

9 Days

# Iran

## Adventure, Archaeology and Ancient Religion

Iran, a country of dramatic contrasts is the latest school trip destination from the STC. Blessed with scenery ranging from snow-clad mountains to vast, inhospitable deserts, this comprehensive tour uncovers the treasures of Persia, providing a fascinating insight for students learning about religion, politics and history. Journey through Islamic centres at Yazd, Shiraz and Isfahan and visit the legendary ruins at Persepolis; this fascinating, and relatively undiscovered, country will never fail to impress and inspire.



# Recommended tour itinerary

Day  
1

## Arrive Tehran

On arrival in Shiraz, we are be welcomed at the airport by an STC representative and transferred to our hotel.

---

Day  
2

## Shiraz, sightseeing

We start our adventure in Iran with a full day of sightseeing in Shiraz. Regarded as one of the oldest cities of ancient Persia, it has been a regional trade centre for over a thousand years. Firstly, we make a visit to Vakil – a mosque built between 1751 and 1773, during the Zand period but later restored in the 19th century during the Qajar period. Known as the city of poets, literature, wine and flowers. Shiraz is also considered by many Iranians to be the city of gardens, due to the many gardens and fruit trees that can be seen in the city.

Later, we will visit Nasir-ol-molk, a stunning mosque displaying other traditional elements such as the *Panj Kāse* ("five concaved") design. Stepping inside this amazing building, you will understand exactly why it has been nicknamed the *Pink Mosque*.

We then visit the tombs of Hafez and Saadi – two important Persian poets – before visiting the Khan religious school where we have the chance to meet a local priest. We conclude the day with a visit to the Shah Cheragh holy shrine. With its most beautiful mirror interior decoration a visit to this amazing example of Iranian design is not to be missed.

---

Day  
3

## Shiraz – Persepolis – Necropolis – Shiraz

This morning, we say goodbye to Shiraz and, via the Quran gate, make our way to Persepolis - the outstanding ceremonial palace of the Achaemenian 550BC. At the Necropolis, high in the limestone escarpments, we have the opportunity to see four tombs of Achaemenian Kings.

Returning to Shiraz, we end the day with a visit to the cookery school where we have the opportunity to taste some fine local cuisine – kebabs at their ultimate best!

---

Day  
4

## Shiraz – Pasargadae – Yazd

This morning, we make our way through incredible mountainous scenery continuing on to Pasargadae, the earliest Achaemenian capital and location of the tomb of Cyrus the Great and an ancient Dam discovered in 2008. We continue with our journey over the central Iranian ranges arriving later in the day at our next stop, the city of Yazd, formerly known as Yezd, and ancient UNESCO world heritage site dating back to the Sassanian Period (224-651 AD)

---





Day  
5

## Yazd

Today will all be about exploring Yazd and learning about the ancient religion of Persia, 'Zoroastrianism'. We visit the city's most amazing gems, including Atash Kadeh. Otherwise known as the Fire Temple. This building was constructed in 1934 and enshrines the Atash Bahram, meaning "Victorious Fire", which dates back to 470 AD. It is one of nine Atash Bahrams; the other eight Atash Behrams are located in India. In the Zoroastrian religion, fire, together with clean water, are agents of ritual purity. We continue on to the Tower of Silence, a circular, raised structure used by Zoroastrians for exposure of the dead, particularly to scavenging birds for the purposes of excarnation.

---

Day  
6

## Chak Chak

After breakfast, we drive towards the town of Chak Chak via the El Abad village. After lunch in Chak Chak there will be some free time for sightseeing as well as prayer and reflection. We return to Yazd for our overnight stay.

---

Day  
7

## Yazd – Naein – Isfahan

This morning we make our way to the final destination of Isfahan, stopping en route to visit the Jāme'h Mosque of Nain - one of the oldest mosques in Iran, dating back to the 9th century. Although it is said to be one of the oldest in the country, the interiors are Seljuki in brick craftsmanship, which allude more to the 11th century.

---

Day  
8

## Isfahan

Isfahan is an important city located on the main north/south and east/west routes crossing Iran, and was once one of the largest cities in the world. It flourished from 1050 to 1722, particularly in the 16th century under the Safavid dynasty, when it became the capital of Persia for the second time in its history.

In the morning we visit the Naqsh-e Jahan Square. Constructed between 1598 and 1629, it is now an important historical site and one of UNESCO's World Heritage Sites. The square is surrounded by buildings from the Safavid era including the Shah Mosque, the Ali Qapu Palace and the Sheikh Lotf Allah Mosque. To the north sits the extensive and colourful Isfahan bazaar, brimming over with talented artisans and their fine products.

Later, we visit the ChaharBagh Religious School where we have the chance to meet with some of the town's clergyman who will provide a fascinating insight into the area's culture and religion.

---

Day  
9

## Depart Isfahan & return Flight to UK

Transfer to Isfahan Airport for your return flight to the UK, full of new experiences to discuss with friends and family!

---

# Further information

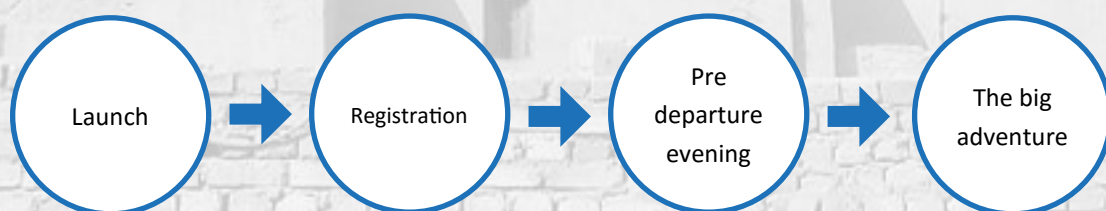
## Look what's included!

- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local tour leader
- Parent and student trip launch evening
- Pre-departure preparation evening
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

## What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance

## Your educational journey timeline



## Physical journey rating:



Some low level physical activities included in your trip, including walking on uneven terrain, maybe a morning/afternoon trek of two to four hours. That said, no physical preparation is required to make the most of the tour. High humidity and temperatures can occur at certain times of the year.

## Culture shock rating:



Students joining trips at this level will find the comforts of home are more of a rarity – or viewed another way, a welcome luxury. English is unlikely to be widely spoken and the food will be quite different to home, perhaps for extended sections of the trip. You should observe local customs so not to cause offence. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty and accommodation in some locations is likely to be basic. Whilst a challenge, destinations and trips at cultural level 4 are also a fantastic opportunity to see a very different part of the world.



# A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your educational journey.



## 1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your educational travel itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

## 2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

## 3 Arrange a trip launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the planned adventure with a comprehensive information evening and an opportunity for questions.



t: 01392 660056 | e: [schools@thestc.co.uk](mailto:schools@thestc.co.uk) | w: [www.thestc.co.uk](http://www.thestc.co.uk)