



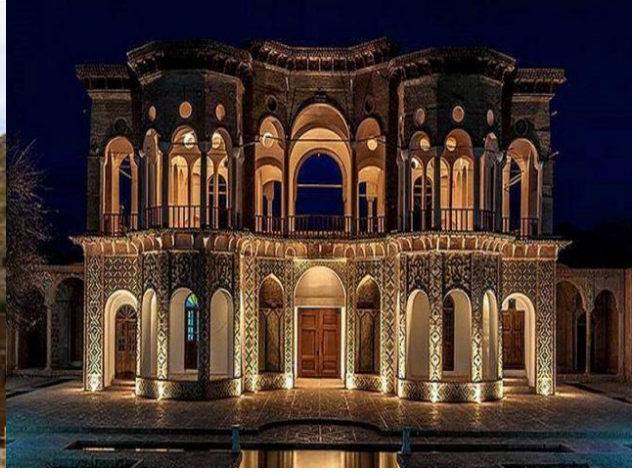
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## Full Itinerary

# Treasures of Persian Empires (18 Days)

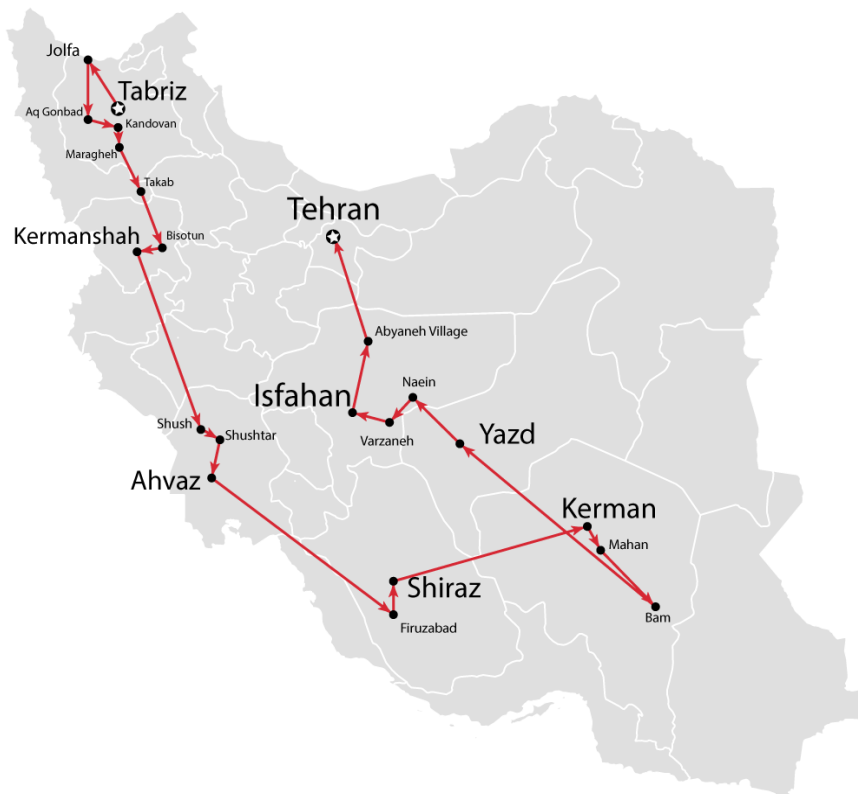
**Route:** Tabriz - Jolfa - Tabriz - Maragheh - Takab - Kermanshah - Susa - Ahvaz - Bishapur - Shiraz - Neyriz - Kerman - Mahan - Rayen - Kerman - Yazd - Varzaneh - Isfahan - Abyaneh - Tehran

- A visit to the largest covered traditional Bazaar
- Historical rock reliefs
- Attractive hand-made cliff houses
- Familiarity with the glorious Persian Empire
- A visit to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites
- **UNESCO World Heritage Sites:** Persepolis, Pasargadae, Chehel Sotoun Palace, and Naqsh-e Jahan Square



## Tour Overview

<b>Group Size:</b> 2 - 20	<b>Date Available:</b> Jan to Dec
<b>Distance:</b> 4100 Km	<b>Range:</b> 15 to 70 year old
<b>Altitude:</b> 1214 m - 1402 m AMSL	<b>Theme:</b> Cultural & Historical
<b>Physical Rate:</b> 1 out of 5	<b>Tour Code:</b> STC106





## Itinerary

### In a Nutshell

On this trip, we will introduce you the culture of Iran and the UNESCO World Heritage Sites. We embark our journey from Tabriz and after visiting the great Tabriz Bazaar and the Mehri Temple of Maragheh we continue on to Takab. We consider visiting Takht-e Soleyman and Taq Bostan. In Susa, head out to the Chogha Zanbil Temple and move towards Shiraz. After immersing in Shiraz atmosphere and enjoy the works of Achaemenid period, we go to Yazd. There, you will explore Fire Temple of Zoroastrian and Isfahan is our next destination. In Esfahan, you will ramble through Naqsh-e Jahan Square and other Safavid works. The tour ends with a visit capital of Iran.

