



A group of Iranian researchers and potters has reconstructed a replica of a prehistorical vessel, which is believed to be used for alchemy, a form of speculative hypothesis tried to transform base metals such as lead or copper into silver or gold and to discover a cure for disease and a way of extending life.

"A replica of a clay vessel belonging to the first millennium BC, which is said to be once an alchemy instrument, is made by the artists of a pottery workshop of the Research Institute of Cultural Heritage & Tourism," CHTN quoted Seyyed Abdolmajid Sharifzadeh, who presides over the traditional arts group of the institute, as saying on Saturday. "The [original] earthen vessel, which was the subject of this research was unearthed in the village of Kaluraz, Rudbar county, Gilan province," Sharifzadeh said.

**Replica of Prehistorical  
'Alchemy' Vessel Built  
by Iranian Potters**

## Course Examines Standards to be Enforced in Traditional Glass Workshops



**C**ertain standards, which should be enforced in traditional glass workshops, were discussed in a training course held on Saturday for a host of glassmakers and related individuals in Tehran province. It was the first course of its kind held for glass-blowing workshops in Varamin that produces some 70 percent of Iran's glassware and crystal. Glass blowing is a glass-forming technique that humans have used to shape glass since the 1st century BC.

The technique consists of inflating molten glass with a blowpipe to form a sort of glass bubble, that can be molded into glassware for practical or artistic purposes. Varamin, a hectic hub of glass production with 100 active workshops, annually exports some two trillion rials (\$47.6 million at the official rate of 42,000 rials) worth of glassware to the Persian Gulf littoral states and some European countries, according to Zhila Khodadadi, who presides over Varamin's cultural heritage and tourism office. She also noted that \$5 million worth of handmade glassware and crystals were exported directly and indirectly from Varamin to other countries during the last Iranian calendar year 1398 (ended on March 19, 2020). Iran exported \$523 million worth of handicrafts during the past calendar year 1398 (ended March 19). Of the figure, some \$273 million worth of handicrafts were exported officially through customs, and about \$250 million was earned via suitcase trade (allowed for customs-free and tax-free transfer) through various provinces, according to data provided by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts. Ceramics, pottery vessels, handwoven cloths as well as personal ornamentations with precious and semi-precious gemstones are traditionally exported to Iraq, Afghanistan, Germany, the U.S., the UK, and other countries.

## Assessment of Ardebil Completed as Touristic City

**I**ran's Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts has completed a comprehensive assessment of Ardebil as a touristic city, the tourism minister announced.

The evaluation was conducted under the country's comprehensive tourism plan, which is being developed under the auspices of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Ardebil is the first Iranian city that is completely evaluated as a touristic city, the tourism minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan said.

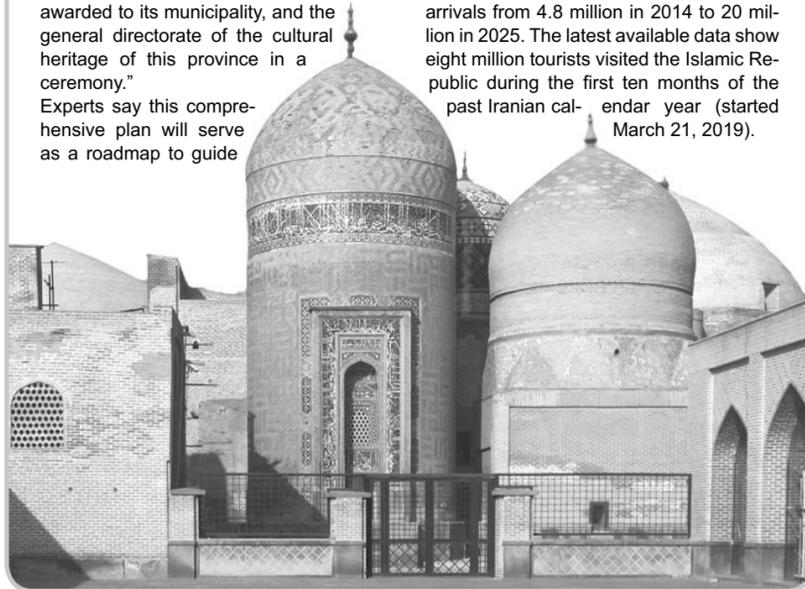
"Ardebil was evaluated as the first tourist city in the country... and the evaluation document of this city will soon be awarded to its municipality, and the general directorate of the cultural heritage of this province in a ceremony."

Experts say this comprehensive plan will serve as a roadmap to guide

tourists from all over the globe to achieve a sustainable and competitive tourism market.

Sprawling on a high, windswept plateau, Ardebil is well-known for having lush natural beauties, hospitable people, and its silk and carpet trade tradition. It is also home to the UNESCO-registered Sheikh Safi al-Din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble.

Iran expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots such as bazaars, museums, mosques, bridges, bathhouses, madrasas, mausoleums, churches, towers, and mansions, of which 24 being inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, it aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025. The latest available data show eight million tourists visited the Islamic Republic during the first ten months of the past Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2019).



## Khuzestan, Iran's Unique Haven for Birds

**T**he southwestern province of Khuzestan is the most diverse region in terms of different bird species, its unique and pleasant climate, as well as rich natural habitats have turned this province into a paradise for rare and endangered species of birds. Khuzestan is home to some 379 recognized species of birds supporting a variety of breeding and wintering waterfowl and seabirds. Every year, with the onset of the cold season, flocks of migra-

tory birds come to winter in the province from the cold regions of Central Asia.

