

The National Seal of Excellence has been granted to 14 high-quality works hand-crafted by artisans of Alborz province, the provincial tourism chief has announced. Ceramics, traditional blacksmithing, torevitics and leatherwork are among the works awarded with the National Seal of Excellence, Fereydoun Mohammadi said.

Since the province has been home to different ethnic groups, it has a wide variety of handicrafts, and the handicraft exhibitions that have been held so far have seen a high number of sales of works, 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.

**Iranian 14
Handicrafts
Receive National
Seal of Excellence**

The U.S. Needs to Return all Achaemenid Tablets to Iran: Envoy

Majid Takht-Ravanchi, Iran's ambassador to the United Nations, has said that the United States must return all Achaemenid clay tablets without any exceptions and excuses. Iranian officials must get their hands on all Achaemenid tablets quickly and without argument from the United States, IRNA quoted Takht-Ravanchi as saying on Tuesday. About 90 years ago, Achaemenid tablets were loaned to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago for a three-year period, and have not been fully returned since then, the official added.

Despite the fact that these tablets are part of the culture and history of Iran and belong to its people, the U.S. continually delays returning them, he noted.

The Iranian request is clear, he said, adding that they want their tablets promptly, safely, and in a timely manner returned.

In 2019, hundreds of Achaemenid clay tablets and related fragments, which were on loan from Iran to the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago since 1935, were returned home. However, the Institute still has some of these tablets. In February 2018, and following years of ups and downs, the fate of those ancient Persian artifacts, was left in the hands of a U.S. Supreme

Court, which ruled in favor of Iran. Archaeologists affiliated with the University of Chicago discovered the tablets in the 1930s while excavating in Persepolis, the ceremonial capital of the Persian Empire.

The tablets reveal the economic, social, and religious history of the Achaemenid Empire (550-330 BC) and the larger Near Eastern region in the fifth century BC. The Achaemenid [Persian]

which have no equivalent, considering its unique architecture, urban planning, construction technology, and art. Persepolis, also known as Takht-e Jamshid, whose magnificent ruins rest at the foot of Kuh-e Rahmat (Mountain of Mercy) is situated 60 kilometers northeast of the city of Shiraz in Fars province. The city was burnt by Alexander the Great in 330 BC apparently as revenge to the Persians because it seems the Persian King Xerxes had burnt the Greek City of Athens around 150 years earlier.

The city's immense terrace was begun about 518 BC by Darius the Great, the Achaemenid Empire's king. On this terrace, successive kings erected a series of architecturally stunning palatial buildings, among them the massive Apadana palace and the Throne Hall ("Hundred-Column Hall").

This 13-ha ensemble of majestic approaches, monumental stairways, throne rooms (Apadana), reception rooms, and dependencies is classified among the world's greatest archaeological sites. Persepolis is the seat of the government of the Achaemenid Empire, though it was designed primarily to be a showplace and spectacular center for the receptions and festivals of the kings and their empire.



However, the institute has resumed work in collaboration with colleagues in Iran, and the return of the tablets is part of a broadening of contacts between scholars in the two countries, said Gil Stein, director of the Oriental Institute at the Universi-

ty of Chicago. The tablets reveal the economic, social, and religious history of the Achaemenid Empire of its time. The empire stretched from Ethiopia, through Egypt, to Greece, to Anatolia (modern Turkey), Central Asia, and to India. The royal city of Persepolis ranks among the archaeological sites

cooking



"Kookoo e Bademjan"

Eggplant frittata is high in dietary fiber. Dietary fiber helps lower cholesterol and controls blood sugar level. 3.5 ounces (100 grams) of eggplant frittata has 71 calories and 45 calories from fat.



Ingredients:

- 2 Large Eggplants
- 1 Small Onion
- 4 Eggs Salt, Ground Chilli Pepper, Turmeric
- 1/2 Cup Milk
- 4 to 5 Tbsp Vegetable Oil

Directions:

1-Beat the eggs in a large bowl until foamy. 2- Add a pinch of salt, ground chilli pepper and turmeric, stir until well mixed. 3- Add the grated onion to the bowl, stir. 4- Add the milk and stir well. 5- Grate the eggplants and combine with the egg mixture, stir thoroughly until well combined. 6- Pour 4 to 5 tbsp of vegetable oil to a frying pan, transfer the mixture to the pan and spread across the pan evenly. 7- Fry over medium heat, flip to fry both sides.

MenarJonban in Isfahan



MenarJonban is a historical monument in Isfahan which is the burial place of Amu Abdollah Soqlabi, who was a mystic in the 14th century. Some minarets in Iran have the ability to shake which are called MonarJonban. There are some MenarJonban in Iran and among them, we can refer to one in Isfahan, and another one in Ardakan. The Iwan located in Menarjonban in Isfahan is as high as 10 meters and each of the two minarets is about 7.5 meters. The roof and the minarets are accessible through a small gate and spiral stairs. But, what makes this building famous is that the minarets can shake. Once you shake one of the minarets, the other minarets along with whole building start shaking. The Iwan dates back to Ilkhani dynasty, but the architectural style of the minarets show that they were made in late Safavid era. The reason has long been questioned by scientists, and many still believe that there is no logical reason. The building is decorated with turquoise tiles in form of stars and other figures. There are some signs and objects in the building that one can notice the vibration while looking at these signs.