#### Day 1: Tabriz

Upon your arrival at Tabriz airport, you are welcomed by the representative of Shakiba Company. After serving breakfast and taking a short rest, you'll go to visit Azerbaijan museum. This museum is the second largest museum in Iran in terms of historical monuments. Afterward, we'll introduce you **Blue (Kabud) Mosque** (15 century AD). You'll see the finest tile in the world in the facade of this mosque. The next site is a **Tabriz Bazaar** (World Heritage Site) where is the largest one in the world and has accepted many traditional jobs. In the evening, our guide leads you through **Shahgoli Promenade** where you spend the enjoyable time by walking along the beautiful pool and being among the locals.

**Overnight:** Tabriz, **Meals:** B, L, D

#### Day 2: Tabriz - Jolfa - Tabriz

Today, you have a chance to visit the **St. Stephen's Church** (World Heritage Site). This church was built in 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> centuries and it is architecturally beautiful and unparalleled. On the way to St. Stephen's church, there is the **Aras River**, which forms the border between Iran, the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia. After the Russo-Persian Wars, this river was designated as the border between Iran and Russia in the 17th to 19th centuries. After sightseeing, you'll back to Tabriz and stay there.

**Overnight:** Tabriz, **Meals:** B, L, D

#### Day 3: Tabriz - Kandovan - Maragheh

After having breakfast, we leave Tabriz to **Kandovan**. The houses of this village are carved in the mountains and dating back to the 5<sup>th</sup> millennium BC. After spending some hours in Kandovan, you'll head to Maragheh city. Maragheh is known as the city of domes and it has been the capital of Iran during the Ilkhanid period. Embark on an included visit to **Ilkhanid Museum**, where has kept the most works of the Ilkhanid and Timurid periods. Later, we'll go on to explore **Mehri temple**. You spend the night at Maragheh. Exploring amazing sites will await to welcome us tomorrow.

**Overnight:** Maragheh, **Meals:** B, L, D



**Day 4:** Maragheh - Takab

Today you'll go to the most astounding historical sites of your life. We drive toward Takab and stop at the **Takht-e Soleyman** (World Heritage Site). Until sixth century AD, Takht-e Soleyman was the largest religious and educational center in Iran that destroyed after the attack of Heraclius, Roman emperor. Here, you can find the works of Parthian (3<sup>rd</sup> century BC), Sasanian (3<sup>rd</sup> to 7th Century AD) and Il-Khanid (13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries) eras.

**Overnight:** Takab, **Meals:** B, L, D

**Day 5:** Takab - Kermanshah

Today you are heading to Kermanshah. Spend the morning exploring **Taq-e Bostan** (third century AD). This historic site consists of several rock reliefs and inscriptions on which the scenes from the coronation of Khosro Parviz and several Sassanid kings were carved.

**Overnight:** Kermanshah, **Meals:** B, L, D

**Day 6:** Kermanshah - Susa - Ahvaz

Today we wander in Susa city. The city belonged to the Elamite period, and the works of this period as well as the Achaemenid, Seleucid, Parthian, Sassanid, and Islamic periods has remained. **Chogha Zanbil** (World Heritage Site) is the most famous work of the Elamite era which was built in the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC. This ziggurat is the site of worship to the port of Inshushinak, the guardian goddess of Susa. The king of Elam wrote in the inscription "I've engraved the golden bricks and gave away this place to the Inshushinak. I hope to be accepted". You'll arrive at Ahwaz and stay there. Prepare yourselves for next exploring sites.

**Overnight:** Ahvaz, **Meals:** B, L, D

**Day 7:** Ahvaz - Bishapur - Shiraz

On the way Ahwaz to Shiraz, you'll stop at Nishapur. You drop in on Tangeh Chogan. This site was the polo match location of Sasanian kings. In some parts of **Tangeh Chogan**, there are rock reliefs of these kings.

**Overnight:** Shiraz, **Meals:** B, L, D

**Day 8:** Shiraz

On the next trip in the heart of Iran, **Nasir-al-Mulk Mosque** (the nineteenth century) is a good start point. This mosque, known as the Pink Mosque, is considered one of the most exclusive mosques in Iran for Muqarnas and tiling. Don't forget to take pictures of colored glasses. **Qavam House** (the nineteenth century) is your next stop. A vast courtyard of this house is well known for its abundant orange trees. Afterward, you'll head out to **Vakil Bazaar**. The evening is a good opportunity to be taken to **Hafezieh** (tomb of Hafez).

