

# Shiraz

## City Guide

### Content

### Page

Introduction (Fars Province)

3

Shiraz City

3

History

4

People and Culture

5

Notable People

5

Food & Drink

6

Souvenirs

7

Events and Festivals

7

Tourist Attractions

8

UNESCO World Heritage Sights

8

Pasargadae & Persepolis

8

Other Sights

8

Vakil Bazaar

8

<b>Content</b>	<b>Page</b>
Vakil Bathhouse	<b>9</b>
Vakil Mosque	<b>10</b>
Citadel of Karim Khan	<b>11</b>
Tomb of Hafez	<b>12</b>
Tomb of Sadi	<b>13</b>
Eram Garden	<b>15</b>
Narenjestan Qavam	<b>16</b>
Qur'an Gate	<b>18</b>
Nazar Garden and Pars Museum	<b>19</b>
Shah-Cheraq Shrine	<b>19</b>
<b>Restaurants</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Hotels and Hostels</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Airport, Railway station and Bus Terminals</b>	<b>21</b>



# Introduction

## Fars Province

Fars province, with a population of around 4,851,274, is considered as the fourth largest province and the cultural capital of Iran. Located on the south of the country, it measures about 122,608 sq. km and includes 29 counties. Fars province is bounded by Isahan and Yazd on the north, (Kohgiluyeh and boyerahmad) and Bushehr on the west, Kerman on the east and Hormozgan on the south.

Falling at the Zagros Mountain Range, Fars Province is divided into three regions: the north and north-western mountainous region with cold winters and enough herbal coverage; the central part which includes Shiraz, Kazeroun, Fasa and Firouzabad and enjoys hot and dry weather in summer and mild weather in winter; and, finally, south and southeastern regions where mountains dwindle to hills. The plains on the western side of the province are used for farming but those on the southern and eastern sides are barren deserts.

Also, Fars province includes the largest number of lakes among the other provinces of Iran: Maharloo, Bakhtegan and Tashk are famous salty lakes of the

in Iran), Arzhan lagoon, Barmshoor, Kaftar and Haft Barm lakes are its well-known sweet water ones. To name some of the rivers irrigating the land of Fars province, we can mention Shadkam, Falian, Tangshoo, Qare Aghaj, Sheshpar and Pirab. Margoona, Dastak, Abraj and Rahmatabad are among the must-see waterfalls of the province. Hot water springs and several animal protected zones, such as Arzhan, Hermod, Mian Jangal and Bamoo national park, are among other attractions of this land.

Fars province hosts several different ethnic groups such as Fars (the majority), Lor, Lak, Arab and Qashqayi nomads. Each of these ethnic groups has their own language and traditions, forming a cultural rainbow doming over the Fars province.

## Shiraz City

Shiraz, famed as the city of wine and poetry, is the capital of **Fars Province** on the southwest of Iran. Lying on a fertile plain at the foot of the **Zagros Mountain** range, the city covers an area of 240 square km, with a height of 1500 m above the sea level.

The city of Shiraz has a semi-arid climate, with hot summers and cold winters. However, its springs and its orange blossoms are very well-known throughout the country, attracting a huge number of both Iranian and foreign tourists.

## History

The city known today as Shiraz has a history of settlement which dates back to at least 3000 years ago. However, it is with the Muslim conquest of Persia, during the reign of Mohammad Ibn Yusef some 1400 years ago, which Shiraz began to occupy the center stage among other cities of the Fars province. Actually, the decline of the Sassanid capital, Istakhr, necessitated the rise of Shiraz as the provincial capital of Fars



With the advent of Iranian dynasties, the Buyid kings (945-1055) made Shiraz the capital of Iran and started building palaces, mosques and extending the city. Prior to Mongol invasion, Shiraz was ruled consecutively by Seljuk and Khwarazm governors. And, by offering generous contributes, Shiraz survived the ruthless attack of Mongols. The city also escaped another horrible fate when Shah Shoja surrendered to Tamerlane. In the 13th century, Shiraz became a leading center of arts thanks to the presence of patronizing governors and outstanding artists and scholars.

In 1504, Shiraz was conquered by Shah Ismail I and became a province of the Safavid Empire (1501-1722). Imam Qoli Khan, the governor of Fars under Shah Abbas I, built various palaces and elegant buildings similar to those in Isfahan.

However, with the fall of the Safavid dynasty, Shiraz fell into decline. Furthermore, the raids of the Afghans and the rebellion of its governor against Nader Shah Afshar worsened the situation of the city. For example, rebellion against Nader brought heavy damage to the city, resulting in the loss of

many historical buildings and monuments. At this time, the population of the city was reduced to 50,000.

