

Fars Province eyes promotion of tourism industry

Iranica Desk

Fars Province attracts a large number of foreign and domestic tourists annually. The religious, historical and cultural properties of the province along with medical and therapeutic potentials, as well as four-season weather play a key role in flourishing its tourism industry.

Shiraz holy shrine

Shah Cheragh Shrine is a major tourist destination and pilgrimage site in the provincial capital of Shiraz. The mausoleum is where one of the brothers of Imam Reza, the eighth Shia Imam, is laid to rest. It boasts architectural elements and motifs from various centuries. The mausoleum has undergone various restoration projects over time. It was registered on the National Heritage list in 1939.

Historical monuments

In addition, the province boasts ancient sites. Pasargadae is among these ancient sites located near Shiraz. It was the capital of the Achaemenid Empire under Cyrus the Great (559–530 BC), who had issued its construction as well as the location of his tomb. Presently, it is an archaeological site which has been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Naqsh-e Rostam is another ancient site of the Achaemenid Empire, consisting of the tombs of Persian kings dating back to the first millennium BC. It stands as a lasting memory of a once powerful empire that ruled over a significant portion of the ancient world.

Persepolis was the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire (550–330 BC). It literally means “city of Persians”. Persepolis is situated 60 kilometers northeast of Shiraz. The earliest remains of Persepolis date back to 515 BC.



Shah Cheragh Shrine
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provides great opportunities for promoting agricultural tourism and ecotourism, according to IRNA.

All these attractions along with its intangible cultural heritage, have paved the ground for turning the province into a unique tourism hub. During his trip to the province in October 2021, President Ebrahim Raeisi called for promoting the tourism industry in Fars Province.

Minister of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Ezzatollah Zarghami also announced that the government has allocated financial aid to develop the Pasargadae Complex.

Moslem Baqeri, a faculty member of the tourism department of Shiraz University, has touched upon distinguishing features of the tourism industry in Fars Province.

“Many tourists travel to Isfahan and the holy cities of Mashhad and Qom to visit historical places. Fars not only provides opportunities for tourists to visit historical, cultural, religious and natural sites, but also enables them to become familiar with food tourism and enjoy bird watching,” he said.

Baqeri added that the tourism industry in Fars has not fully developed due to insufficient investments in the tourism infrastructure.

He said deficiencies such as weakness in hosting, marketing and lack of direct flights from neighboring countries have adversely impacted the province's tourism.

The caretaker of Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism of Fars Province also said officials are pursuing plans to boost tourism there.

Ruhollah Ravanshad said developing health tourism and organizing nomadic tours are among these plans.



Naqsh-e Rostam
irandoostan.com

Famous poets

The provincial capital of Shiraz is also home to the tombs of Hafez and Sa'di. Hafez was a 14th century poet whose works can be found in almost every Iranian home. His tomb is usually crowded with visitors. The tomb is raised up on a beautifully decorated dais, surrounded by fragrant rose



Tomb of Hafez
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gardens, water channels and orange trees.

Sa'di, a 13th century poet, is one of the greatest figures in classical Persian literature. His best-known works are: Bustan (The Orchard) and Golestan (The Rose Garden).

Shiraz ranks among Iran's medical and therapeutic hubs. It provides high



Tomb of Sa'di
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quality medical services not only for Iranians, but also for a large number of patients from neighboring countries. According to Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, about 1,500 foreigners receive medical treatment in the city every month.

Fars Province, with its 37 cities and towns and four-season weather, also

Historical watermills of Dezful urgently in need of renovation

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The city of Dezful in the southwestern province of Khuzestan hosts a number of historical watermills, some of which were built concurrent with the establishment of the city during the Sassanid period, 1,700 years ago.

Roman Grishman, a French archaeologist, listed the mills among the

oldest irrigation systems established worldwide.

Close to 60 watermills were built in various parts of the city, such as under the old and new bridges and in Alikaleh neighborhood.

The watermills, some of which were still in use until the Safavid and Qajar eras, helped improve the economy of the city throughout history.

Some of the watermills on the Dez riverside were destroyed due to the river flooding; thus, only 20 still remain. The watermills of Dezful were registered on Iran's National Heritage List in 2001; however, with respect to their great significance, new studies are underway to prepare conditions for the inscription of the mills and other

water structures of the city on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Mohammad Azarkish, a cultural heritage expert, told ISNA that the historical watermills of Dezful have been left unattended in recent years, which is why the structures are in need of renovation.

He added that 25 watermills stand between the ancient and new bridges

of Dezful, pointing out that the structures which were registered on Iran's National Heritage List should be taken care of very carefully and effectively.

Azarkish noted that the flooding of the river at the beginning of every spring causes damage to the watermills, so they are in need of continuous restoration.

Referring to measures

undertaken to preserve the watermills, he said that strengthening them should be placed on the Cultural Heritage Ministry's agenda.

He said that with numerous historical attractions, Dezful can be recognized as an important tourist destination in the country, and the watermills can play a significant role in this respect.

Khuzestan Province is home to three UNESCO World Heritage sites, namely Susa, Chogha Zanbil, and Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System, yet it is a region of raw beauty where visitors could spend weeks exploring.

The province is also a cradle for arts and handicrafts which artisans have inherited from preceding generations.



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