



Perspectives
OF IRAN

OCTOBER 18 - NOVEMBER 2, 2016



U.S. to TEHRAN

Tuesday, October 18

Depart the U.S.

TEHRAN

Wednesday, October 19

Upon arrival, transfer to the Espinas Hotel.

TEHRAN

Thursday, October 20

After a late morning orientation, begin exploring Iran. Discover Golestan Palace (Palace of Flowers) and visit the National Archaeological Museum with its fine collection including a stone capital of a winged lion from Susa. Gather this evening for our welcome dinner. (B,L,D)

TEHRAN

Friday, October 21

Head to northern Tehran to visit the Niavaran Palace and Museum, the last home of Mohammad-Reza Shah and his family. The complex boasts two palaces, a pavilion, Persian gardens, a museum and a smaller gallery. Continue on to Khomeini's home where one is allowed a glimpse of the dwelling. Enjoy lunch in a lively neighborhood, then stop at the Iranian Film Museum located in the beautiful Ferdowsi Garden. (B,L,D)

TEHRAN

Saturday, October 22

Visit to the superb Carpet Museum which has a small number of excellent Iranian carpets. After lunch visit the Malek Museum and Library which is home to several Qajar era monuments in downtown Tehran. End the day with a visit to the Museum of Contemporary Art to see a part of one of the most valuable collections of modern art outside of Europe and the United States. (B,L,D)

KERMAN

Sunday, October 23

Meet with the Persian Wildlife Heritage Foundation and learn about their goals to

safeguard Iran's delicate and sacred natural environment and wildlife such as the endangered Asiatic Cheetah. Visit the Reza Abbasi Museum which is home to a superior collection of Persian miniatures. View the Iranian crown jewels. This spectacular collection of jewels, stored in the basement vault of the Bank Milli Iran, contains the world's largest uncut diamond as well as the Peacock Throne. Fly to Kerman and transfer to the Pars Hotel. (B,L,D)

KERMAN

Monday, October 24

Visit Rayen, a preserved medieval city molded from the red clay of the surrounding desert. En route back to Kerman stop in Mahan for a lunch at the delightful Bagh-e Tarikhi Gardens, designed as traditional Persian gardens. Head to the beautiful tomb of Shah Nematollah Vali. His tomb is an excellent example of the importance of traditional Persian architecture on the harmony between nature and building. (B,L,D)

YAZD

Tuesday, October 25

Visit Kerman's historical core and walk through an attractive ensemble of three buildings inside the Kerman Bazaar, including a lovely madrasa built around a garden courtyard and a historical bath-house, now a museum. Visit a local tea-house before a delicious Persian lunch and the drive to Yazd. Stop for a rest at the 400-year old Zein-o-Din Caravanserai. Upon arrival transfer to the very traditional Moshir Garden Hotel. (B,L,D)

YAZD

Wednesday, October 26

In Yazd stop at the home of the former Governor of the city to see and learn more about traditional Persian architecture and the *badgers*, wind towers ingeniously designed to catch a passing breeze. Visit the bazaar and enjoy a stroll through it before visiting the Water Museum. Stop at the Haj Khalifeh Ali Rahbar pastry shop opened in 1916. Visit

TRIP DETAILS

INCLUDED: Accommodation as per itinerary; Meals as listed in the program; Bottled water on the bus; All sightseeing in an air-conditioned coach; Internal flights; All entrance fees and special events listed; Full educational program and Study Leader; Pre-departure materials and reading list; Local Iranian guide; Professional tour manager who will accompany the group; Gratuities for drivers, porters, restaurant and hotel staff for all group activities.

DOES NOT INCLUDE: International airfare into and out of Iran (approximately \$1,500); Visa fees for Iran (\$90 at time of printing); Excess luggage charges; Medical Expenses; Trip Insurance; Items of a purely personal nature; Gratuity to local Iranian guide.

COST: \$7,090 per person, double occupancy; \$1,310 single supplement

GROUP SIZE: Minimum 15, Maximum 25



the Friday Mosque, the best preserved 14th century mosque in Iran, and enjoy a walking tour through the covered streets of Yazd's old quarter. Spend the balance of the afternoon concentrating on the Zoroastrian religion and visit one of the two Towers of Silence. (B,L,D)

SHIRAZ Thursday, October 27

Head to a small village called Taft where a large number of Zoroastrians still live. Before reaching Shiraz visit the site of Pasargad where Cyrus the Great defeated Astyages the Mede in 550 BC and, according to tradition, decided to build the first Achaemenian capital on the site of his victory. Continue on to Shiraz and the Homa Hotel. (B,L,D)

SHIRAZ Friday, October 28

Today we enjoy a full day excursion to Persepolis, the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenian Empire and one of the world's most beautiful and spectacular archaeological sites. This palace city was built by craftsmen from around Darius' vast empire. Superb bas reliefs depict the flow of ritual processions. After lunch sitting in the shade of grape vines, visit Naghsh-E Rostam which contains the carved tombs of four Achaemenian kings. Return to Shiraz. (B,L,D)