Iranian Province to Boost Rural Tourism

Local authorities plan to boost rural tourism in the northeastern North Khorasan province, the provincial tourism chief has announced.

Taking into account the pristine nature of the villages in the region, the province has great potential to become a tourist hotspot, Ali Mostofian said on Tuesday.

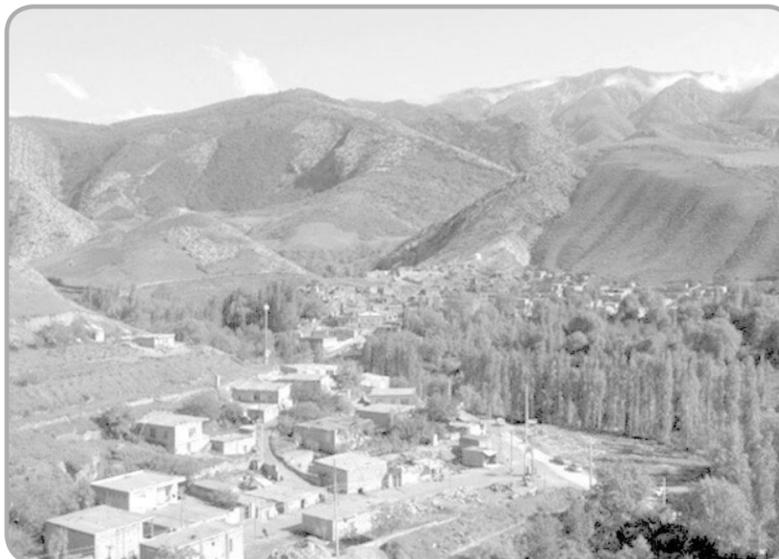
Investing in tourist villages can provide a substantial amount of employment to the region, the official added. When it comes to rural tourism Iran, which has many pristine yet diverse natural settings, has many to offer to nature lovers. Rural tourism as well as agritourism and farm-stays can be regarded as a win-win both for local communities, and post-modern travelers who are tracing unique experiences.

Sightseers may stay with a rural or nomadic family for a while or enjoy an independent stay and

assist them with day-to-day life. It also opens up an opportunity to feel rustic routines, their agriculture, traditions, arts, and

the social wellbeing in rural areas, for instance by stimulating improvements in infrastructure, sanitation, and electricity net-

worked. The World Tourism Organization sees rural tourism as a type of activity in which the visitor's experience is related to a wide range of products generally



Such tourism also possesses characteristics such as low population density, a landscape dominated by agriculture and forestry, as well as traditional social structure and lifestyle.

Experts believe though the northeastern province may not be the first choice of travelers, its tourism industry is getting momentum.

According to Lonely Planet, most foreign tourists pass straight through North Khorasan in transit between Mashhad and Gorgan, but if you have time to explore, it's worth diverting south from the capital, Bojnurd, towards Esfaryen, famed for its wrestling tournaments, the remarkable citadel of Belqays and the partly preserved stepped village of Roein some 20km north.

Serbia's Mokra Gora Ranked among Best Tourist Villages In the world

The Serbian village of Mokra Gora was ranked among the best tourist villages in the world by the General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization at the end of last year. Chosen amongst 170 registered places from 75 countries around the world, the people of Mokra Gora already knew that they lived in "the most beautiful village in the world" before it was officially confirmed. The untouched nature, clean air, and unusual tourist attractions are only a few of the things attracting tourists to the village. "The people here are nice, we have good local products and still untouched nature," one of the locals told Euronews. "We welcome everyone who comes to us," another added.

Most of the village's promotion was made by the Serbian filmmaker Emir Kusturica, who built the wooden tourist resort "Mečavnik" on the hill. Every year, the resort is visited by about 100,000 tourists from all over the world.

The architectural masterpiece "Šargan Eight", which tourists can find near the narrow-gauge railways, is also responsible for the development of this area. The railway used to connect Mokra Gora with the rest of the country, and today it is one of the main popular tourist attractions.

"When the railway was rebuilt, it brought tourists to this area, everything started with the railway," revealed Aleksandra Milutinović, manager of

the "Šargan Eight" complex.

In 2005, this village was declared as a protected natural asset for its clean rivers, drinking water, and sewage. The locals also refused for a nickel mine to be built, and every day the rangers of the nature park fight against illegal construction. "Our task is to protect this beautiful nature from human bad influence," said MilišavSpasojević, the head of the ranger service at the Mokra Gora nature park. Mokra Gora is currently inhabited by 600 people, and although many youngsters left the village in the past decades, most of them have decided to return. The village's school has only 30 students, and forecasts say that there will be more in the future.

