

Iran – Wonderful Persia

The Persian beauties are endless on our trip: Teheran and its modern way of life, the paradisiacal gardens of Chiraz, the forests of Beech on the shores of the Caspian Sea and the mountain ranges of Elbourz. The oriental brilliance of the cultural and historical treasures of Isfahan and Shiraz are among the highlights. You will see herds of camels in the desert of salt or sand. The charm of the ancient Silk road captivates us immediately. Locals are welcoming us with their hospitality and the Bazaar and tea houses show us Iranian everyday life. Hospitality is a tradition, a tradition that we will experience even more while riding our bikes.

Day 1 Tehran

Flight to Tehran and transfer to the hotel.

Day 2 The metropolis of Tehran

A day of acclimation. Tehran offers many highlights and we will start this day with a visit to the Saadâbâd Palace and the National Palace, where the last Shah of Iran reigned. After visiting the archaeological museum, we dive ourselves in the Bazaar of the old town.



Day 3 The mountains of Elbourz - 35km

We start our day tour in the small village in the Alborz mountain chain. These are high mountains situated between the Caspian Sea and the Persian highlands with more than 5600 meters altitude. The highest peak is the Volcano Damâvand which offers an overwhelming view. Afterwards, our bus takes us to one of the oldest cities in Iran: Amol.



Day 4 The hinterland of Tehran - 42km

First, we will drive along the coast of the Caspian Sea by bus. Before getting on the bikes, we have the opportunity to discover Iranian rice fields and enjoy the Persian jungle as well as its pleasant climate. Transfer along the coast of the Caspian Sea. We pass green rice fields and can admire the Persian jungle. From the beech forest, we pedal through a green valley, interrupted by streams and small houses.



Day 5 Walasht Lake, Mazandéran Province - 24km

Walasht Lake is deeply inlaid in the Mazandéran province. Its intense sparkling blue and surrounding by the mountain ranges, make this day a true highlight. Not only the colors, but also the fragrances of the pine forest, which surrounds us, allow us to capture a new image of Persia. The bus takes us back to Tehran.

Day 6 The desert of sand and salt - 18km

Today, the trip takes us towards the south, near Kashan. By bike, we dive into the desert and its infinite majestic expanse. The impressions of the salt desert are truly stunning. As we take the bus back to Kashan, we crack some of the famous pistachios from the region, pistachios that are exported all over the world and renowned for their excellence. In Kashan, between cypresses, fountains and water courses, the Fin garden is located which belong to the world cultural heritage. We will visit the gardens tomorrow.

Day 7 Treasures in Kashan

We start the day with a visit of the famous Fin garden. It contains architectural treasures from the times of the Safavide, Zand and Kadschar. With numerous fountains, water basins, water streams and old trees, it is one of the most beautiful gardens of Iran. From here, the bus takes us to Ispahan, where we have a free afternoon. There are many options: Maybe you want to visit a tea house, smoke a hookah, visit an enamel factory or get to know the locals?



Day 8 Ispahan, Thousand and One Nights

A fairytale town at our feet! It's like 1001 nights! Ispahan charms every visitor and we have plenty of time to let ourselves be enchanted...

At the Palace of the 40 columns, we count the pillars carefully. In the richly decorated rooms, we don't know where to look first. Then we climb to the roof of Ali Qapu's Palace. The huge Meidan Emam Square (UNESCO World Heritage Site) lies in front of us. Our next destinations: the elegant Lotfollah and the Royal Imam Mosque. You can use the rest of the day for your own. Maybe you want to have a look at the bazaar and taste some of the rose water or any other fragrances and souvenirs.

Day 9 Isfahan

Today we visit one of the greatest testimonies of Safavid architecture: The Imam mosque and the mosque of Sheikh Lotfollah, the 6-story Palace Ali Qapu, with its high gate. Afterwards we explore the mysteries of the Chehel Sotun Hasht Behesht Palace (the Eight Gardens of Paradise). In the evening, we stroll next to the eternal river of "Zayandeh Rud" and visit the bridges of Khadju, Sio Ee Pol and Shahrestan, which are more than 500 years old. You will discover the customs of Persian cuisine in a traditional Persian restaurant.

Day 10 Chack Chack - 32km

First, transfer to the town of Chack Chack. Here, we discover the most sacred mountain shrine and pilgrimage place of the Zoroastrians. From here, we cycle through the Zagros Mountains in the central highlands to the beautiful caravanserai. Tea break! Now the bikes are stored, and we head to Yazd.

Day 11 Yazd

Its exceptional location on the caravan road has made Yazd a very prosperous city since the 10th century.

The impressive towers of silence, which served for sky burials, the visit of the fire temple, the water cistern and the Jamea mosque - we will discover all these sites during our visit. The athletes use to do their work out here. In the evening, we attend the Iranian rituals of Zurkhaneh. In 2010, they were designated as intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO.

Day 12 Pasargades - 33km

We reach another UNESCO World Heritage site in Pasargades. The Persian king Cyrus the Great used to live here. Then, we cycle through the Marvdasht valley to the original village of Sedan, with its green gardens and mud huts. Continuation of the bus journey to Persepolis.

Day 13 Persepolis and Shiraz

One of the highlights of the trip are the excavations of Persepolis (UNESCO World Heritage site). At the *Gate of All Nations* we remember the tolerance of Persians towards the faith and culture of other people. Homakapitell, the hall of the 100 columns and the Apadana Palace testify to the past glory. We explore the tombs of the Achaemenid kings. Afterwards, we drive to Shiraz and visit the tombs of the most famous poets: Hafiz and Saadi. We end the day with a visit of the Nasir-ol-Molk mosque.

Day 14 Zagros Mountains - 55km

Our last bike ride takes us to Haftbarm Lake, which is located in the mountains of Zagros. The forests on the side of the mountains and its vast valleys are just impressive, a magnificent landscape appears in front of us. Afterwards, we visit the Shah-Cheragh Shrine in the afternoon. It illustrates the Shia faith, the Islamic persuasion of Iran. The bus returns to Shiraz. A farewell evening with delicious culinary specialties awaits you.

Day 15

It's time to say goodbye. Transfer to the airport and return flight.

Guided Cycling Trip

Route Characteristic: 1-2

The bike routes are usually slightly downhill or flat. On the last day, the distance is a bit longer, but without much inclination. The routes are on paved roads without much traffic.

Dates:

28.03. – 11.04.2020
04.04. – 18.04.2020
17.10. – 31.10.2020
31.10. – 14.11.2020
27.03. – 10.04.2021

Numbers of participants: 8 minimum / 14 maximum

The tour includes:

- ✓ Flight with Turkish Airlines from Paris to Tehran
- ✓ Flight with Turkish Airlines from Shiraz to Paris
- ✓ 14 nights in 3* and 4* hotels, mostly with air condition
- ✓ Daily breakfast
- ✓ Daily dinner
- ✓ 4 x full-board
- ✓ Snacks and drinks on cycling days
- ✓ Guide from France A Vélo
- ✓ Local Travel Guide (English)
- ✓ 1 Escort vehicle during the entire trip
- ✓ All Minibus transfers indicated
- ✓ All mentioned entries
- ✓ 21-speed Trekking Bike

| Price per Person | Euro |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Double Room | 2.345,00 € |
| Single Room | 2.735,00 € |

Subject to change

To enter Iran, you need a visa. We are happy to take care of it for you. For our information sheet "Useful and to know" about this trip.

