

Apadana Palace in Susa undergoes restoration to reclaim own glory



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Apadana Palace, located within the vicinity of the ancient city of Susa, has been restored and preserved, announced the director of the Susa World Heritage Site. Ali Boveyri Monji stated that significant actions have been taken in the Persian Achaemenid palace area this season to continue the management, restoration, and protection plan for Susa.

He noted that there has been continuous removal of wild vegetation in the area and added that fortifying the walls of the trenches in the eastern, middle, and western courtyards of the palace, grading to direct surface water, and applying mud plaster are among the most important protective actions carried out this season according to chn.ir. He continued by stating that the installation of lighting and CCTV cameras has

made it possible to monitor the Apadana Palace electronically. Boveyri Monji emphasized that improving and organizing the visitor pathways is another activity conducted at the Apadana Palace. The remains of Darius's Apadana Palace in Susa are among the valuable and significant monuments dating back to the Achaemenid era in ancient Iran. This palace was constructed around 521 BCE to 526 BCE under

the orders of Darius I, at a time when Susa was one of the capitals of the ancient Persian Empire. The palace served as the winter residence of the Achaemenid kings and featured various sections, including the Great Hall, the gateway, the reception palace, and three central courtyards. Opinions on the Apadana Palace vary; some believe its construction was influenced by the religious sig-

nificance of the city of Susa. In ancient civilization, all structures comprising halls with multiple columns were referred to as Apadana, which essentially describes a type of columned hall in ancient Iran. During archaeological excavations at the Apadana Palace, a notable inscription was discovered that refers to the reign of Darius and contains a text attributed to Darius the Great, outlining the construction of the

palace. According to this inscription, the palace was set on fire in the years following Darius's death and during the reign of Artaxerxes I (Darius's grandson), after which it was restored and renovated by Artaxerxes II. Roman Ghirshman, a Ukrainian-born French archaeologist, suggests that the architects of the Achaemenid palaces in Susa drew inspiration from Elamite structures. Darius himself explicitly mentions the col-

laboration of architects and artists from the subject lands in the commemorative inscription of the Apadana. Additionally, it should be recognized that the principles and culture of the Achaemenid era represented a synthesis of the arts and culture of all the fine arts from the inhabitants of these subject lands. Ghirshman argues that Darius established Susa as his capital following a brief stay in Babylon.

Luxurious charm of Shapuri House in Shiraz

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For every Iranian, the name Shiraz evokes beautiful gardens, historical buildings, and numerous attractions that reflect the city's rich cultural heritage. Known as the city of poets and literature, Shiraz has been a center of Persian culture for centuries, with a history that dates back to ancient times. It is home to iconic sites such as the stunning Nasir al-Mulk Mosque, renowned for its breathtaking stained glass windows, and the historic Arg

of Karim Khan, a citadel that showcases the architectural brilliance of the Zand dynasty. Additionally, the nearby Persepolis, the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire, further emphasizes Shiraz's significance in Iran's history. Among the tourist attractions in Shiraz, the capital city of Fars Province, the Shapouri House stands out as one of the most fascinating. This luxurious mansion, which dates back to the Pahlavi era, exemplifies the city's architectural diversity.

In the mansion, a blend of Iranian and European architecture can be observed, creating a unique landscape where the natural beauty of the garden complements the stunning architecture of the building. The Shapuri House, which belonged to Abdolsaheb Shapuri, one of the most famous merchants in Shiraz, was constructed from 1931 to 1936 under the supervision of the renowned architect Abolqassem Mohandesi. Until the early 1970s, the Shapouri family resided in this

mansion; however, a few years after the beginning of that decade, the house became abandoned. In 1999, the Cultural Heritage Organization of Fars Province purchased this luxurious building from the Shapouri family and registered it as part of Iran's cultural heritage, ensuring its preservation for future generations. The Shapuri House has two floors, with a built area of 840 square meters and a total land area of 4,635 square meters. It was constructed in the Qajar architectural style

and is among the first buildings designed and constructed with a free approach to architecture, showcasing the innovative spirit of its time. The main entrance of the building is not aligned with the main axis, requiring visitors to make a 90-degree turn at the northern facade to enter. The pathways of the garden follow a completely symmetrical pattern, although the trees are not planted symmetrically. Additionally, the inclusion of a balcony was an unconventional feature in

Iranian architecture, yet this building prominently features one. The overall layout and design of this mansion are distinctive and unparalleled for its time; for instance, it incorporates a staircase that is not found in any other buildings of that era. Furthermore, there are many rooms inside the mansion, each serving a specific function. The innovations utilized in the Shapouri House's garden have created a harmonious blend of Iranian and European garden styles.

In the western facade of the mansion, one can see round and ornate plaster columns adorned with Achaemenid-style tile work on the top of the upper porch. In the center of the garden, a beautiful large pentagonal pool adds charm and tranquility to the landscape. Among the trees planted in the Shapouri garden are cedar, maple, plane tree, fig, pomegranate, orange, and date, which, along with vibrant rose and geranium flowers, beautifully adorn the garden, making it a serene oasis in the heart of Shiraz.



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