**Overnight:** Shiraz, **Meals:** B, L, D



### **Day 9: Shiraz**

Continue exploring Shiraz on the second day by **Persepolis** (World Heritage Site). This palace is the best place to get familiar with the architecture dedicated to the sixth and fifth century BC. After visiting Persepolis, you head to **Necropolis** (World Heritage Site), which has kept rock reliefs and tombs from Elamite to Sassanid period. Take a stroll to the **Ka'ba-ye Zartosht** (Cube of Zoroaster). After spending hours in the ancient world, you back to Shiraz and immediately be taken to **Eram Garden** (World Heritage Site). The establishment of this garden date back to the Seljuk period (11-12 AD), but the beautiful building in the middle of the garden was built in the Qajar period (18-20 AD). Today tour visiting ends with Shah Cheragh which is one of the holy places of Iranians for praying.

**Overnight:** Shiraz, **Meals:** B, L, D

### **Day 10: Shiraz - Neyriz - Kerman**

Today, we leave Shiraz toward Kerman. En route to Kerman, we visit Neyriz city. According to the words of historians, it has been one of the Achaemenid Army steel weapons producers. Now, it is the time to visit Jame Mosque in this city. It is one of the oldest mosques in Iran, which regarding to elderly sayings, it was the fire temple in the past. **Jame Mosque of Neyriz** is the first single porch mosques in the Khorasani style architecture. We'll arrive Kerman at night and stay there.

**Overnight:** Kerman, **Meals:** B, L, D

### **Day 11: Kerman - Mahan - Rayen - Kerman**

Kerman is the largest desert city in Iran despite to be located in the desert, it is considered the highest city in Iran. We make our way to Mahan to visit the **Shazdeh Garden** (World Heritage Site). This garden was built in the Qajar period (1881 AD). You'll see the most beautiful Iranian fountain here. We'll leave Mahan toward Rayen. **Arg-e Rayen** is worth a stop to see. You'll come back to Kerman and stay overnight there.

**Overnight:** Kerman, **Meals:** B, L, D

### **Day 12: Kerman - Yazd**

We'll head to Yazd this morning. The first visiting is dedicated to the **Zoroastrian Fire Temple**, which is the beautiful building and a fire is burning here hasn't extinguished for 1500 years. After fire temple, it is the time to visit **Henna workshop**. You'll get familiar with the traditional way of grinding Henna. We'll continue on to **Jame Mosque of Yazd** (12<sup>th</sup> century AD). This mosque is considered the masterpiece of the Timurid period its long minarets being seen far away. An evening is a good time to take a stroll in **Fahadan** quarter and pass through the adobe lanes. After that, we'll reach **Amir Chakhmaq Complex**. This is one of the largest urban squares in Iran and the place of traditional businesses in Yazd. On the corner of the square, there is a wooden structure named Nakhil (palm) which the seventy people move it as the sign of human liberation on Ashura day.

**Overnight:** Yazd, **Meals:** B, L, D



### **Day 13:** Yazd - Naein - Varzaneh

Today, we leave Yazd to Varzaneh. In the middle of the way, we stop at Naein and visit the cloak weaving workshop. Cloak is a long dress like manteau used by Iranians in the old days. Our next destination will be **Pirnia House** (Safavid period) or the ethnography museum of Naein. Later, we move toward **Varzaneh**. It is a desert city where you can get familiar with the desert people's culture. The first amazing place you see here is **Gavchah** (Ox-well Complex). The **Dovecote** is the next attraction you are going to explore. In the past, the farmers have collected bird dropping and used them as fertilizer required. In the evening, you go to Varzaneh desert and you could try walking on the sand.

**Overnight:** Varzaneh (guesthouse), **Meals:** B, L, D

### **Day 14:** Varzaneh - Isfahan

You'll move toward Isfahan in the early morning. We start our visiting with the **Chehel Sotoun Palace** (World Heritage Site). When you count its columns, you'll get number twenty. Don't be surprised. Certainly ask your guide why does it call 40-columns-palace? The fabulous murals of this palace represent the wars and joys of the Safavid and Qajar kings, Afshar (18 century AD). We cross through the beautiful park to arrive at **Naqsh-e Jahan Square** (World Heritage Site). It is the largest traditional square in Iran, which consists of two mosques, one palace and one Bazaar. Upon arrival at the square, you'll be taken to the **Shah Mosque**, which consists of four minarets. Facing the mosque on the north side, there is the Qeysarie Bazaar where you can see the old businesses of Isfahan.