But, prosperity came back to Shiraz once again with the coming to power of **Zand** dynasty. The benevolent founder of Zand dynasty, **Karim Khan**, declared Shiraz as his capital in 1762 and built a royal district with a fortress, administrative buildings, a mosque and one of the finest covered bazaars in Iran. He also dug a moat around the city, built an irrigation and drainage system and reconstructed the city walls. By the way, as it is the fate of all monarchies, the story of Zand dynasty came to end in 1795.

As Aqa Mohammad Khan Qajar won the power, he take a sever revenge from Zand dynasty and Shiraz. He moved the capital to Tehran and destroyed many of the elegant monuments of Shiraz. Nevertheless, Shiraz didn't collapse to nothing because of being placed on the business route to Persian Gulf.

Nowadays, many beautiful gardens, monuments and houses built by Qajars contribute to the never-ending beauty of the splendid Shiraz.





# People & Culture

According to the 2016 census, with a population of 1,869,001 people, Shiraz is ranked as the fifth most populated city in Iran. The majority of people in Shiraz speak Persian language, with a friendly accent known as Shirazi. The majority of people living in Shiraz are of Fars origin, more than 90 percent, while other ethnic groups of Turks, Lors, Baluchs, Kurds and Arabs make up the rest of the population. In terms of religion, Muslims have the upper-hand, but a minority of Jews and Christians also live in the city.

## Notable People

Shiraz is recognized as the center of culture and literature in Iran. In fact, as the home of great Iranian poets, Saadi and Hafez, Shiraz is known as the city of poetry. Shiraz is also the home or the birth place of many famous Iranian figures including eminent artists, politicians, authors and scientists. Some of these notable figures include: Mulla Sadra, the 17th-century Iranian Islamic philosopher; Khwaju Kermani, an Iranian poet and Sufi mystic of the 14th century; Saadi Shirazi, a 13th century poet; Hafez Shirazi, a poet of the 14th century; Shahriar Mandanipour, the contemporary Iranian writer and journalist; Ebrahim Golestan, the contemporary Iranian writer and filmmaker; Firouz Naderi, the contemporary Iranian NASA scientist; Gholam A. Peyman, the contemporary Iranian ophthalmologist and Ali Asghar Khodadoust, the Iranian eye surgeon who invented the LASIK eye surgery.





# Food & Drink

Shiraz is home to one of the most diverse and delicious cuisines in Iran. For many Iranians, travelling to Shiraz is characterized not only by visiting ancient monuments and cultural sites, but also by trying the endless choices of the tasty dishes and desserts of Shiraz. Some of these dishes are:

## Kalampolo

a traditional food made by rice (polo, the essential of every Persian dish), fried chopped cabbages, special aromatic herbs and meat balls. It is mostly served with a popular side dish named "salad shirazi," a mixture of finely chopped fresh cucumbers, tomatoes, onions and lemon juice as dressing.

## Aash-e Sabzi

a rich thick soup served at the breakfast time. Made by lamb meat, beans, peas, lentils, rice, and herbs and topped with fried onions, Aash-e sabzi is a yummy Shirazi dish.

## Faloodeh Shirazi

frozen starch noodles in sweet syrup with the flavor of rose water and cardamom served with fresh lemon juice. Faloodeh is the most famous of all desserts of Shiraz and is also served with traditional saffron-flavored ice-cream.

## Badam sookhteh

roasted almond in liquid sugar dip.

## Shirazipolo

a kind of rice cake cooked by rice, yogurt, saffron, fried eggplant, and chicken.

## Ranginak

a kind of halva made with flour, date, walnut and sugar.

## Kolooche-masghati

a kind of traditional biscuit (koloocheh) eaten with a sweet, made by starch, sugar, rose water, saffron, pistachio powder and cardamom (masghati).



# Souvenir

Shiraz is renowned for its rich cultural heritage reflected in its vivid art and crafts made by artisans in urban or rural areas. A good range of hand woven rugs can be found in bazaars of Shiraz. Chief among them is Gabbeh, a kind of pile rug coarsely woven by natural-dyed yarns, in form of geometrical or abstract patterns. Kilims, jajims, felted mats are other crafted rugs in Shiraz. Monabat kari or wood carving is an exquisite art and the city of Abbadeh in North of Fars province is best-known for producing it. The artisans draw a design on the surface of the wood board and then carve it by a chisel to remove the background in various depth. In Khatam kari or Wood inlaid working, one of the top artifacts in Shiraz, tiny and thin colored pieces of wood, brass and camel bones are put together side by side and then stuck on a wooden surface. Khatam kari accounts for the major handicraft of this ancient city.



