

Ashura Tent in Tehran hosting mourners of Muharram



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Iranica Desk

A large tent, called *khey-meh-ye Ashura*, has been set up in Haft-e Tir Square in Tehran in cooperation with Tehran Municipality's Beautification Organization to host the people participating in the mourning ceremonies held on the occasion of Ashura, the tenth day of the month

of Muharram, which is the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Hussein (PBUH), the third Imam of Shia Muslims, and his companions. Due to the fact that the arts related to Ashura have their roots in the country's culture, the tent is paving the way for Iranian artists to display their religious works for enthusiasts during the lunar months

of Muharram and Safar. Managing Director of Tehran Municipality Beautification Organization Reza Sayyadi said, "We are holding various programs during these two months, such as singing of religious hymns and performing *Ta'zieh* (a ritual dramatic art that recounts religious events, historical and mythical stories and folk tales),

pardeh khani (narration of epic stories painted on a screen) and poetry readings". Meanwhile, Head of Tehran's Islamic City Council Mehdi Chamran stated, "This tent, established to show our respect for Imam Hussein (PBUH), will definitely help create a spiritual atmosphere in Tehran during Muharram and Safar".

Lahijan, a unique tourism destination in Gilan Province

Lahijan Pool
Itto.orgSheytan Kuh waterfall
Iranicultura.itKashif al-Saltanah Tomb
kashanehlahijan.com

Lahijan, a city in the northern province of Gilan, has long been involved in the silk trade. In 1932, the first tea factory was set up in Lahijan. Also, a large part of rice and citrus crops of the province is produced there.

Traveling to Lahijan is a unique experience, thus, be sure to include it in your travel plan to Gilan Province.

In addition to its waterfalls, Lahijan Pool and cable car, Lahijan has shown a green and fresh image that attracts many tourists from all over Iran and the world, kental-travel.com wrote.

In ancient Persia, Lahijan means "the land of silk". No wonder one of the products of this 800-year-old city was silk.

Climate

The climate of Lahijan is hot and humid in the summer. Winter begins with strong and warm winds and ends with snowfall. The humidity in this city is high. The average humidity is 76 to 79 percent, but it can reach 100 percent.

Sights

Lahijan has many natural sights. Sheytan Kuh waterfall and Lahijan green roof and pool are among those which are spectacular. Do not forget to take the Lahijan cable car and experience the spectacular view of the mountain. Golshan Bath, Tea History Museum, Kashif al-Saltanah Tomb and Akbariyeh Mosque are among historical attractions of Lahijan.

If you have time, visit Amir Kalayeh International Wetland, which is also known as Shaleh Kol. This wetland is located near Lahijan, next to Chamkhaleh Road to Kiashahr. The historical tomb of Sheikh Zahed Gilani, located in the village of Sheikh Anwar, is also a very impressive historical site.

Shopping centers and souvenirs

Lahijan traditional market is full of colors, smells and tastes. But if you want to buy things other than fresh fish and vegetables, go to its shopping malls.

The image of Lahijan is tied with a cup of hot and fragrant tea. Therefore, it is not possible to go to the city of tea and return without buying it.

Cookies are the next delicious option that you should buy for yourself and as souvenirs for your family and friends. Rice, jams and pickles, smoked fish and salted fish are other famous souvenirs of Lahijan.

Lahijan's varied appetizers and dishes are exciting, delicious and memorable. Fresh fish and sour kebab, local yogurt and pickled garlic can make you hungry. You will find good restaurants in Lahijan that serve these delicacies with quality.

Being a tourist city, you can find a decent number of hotels and other types of accommodations in Lahijan.

As the density of cities in northern Iran is high, you can find luxury or budget hotels in nearby cities as well.

Shift from Persian to Islamic art



Today, Persian art is part of Islamic collections and museums all over the world, but no "Museum of Persian Art" has ever been established.

The shift from "Persian" to "Islamic" happened in parallel with the establishment of the Arab states in former Ottoman territories after World War I and the invention or reassertion of their local, modernist-national traditions. While attempts were made to recategorise the arts according to major ethnic groups in the Middle East based on the 19th-century concept—namely Turkish, Arab and Persian—or according to the religious group by adopting the adjectives such as Muhammadan or Muslim, a new taxonomical category—Islam—was introduced by western art historians in the inter-war period.

Such shifts rarely occur without conflicts. Similar processes have been taking place in many more areas over the wider region from the Caucasus to Afghanistan.

During the height of the "Orient oder Rom" debate but geographically far from the centre of the debate, the Russian Yakov Ivanovich Smirnov (1869-1918) realised that a large number, perhaps the majority, of the splendid metalwork hoards from the Russian steppe and Siberia, which had been previously considered as Persian, was in fact "Iranian."

The chapters of the art of long-forgotten Iranian peoples, such as the Sogdians, the Khwarizmians and the Bactrians, thus began to emerge as the essential narratives of a wider, more variegated Iranian civilisation. This again paralleled important political changes which were to unfold in Central Asia, a Turkic-dominated land, also called "Turan" or "Turkestan." Within a few decades, new states appeared on this part of the Persian cultural domain, such as the Uzbek, Tajik, Turkmen and Azerbaijan Soviet republics, completing the fragmentation of Persian art.

Each fiercely claimed to be heir to the same patrimony, often in an exclusionist manner, and was eager to establish a historical link to great mediaeval dynasties, such as the Samanids for Tajikistan and the Timurids for Uzbekistan. To fashion local culture more authentically national, as well as to erase the history of the communist past after the 1990s, some of the best-preserved monuments in the region that had been researched by leading Soviet scholars in the 1960s-70s were, soon after the independence, extensively restored or in some cases completely remodelled as buildings with more recognisably "Persian"-style decoration. At the same time, the Turkic Uzbeks regard themselves as heirs par excellence to the Turanians, and model their monuments on this standpoint.

The above is a lightly edited version of part of a chapter entitled, 'Why Persian art needs to be studied and collected', from a book entitled, 'The Shaping of Persian Art: Collections and Interpretations of the Art of Islamic Iran and Central Asia' edited by Yuka Kadoi and Iván Szántó, published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing.