

# 22,750 valuable historical sites identified across Isfahan



Mesr village  
farsnews.ir



Chehel Sotoun Palace  
ISNA

## Iranica Desk

The Director General of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization of Isfahan Province announced that 22,750 valuable historical sites have been identified across the province, with many of these structures needing to be registered on both national and global heritage lists.

Amir Karamzadeh added that numerous artifacts and monuments should be included on Iran's National Heritage List, while several others possess outstanding universal value worthy of UNESCO World Heritage status. "All these files are being pursued, and the process of document preparation continues," he stated, IRNA wrote. Karamzadeh also reported on efforts to pursue world heritage registration for Mesr village, the be-

ginning of restoration projects for repurposed historical buildings, and the hosting of the country's first special session on tourism and handicrafts in Isfahan.

"According to the indicators outlined for us in the Seventh Development Plan, we have made significant progress in registering historical monuments," he said. "A considerable number of heritage structures requiring repurposing for restoration have been revived by the private sector and municipalities, with the Isfahan Cultural Heritage Department playing a strong supporting role in this process."

The official cited an old mill in Najafabad and traditional oil-extraction buildings as examples of sites with potential for World Heritage listing.

Karamzadeh identified the world heritage registration of Mesr vil-

lage as one of the department's most important priorities. "It is one of the most prominent tourist villages in the province," he explained.

"Its dossier has been submitted for the Best Tourism Villages of the world, and thanks to substantial funding secured by the governor, village council, local governor's office, and community resources, we are finalizing its world heritage dossier."

Referring to recent challenges affecting the tourism sector, Karamzadeh noted that despite difficulties arising from wartime conditions and reduced travel, a dedicated meeting was held with the provincial governor to address tourism and handicraft issues. "Obstacles were reviewed, and decisions were made to rectify them," he said.

He emphasized the interconnect-

ed nature of cultural heritage, handicrafts, and tourism.

"These three sectors complement each other. When tourists arrive, historical monuments are restored and preserved, and handicrafts thrive. They exist within a single production and service chain and derive meaning together," he stated.

Karamzadeh also disclosed that a UNESCO regional conference for the Eastern Middle East was scheduled to take place in Isfahan. "Although the proposal for this event was submitted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, it was postponed due to wartime conditions and the crisis imposed upon us," he said.

The official highlighted Isfahan's pivotal role in global events, stating, "This conference is a valuable opportunity to showcase

the province's cultural heritage capabilities and unparalleled historical assets."

He confirmed that from technical coordination and dossier preparation to logistical assessments and urban arrangements, all sectors are ready, with every stage completed in cooperation with responsible agencies.

Stressing that Isfahan has always been at the forefront of cultural diplomacy and hosting international events, Karamzadeh asserted, "This conference can be a turning point in introducing the province's heritage, handicrafts, and tourism potential, and we have dedicated all our resources to ensuring its success."

During attacks and bombings on March 8, 2025, in Pasdaran Street near Naqsh-e Jahan Square, tiles on the northern and western ivans of the Abbasi Jaame (Grand)

Mosque were dislodged in several areas. The mosque is part of the UNESCO-listed Naqsh-e Jahan Square complex, which sustained damage from the blast waves of enemy attacks.

Subsequent bombings near the Isfahan General Governorate Office — located within the Safavid Dolatkhaneh, which is part of Isfahan's historical-cultural axis and listed on the National Heritage List — caused extensive damage to these memorials in the museum city of Isfahan. The attacks affected the buffer zone (Grade 2) of Naqsh-e Jahan Square and the immediate buffer zone (Grade 1) of the Chehel Sotoun Palace.

According to Isfahan's Cultural Heritage Department officials, 28 historical monuments in the region were damaged during the bombings by the American-Israeli coalition.

## Echoes of faith in bricks, tiles of mosques in Yazd

### Iranica Desk

The old mosques of Yazd Province are among the most fascinating heritage sites left behind by past generations. In addition to their religious and devotional significance, they showcase the distinctive culture and unique architecture of the tasteful and art-loving people of Yazd.

In this region, there are numerous mosques that are historically, artistically, and architecturally important. These places are divided into two types: neighborhood mosques and grand mosques (Jaame). The first type is simple and unadorned, consisting of a dome chamber, a courtyard, a winter hall (Shabestan), and a heated room (Garmkhaneh) for the cold months.

The number of local neighborhood mosques is large, the most important of which include Koushk-e No, Tall, Posht-e Bagh, Sabat, Rig, Bayagh Khan, Zavieh, and Sheikh Dad, according to IRNA.

The Amir Chakhmaq Mosque in Yazd is another structure located within a historical complex of the same name. It was built in 1437 CE. This mosque was constructed by Amir Jalal al-Din Chakhmaq, one of the commanders of Shah Rukh of the Timurid dynasty and the governor of Yazd, in collaboration with his wife, Fatemeh Khatun.

In the mosque's Kriyas (a semi-open, vaulted space that opens onto the square), a stone has been installed on which the text of a Vaqf (endowment) document is inscribed in the Naskh



Amir Chakhmaq Mosque  
wikipedia.org

script. The presence of delicate meshwork made of mosaic tiles in the windows on both sides, the northern corridor, and part of the ivan's façade has given the building a special and remarkable beauty.