# Events & Festivals

## • Day of Hafez

is held on October 11, in the **Tomb of Hafez**. People of Shiraz and the lovers of Hafez gather in the **Tomb of Hafez** and recite his poems.

## • Day of Shiraz

May 5 is designated as the Day of Shiraz which is celebrated by events held by the Shiraz municipality.





# Tourist Attractions

[Shiraz](#) has maintained its position as a top tourist attraction in Iran for both domestic and international visitors. Having A-list cultural historical attractions from the ancient ruins to refreshing garden houses, Shiraz never fails to amaze visitors.

## UNESCO World Heritage Sights

1

### Persepolis

is located outside of the city and bears the marks of the **Achamenid Empire**.

2

### Pasargadae

is one of the must-see tourist spots outside of Shiraz and is considered as one of the top destinations visited by the tourists of Shiraz.

## Other Sights

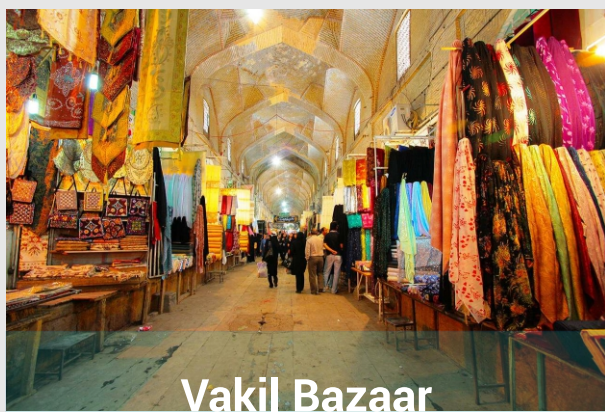
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### Vakil Bazaar

Vakil bazaar was built between the years 1770 and 1774 following the order of Karim Khan, the regent of Iran and founder of the Zand dynasty. It is said that Karim Khan(1751-79) was inspired by the Safavid Qay ariya bazaar of Lar, and had his bazaar built based on the latter's plan.





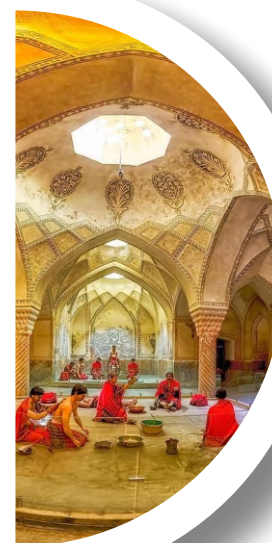


The bazaar stretches from the northeast to the southwest forming a cross-shaped plan constituted by two perpendicular archways. Each branch of this cross forms a specific commercial unit, called *rasteh*. The north and south *rastehs* included eighty-two shops, the west and east wings twenty and thirty-eight shops respectively. The southern *rasteh* was the draper's bazaar (*Bazzazan*); the northern one was for the hatters (*Kolahdouzan*); traders in the eastern *rasteh* sold thread, lace and tapes (*Allaqebandan*) and the western *rasteh* was used for selling quiver and swords (*Tarkeshduzan*). Although these *rastehs* are not used for the same purposes today, they still carry their old titles.

Apart from the shops, [Vakil Bazaar](#) also included five caravansaries: *Rowghani*, *Ahmadi*, *Qawami* and *Gomrok* caravansaries on the eastern, western and northern sides of the bazaar and *Fil* caravansary (elephant caravansary) on the southern part of the west wing. Some parts of *Qawami* and *Rowgani* caravanserais, as well as eight arches of the bazaar, were demolished due to urban expansion in the Pahlavi I era.

Once an international trade center, this bazaar contains 180 shops mainly selling carpets, rugs, spices, cooper handicrafts and antiques. The highlight of the bazaar is *Saray-e Moshir* located on its southern end. It was built by *Mirza Abolhassan Khan Moshir* between the years 1785 to 1925. Local souvenirs and handicrafts are being sold in this bazaar and caravansera.

*Nou bazaar* (or the New Bazaar) is another great bazaar lying in the heart of Vakil bazaar. It starts at the northernmost point of Vakil bazaar and ends in *Isfahan Gate*. This Qajarid bazaar mostly trades in textiles, household objects, and leather products. The long lanes with delicate rays of light shining through the aperture and wooden



## 4

## Vakil Bathhouse

[Vakil bathhouse](#), with an area of 1,350 sq. m, is one of the largest traditional bathhouses in Iran built by *Karim Khan Zand*. The bathhouse was in use until 90 years ago, but it was changed into a traditional gymnasium (*Zoorkhaneh*) for a while and today stands as a historical monument and anthropological museum.