**Overnight:** Isfahan, **Meals:** B, L, D

### **Day 15:** Isfahan

Today is the day we have been waiting for. We start visiting Isfahan with **Jolfa Quarter** (Armenian quarter). Armenian of Isfahan lives in this quarter that they've moved to Isfahan from Azerbaijan in Safavid period. There are several churches in this quarter, which **Vank Cathedral** is the largest one. A museum which will be seen in the cathedral can get familiar you with Armenian history of Isfahan. Don't miss another museum in Isfahan, **Music Museum**. In addition to getting familiar with musical instruments, you can listen to the music of various regions of Iran for the moments. We continue our visiting to the **Ali-Gholi-Agha** old quarter to know about Iranian traditional sports as **Zurkhaneh Sports**.

**Overnight:** Isfahan, **Meals:** B, L, D

### **Day 16:** Isfahan - Abyaneh - Tehran

We make our way to Tehran. In the middle of the way, we head out to **Abyaneh village** located in the northwest of Natanz. Upon arrival at the village and crossing through the alleys, you'll face with stepped view, red-colored houses and local clothing of villagers. In the evening, you move toward the capital of Iran, Tehran.

**Overnight:** Tehran, **Meals:** B, L, D



### **Day 17: Tehran**

Tehran is the largest city in Iran, also known as light and sound. In the morning you wake up, you'll start visiting with **National Jewelry Museum**. You can see the most expensive jewelries in the world here. These jewelries have been bought from different parts of Iran and the world by the Iranian merchants. After that, you will be taken to the **Golestan Palace** (World Heritage Site). This palace with more than 400 years of antiquity (16 century AD) is one of the palaces has remained from the Safavid period. Next destination is **Abgineh Museum**. The museum, also known as the Museum of Glass and Clay, was established in one of the old buildings in Tehran, which is located in a large garden. The oldest glasses of this museum are the ones belonging to the Chogha Zanbil Temple.

**Overnight:** Tehran, **Meals:** B, L, D

### **Day 18: Tehran**

Departure



## Need to Know

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Accommodation 4-5* Hotels &amp; Guesthouse</b></p>	<p><b>Total - 17 nights in 4-5-star double room &amp; 1 night in guesthouse</b>            3 Night - Hotel in Tabriz            1 Night - Hotel in Maragheh            1 Night - Hotel in Takab            1 Night - Hotel in Kermanshah            1 Night - Hotel in Ahvaz            3 Night - Hotel in Shiraz            2 Night - Hotel in Kerman            1 Night - Hotel in Yazd            1 Night - Guesthouse in Varzaneh            2 Night - Hotel in Isfahan            2 Night - Hotel in Tehran</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Transport</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Air-conditioned Private Mini Bus</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Meals</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">B: 17</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">L: 17</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">D: 17</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Inclusion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hotel Accommodation</li> <li>- Airport - Hotel - Airport Transfer</li> <li>- Meals as it's mentioned</li> <li>- Iran Visa (Reference Code)</li> <li>- Entrance fees as it's mentioned</li> <li>- Professional Tour Guide</li> <li>- Free Wi-Fi</li> <li>- Iranian SIM Card</li> </ul>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Exclusion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International Airfare</li> <li>- Personal Insurance</li> <li>- Visa Stamp Fee</li> <li>- Expenses of Personal Nature</li> <li>- Tips and Portages</li> </ul>		





## Why travel with Shakiba?

**A to Z Services:** Shakiba Travel Company offers all the necessary services you need from A to Z, during your trip to Iran. The services include visa collection assistance, tour guides, transfer, transport (private car, van, bus, plain and train), and accommodation (hotels, hostels, Eco lodges, homestays, guesthouses).

**Iran Visa:** Shakiba experienced visa team highly recommends travelers to get their Iran visas before coming to the country. This will accelerate and facilitate the trip and will cause lots of comfort upon arrival. Sometimes it has been noticed that some travelers applied to get a visa upon arrival and unfortunately they were rejected due to some problems. If travelers collect their visa before arrival they will guarantee their trip and there won't be the risk of rejection. Our team at Shakiba Travel Company is well ready to assist its customers with the process of visa application and is on-line 24 hours to answer all visa-related questions.

**Reasonable Prices:** There is always the possibility of comparing our prices with other companies and make sure of our low fees. There are also different occasions for benefiting from Shakiba Company's offers and discounts.

**Free of Charge:** One free in groups of up to 10 person

**Security:** Iran is generally a very safe place to travel. Violent crime against foreigners is extremely rare and, indeed, if you do your best to fit in with local customs, you are unlikely to be treated with anything (<https://www.lonelyplanet.com/iran/safety>).

**Service Quality:** Shakiba does its best to fully satisfy the customers to receive travel services with the quality they expect. So, we guarantee your satisfaction.

**Full-Time Support (7/24):** Our experienced team is always ready to support its customers all day long. Customers and travelers can always feel free to ask whatever questions they have and receive immediate responses and advise on their selected package. Our professionals are willing to assist with all of your tour-related inquiries.