SHIRAZ Saturday, October 29

Visit the Shiraz bazaar and the 19th century Eram Gardens built in a quadripartite Persian Paradise Garden structure. Explore the citadel or Arg-e Karim Khan built in 1766 using the best architects and artists and materials of the time. Stop at the Pink Mosque or Nasir-ol-Molk Mosque which is the oldest and one of the most elegant mosques in southern Iran. Continue on to the tomb of Saadi, one of the major Persian poets of the time and known all over the

world for the quality and depth of his social and moral thoughts in his writings. End the day at the tomb of the celebrated poet Hafez which is located in a small garden. (B,L,D)

ISFAHAN Sunday, October 30

Drive to Isfahan stopping en route for lunch. Upon arrival in Isfahan, visit Hasht Behesht which is located in the center of the Garden of Nightingales (the Bagh-e Bulbul), and is one of Isfahan's two surviving Safavid pavilions. Transfer to the delightful Abbasi Hotel, a converted caravanserai. (B,L,D)

ISFAHAN Monday, October 31

Isfahan is perhaps the most beautiful of all Iranian cities. Visit the Palace of Forty Columns, a charming pavilion where the walls and ceilings are covered with frescoes and paintings. Walk to the Maydan-e Shah or Imam Square, the central focus of this fascinating city which never failed to inspire and awe European merchants and ambassadors to the Safavid court. Explore the Lotfollah Mosque, the Ali Qapu Palace and the towering portal of the Shah Mosque. After lunch, spend the afternoon exploring the bazaar and learning more about traditional crafts in Iran. (B,L,D)

ISFAHAN Tuesday, November 1

Visit the Friday Mosque with its tiled ivans, vaulted ceilings and lofty domes that displays more than 800 years of Persian religious architecture. Admire some of the five bridges crossing the Zayendehrud River and wander through the city's fascinating Armenian quarter. Enjoy a farewell dinner this evening. (B,L,D)

ISFAHAN TO U.S. Wednesday, November 2

Depart Isfahan in the early morning and arrive back in the U.S.



WHAT TO EXPECT

Participants must be in very good health and able to keep up with an active group. In order to participate, one should be able to walk 1-2 miles per day comfortably, climb steep stairs without handrails or assistance and walk and stand for periods of two hours at a time.

Fall is a lovely time to travel in Iran when temperatures range from 60-85 degrees Fahrenheit. The infrastructure in Iran is quite good with modern roads and buses. Hotels are comfortable with private bathrooms and air-conditioning. Food is freshly prepared and healthy. During the program, participants should be dressed modestly and women will be required to have their head covered while in public areas. Alcohol is not permitted in Iran. More details will be provided upon registering for the trip.



Perspectives OF IRAN

RESERVATION FORM

OCTOBER 18-NOVEMBER 2, 2016

Name 1 _____

Name 2 _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell phone _____

Email Address _____

Enclosed is a deposit of _____ (\$500 per person) for _____ spaces.

Enclosed is my check **OR** Charge my deposit to my Visa MasterCard

CARD # _____ Expires _____ Security code _____

Authorized Cardholder Signature _____ Date _____

Final payment must be by check. Please make checks payable to "Distant Horizons." Do not write "Iran" on your check. Your deposit is fully refundable up until 14 days after receipt of your reservation form. A confirmation letter, full terms and conditions, reading list and a travel insurance application will be mailed to you upon receipt of your deposit.

ROOM ARRANGEMENTS

Single Supplement

Double Occupancy; I will be sharing a room with: _____

I would prefer a roommate, but will pay the single supplement if one is not available.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

I/we wish to be booked on the suggested group flight from SFO

I/we wish to be booked on a departing flight from: _____

I/we will make travel arrangements to arrive in Tehran and depart from Isfahan

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM ALONG WITH YOUR DEPOSIT TO:

Commonwealth Club Travel
555 Post Street, San Francisco, CA 94102
You may also fax the form to 415.597.6729

Phone: (415) 597-6720 | Fax: (415) 597-6729 | travel@commonwealthclub.org

Please note the State Department has had a Travel Warning for Iran since 1979. You can read this Travel Warning at http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_920.html. Our tour operator has operated many trips to Iran. The Commonwealth Club and our tour operator are closely monitoring the situation in Iran and will not operate the trip if the situation within the country becomes hostile or unsafe.



STUDY LEADER

Dr. Emily Jane O'Dell is an Assistant Professor at Sultan Qaboos University in the Sultanate of Oman. Previously, she held the Whittlesey Chair of History & Archaeology at the American University of Beirut, and taught at Columbia University, Brown University, and Harvard University -- where she received an award for excellence in teaching. Emily completed her Postdoctoral Fellowship at Harvard University in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and the Humanities Center. She received her PhD, MA, MFA, and MA from Brown University, and an additional Masters in Central Asian Studies from Columbia University.

Emily's writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *Salon*, *Christian Science Monitor*, NPR, and *Huffington Post*. Her recent academic publications touch upon Iranian cinema, Sufism, disability in Iran, Islamic law, and archaeology. In 2009, she was invited to speak (in Persian) at the Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tehran on Iranian and Tajik cultural and historical connections.

For her field-research and expertise on Islam, Sufism, cultural heritage, and politics, Emily has been a State Department Critical Languages Fellow for Persian and Tajiki, Fulbright-Hays Fellow, Harvard Traveling Fellow (Iran), Edward A. Hewett Policy Fellow, American Councils Research Fellow, IREX Fellow, and Columbia Pepsico Fellow.