



Tomorrow, a vast collection of Iranian arts and culture will go on show at the National Museums of Berlin, to cast a rare light on 5,000 years of the history of the nation. The exhibition explores the central role that Iran has played in the context of cross-regional political, economic, and cultural relations. As a "cultural highway" connecting Asia, Africa, and Europe, Persia is a place of extraordinary ethnic and linguistic diversity. It features over 300 objects from the Sarikhani Collection as well as numerous collections of the National Museums in Berlin, highlighting Iran's outstanding importance as a source of inspiration and center of intercultural exchange between the Mediterranean, China, and India from the first advanced civilizations of the 3rd millennium BC to the end of the Safavid Empire in the early 18th century.

Berlin to Host Gorgeous Show of Iranian Arts

Inn, Public Bathhouse and Mosque Approved as National Heritage

A selection of nine historical structures including an inn, a public bathhouse, and a mosque, all located in Iran's East Azarbaijan province, have recently been added to the national heritage list. Furthermore, a shop and three residential houses were inscribed on the prestigious list by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, CHTN reported. Capital of East Azarbaijan province, Tabriz, which is well-soaked in history and culture for millen-

nia, embraces several historical and religious sites, including the Jameh Mosque of Tabriz and the Arg of Tabriz, and UNESCO-registered Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex to name a few. Tabriz became the capital of the Mongol Il-Khan Mahmud Gazan (1295-1304) and his successor. Timur (Tamerlane), a Turkic conqueror, took it in 1392. Some decades later the Kara Koyunlu Turkmen made it their capital, it was when the famous Blue Mosque was built in Tabriz.

The city retained its administrative status under the Safavid dynasty until 1548 when Shah Tahmasp I relocated his capital westward to Qazvin. During the next two centuries, Tabriz changed hands several times between Persia and Ottoman Empire. During World War I, the city was temporarily occupied by Turkish and then Soviet troops. The ancient city was declared a world craft city of carpet weaving by the World Craft in 2016. It also bore the title of 2018 Islamic Tourism Capital.



Iran has not Stopped Issuing Tourist Visas: official

By the emergence of a highly contagious Omicron variant, Iran has not stopped issuing tourist visas, which it resumed on October 23 following 19 months of suspension to curb the virus. "Following the closure of Iran's airspace to six [African] countries where the Omicron variant has been detected, concerns have been raised about the issuance of Iranian tourist visas," Leyla Ajdari, an official in charge of foreign tourism marketing, said. In response to those concerns, she stressed there is no plan yet to halt the re-issuance of Iranian tourist visas, ISNA reported.

Iran's National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control on November 27 banned arrivals from the African countries of Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, and Swatini reacting to the new variant.

The Omicron variant appears able to get around some immunity but vaccines should still offer protection against severe disease, according to the latest data from South Africa where it is fast overtaking Delta to become the dominant variant. Omicron, which has raised global fears of a surge in infections, was first detected in southern Africa earlier this month and has prompted governments across the globe to impose travel restrictions and take other measures to try and contain it.



For the time being, some travel experts believe the restoration of tourism flow is of high importance for the Islamic Republic. Iranian Tour Operators Director Ebrahim Pourfaraj said earlier this month that the restoration of tourism flow to the country is very important for Iranian tour operators and travel insiders.

"At the moment, we are not thinking about revenues, but we are looking for the beginning of the tourist flow to the country and renew our links [with international fellows]," Pourfaraj said. His comments came after months of steep recession triggered by massive coronavirus restrictions which led many travel insiders, hoteliers, and tour operators towards bankruptcy, unemployment, debts, and the prospects of not being competitive on the international level.

As mentioned by Pourfaraj, Iran has made its best to maintain contact with global tourism markets and companies that worked with Iran in the past, especially since virtual communication and meetings have thrived.

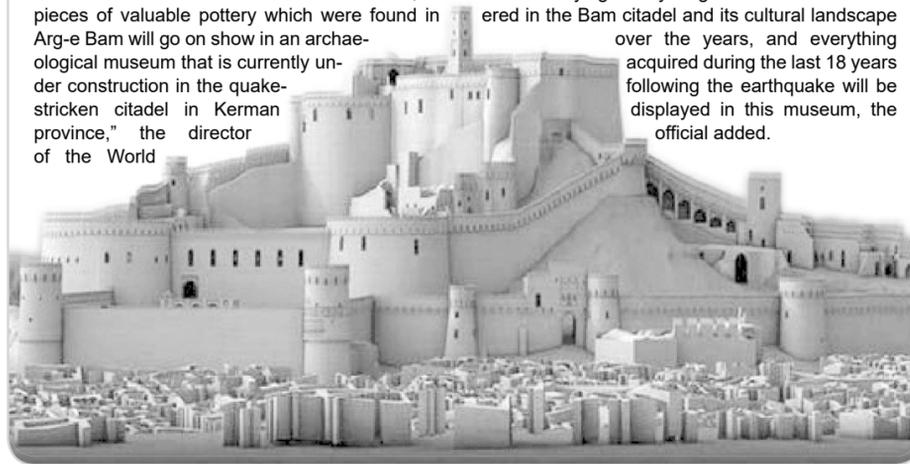
"Following the resumption of the tourist visa, visitors from Russia and France have traveled to Iran and we are currently expecting a smaller number of tourists in Iran due to the current situation in the world," he explained.

Iran is potentially a booming destination for travelers seeking cultural attractions, breathtaking sceneries, and numerous UNESCO-registered sites. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, Iran aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.

Ancient Infants to Go on Show

Bodies of ancient infants along with thousands of relics unearthed near a UNESCO-registered citadel in southern Iran will go on public display in near future. "Bodies of infants and relics such as over 200,000 pieces of valuable pottery which were found in Arg-e Bam will go on show in an archaeological museum that is currently under construction in the quake-stricken citadel in Kerman province," the director of the World

Heritage site said. Moreover, objects dating back from the Neolithic period to the Islamic era will be shown in prehistoric, pre-Islamic, and Islamic galleries of the museum, ILNA quoted Mohsen Qassemi as saying. Everything that has been discovered in the Bam citadel and its cultural landscape over the years, and everything acquired during the last 18 years following the earthquake will be displayed in this museum, the official added.



'Red Gold' Magnetizes Sightseers toward Northeast Iranian Farms

During the past two months, Torbat-e Heydarieh and Zaveh county in northeastern KhorasanRazavi province hosted 12 saffron tours, a local tourism official has announced.

As saffron harvest season began in Torbat-e Heydarieh and Zaveh, tourists and individuals from all over the country visited the county for recreational or scientific-research tours, Ali Mohammadi said on Thursday.

Besides visiting saffron fields and learning about the stages of collecting and processing saffron bulbs, the tourists also visited a museum dedicated to saffron, the largest flower market in the country, the saffron research institute, and saffron companies among other places, the official added.

The tours also included visits to other historical and tourist attractions, handicraft workshops, and ecotourism resorts, as well as exhibitions and festivals, he mentioned.

Torbat-e Heydarieh is known as the land of red gold because of the large area planted with this crop and a large amount of saffron produced there, he explained.

This year, a saffron tourist train and a saffron festival were planned from Mashhad to Torbat-e Heydarieh, which was widely welcomed by travel agencies, journalists, and locals, he noted.

Iranian saffron is known as the "red gold". Saffron is a magical ingredient in Persian culture, from aromatic foods and colorful desserts to physical and spiritual medicine. Every



year, the saffron harvest season begins in early November. While most other vegetation is gone, the bright

purple flowers cover the fields and create an outstanding landscape in dry regions in Iran.

National Seal of Excellence Granted to 52 Iranian Handicrafts

A selection of 52 high-quality works handcrafted by the natives of Khuzestan province has been granted the National Seal of Excellence, the provincial tourism chief has announced. Winners were picked by a panel of national juries from a shortlist of 80 works, SeyyedHekmatollahMusavi said. "Khuzestani craftsmen and artists have done remarkable work over the past few years, considering the growing trend in the field and the efforts made to

promote handicraft in the villages and cities of the [southwestern] province," the official added.

The National Seal of Excellence is given to high-quality, selected works to support craftspeople, improve the quality of their works and preserve the originality of this industry, and create sustainable employment.

With 14 entries, Iran ranks first globally for the number of cities and

villages registered by the World Crafts Council, as China with seven entries, Chile with four, and India with three ones come next.

In January 2020, the cities of Shiraz, Malayer, and Zanjan and the village of Qassemabad were designated by the WCC- Asia Pacific Region, putting Iran's number of world crafts cities and villages from ten to 14.

The value of Iran's handicrafts exports stood at \$120 million during the first eleven months of the past Iranian calendar year 1399 (March 20, 2020 - February 18, 2021), Mehr reported. The country's handicrafts exports slumped during the mentioned months in comparison to the same period last year earlier due to the damage the coronavirus pandemic has inflicted on global trade.

