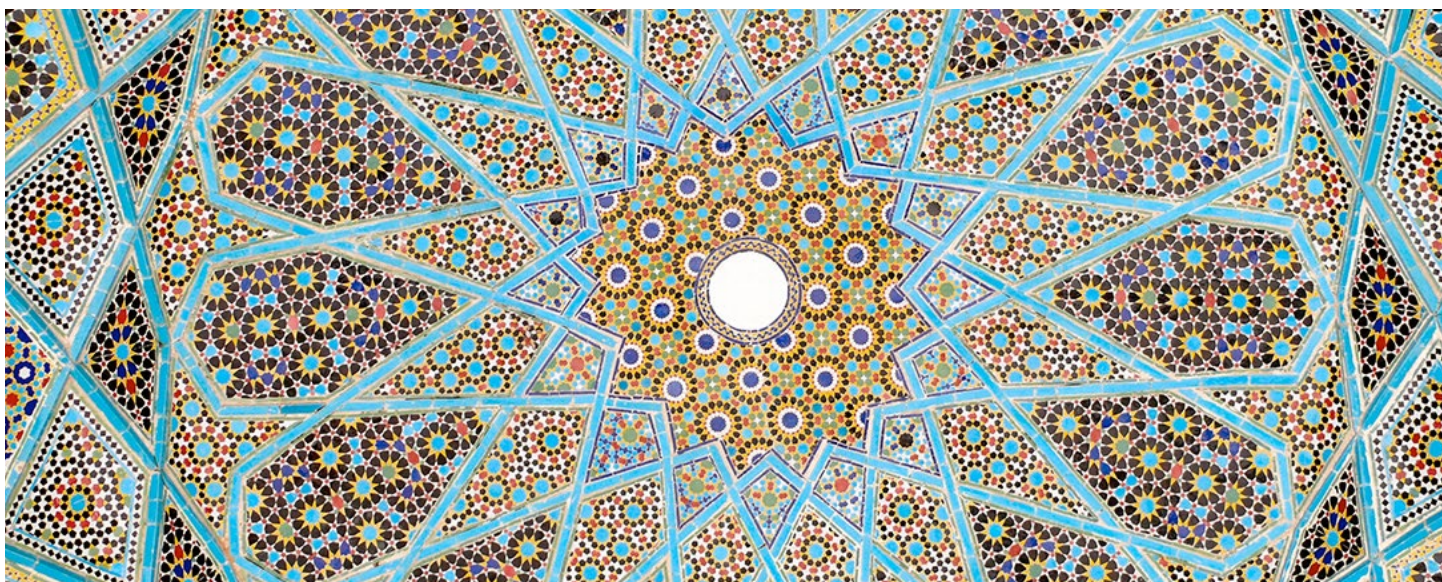
#### DETAILS & PRICING

**B: BREAKFAST**

**L: LUNCH**

**D: DINNER**

**R: RECEPTION**



### **SEPTEMBER 5: DEPART THE US**

### **SEPTEMBER 6: DUBAI**

**R**

- Arrive in Dubai. Transfer to **Radisson Blu Deira Creek Hotel (Executive Floor rooms)**.
- Enjoy a welcome cocktail reception and dinner with fellow travelers.

### **SEPTEMBER 7: TEHRAN**

**B, L, D**

- Enjoy an **Introduction to Iran** briefing.
- Take a group Fly Dubai flight to Tehran.
- Arrive in Tehran.
- This afternoon visit the **Carpet Museum** which features a number of excellent Iranian carpets.
- Transfer to the **Espinas Hotel**.

- Enjoy dinner with guests who will share their experience of living life in contemporary Iran.

### **SEPTEMBER 8: TEHRAN**

**B, L, D**

- Enjoy a full day of sightseeing in Tehran. This morning visit the **National Museum**, which is also known as the Archaeological Museum, with its fine collection including a stone capital of a winged lion from Susa and a 6th century B.C. audience hall relief of Darius the Great from the Treasury at Persepolis.
- Continue on to the **Glass and Ceramics Museum** of Iran followed by lunch at a local restaurant.
- After lunch view the Iranian Crown Jewels. This spectacular collection of jewels, stored in the basement vault of the Bank Milli Iran, was closed



for many years but is now open on certain days to the public. Admire the world's largest uncut diamond as well as the Peacock Throne.



- Meet with the **Persian Wildlife Heritage Foundation**, an organization with a goal to safeguard Iran's delicate and sacred natural environment and wildlife. The foundation promotes science and research, getting local communities involved in conservation, raising environmental awareness and working on national and local policies. Protecting the endangered Asiatic Cheetah and its environment is of particular importance.
- Dinner tonight will be at a local restaurant.

