



The efforts of the Touring & Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran have significantly eased the entry process for travelers and tourists with personal vehicles into the ancient country. "This significant facilitation in the temporary entry of private and commercial vehicles for passengers and tourists has been achieved through the timely efforts of the Touring and Automobile Club of the Islamic Republic of Iran, along with the cooperation of the Iranian Traffic Police," the TACI reported. According to the club, tourism using personal vehicles not only increases the number of tourists but also improves traffic flow and benefits all sectors along the tourist route. Furthermore, traveling by personal vehicle is a favorite mode of transportation for tourists worldwide, as explained by the club.

### Iran Facilitates Entry of Foreign Travelers with Personal Vehicles

## Iran-France Photography Competition Focuses on Water

A photography competition for photographers living in Iran will be held, centering on the theme of water. Titled "Water in Iran," the photographic contest is part of the international conference held in Paris via videoconference with Iran (September 2024-March 2025) on the theme "Crossed perspectives on water cultures, France-Iran". Organized by the Franco-Iranian Center in Paris, Ithaque Gallery in Paris, and the Iranian National Photographer's Society, the contest seeks to combine documentary photography with experimental photography to highlight the water situation in Iran through a collective exhibition, ISNA reported. The expected approach is that of fresh and salt water, terrestrial

and oceanic environment, human activities linked to water, techniques, and developments, concerning the Iranian territory. Based on the entries received, the jury will select a winner. The winner will receive a first prize of five hundred euros for the photograph selected by the jury as the best. A maximum of 40 other photographs by several other candidates will be included in a group exhibition at the Ithaque Gallery located in the Marais district, in Paris, from September 12 to October 3, before moving to the headquarters of the Overseas Academies of Sciences in Paris on October 7 and running until October 18. The Franco-Iranian Center is a French association created in 2016 and based in Paris. It aims to

deepen and develop Franco-Iranian relations in all areas (institutional, economic and commercial, cultural and artistic, sporting, academic, etc.) and to work to strengthen the bonds of friendship between the French and Iranian peoples and the two countries. All these areas represent the pillars of the eternal bridge linking France and Iran, and it is essential to strengthen these links through associative activity. The Franco-Iranian Center organizes a wide-ranging program of conferences, speeches, and meetings in partnership with other organizations and partners. In 2023, this non-political association was considered to be the most active in Franco-Iranian relations, receiving extensive media coverage.



Perspective



### Iranian Artisans Showcase Skills at Expo 2024

Tens of Iranian craftspeople showed off their skills as a marketing opportunity at the 6th International Export Potential Exhibition of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Iran Expo 2024), which was held in Tehran from April 27 to May 1.

Enameling, marquetry, turquoise inlaying, woodcarving, hand-woven carpets, traditional jewelry, and ornaments were among the wide array of artistic disciplines and traditional crafts offered at the event.

Maryam Jalali, the deputy minister for handicrafts, while visiting the Gilan province's booth, emphasized the expo's potential for accessing global markets, stating that the value chain of this year's edition is closely related to handicrafts.

Gilan, with rich assets such as UNESCO recognitions for Chador-Shab weaving, and Hyrcanian forests, can contribute significantly to the identity formation of value chains, she said.

Jalali stated: More than 27,000 artisans are currently engaged in 42 handicraft fields in Gilan, and seven cities and villages in the province have been introduced as national and international brands for handicrafts.



Some crafters exhibited superior quality at the event held at Tehran Permanent International Fairgrounds, while Hall 25 was dedicated to handicrafts. Furthermore, several booths arranged live workshops where artisans engaged in crafting or producing handicrafts.

In addition, Ali-Asghar Shalbafian, the deputy minister for tourism, paid a visit to the Expo, saying the organization of this expo is important, despite tourism having the smallest share in it. He considered the expo crucial for conveying a secure and realistic image of Iran to foreign traders and merchants.

At present, a selection of 13 cities and three villages in Iran have been registered by the World Council of Handicrafts as "world cities of handicrafts".

