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Kashan: A world craft city driving economic growth and artistry



Iranica Desk

The city of Kashan, located in the central plateau of Iran, has been honored with the prestigious title of the second world craft city of Isfahan Province, following the renowned city of Isfahan. This recognition not only brings immense pride to the locals but also presents a remarkable opportunity for the sustainable development of handicrafts and traditional arts in this historic land. Hamidreza Mohaqeqian, the director general of the provincial Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and

Handicrafts Organization, highlighted the cultural and artistic prominence of Isfahan Province. Presently, more than one-third of the world's recognized handicrafts are produced in this province, with over 68,000 artists working alongside 130,000 others who are indirectly active in the sector.

In 2016, Isfahan achieved two international titles. Firstly, it was chosen as the Second World Craft City by the World Crafts Council, surpassing numerous contenders due to its diverse range of handicrafts and the presence of nearly 100,000 tal-

ented artists. Subsequently, Isfahan was designated as the Creative City of Crafts by UNESCO, further cementing its reputation as an artistic hub.

Building upon this momentum, various cities within Isfahan Province have also attained recognition for their craftsmanship. Shahreza, located on the historical and tourist axis of the province's southern region, emerged as the National Craft City for Ceramics; Mehrgerd, a village in the suburbs of Semirum, which boasts over 400 native craftspeople, was designated as the National Handi-

craft Village. Additionally, Golpayegan was acknowledged as the National City of Wood Carving; and, finally, Kashan, with its rich historical background and pivotal role in the cultural and civilizational development of Iran, has been chosen as the World City of Traditional Textile. The invaluable contribution of artists of this city in shaping the country's art and culture cannot be underestimated. With a history spanning nearly 7,000 years, and its significant contributions in pre- and post-Islamic eras, Kashan has long been destined to receive this prestigious

recognition.

The city's claim to fame lies in its pioneering efforts in traditional textile art, boasting workshops with nearly 200 years of history. Furthermore, the dedication of modern-day artists and handicraft suppliers to carry on the legacy of their predecessors has solidified Kashan's nomination as a world craft city for traditional textile art.

After almost two years of meticulous planning and preparation, a 10-member delegation from the World Council of Handicrafts visited Kashan in February. They explored the city's various

handicraft workshops and markets before ultimately choosing Kashan as the World City of Traditional Textile.

As a result, a magnificent official ceremony was recently held to celebrate the world registration of Kashan as a distinguished city preserving and promoting the art of traditional textiles. This acknowledgment will undoubtedly play a crucial role in elevating Kashan's global standing, attracting artisans, enthusiasts, and tourists from all corners of the world, and fostering the continued growth and appreciation of traditional textile art.

Honarmandan Park of Tehran serving as a magnet for art and culture enthusiasts

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In the heart of Tehran, Honarmandan Park not only serves as a beautiful green space but also stands as a vibrant center for art and culture. With its rich history and diverse offerings, this park has become a magnet for art enthusiasts seeking a blend of modern artistic expressions and peaceful surroundings. Originally dating back to the Qajar Dynasty, Honarmandan Park

was transformed into an artistic and cultural complex under the architectural guidance of a German architect. Serving as a weapons warehouse during World War II, several non-Persian style buildings were constructed to strategically protect the essentials. However, prior to this period, it was home to a garden and a mansion belonging to one of the Qajar princes.

One of the key highlights within Honarmandan Park is the

Iranian Artists' Forum. This significant cultural and artistic location encompasses visual arts galleries, theaters, cinemas, handicraft shops, art and design shows, as well as national and international events. With numerous galleries surrounding this part of Tehran, visitors are spoiled for choice with creative displays and exhibitions.

The Iranian Artists' Forum serves as a hub for various artistic endeavors, focusing on theater

performances, film screenings, paintings, sculptures, photography exhibits, music concerts, and educational lectures.

Additionally, Tamashakhaneh of Iranshahr, one of Tehran's most famous performance halls, is nestled within this park, offering captivating theatrical experiences.

Beyond embracing the world of art, Honarmandan Park caters to visitors of all interests. The park boasts facilities such as

libraries, coffee shops, restaurants, football fields, and basketball courts. Sports enthusiasts can engage in friendly matches or simply enjoy outdoor activities available in the resort-like setting.

With its regular lineup of music concerts, exhibitions, and movie screenings, Honarmandan Park has become a beloved destination among art lovers. Visitors can immerse themselves in the vibrant atmosphere, interact

with Iranian artists, and savor the delights of Persian tea while exploring the park's unique offerings.

Whether you are an art aficionado seeking creative inspiration, or simply looking for a serene place to unwind, Honarmandan Park presents an ideal haven in Tehran. Its fusion of artistic expression, cultural heritage, and recreational facilities makes it a must-visit destination for locals and tourists alike.



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