## SEPTEMBER 9: TEHRAN

B, L, D

- Visit the Golestan Palace (Palace of Flowers) which is located on Khordad Square. Consisting of many buildings, terraces and courtyards, the palace is set in a walled park veined with canals rushing down from the Tochal Mountains.
- After, drive to northern Tehran to explore the Iranian Film Museum located in the beautiful Ferdowsi Garden. This little-visited museum focuses on Iran's contribution – at home and abroad – to the world of cinema and houses an extensive collection in a beautiful historical building. Enjoy lunch at a delightful cafe in the museum.
- This evening enjoy a reception with various artists followed by a dinner with **Nazila Noebashari**, owner of **Aaran Gallery** - one of Tehran's most important contemporary art galleries – who will meet you and talk more about contemporary art in Tehran.

## SEPTEMBER 10: KASHAN

B, L, D

- Depart this morning for **Kashan**, a drive of about three hours.
- Stop along the way at the historical **Garden of Fin**, which was first planted during the Safavid period and kept alive with water from the nearby Sulaimanieh Spring. This beautiful garden was expanded by the Zand and Qajar monarchs, with many open pavilions added.
- Arrive in Kashan and transfer to the **Manouchehri House** for lunch and overnight. The hotel, which was initially a private home, has been lovingly restored and offers a wonderful opportunity to spend a night in a traditional home.
- Continue on to **Noushabad**, a handmade underground city at a depth of 15 to 60 feet. The city, a masterpiece of ancient architecture, consists of many labyrinth corridors, rooms and wells that can be reached from any location in the city without being seen.
- End the day at the historic **Kashan Bazaar**, the center of trade in the city for almost 800 years. The Khan Amin al-Dowleh Timche, a caravanserai with a magnificent decorated dome, is a wonderful place to sit with a cup of tea and people-watch. Be sure to purchase a bag of Kashani cookies from one of the many patisseries - the coconut macaroons (nargili) are absolutely delicious!



**SEPTEMBER 11: ISFAHAN****B, L, D**

- Begin this morning by learning more about the project to revive the traditional textiles that Kashan is known for. **Saba Manouchehri**, owner of the **Manouchehri House**, has started this project and artisans are working in the actual hotel. We will meet them in their workshop at the hotel and learn about the project. Continue on to visit the **Tabatabaei House**, a traditional house built in the early 1880's, which is renowned for its mirror and stained-glass work.
- After lunch drive about 3 hours to **Isfahan** stopping at the small village of **Abyaneh**. **Abyaneh** is a beautiful historic village at the foot of Karkass Mountain. This is one of Iran's oldest villages – a village of living traditions, architectural styles (all in red clay), and an interesting example of human adaptation to nature.
- Arrive in Isfahan and check into the **Abbasi Hotel**, a converted caravanserai. The large double-storied caravanserai was originally constructed to house the student and professors of the college but was later transformed into a wonderful hotel where guests can drink tea inside a garden courtyard with the full view of the **Madrassa Chahar Bagh's** magnificent yellow and turquoise dome.
- This evening enjoy a Persian buffet dinner served in the hotel courtyard.

**SEPTEMBER 12: ISFAHAN****B, L, D**

- After breakfast begin exploring Isfahan, perhaps the most beautiful of all Iranian cities. Begin with a visit to the **Palace of Forty Columns**, a charming pavilion used to receive dignitaries and ambassadors. Here the walls and ceilings are covered with frescoes and paintings and the superb wooden roof of the porch is painted with a series of geometrical decorations interspersed with flowers.
- From here walk to the immense **Maydan-e Shah**, or Imam Square. After consolidating his control, Shah Abbas I initiated one of the world's grandest experiments in city planning, moving the capital from Qazvin to Isfahan in 1598 where it remained until 1722. Mosques, palaces, bazaars and public parks were built under the monarch's personal supervision over the next thirty years. Visit the **Lotfallah Mosque**, constructed between 1603 and 1617 which served as a private chapel for the Imperial family.
- Stop at the **Naseriyeh Madrassa** to meet with clergy and discuss religious life in Iran.
- Enjoy lunch at the **Bastani Restaurant**, located in the heart of the bazaar. Afterward, enjoy additional free time in the bazaar.
- Return to the hotel mid-afternoon. Dinner is at a local restaurant.





## SEPTEMBER 13: ISFAHAN

B, L, D

- This morning admire some of the five bridges crossing the, sadly dry, Zayendehrud River at Isfahan. Perhaps the most beautiful is the two-story **Khaju Bridge** which was constructed by Shah Abbas II in about 1650.
- After seeing the **Bridge of 33 Arches**, drive to the Armenian quarter of Isfahan. This dates from the time of Shah Abbas I who set up this colony of Christians from the town of Jolfa and named it New Jolfa. There are fourteen churches here and we have planned a walking tour beginning at the **Bethlehem Church**.



- Enjoy a private guided tour at Isfahan's new **Music Museum** which showcases more than 300 instruments from around Iran, many unchanged from their depictions in centuries-old paintings or miniatures on display around the city's historic sites. The visit will end with an intimate performance, where traditional love songs and Persian poetry are played by modern masters.
- Stop for lunch at the **Hermes Café**.
- After lunch continue by foot to the **Vank Cathedral** which was one of the first Armenian churches to be established in the **Jolfa** district after the Ottoman War of 1603-1605.
- Return to the hotel.
- Enjoy dinner at a lovely local restaurant – **Shahrazad** – within walking distance of the hotel.

