

Tehran’s museum treasures, architectural wonders

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Tehran is often referred to as the “City of Museums,” housing the highest number of museums in Iran and offering unparalleled diversity in its collections. A significant portion of these museums is situated within the historical fabric of Tehran, particularly in its central neighborhoods such as Oudlajan and Sangelaj. According to municipal officials, approximately 80% of the city’s museums are found in this area, making it essential for nearly 70% of those looking to explore Tehran’s museums to enter this region. These museums hold particular importance due to their architectural significance and the priceless artifacts they contain. If you’re on the hunt for hidden treasures in the heart of the city’s museums, be sure to continue reading this report:

National Museum of Iran



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The National Museum of Iran, also known as the Museum of Ancient Iran, boasts over 80 years of history. It is not only the largest archaeological and historical museum in Iran but is also considered one of the largest museums in the world regarding the volume, diversity, and quality of its artifacts. Located at the beginning of Si Tir Street, the museum occupies a floor area of 2,744 square meters and, due to the antiquity of its collections, is regarded as one of the world’s premier museums, having been inaugurated in 1937. The building was designed by French architect André Godard, with its exterior inspired by Taq Kasra.

The museum houses a wide range of artifacts dating from the 6th millennium BCE through various Islamic periods, displayed over two floors. In the museum, items are categorized into prehistoric, pre-Islamic, and Islamic periods, showcasing unique artifacts for which no monetary value can be assigned. Among the notable artifacts displayed in this museum are items from the Elamite civilization found in Chogha Zanbil, including a bull sculpture, inscriptions, clay tablets, and glass tubes. Additionally, significant works from the Achaemenid and Sassanid periods stand out as some of the most important artifacts of these eras.

Glass and Pottery Museum

The Glass and Pottery Museum is housed in a historic building from the Qajar period, situated on Si Tir Street in Tehran. This site was registered on Iran’s National Heritage List on May 7, 1998, and it ranks among the most visited museums in Tehran, attracting over two million visitors annually. The museum’s octagonal structure is set within a 7,000-square-meter garden, featuring exquisite doors and windows that reflect the elegance of Seljuk architecture. Spanning two floors, the museum comprises

five halls: two on the first floor dedicated to glass and pottery from the pre-Islamic period, and three on the second floor showcasing artifacts from the Islamic period. A notable feature of the museum’s interior is its display cases, which draw inspiration from the columns of Persepolis, the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire, in Fars Province and occasionally the Zoroastrian Fire Temple in Naqsh-e Rostam, an ancient archeological site and necropolis located about 13km northwest of Persepolis.

These unique designs enhance the overall aesthetic of the exhibits. Among the highlights are some of the oldest glass pieces, known as glass cylinders, which were discovered at Chogha Zanbil, an ancient Elamite complex in the Khuzestan Province, and date back to the second millennium BCE. The first floor also features prehistoric artifacts, including the oldest handmade pottery from the Parthian period, dating back to the first millennium BCE.



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Post and Telegraph Museum



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The Post and Telegraph Museum opened its doors in January 1991. Housed in one of the oldest and most elegant government buildings, the museum features two floors filled with various halls and booths, making it an ideal destination for enthusiasts seeking to explore historical and ancient artifacts. Established in one of the oldest and most elegant government buildings, it is an ideal destination for enthusiasts of historical artifacts. Constructed in 1928 CE during the tenure of former post ministers Soor Esrafil and Nezam al-Din Hekmat, the museum covers an area of 15,000 square meters on Imam Khomeini Street. The building features columns in the neo-Achaemenid style, which were so successful that they

were later adopted in a grander form for the Nezmiyah building. Nestled in the cultural and historical area of Mashq Square, the museum is surrounded by structures dating from the Qajar period to the early Pahlavi era. Construction materials used in the museum mirrored those found at the entrance of the National Garden and in other buildings around Mashq Square. The museum comprises eight booths spread across two floors. The first floor houses ceremonial or ministerial booths that showcase portraits of post, telegraph, and telephone ministers, from the first minister, Ali Quli Khan Mokhber al-Dowleh, to the current minister. A highlight of the first floor is the domestic stamp hall, featuring 1,100 series of

stamps from the Qajar, Pahlavi, and contemporary periods. This area includes two display cases showcasing stamp plates related to Thomas Edison and Ahmad Shah Qajar. At the end of the hall, you can find a model of a Qajar postman and a depiction of a post street. The second floor features the international stamp hall, which displays stamps issued by 130 member countries of the Universal Postal Union. Additionally, there are horizontal display cases featuring stamps donated by various personalities and envelopes sent from different countries. The postal objects booth offers a fascinating collection of old postal scales and sample mailboxes from various countries, including Brazil, Egypt, Canada, Germany, Mexico, and Sweden.

Malek National Library and Museum

The Malek National Library and Museum is a significant scientific and cultural center affiliated with the Astan Quds Razavi Foundation, located in the National Garden area on Mashq Square. It houses valuable items, some of which are unique worldwide. The center spans over 5,000 square meters of land, with a built area of approximately 9,000 square

meters, combining traditional architecture with Islamic-Iranian art crafted by artists from the Astan Quds. The museum was founded and endowed by the late Haj Hossein Aqa Malek, son of Haj Mohammad Kazem Malek al-Tojjar. The original building, which served as Malek’s private residence, is situated in the Beyn al-Haram-eyn Bazaar in Tehran. This single-story structure, dating back to the late Qajar era, features two sections: inner and outer. Haj Aqa Malek converted it into a museum in 1937.

The museum displays exquisite handwritten books and various artifacts collected by Malek throughout his lifetime, including rare books, coins, stamp collections, paintings by Kamal al-Molk, carpets, and more.



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