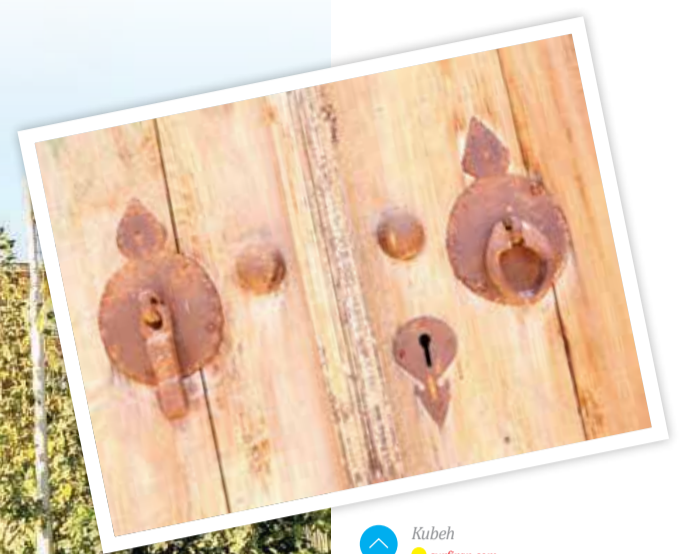


Splendor of traditional Persian architecture



Zahir-ol-Eslam House, Tehran
wikimedia.org



Kubeh
surfiran.com

Traditional houses are among the jewels of Iran and the Persian culture. In Kashan, Isfahan, Yazd, and other cities, they can be among the highlights of your visit. The monuments are open books telling about people's traditional way of life.

sun exposure, and is thus cooler.

Importance of guests

Besides the weather, the architecture of traditional houses of Iran was based on their social function. If a house's primary purpose was to be a living

decorated with beautiful mirror works and paintings. One of the best examples is the Mollabashi House in Isfahan.

The rooms also have colorful windows, a typical element of Persian culture. Not only would they add artistic value to the

traditional houses have a more sophisticated entryway, with engravings, calligraphy, a semi-dome, as well as two platforms on both sides.

Wooden doors are systematic features of traditional houses, on which two doorknockers are attached. Called *kubeh*, these two knockers have different sizes and produce different sounds: one was used by male guests and the other by female guests, so that the person opening the door could know whether to expect a man or a woman. Once passed the entrance, the guests would cross an antechamber called *hashti*, leading to the central courtyard. All traditional houses have a central courtyard, which is where the family members would often gather. In the middle is a small

progressively furnished in Iran. Traditionally, the most essential element of the rooms is the carpet, as people would sit on the floor to talk, have tea, and share food. Large cushions were placed against the walls so that people could lay back. When

the capital city of Tehran. Hopefully, plenty of them are now being renovated and turned into museums, hotels, cafés and restaurants, so that travelers can fully appreciate them. However, central Iran is where the most beautiful traditional houses can be

into a hotel, Mollabashi House has one of the most beautiful and photogenic *shahneshins*. You can drink tea in the yard of Abbasi Hotel, which was not a house but a caravanserai.

Shiraz

Going further south, the atmosphere changes a bit as you approach Shiraz, the capital of Fars Province. This city is famed for its roses, orange blossoms and poetry.

Don't miss the opportunity to visit Qavam House, located in the Narenjestan Garden, which was once the residence of Shiraz's ruling family under the



Tabatabaei House, Kashan
surfiran.com

There is no need to be a fan of architecture to appreciate the exceptional features of traditional Iranian houses. With a delicate design, full of beautiful mirror work, woodworks, and paintings, they are the perfect embodiment of Persian art and culture, surfiran.com wrote.

Climatic conditions

Iran is a four-season country, and all traditional houses have been built according to the climatic conditions of the region to provide comfort for their residents. Furthermore, traditional houses are oriented north-south, to help people use different parts of their house depending on the temperature: in the winter, the southern part of the house, which is exposed to the sun, was used, while in the summer, people would occupy the northern section of the house that has less

space for a family, it has also always been a place to receive guests. Having guests in the Persian culture is central, and the more luxurious the building is, the more sophisticated must be the way guests are welcomed.

Traditional houses have been built with two separate parts: one called *birouni*, dedicated to guests; and the other called *andarouni*, that was used by the family and servants. It allows the latter and, in particular, women who may not have wanted to be seen, to navigate the house without having to cross the areas where the guests were staying. Often, houses have a room for guests, which varies in size depending on the family's wealth. It is called *shahneshin* (meaning fit for a king), the most luxurious, or *talaar* and *neshiman*, the simplest ones. *Shahneshins* are very eye-catching spaces,



Mollabashi House, Isfahan
surfiran.com

house, but their stained glasses also protect the rooms from the light and prevent some insects from entering.

Specificities

Passersby can hardly guess the beauties that are on the other side of the wall. Indeed, traditional houses usually have a simple façade. Rich

pool, called *howz*, often decorated with flowers. Rooms are all around the rectangular yard, and would be occupied by several generations of the family, all living together. Inside the house, there would be little if no furniture. It was only from the Qajar era, under the influence of the European style that houses were

comes the time to nap, they would bring floor mattresses.

Where to visit traditional houses in Iran

It's unthinkable to visit Iran without seeing a few traditional houses. Unfortunately, many have been destroyed in the past centuries, in particular in

admired. Let's have a look at some of the traditional houses which you can visit in four cities: Kashan, Isfahan, Yazd and Shiraz.

Kashan

Kashan is the main city in Iran to visit traditional houses, as it holds some of the most amazing ones. These traditional houses belonged to rich merchants of the 19th century. Each of them has a unique architecture and an exceptional interior design that are the best illustrations of the beauty of Persian architecture. Boroujerdi House, Tabatabaei House, Ameri House, and Abbasi House are the most famous monuments to see while in Kashan.

Isfahan

With many magnificent monuments dating back to the Safavid era, Isfahan is another great destination for lovers of traditional houses. Now turned

Qajar Dynasty. Zinat-ol-Molk is another beautiful traditional house that has now become a museum. You will also find plenty of smaller houses turned into cafés and hotels.

Yazd

Traditional houses of Yazd tend to differ from the other cities of Iran. One of the most iconic ones is Aqazadeh House, a beautiful mansion, dating back to the Qajar era, which is located in Arbakooh, near the capital city of Yazd.

Malek al-Tojjar House is another traditional monument that once belonged to a rich merchant close to the Qajar king, Nassereddin Shah.

As Yazd is a desert city, all houses have one or more wind catchers. They are also singular for using their rooftops, now often used as cafés.

Here again, don't miss your chance to stay in one of Yazd's traditional houses.