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Full Itinerary

Alamut Castle of Assassins Tour 2019 (15 days)

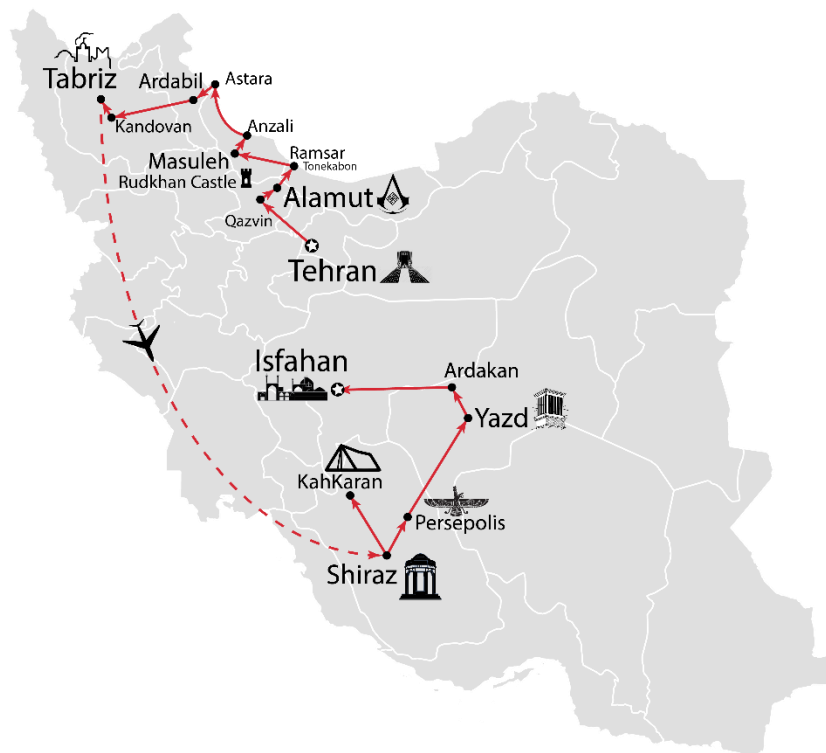
Route: Tehran - Qazvin - Alamut - Garmaroud - Dinehroud - Alamut - Tonekabon - Ramsar - Masuleh - Roudkhan Castle - Anzali - Astara - Heyran Valley - Ardebil - Sareyn - Kandovan - Tabriz - Shiraz - Kahkaran - Shiraz - Persepolis - Naqsh-e Rostam - Yazd - Ardakan - Isfahan - Tehran

- A trip to Assassin's origin and a visit to Alamut Castle
- Visit Persepolis and Necropolis (Achaemenid Empire)
- A visit to the world's largest lake
- Swimming in volcanic and hot springs
- See the scenic landscapes of North West of Iran
- A visit to qanat: the ancient underground water management system
- Walking in the world's largest historic Bazaar
- A visit to Historic city of Yazd
- Half of the World (Isfahan: World Crafts City)
- Get deeply involved with the life realities of the nomadic tribes
- Wonderful rural experience: Kandovan and Masuleh
- **UNESCO World Heritage Sites:** 1. Sheikh Safi al-Din Khangah and Shrine Ensemble, 2. Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex, 3. Persepolis, 4. Historic City of Yazd, 5. Naqsh-e Jahan Square, and 6. Chehel Sotoun Palace



Tour Overview

Group Size: 2 - 24	Date Available: April, May, Jun, October, November
Distance: 3000 Km + 1:40 min	Range: 15 to 80 year old
Altitude: -22 m - +2099 m AMSL	Theme: Cultural & Ecological
Physical Rate: 2 out of 5	Tour Code: STC109





Itinerary

In a Nutshell

Perhaps many of you have heard the name of Alamut by playing Assassin's Creed, or you've seen this name in the "Description of the World" written by Marco Polo or "Alamut" dedicated to Vladimir Bartol. A trip to Alamut is an opportunity for you to get to know about Alamut Castle and the men who influenced the world a thousand years ago. The Alamut Tour takes you to the heart of the Alborz Mountains and you are taken to the Caspian Sea next. You can swim in hot mineral waters (Spa) in Sareyn and visit the world's largest traditional market in Tabriz.

Day 1: Tehran - Ghazvin - Alamut

Upon your arrival in Imam Khomeini International Airport, Shakiba's representative awaits to welcome you. Then transfer to City of **Ghazvin**. After a short rest and serving your breakfast at **Guest House**, we drive towards Alamut area. Continue driving up to **Alborz Mountains**, we pass some villages and stop at **Canyons of Andej village** where having a cope of coffee or tea make you fresh. The canyons in the valley of Assassins is a must-see attraction. You will find a twisted form of sandstone rock material in this zone of the valley. There is not so much walking but we promise you will like the scenery! Be ready for light trekking that takes us up to **Alamut Castle**. There would be a maximum two hours of walking/hiking in the plan. Alamut Castle (Hassan-i Sabbah Castle) has over **600 steps** to hike. At the end, we will have time to socialize with locals before a traditional dinner.

Overnight: Alamut (Local House), **Meals:** B, L, D

Day 2: Alamut - Garmaroud - Dinehroud

In the morning we start of Trekking from Garmaroud Village, we will transfer to this village; it is about 15 kilometers far from the T-junction of the main road to Alamut castle. After that, we will trek approximately until evening. Garmaroud can be the most walker-friendly one in the area. You may pass some small canyons or may walk a little on the bed of the alive rivers, then be prepared for wet shoes!

More details

The normal one-day trekking plan is from Garmaroud to Narmilat (based on the time availability of the tourists and the weather conditions).

This walking is not only on the uneven surface, so be prepared with your proper walking shoes and possibly walking sticks. You will pass small rivers, hike up and descend down from the mountains and hills. If you are here in the valley on the season March - June, you will have the wonderful views to the snow-capped mountains. Trekking normally gives you an opportunity to be in contact with the pure local life style.

Overnight: Dinehroud (Local House), **Meals:** B, L, D

Day 3: Dinehroud - Tonekabon - Ramsar

After having a local Breakfast in Dinehroud we start to Trek in the heart of the natures and mountains and the villages about. The view is amazing in early spring in this zone, but the weather may change within an hour from being full sunny to completely foggy or sometimes rainy. But as long as one our local mountain guides is accompanying you in this trip, there is nothing to be worried about!



Since the weather is always good in simple words in summertime in this area, if you pass **Pichebon** or have hiked around this village, you will definitely pass by some herds of sheep (maybe belonging to nomads in the valley or the villagers from close by villages) and a lot of beehives. This road ends up and takes you in the **Caspian Sea** at the town of **Tonekabon** when you drive about and pass **Maraan, Yuj** and some other villages.

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

Day 4: Ramsar - Masuleh - Roudkhan Castle - Anzali

Enjoy the scenic driving alongside the Caspian Sea and drive to Masuleh. Masuleh architecture is extraordinary and courtyards and roofs both serve as pedestrian areas similar to the streets. However, the small streets and many stairs simply also wouldn't make it possible for vehicles to enter. This makes the town wonderful to explore on foot and gives an opportunity to meet and enjoy the hospitality that Iran is renowned for. After visiting the historic village of **Masuleh**, we'll drive towards **Fuman** visiting the **Rudkhan Castle**. Construction of Rudkhan Castle dates back to the Sassanid era. In 11th century, Hassan-i Sabbah and his followers, used Rudkhan Castle as one of the assassin castles in Iran. The length of the wall around this castle is 1,500 meters and you have to climb many steps to reach it. Then we drive to Anzali via the Caspian Sea coastal-line town.

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

Day 5: Anzali - Astara - Heyran Valley - Ardebil - Sareyn

Today we'll be driving to Sareyn. En route visiting **Asalem to Talesh Roud**. On the way to Asalem, you are going to experience untouched and pristine nature around the Asalem Road. This road is one of the best scenic roads in Iran. You can see many beautiful landscapes on your way to Astara. Then you will drive to Ardabil via **Heyran pass**. Heyran pass links Gilan and Ardabil provinces and has many scenic landscapes to photography. It is believed that this pass was named Heyran as it is almost always shrouded in a cloud of mist, creating an astonishing view for onlookers. Heyran Road that leads to Sareyn and Ardebil. In Ardebil, you will visit one of the main sights in the city in northwest Iran, the **shrine of Sheikh Safi al-Din Ardabili** (World Heritage Site). He (died in 1334 AD) was spiritual leader of Safavid kings. When traveling there, you really must try some of the **traditional dishes**, as there is a great variety of food, traditional desserts, and sweets, and the quality of their **honey** is renowned. In the evening we arrived at Sareyn. Sareyn is famous for its ("warm spas"). The springs are near inactive volcano, mount Sabalan or Savalan (third highest peak in Iran) and its water contains Sulphur particles. You can use SPA and take a rest and be relax.

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

Day 6: Sareyn - Kandovan - Tabriz

Today, you'll journey to Kandovan in the **volcanic highlands** of Mt. Sahand. About 60 km away from Tabriz lies Kandovan where exemplifies man-made cliff dwellings. It has a reputation of rocky village which are still inhabited. Kandovan as troglodyte homes is similar to dwellings in the Turkish region of Cappadocia. In the evening we will drive to Tabriz.

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

Day 7: Tabriz

After breakfast, start your city tour in Tabriz. You start your sightseeing by visiting Blue mosque (1465 AD) whose mosaic tiles invite you to a deep thinking.



