

Iran's beautiful islands

When thinking about Iran, most people have in mind the immensity of its deserts, or the beauties of its

mosques and palaces. Few people consider its islands, yet the country is a great destination for those

who crave white sandy beaches and turquoise waters. In this article, discover Iran's most beautiful islands.

Two seas run alongside Iran: the Caspian Sea in the north and the Persian Gulf in the south. While Iran has only one island in the Caspian Sea, it possesses no less than 34 islands in the Persian Gulf, out of the 90 small and large islands in this area. Not all of

them can be visited, either because they are military territories or because they are under environmental protection. But there are plenty remaining islands to offer wonders to travelers, among which the most famous are the two largest: Qeshm and Kish.

Qeshm Island

Qeshm is the largest island in the Persian Gulf, and by far one of the most interesting. The island has been a UNESCO geopark since 2006, and has many significant geosites. The most famous are the Chahkooh Canyon, the Valley of Stars, and the

Salt Cave, which is the longest in the world. Qeshm Island also has a singular culture, deeply influenced by the neighboring Arab countries. Visiting Qeshm Island is easy, as there is an international airport and daily flights to and from Tehran. Furthermore, most nationalities can stay in Qeshm without a visa for 30 days, surfiran.com wrote.



● hamishehsajfar.com



● visitiran.ir

Kish Island

Kish is Iran's second largest island, yet it is much smaller than Qeshm. The island is famous for its pristine sandy beaches and fancy hotel resorts. Visitors do not need a visa to enter Kish Island, which can be reached by air. Kish Island can be

a rather expensive destination, as it focuses on providing great entertainment (waterpark, dolphinarium, zoo, various watersports, etc.) and plenty of shopping centers. While Kish Island is famous for its modernity, there are also several natural and historical attractions such as the old Greek Ship and the underground city, Kariz.

Hormuz Island

There are plenty of other beautiful islands that attract visitors in southern Iran.

Hormuz Island, situated between the port city of Bandar Abbas and

Qeshm Island, is a must-see. It is sometimes called Rainbow Island, as it is famous for its colorful mountains and soil. The island is of great geological interest, and is a stunning succession of various natural landscapes.



● iraniantours.com



● IRNA

Hengam Island

Just two kilometers south of Qeshm Island, Hengam Island is famous for its

dolphins that can easily be observed from autumn to spring. Hengam is a small, 33-square-kilometer, inhabited island that attracts many visitors for its fauna and flora. Besides dolphins,

there are also many gazelles on the island. Furthermore, it's a perfect destination for swimming, with a pristine beach and crystal clear water full of colorful fish.

Larak Island

Larak is another beautiful island near Qeshm and Hormuz. While it's not much visited, it is becoming increasingly popular for its pristine and beautiful nature. The island is 77 square kilometers, and is inhabited by about 500 villagers who speak their own dialect.

Like Qeshm, Hormuz, and Hengam, Larak combines small mountains and sandy beaches. There are also the remains of a Portuguese Castle. There is no public transportation to Larak Island, but it's easy to get a boat from Qeshm pier and cross the 10 kilometers separating the two islands.

Lavan Island, located west of Hormuzgan

Province, is Iran's third largest island. It can be reached from the port city of Mogham in 30 minutes by boat. While mostly residential and inhabited by fishermen families, Lavan Island is not so touristic. However, the island has a beautiful and lush nature, covered with shrubs and tall trees and vast pristine beaches of white sand.



● jabama.com



● jahannews.com

Maroo Island

Maroo Island, also called Shidvar Island, is located near the port city of Mogham, in western Hormuzgan Province, and can be reached via Lavan Island. The small island is famous for its white sand beaches

and a seabed full of colorful coral reefs, which makes it a paradise for divers. Because of its rich and fragile ecosystem, the entrance of tourists on the island is regulated and requires authorization from the Environment and Maritime Organization.



● atto-co.com

Ashuradeh Island

Ashuradeh is the only island in the Caspian Sea, in northern Iran. In Golestan Province, the island is part of Bandar Torkaman. While it was once inhabited, its 300 families have now left. The island has very fertile soil suitable for growing pomegranate trees and raspberry bushes. It is also where 40 percent of Iran's caviar is produced. On the island, visitors can discover the remains of two historical buildings dating back to the Russian occupation in 1837: the Russian Fort and the Russian counselor's house.

Protected islands of southern Iran

There are many other small islands in the Persian Gulf, both in Hormuzgan Province and Bushehr Province. Since these islands are breeding grounds for many species of migratory birds and have a fragile ecosystem, entering them is only possible after getting permission from the Department of the Environment. Most of these islands are uninhabited and only fishermen come by sometimes. Among the most beautiful of these islands are Nakhiloo Island (small enough to be visit-

ed in an hour by foot), Umm al-Gorm Island, and Tahmadon Island (one of the largest, with a length of about 12 kilometers). These three islands can be reached by boat from the city of Bord Khun. We could also mention Dara Island, Kharko Island, and Ghabr-e Nakhoda Island. On the latter, which can be crossed in less than 30 minutes by foot, there is something resembling a tombstone, which, according to local stories, is the tomb of a captain ('nakhoda' in Persian) from Bushehr.

Islands you won't be able to visit

There are still plenty of small and medium-sized islands in the Persian Gulf that belong to Iran, but that are not accessible to visitors. Indeed, many of these islands are used for military purposes, as the Strait of Hormuz is a strategic military area. One of the most famous islands is Abu Musa; the Greater and Lesser Tunbs, Siri Island and Farur Island are other islands to which access is prohibited.



● rahbal.com



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