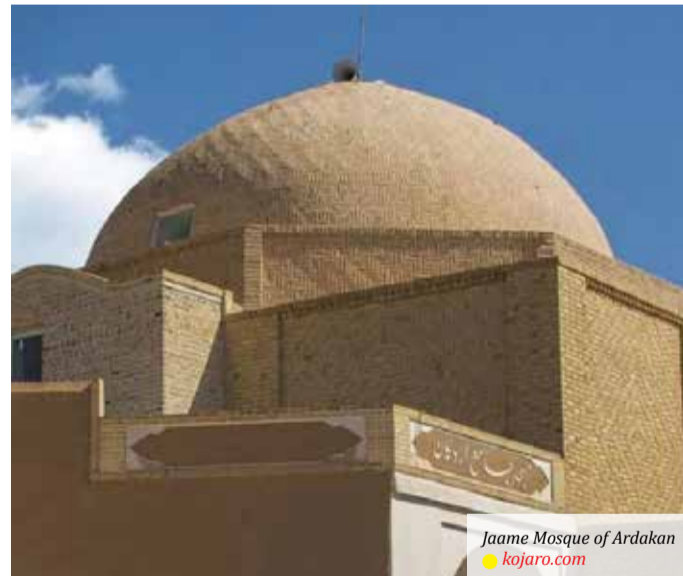
The outer surface of the dome and the inscription band surrounding it are decorated in the Kufic script. The mihrab (prayer niche) of the main ivan is also adorned with mosaic tiles and a muqarnas (stalactite vault) archway. In the center of this mihrab, a very finely carved white marble stone measuring 3.38 by 1.15 meters has been installed.

In terms of rank and beauty, this mosque is second only to the Jaame Mosque of Yazd. It has also been called the "New Jaame Mosque" (Jaame-e No).

Another old and famous mosque of Yazd that features distinctively Islamic architecture is the Molla Esmail Mosque, where the Friday prayers of the city of Yazd are held.

This structure was built by Molla Esmail Aqda'i, a renowned scholar of the 19th century CE (13th century AH). It consists of a vast ivan with a span of 15.75 meters, a Shabestan (prayer hall) with 31 columns, an excellent dome with brickwork patterns and inscriptions on the doorways, all integrated with tiles and inscribed stone. On its entrance portal, there are inscriptions in the Nasta'liq script and various stone tablets. Ayatollah Sadoughi, the third martyr of the prayer niche (mihrab), was martyred in this place. Every year, mourning rituals for Imam Hussein (PBUH) are held here with great solemnity and splendor.

The Jaame Mosque of Abarkuh is another old mosque in Yazd Province, located in the city of Abarkuh, 120 kilometers from the provincial capital, on the Yazd-Shiraz road. This structure consists of four ivans arranged directly around its courtyard, along with a number of corridors, a Shabestan, and rooms.



Jaame Mosque of Ardakan  
kojaro.com

This mosque dates back to the Mongol era, but its older parts — especially the domed Shabestan built between the southern and eastern ivans — and part of its main structure, date back to before this period. During the late reign of Sultan Abu Sa'id, many efforts were made to beautify it. Another large and old mosque in the city of Yazd is the Hazireh. The previous structure on this site was a shrine (resting place) for the worship and lodging of the poor. It was built in 1440 CE with the funding of Haj Shams al-Din Meybodi.

The Rig Mosque of Yazd is also a relic from the Mongol and Timurid eras. It was built by Amir Mo'in al-Din Ashraf in the 14th century CE (8th century AH). He purchased this structure, which

was nothing but ruins, and built a porch (Soffeh), a dome, and a congregational hall (Jama'at Khaneh). He also ran a stream of water through it and endowed shops adjacent to it.

This structure, whose entrance and dome were later repaired and restored by Khajeh Tavakol Qazvini, features a brick façade, platforms on the sides, a high dome, a short clay minaret, and a white marble stone inside the mihrab. Above the mihrab, there was a windcatcher (Badgir), which has now been destroyed. Its light wells are generally octagonal in shape.

The Shah Tahmasb Mosque was built in the 16th century CE (10th century AH) by Begum, the daughter of Shah Tahmasb of the Safavid dynasty, and her husband Noor

al-Din Mir Miran. Two white marble stones on the columns of its mihrab are among the most prominent remaining features of this mosque.

The Jaame Mosque of Ardakan, also from the 16th century CE, has eight metal pieces engraved with the names "Allah" and "Muhammad" in the Kufic script on the left side of its entrance portal. The Zilou (traditional Persian woven rugs) inside it date back to 1629 CE (1038 AH).

The Jaame Mosque of Bafq is another old mosque in the province, featuring a relatively large courtyard and ivan. An interesting point about its architectural style is that its original construction belongs to the Safavid era, while its decorations date from the Qajar period. Four-hundred-year-old trees stand tall in its courtyard. In front of the mosque, there is also a school where students of religious sciences study. The Shah Vali Mosque in the city of Taft, built in the 14th century CE (8th century AH), has a winter hall (Garmkhaneh) and a summer section. Its interesting features include a marble mihrab stone measuring 125 by 64cm, on which a lantern design, floral and bush carvings, and sacred phrases in the Naskh script are engraved.

The Jaame mosques of Firuzabad, Mehriz, and Rik-e Ashkezar are also among the old mosques of Yazd Province. Each of these possesses a distinct architectural style from past eras, reflecting the rich historical and cultural depth of the region.