Once the mosque was built, artists took a further 25 years to cover every surface with the blue majolica tiles and intricate calligraphy for which it was nicknamed (Lonely Planet). Once the mosque was built, artists took a further 25 years to cover every surface with the blue majolica tiles and intricate calligraphy for which it was nicknamed. The interior is also blue, and missing patterns have been laboriously painted onto many lower sections around the few remaining patches of original tiles. A smaller domed chamber away from the entrance once served as a private mosque for the Qareh Koyunlu shahs. But as you stand before the north façade with much of its original tile work still intact, you'll get a glimpse into the enduring artistic legacy of Iran's ancient dynasties. Next door, at the **Azerbaijan Museum**, you'll peruse a vast collection of archaeological artifacts spanning millennia of human history and culture in the region. You'll also see the **Arg-e Alishah**, an imposing but unfinished 14th-century monument that later served as a military fortress during the Russo-Persian Wars of the 19th century. Afterward, you will visit the **Grand Bazaar**, the only bazaar on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites. It's a wonderful place to chat with engaging merchants and browse for **jewelry, carpets, and spices**. But with 4 miles of shops, you'll also mingle with friendly residents who are here to shop for spices and other daily staples. End your day by visiting **Shah Goli** (El-Goli), a large park with an artificial lake in the middle. It is a really good place for afternoon strolls.

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

Day 8: Shiraz

After serving breakfast, your tour starts with a visit to the city of Shiraz. You start your sightseeing by visiting **Nasir-al Mulk** mosque whose pink arrays invite you to deep silence. The next site you are going to visit is **Narenjestan Qavam**, which was formerly an educational institute for the famous orientalist, Arthur Pope. Arthur Pope and his wife have used the place for doing researches and have changed it into a museum. In the evening, you will have a walking tour to see the exterior view of **Karim Khan Citadel** and go shopping in **Vakil Bazaar**. The evening is a good opportunity to be taken to **Hafezieh** (tomb of Hafez). The last one is **Ali ibn Hamzeh Holly Shrine**. The evening is at your leisure.

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

Day 9: Shiraz - Kahkaran

Today, you will visit **Ganbil Canyon**. Ganbil is one of the nicest places in the **Zagros Mountains** in the south of Iran located about 130k from the northwest of Shiraz. Arrive to Kahkaran Village and start trekking. Stop to a **nomad's family** for lunch; continue trekking to the canyon; Arrive to a nomad's family around sunset; Spend the night with the nomad's family.

Overnight: Kahkaran (Nomadic Tent), **Meals:** B, L, D

Day 10: Kahkaran - Persepolis - Yazd

After homemade breakfast, we drive to Persepolis and the Necropolis from the different way. Today you will see some parts of the rich history of Iran. Persepolis, be constructed in 5th century BC, is a beautiful architectural masterpiece that considered as a symbol of Achaemenid Empire. To continue your trip, you stop at **Naqsh-e Rostam** and visit four tombs of the ancient kings. After getting familiar with the majesty and glory of the Achaemenid Empire, you go to Yazd and on the way, you will have a stop to visit **Abarkooh and Aghazade house**. Unpredictable surprisingly historical House (Nearly 400 years old) where you can have a delicious dinner in front of a nice garden. The atmosphere is quiet, far from any stress. The **windcatcher** is unique. At night you will arrive at Yazd.



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

Day 11: Yazd - Ardakan

You leave your hotel in the morning to be transferred to the **Zoroastrian Fire Temple** and the **Tower of Silence**. Zoroaster was a pre-Islamic prophet in Iran who was famous for bringing peace and friendship. He had many supporters in the country and there are still many Iranians who are following his verdicts. This Fire Temple is a place still active for praying and it is regarded as the unique one in Iran. After your visit, you get amazed by another unique structure called Tower of Silence where Zoroastrians would leave dead bodies for excarnation. Yazd is a city incredibly famous for **Henna**. Thus, it is planned to visit a workshop in the city and learn how Henna is being ready to be used in Asian traditional medication. It is also used in marriage and some ritual ceremonies. The evening is the time where you pass through the lanes of an old Quarter called **Fahadan**. On your way to a **Baklava** baking workshop (a kind of traditional sweet). Pass **Amir Chaqmaq Square**, and enjoy the evening view of the square and visiting **Yazd Jameh Mosque**, the first view that attracts you is the facade and the tall minarets of the mosque. You will take a walk in the area near the mosque and enjoy the antiques, which are in the nearby shops. In the evening we visit the Old Persian tradition of **Zoorkhaneh**, where men of all ages meet in old and hidden gyms to strengthen their bodies and minds. Accompanied by singing and drum beats, precise exercises are performed with high respect of each other and god. It's a unique and highly authentic local experience! Drive to Ardakan about. Your stay is at the Traditional old house in the heart of Ardakan's historical places. You can go up to the roof and see Ardakan from above.

Overnight: Ardakan (Guest House), **Meals:** B

Day 12: Ardakan - Isfahan

Ardakan hosts the world's largest one-sided wind tower. You explore the city of Ardakan with its amazing aqueduct (**qanat**). In this qanat, the youngest of Iran's pitman is ready to familiarize you with the culture of the ancient people and the system of extracting water from the depths of the ground. Then you pass through the mud-brick lanes which have created one of the largest Iranian adobe structures. After that, we head out to **Tahini** (sesame paste known as Ardeh in Iran) **workshop**. The **carpet museum** is your next stop and you will be taken to the dolls farm. After lunch, in the evening we drive toward Isfahan.

Overnight: Isfahan, **Meals:** B

Day 13: Isfahan

Today you will visit the city of Isfahan, As the 17th-century capital of the Safavid Empire, Isfahan was one of the world's greatest cities - architecturally striking, wealthy beyond imagine, and politically powerful with Europeans, Ottomans, Indians, and Chinese coming to its court - the heart of a vast Persian Empire that stretched from the Euphrates River in present-day Iraq to the Oxus River in Afghanistan. Indeed, its grandeur inspired the rhyming proverb, "Isfahan nesf-e jahan" (**Isfahan is Half the World**). Capture the marvels of the Safavid dynasty, all in a single square, **Naqsh-e Jahan Square**. Once used as a polo field, Naqsh-e Jahan square is now a lively traditional bazaar. Marvel at **Ali Qapu Palace** with its unique features and mesmerizing view of the square from the top, you'll marvel at its beautiful music rooms and the balconies where Safavid kings would sit to enjoy the polo matches unfolding in the square below. Soak up Islamic architecture in a magnificent Imam Mosque on one side and small but impressive **Sheikh Lotfullah Mosque** on the other side of the square.



Sip some tea and indulge yourself in an ethnic dish in a memorable place. Stroll in splendid Chehel Sotoun Palace with the gardens surrounding it. After lunch, the next is 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, Qajar kings and Afshar (18 century AD). This evening is your free time. Recommend you to take a stroll at Naqsh-e Jahan Square, and visit the **Qeisariyeh Bazaar** to spend a couple of hours there. You would get familiar with **Iranian handicrafts** and it is worth shopping.

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

Day 14: Isfahan - Tehran

Capture the colorful beauty of the **Jolfa Quarter**. Armenian of Isfahan lives in this quarter that they've moved to Isfahan from Azerbaijan in the Safavid period. There are several churches in this quarter, which the **Vank Cathedral** is the largest one. A museum that will be seen in the cathedral can get familiar you with Armenian history of Isfahan. After lunch, you will enjoy the traditional Iranian music at the **Music Museum** and know about all the old and modern Iranian musical instruments and also you will enjoy the live performance in this Museum. In the evening we drive to Tehran, International Airport for the flight back to Home.

Overnight: Waiting at the Airport, **Meals:** B, L, D

Day 15: Tehran

Departure



Need to Know

<p style="text-align: center;">Accommodation Standard Class 3/4/5* Hotels, Guesthouse, Local House, and Nomadic Tent</p>	<p>Total - 9 nights in 3-star double room, 2 nights in guesthouse, 2 nights in local house, and 1 night in nomadic tent 1 day - Guesthouse in Qazvin: rest and serve breakfast 1 Night - Local House in Alamut 1 Night - Local House in Dinehroud 1 Night - Hotel in Ramsar 1 Night - Hotel in Anzali 1 Night - Hotel in Sareyn 1 Night - Hotel in Tabriz 1 Night - Hotel in Ramsar 2 Night - Hotel in Shiraz 1 Night - Nomadic Tent in Kahkaran 1 Night - Hotel in Yazd 1 Night - Guesthouse in Ardakan 2 Night - Hotel in Isfahan</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Transport</p>	<p>Private Car (2 Pax), Van (3 - 9 Pax), Middle Bus (10 - 20 Pax), Domestic Flight</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Meals</p>	B: 14	L: 14	D: 14
<p style="text-align: center;">Inclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hotel Accommodation - Transportation: Air-conditioned vehicles as it's mentioned - Domestic Flight (Tabriz - Shiraz) - Airport - Hotel - Airport Transfer - Meals as it's mentioned - Iran Visa (Reference Code) - Entrance Fees as it's mentioned UNESCO: 6 Attractions - Professional Tour Guide - Free Wi-Fi - Iranian SIM Card - Gift behalf of the Shakiba Travel Company 		
<p style="text-align: center;">Exclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International Airfare - Personal Insurance - Visa Stamp Fee - Expenses of Personal Nature - Tips and Portages 		



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.