## Emad ud-Duleh Mosque: a Testament to Cultural Exchange and Spiritual Significance

Emad ud-Duleh Mosque stands as a unique architectural gem, located in the heart of Kermanshah city within the bustling traditional bazaar. Positioned at the epicenter of social gatherings, this mosque holds a special spatial significance. Kermanshah, situated in a border region, serves as a melting pot of diverse beliefs and cultures, with influences from neighboring countries enriching its tapestry of religious practices. As mentioned by Visit Iran, the mosque serves as a focal point for people from various backgrounds, reflecting its role as a gathering place for different social classes. Its architectural design reflects its public utility, eschewing the grandiosity typical of royal mosques of its era in favor of simplicity akin to future mosques and contemporary Iranian buildings. This simplicity is evident in its



courtyard decorations, featuring a harmonious blend of unglazed narrow bricks and seven-color tiles. The centuries-old mosque boasts a distinctive architectural style characterized by four iwans (vaulted halls), each housing different elements such as the façade, entrance, corridor (Hashti),

central courtyard, prayer hall, watchtower, and chambers. The mosque's layout, akin to a school or madrasa, provides accommodation for students of religious sciences within its surrounding chambers. Emad ud-duleh's patronage extended beyond architectural endeavors; he brought

a door from Imam Ali Haram to Kermanshah and donated a silver door in return. This wooden door, dating back to the Safavid period, now adorns the mosque's entrance, known as the "Qapi of Shah-e Najaf." Another intricately decorated wooden door graces the southwest side, leading to the intersection of jewelers' and Hoori Abad bazaars. Stepping through the corridor, visitors enter a spacious courtyard adorned with beautiful tiling and inscriptions commemorating the mosque's construction. The southern iwan, serving as the entrance to the main prayer hall, stands out with its elaborate decoration. The prayer hall itself features a vaulted ceiling supported by fourteen brick columns, with light filtering in through ceiling apertures. The courtyard's central feature is a newly constructed

pool, while a small wooden room overlooks the eastern iwan. The main entrance, accessed through the eastern iwan, connects to the jewelers' bazaar via a grand wooden door. A striking addition to the mosque's architecture is a large Swiss-made clock adorning the minaret, symbolizing cultural exchange. Emad ud-Duleh Mosque's rich heritage is further enhanced by its exquisite tiling, high-quality wooden doors, and intricate brick pulpits. Its dual entrances from opposite sides of the bazaar underscore the city's reverence for spirituality, echoing a bygone era where commerce and religion intertwined seamlessly. As a spiritual oasis amidst the bustling bazaar, Emad ud-Duleh Mosque stands as a testament to the enduring significance of cultural exchange and communal worship.

## 6 must-visit Villages near Tehran during Spring Season

In spring, the villages surrounding Tehran become exquisite destinations to explore. With longer days offering endless opportunities for adventure, vibrant flowers in full bloom, and the sun beaming down, it's undoubtedly one of the finest seasons for a vacation. Rural tourism around Tehran is a wonderful experience for people who love nature and peaceful surroundings.

Tehran is surrounded by beautiful countryside with mountains, valleys, and traditional villages. Many people from the city escape to these rural areas to relax and enjoy the fresh air. In these rural areas, you can find charming villages with old houses made of clay and brick. The people are friendly and welcoming to visitors. While the options for springtime getaways are plentiful, a select few truly stand out. Let's delve into the top six destinations near the Iranian capital that are perfect for springtime travel!

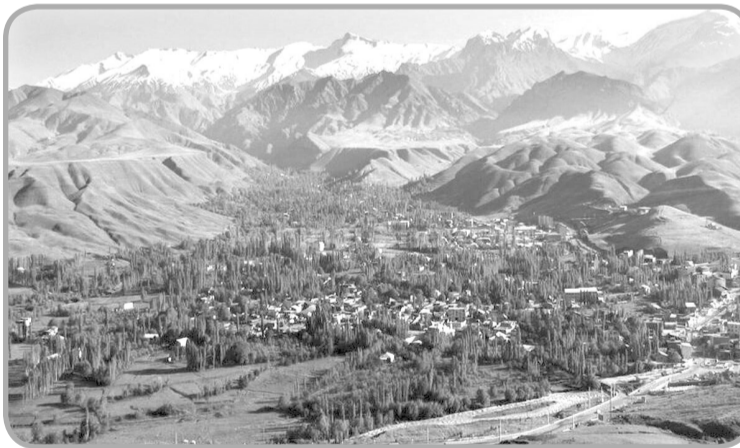
### Taleghan: a sanctuary in the mountains

Situated on the foothills of the Alborz mountain range, Taleghan offers an air of tranquility that is unmatched. From refreshing springs to sprawling orchards, Taleghan offers a glimpse into a world untouched by time. The village is home to waterfalls, caves, springs, and orchards, which have made it an ideal area for sightseeing.

### Arangeh: where history meets nature

Perched along the Karaj-Chalus road, the village of

Arangeh beckons travelers with its rich tapestry of history and natural splendor. Wander through orchards heavy with ripe fruits, or marvel at ancient sites that whisper tales of bygone eras. From the breathtaking Khor waterfall to the snow-covered slopes ideal for skiing in winter, Arangeh promises an unforgettable escape.



### Afjeh: a haven of natural beauty

Nestled within the Lavasan-e Kuchak rural district, Afjeh emerges as a tranquil retreat from the urban hustle. Here, nature reigns supreme, with cascading waterfalls, ancient palaces, and historic bathhouses waiting to be explored. While there are no hotels in Afjeh, renting local houses or camping under the stars offers a unique op-

portunity to commune with nature.

### Ahar: a breath of fresh air

Situated near rivers and mountains, Ahar offers a welcome respite from Tehran's bustling streets. As you traverse the Shahid Babaei Highway towards Lavasan-Lashkark road, the air grows fresher, and the pace slows to a leisurely stroll. Follow the winding paths to discover hidden treasures, from babbling brooks to scenic vistas that stretch as far as the eye can see.

### Barghan: a gem of scenic beauty

Situated in Savojbolagh county, Barghan captivates visitors with its blend of natural wonders and cultural heritage. Visitors may explore ancient temples and mosques, or wander across arch bridges that span crystal-clear streams. Whether you're seeking solitude in nature or a taste of local traditions, Barghan offers a myriad of experiences to delight the senses.

### Kordan: where greenery meets history

In the green expanse of Savojbolagh county lies Kordan, a village steeped in history and surrounded by lush orchards. Visitors may follow the meandering river as it winds through the village, or lose yourself amidst the fragrant blooms of cherry blossoms.

With its pleasant climate and abundant greenery, Kordan is a haven for nature lovers seeking refuge from the urban areas. Overall, rural tourism around Tehran offers a peaceful escape from the hustle and bustle of city life. It's a chance to reconnect with nature, experience traditional Iranian culture, and relax in beautiful surroundings.

## Khomein's Rosewater Festival Gains National Recognition



An annual festival dedicated to roses and rosewater has been officially registered in the national list for intangible cultural heritage, marking a significant milestone for Khomein's Shahabieh village. Emphasizing the deep historical roots and authenticity within the county, Khomein's cultural heritage chief pointed out that the roses and rosewater, produced predominantly in the Shahabieh area, are not only key local products but also inte-

gral to the cultural identity of the region. Ali Mashhadi noted that with a rich heritage and the efforts of the provincial organizations, the festival has been successfully added to the national tourism events calendar. "Henceforth, the festival would take place annually from May 8 to 10," Mashhadi noted. "Now officially recognized as rose and rosewater days." This period marks a vibrant celebration in the Shahabieh village, where visitors from across the

country gather to experience the unique fragrances and beauty of roses, alongside the traditional art of rosewater distillation, according to the official. Mashhadi explained that the inclusion of this event in the tourism calendar aims to streamline and professionalize tourism in the region while organizing new tourist destinations and routes. "This initiative is expected to significantly boost the local economy by increasing tourist influx,"

the chief further explained. "Who are drawn not only to the festival but also to the rich cultural tapestry of the area." Throughout the three-day event, the village of Shahabieh transforms into a bustling hub of activity, Mahhadi added. The official in his concluding remarks, stated that the arranged programs, include a diverse array of stalls showcasing exquisite local handicrafts and a dedicated exhibition for rose and rosewater products.

### Kashan Sites Visited by over 30,000 Tourists in Day

Kashan, a historical city within Iran's Isfahan province, has shattered previous visitor records by attracting over 30,000 tourists to its historical sites in a single day. Isfahan's director-general of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, on Saturday, reported that from the after-



noon of Thursday to the end of Friday, May 3, more than 30,000 tourists visited the ancient attractions of Kashan alone. Fin Garden, which is a UNESCO-listed site, was the most visited destination, ranking first among all tourist attractions in Isfahan province during the recent holidays, according to Amir Karamzadeh. Karamzadeh further elaborated on the figures, highlighting that the combined visitor count for the historic sites of Kashan and Isfahan had surpassed 50,000 in a single day. Kashan's commitment to preserving its historical integrity while embracing the needs of modern tourism makes it a unique travel destination, rich with cultural heritage that continues to fascinate and attract large numbers of visitors annually.