Due to the existence of numerous rivers, wetlands, and special bird habitats, at least 6 species of rare birds of Iran that live in the margins of wetlands and rivers have been recorded in Khuzestan province, two species of which have been seen only in this region. From terns and ibises to house

sparrows, various subspecies of birds will surely be recorded in Khuzestan province by researching and expanding the science of bird watching in the country.

While today, poachers and hunters travel to Khuzestan from neighboring cities and in addition to hunting birds, endanger the species by pushing them toward extinction.

In this regard, Mohammad Javad Ashrafi, chief of Khuzestan's department of environment, stated that about 20 percent of the country's wetlands are located in Khuzestan, this is why the province is home to most migratory birds, along with the favorable weather conditions.

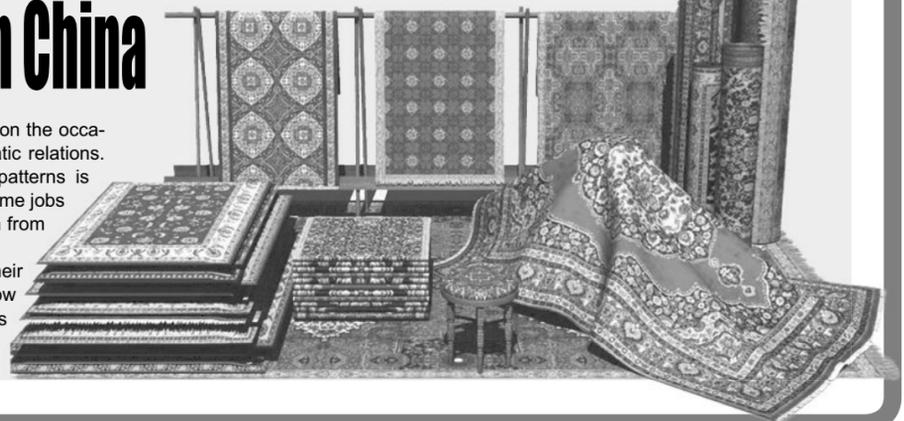


## Exhibit of Handwoven Persian Carpets Opens in China

**I**ran on Saturday inaugurated an exhibition of hand-woven carpets in Shanghai to commemorate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations with China. The exhibition has jointly been arranged by Bordbar Cultural Foundation, Mahan Air, and Shanghai Art Museum, according to the consulate general of Iran in Shanghai, IRNA reported on Saturday. Iranian Consul General in Shanghai Ramezan Parvaz was amongst attendees to the inauguration ceremony of the exhibit, which will be running for a month, the report said. On the sidelines of the ceremony, Parvaz said other cultural and art ceremonies are scheduled to

be held in Shanghai and its neighboring provinces on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Iran-China diplomatic relations. Weaving rugs and carpets based on traditional patterns is widely practiced across many Iranian villages as home jobs or at small workshops with know-how passed down from generation to generation.

Persian carpets are sought after internationally for their delicate designs and high quality. Official figures show handmade carpets have a significant share in Iran's non-oil exports.



cooking



### Baklava

Baklava or Baghlava is a sweet pastry that is popular around the world. Baklava is so filling and full of calories.

#### Ingredients:

- 1 Cup All Purpose Flour
- 1/4 Cup Sugar
- 2 Tbsp Sugar
- 2 oz (57 g) Pistachios
- 1.5 oz (42 g) Walnuts
- 1/5 oz (42 g) Almonds
- 1 Tsp Ground Cinnamon
- 1 Stick Cinnamon
- 1 Clove
- 1/3 Cup Honey
- 1 Tbsp Unsalted Butter
- 1/4 Tsp Cider Vinegar
- 1/2 Lemon (1/2 Tbsp Lemon Juice, 2 inch Lemon Zest)
- 1 1/2 Tbsp Vegetable Oil
- 1/8 Tsp Salt



#### Directions:

Combine a cup of all purpose flour and 1/8 tsp of salt in a large bowl and stir.

In a smaller bowl, mix 1/3 cup of hot water with one and half tsp vegetable oil and cider, stir well. Add the water and oil mixture to the flour bowl gradually.

Add more flour if the dough is too sticky. Knead the dough for 20 minutes.

Rub the dough with vegetable oil, place it back in the bowl, cover the bowl with a lid or a plastic wrap, and let rest for two hours. Mix the ground pistachios, walnuts and almonds in a bowl, add 1/4 cup of sugar, and a tsp of ground cinnamon and stir. Melt a tbsp of unsalted butter and grease the bakeware's surface and the sides with it. Cut the dough in 6 equal pieces. Roll out each piece of dough on a well flour surface as thin as it gets. Be generous in using more flour on the rolling pin and your working surface. Lay the dough on the bakeware, brush the surface with the melted butter. Extra edges can be cut or folded back on top the layer. Repeat the steps until you have 3 layers of dough. Cover the surface with a layer of the ground pistachios and walnuts mixture evenly. Add three more layers of dough on top. Remember to brush the dough layers with the melted butter. Cut the Baklavas in squares of triangles.

Preheat the oven to 350° F (176° C), bake for 30 minutes. Remove the bakeware from the oven, re cut the baklavas and make sure they are now separated from each other. Turn the oven down to 300° F (149° C) and bake baklavas for 30 more minutes. Meanwhile, combine honey, 2 tsp sugar, 1/4 cup of hot water, 1 stick of cinnamon, a clove, 2 inches of lemon zest and half tsp of fresh lemon juice in a pot and stir. Simmer the pot for 10 minutes. Turn off the heat and allow it to cool down. Now turn the oven down even more to 210° F (99° C) and bake the baklavas for 30 more minutes. Remove baklavas from oven, and pour the honey mixture on top immediately.