

Importance of dinosaur footprint discoveries in Kerman Province

Iranica Desk

Mohammad Eslami, the head of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization of Zarand, a city in Kerman Province, recently visited the newly discovered dinosaur footprints in Dasht-e Khak Village, accompanied by the heads of universities in Zarand. During this visit, he articulated that the primary purpose was to assess the significance of this discovery in relation to tourism and the protection of natural heritage. Eslami emphasized the potential of this discovery to attract tourists, noting that these dinosaur footprints are not only valuable historical and scientific artifacts but could also become a unique tourist attraction. He added that the existence of such evidence of dinosaurs could promote scientific and specialized tourism, providing an opportunity for a better understanding of geological and environmental history. Eslami indicated that necessary measures for the protection of this



● virgool.io

footprint, as well as the creation of suitable conditions for its tourism development, would commence soon, ISNA wrote. Samin Mirzaei, the head of the Islamic Azad University of Zarand, stressed the importance of education and research in paleontology. She mentioned that this discovery could offer more opportunities for students and

researchers to conduct studies and will be effective in fostering educational programs in this field. Local officials and stakeholders were also present during the visit, engaging in discussions about planning educational and scientific tours in the region. They specifically emphasized the need to create suitable infrastructure

to facilitate visits from tourists and scientific experts. This valuable discovery, beyond its scientific aspects, is regarded as an opportunity for sustainable tourism development in Zarand, which could contribute significantly to job creation and economic growth in the region. Dinosaur exploration operations took place in late summer

2002, when a joint Iranian and Brazilian team identified skeletal remains of dinosaurs, including a carnivorous theropod tooth and pieces of unidentified bones, in the Darreh-ye Neyzar area, located in the village of Deh Alireza in northern Zarand, Kerman. Additionally, an herbivorous dinosaur footprint, angled and

located on a sloping wall, was uncovered in recent excavations. Part of this dinosaur's footprint, which lived approximately 180 million years ago during the Jurassic period, has been lost due to neglect. These significant discoveries have confirmed that both herbivorous and carnivorous dinosaurs coexisted in Iran.

A walking tour of Shiraz's historic Zand quarter



Karim Khan Citadel
● charkhemina.ir



Vakil Mosque
● wikipedia.org



Pars Museum
● aftartravel.com



Vakil Bathhouse
● kojaro.com



Vakil Bazaar
● safartop.com

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Shiraz, often referred to as Iran's cultural capital, is best explored on foot — especially in its historic Zand Quarter. Built in the 18th century under the visionary rule of Karim Khan Zand, this district seamlessly blends Persian artistry, architectural marvels, and vibrant living history. This half-day walking tour covers six iconic sites and concludes with a taste of authentic Persian cuisine. Let's step back in time!

Why Shiraz is a must-visit

Shiraz isn't just a city; it's a portal to the soul of Persia. Beyond its poetic legacy, it serves as the gateway to both Persepolis, the awe-inspiring Achaemenid capital, and Pasargadae, the tomb of Cyrus the Great. Both are UNESCO World Heritage Sites located

just an hour away, destination-iran.com wrote. The city boasts landmarks like the 19th-century Nasir al-Mulk Mosque, where sunlight transforms stained-glass windows into kaleidoscopes of color. Shiraz's temperate climate nurtures vineyards and fragrant orange groves that frame its stunning turquoise-domed shrines. Its cosmopolitan spirit pulses through art galleries, saffron-infused cuisine, and the warm, tea-loving locals who embody Persian hospitality. A journey here isn't just travel; it's time travel.

Karim Khan Citadel

Karim Khan Zand, who ruled Iran from 1751 to 1779, rejected the title of king in favor of Vakil-o-Roaya (Attorney of the People). His citadel served both as a military stronghold and a royal

residence. Karim Khan Citadel is a rectangular brick fortress with 14-meter-high walls and circular bastions at each corner. **Rostam tilework:** The eastern entrance features glazed tiles depicting Rostam, the legendary hero from Ferdowsi's Shahnameh, battling demons. **Inner oasis:** Inside the citadel, a serene courtyard filled with orange trees, private bathhouses (visit the southeast section), and four residential wings showcase the lifestyle of the Zand royal family.

Pars Museum

Located in Nazar Garden, just a five-minute walk south of the citadel, this octagonal Kolah Farangi (pavilion) building, named for its European-influenced design, once hosted Karim Khan's diplomatic meetings. Today, it houses:

- Exquisite Holy Qur'an manuscripts
- Lacquer-work boxes from the Qajar era
- Portraits of Zand rulers and Safavid-era ceramics
- Design Details:** Admire the intricate muqarnas (honeycomb vaulting) and floral tilework framing the central dome.

Vakil Mosque

Just a 10-minute walk east from Nazar Garden, near Vakil Bazaar, this mosque greets visitors with its colorful display of striking glazed tiles adorned with beautiful floral patterns. Crossing a wide-open courtyard, enter the southern Shabestan, where a columned hall is concealed behind its tall entrance portal. **Courtyard:** Framed by 48 tiled arches and featuring a reflective pool.

Prayer hall: Supported by 48 spiraled columns, the vaulted ceiling is adorned with intricate arabesque patterns.

Mihrab and minbar: The prayer niche and pulpit showcase calligraphic inscriptions and peacock motifs. The mosque's name, Vakil echoes Karim Khan's self-chosen title.

Vakil Bathhouse

A three-minute walk west of Vakil Mosque leads to this former public bathhouse, now a museum showcasing:

- Wax figures reenacting traditional bathing rituals
- Architectural innovations like Khanu (underground heating)
- Temporary exhibitions (e.g., Persian carpets)

Design note: The bathhouse's arched ceilings amplify sound — a feature that ensured privacy

during its heyday.

Vakil Bazaar and Sara-ye Moshir

No tour of Shiraz is complete without diving into its iconic bazaar! From the Pars Museum, head east to the main entrance, a short walk to two gateways:

- Southern gate:** Follow your nose to vibrant spice stalls and kaleidoscopic shops beneath soaring 17th-century arches. Don't miss the Chaharsu, a domed crossroads where passageways lead to workshops and glittering fabric stores, sourcing materials for the iconic embroidered dresses of the Qashqai nomads.
- Northern gate:** Peek into everyday life at stalls brimming with household goods — perfect for authentic souvenirs and people-watching.