

# Visit Iran in the spring



Qeshm Island, Hormuzgan Province  
● IRNA

Did you make your decision and choose Iran as your travel destination? Iran is one of the most beautiful places on earth; are you interested in experiencing it?

Travel and tourism are enjoyable in every season of the year and more in the spring than in any other season. Spring has milder weather than most other seasons in most parts of the Northern Hemisphere. On the other hand, in Iran, spring has more holidays than other times and provides enough opportunities for travel. As we all know, spring is the first season of the year in the Iranian solar calendar, and Nowruz is held on the first thirteen days of the year, irandestination.com reported.

This is the biggest holiday period for Iranians. But the sheer number of travel options makes the choice a bit difficult. In this article, we will learn more about suitable tourist destinations in the spring.

## A good season to travel to the tropics

The tropics and deserts are off the list of travel options as summer approach-

es. But spring, especially in the early months, has a milder and more tolerable climate in these areas, for example, the southern islands of Iran such as Kish and Qeshm, the coasts and southern cities such as Chabahar, Bandar Abbas and Ahvaz. Apart from the southern cities and islands of the Persian Gulf, there are other tropical regions that can be visited in the spring. For example, the desert cities of Yazd and Kerman are still good hosts for you in the spring. Also, desert tours and desert hiking will have their last trips in the spring before the summer arrives.

## Isfahan and Shiraz are ideal destinations

If you ask professional tourists or travel guide writers what season is suitable for traveling to Shiraz and Isfahan, most of them will undoubtedly recommend the spring. These cities are located in the central part of Iran and are not completely desert, mountainous or forested. Therefore, in mild seasons such as spring, they are at their most ideal. Shiraz and Isfahan also have vegetation that makes them beautiful during

spring blossom. The orange orchards of Shiraz bloom in the spring and the blossoms fill the city. Naqsh-e Jahan Square in Isfahan has an amazing effect in the spring.

## Scenic attractions of Kermanshah

The western province of Kermanshah is also one of those places that you should visit in the spring. This province is very green and fresh while being mountainous, and it has natural areas that will take your breath away. Vast and lush plains, with a variety of plant species and historical attractions in the heart of these vast plains have made this one of the most unique provinces.

## Sarein, the city of hot springs

The city of Sarein is one of the tourist areas in Ardebil Province, which owes its fame to its hot springs. These hot springs usually originate from Mount Sabalan, which is one of the reasons that persuade one to travel to this beautiful city. This city has a close connection with Sabalan Mountain, and for this reason, in the spring the city sees the most beautiful landscapes.



Taq Bostan, Kermanshah, Province  
● IRNA



Naqsh-e Jahan Square, Isfahan Province  
● IRNA



Sarein, Ardebil Province  
● dleeyar.com

# Shapes of lustre-painted wares



The shapes of the lustre-painted wares show a pattern of survival different from other Safavid wares. They include far more closed shapes. Certain other shapes, such as the small cup, proliferate. Of the 255 lustre-painted objects in our database, 18 percent are bottles, while the largest number of open shapes consists of bowls (20 percent).

The survival rate of the bottles is remarkable, considering that it is much lower in other categories of decorative technique. More unusual shapes, such as ewer, jar, and multi-nozzle vase, and the spouted pot with three handles, make up altogether only about 10 percent of the surviving lustre-painted objects. The large quantity of bowls is particularly notable. Small bowls range in diameter from 11cm to 15cm and are shallow to medium in depth. The medium bowls range from 18cm to 19cm in diameter and are all of medium depth. The larger bowls range from 20cm to 24cm in diameter and tend to be shallow.

## Decoration on lustre-painted wares

The potter used the brilliant white ground to paint the subject matter in a copper-coloured lustre.

Cobalt blue or copper (turquoise) also occur as background colours for the lustre-painting, but the potter often chose to contrast the white ground with a coloured one, usually cobalt. Frequently, the interior and exterior of an open shape were contrasted in this way. Cobalt sometimes appears alongside the lustre as painted detail.

Other colours joined the palette occasionally, but it is not clear whether the use of this extended palette signifies a different atelier. Copper lustre is used for outlining the opaque yellow. Certainly, the style of the painting differs from that of the potters who used a system of contrasting backgrounds.

One of the most attractive and common themes found on these wares is the paysage scene. Usually there is a meandering stream, a rectangular pool (*hawz*), a pair of cy-

presses, other assorted trees, and animals such as a peacock or a fox. The background is filled with small plants and flowers, resembling the floral decoration of Kerman slip-painted polychromes. Exteriors of bowls with paysage scenes, although charming, are repetitive. One lustre bowl has the peacock scene but adds to it an L-shaped object with a finial, perhaps the headstone of a tomb. The prominence of the peacock on these wares may have religious (mystical) significance.

The escutcheon is a common motif, perhaps derived from Safavid metalwork, where it was used in conjunction with elongated cartouches. Another common motif is the palmette interlace, sometimes with as many as three overlapping palmettes.

The palmette interlace border was also common on the Isfahan polychrome wares and some Isfahan blue-and-whites. The forms of the plants and the narrow border designs constitute a repertory that

varies little even though different painters were involved.

The underside of dishes often bears a simple standardized border design. Vessels with this treatment of the back often have designs featuring large plant elements rather than the delicate floral life found on the paysage scenes. Perhaps different ateliers account for the variation. Some of the pieces are clearly more elaborate, such as the three-handled spouted pots (sometimes referred to as "teapot" or "posset pot"), while others, particularly cups, are less ambitious in their decoration. Absent from all but one example is the contemporary background of Kerman wares, the leaf-curl.

Notable on Safavid lustre-ware is the effort made to decorate all the surfaces that the user could enjoy, such as the turned out lip of a flask, or vase, on which the artist has continued the design found on the exterior.

Sometimes this impulse even spread to the base.

*The above is a lightly edited version of part a chapter entitled, 'Dominant Fashions and Distinctive Styles', from a book entitled, 'Persian Pottery in the First Global Age', written by Lisa Golombek, Robert B. Mason, Patricia Proctor, Eileen Reilly and published by Brill. The photos were taken from the book*