## SEPTEMBER 14: SHIRAZ

B, L, D

- Depart early this morning and drive about five hours to **Naqsh-e-Rustam** with its elaborately carved tombs.
- After a pleasant lunch visit **Persepolis**, the ceremonial

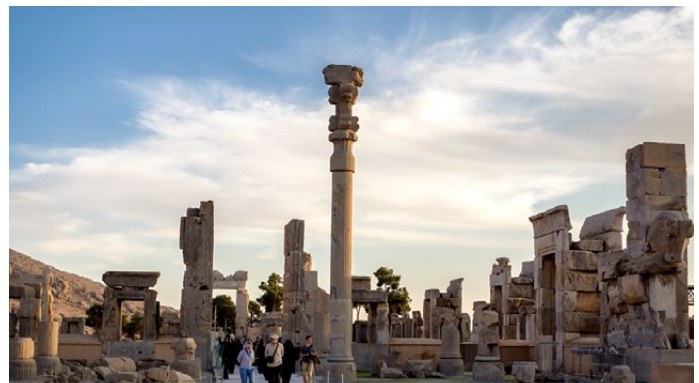
capital of the Achaemenian Empire and one of the most spectacular archaeological sites remaining from the ancient world. The city was started by Darius I around the 6th century B.C. with work carried on by Xerxes and Artaxerxes for another 200 years until the city's destruction by Alexander the Great in 330 B.C. Examine the site's major ruins, including the Gate of All Nations, the Hall of a Hundred Columns, the Gate House of Xerxes and the Treasury. Persepolis is truly the symbol of ancient Persia, if not modern Iran.

- Enjoy dinner at the hotel this evening. **Zandiyeh Hotel/Homa Shiraz**.

## SEPTEMBER 15: SHIRAZ

B, L, D

- Morning visit to the **Eram Gardens**. Built during the 19th century in a quadripartite Persian Paradise Garden structure, the garden and Qavam House, which is decorated with tiles featuring poems from Hafez, are set within the Shiraz Botanical Garden.
- Continue by foot through the fascinating **bazaar of Shiraz** to the citadel or **Arg-e Karim Khan**. The citadel was built in 1766 when Karim Khan invited the best architects and artists of the time to work on the design.
- Enjoy lunch at the delightful **Shaterabbas Restaurant** which serves superb Persian cuisine.
- After lunch visit the **Tomb of Saadi**. Born in 1213, he became one of the major Persian poets of the time, known not only in Persian speaking countries, but also in the west.
- End the day at the tomb of the celebrated poet Hafez which is located in a small garden. The poet lived in Shiraz his entire life (1300-1389) and is well known to Iranians.
- Return to the hotel late afternoon.
- Dinner this evening at the wonderful **Haft Khan Restaurant**.



## SEPTEMBER 16: DUBAI

B, L, D

- Enjoy the morning at the bazaar before transferring to the airport for our Air Arabia flight back to Sharjah in the UAE, located just a short drive from Dubai.
- Depart Shiraz for Sharjah on Air Arabia.
- Arrive Sharjah, UAE.
- Upon arrival transfer to the **Raddison Blu Diera Creek Hotel** (Executive Floor rooms).
- Enjoy a farewell dinner tonight.



## SEPTEMBER 17: DEPART

- Depart for your international flight home.

## PRICING

Per person double occupancy:	<b>\$7,280</b>
Single supplement:	<b>\$1,540</b>
Dubai/Iran/Sharjah flights:	<b>\$450</b>

## INCLUDED

- Accommodation, based on double occupancy, in hotels as listed. Executive Club floor rooms in Dubai included.
- Three meals daily with unlimited water and soft-drinks included in Iran
- Water on the bus at all times
- All sightseeing and excursions in a private air-conditioned bus
- Transfers for all arrivals and departures in Dubai
- All entrance fees listed
- Services of an Iranian National Guide who will travel with the group throughout
- Services of a Nation/Distant Horizons tour manager that will travel with the group throughout the trip
- Basic gratuities to all staff

## DOES NOT INCLUDE

- International airfare to and from Dubai
- The following flights which totals \$450
  - Dubai/Tehran
  - Shiraz/Sharjah
- Visa fee for Iran which is currently \$90 a person plus processing fee
- Excess luggage charges
- Travel Insurance
- Items of a purely personal nature
- Any item not listed

## HOTEL ACCOMODATIONS

- Dubai: Radisson Blu Deira Creek Hotel (Executive Floor Rooms)
- Tehran: Espinas Hotel
- Kashan: Manouchehri House
- Isfahan: Abbasi Hotel
- Shiraz: Zandiyeh Hotel/Homa Hotel