This bath is mainly built of brick, gypsum mortar and stone. The entrance portal on the north of the bathroom is a low doorway connecting to an anteroom (*Hashti*) with a slight slope. This technique, along with the angled entrance of the rooms, was brilliantly applied to trap the heat inside.

The anteroom, decorated with arabesque patterns, leads to the *Sarbineh* or dressing hall. This octagonal hall and the chambers around it hold eight monolithic stone columns, supporting the vault. The walls are decorated with stucco moldings in floral and geometric patterns. There is a big pool in the middle and some empty spaces beneath the surrounding chambers which were used as shoe boxes.

A corridor, which houses the latrines, connects *Sarbineh* to *Garm-khaneh* (or the heat room). It used to be a place for those who had taken a bath and wanted to rest. The central heat room is based on a square plan ground with four columns in solid rock topped by a canopy of vaults. Hot water canals passed under the floor covered with stones. The dados are in green marble plates imported from *Tabriz*. There are two deep niches with a large stone pool in front of them which were used by nobilities. Particularly remarkable are the plaster designs created in the Qajarid era (1785 to 1925) over the *Zand* designs.

## Vakil Bathhouse

The wax figures and the sound of the sweet accent spoken by people in [Shiraz](#) portray different procedures of bathing in the Zand era. The bathrooms were not places used merely for cleaning, but different ceremonies were also held there. You can feel a real ceremony held in public baths, by visiting a room which was dedicated to 'Henna Bandan'. This ceremony was one part of an Iranian traditional wedding ceremony where the relatives put Henna on bride's hands as a symbol of joy and fortune.



5

## Vakil Mosque

Vakil mosque covers an area of 8,660 square meters and is named after the founder of Zand dynasty. It is recorded that the early construction of this major religious building of the Zand period started in 1766, over the relics of a Safavid structure. This 18th-century structure was reconstructed several times in the 19th century. The major reconstructions, including the entrance tilework and that of the porches, were undertaken from 1827 to 1828.

The main entrance is located in the northern side of the mosque, adorned with tiled stalactites, calligraphy and stone friezes. The tile work features the unique Shirazi style of decoration which inspired its subsequent structures in the 18th century. The wooden door is a copy of the Zand era door broken during the Qajar era.

The vestibule behind the entrance leads you to a spacious courtyard through the corridor with a 90-degree rotation from the axis of the portal. This rotation is toward the qibla in order to keep the harmonious unity of the complex.

The courtyard is a rectangular area with a long pool in the center, decorated with arcades. The lower parts of the arches are decorated with marble slabs carved in floral patterns.

The courtyard is a rectangular area with a long pool in the center, decorated with arcades. The lower parts of the arches are decorated with marble slabs carved in floral patterns. Unconventionally, instead of the usual four-porch plan of the mosques, Vakil mosque has two porches (ayvan) on the northern and southern sides of its large courtyard. The northern porch is flanked by two minarets and a high vault designed with an intricate calligraphy. This is known as Pearl vault, which shines like a piece of pearl on this mosque. It is also a tradition in the mosques of [Shiraz](#) to call the northern porch Pearl Arch. Nasir-al Molk mosque in Shiraz also has a Pearl Arch.

The southern porch leads to the big prayer hall of the mosque and its iconic feature is the 48 great spiral pillars. These five-meter-high columns are made of marble stones brought from [Yazd](#) and Azarbayjan. The altar is like the jewel of the hall mostly adorned with pink tiles in floral patterns. The plinth on the left is cut out of a single block of marble. The spacious hall in the east used to be a winter prayer hall holding 12 stone columns. This 25\*20 m hall now hosts prayers throughout the year.





Arg-e Karim Khan is the 18th-century royal castle of the well-known ruler of Zand dynasty, Karim Khan. As [Shiraz](#) became the capital of Iran in the Zand era (1751-1794), Karim Khan brought different architects and craftsmen from all over the country and even India to build this fortification in the best part of the city. This citadel was built in 1766 and is one of the earliest buildings constructed in Shiraz under the Zand rule.

The Arg is a large, rectangular building, originally surrounded by a 4-meter deep moat as a means of protection against the threats of enemies. Furthermore, there are four conical watchtowers at each corner of the building, soaring up to 14 meters height. The monument measures 124.8 m from east to west and 93.6 from north to south. The outer walls are 12 m high and the lofty entrance to the citadel is positioned in the middle of the east wall. The Qajarid glazed-tile panel installed above this portal displays Rostam, the mythic hero of Shahnameh (The Book of Kings by Ferdowsi), defeating the white demon. The castle's vestibule, corridors, guardrooms and Hammam (bathroom) are all housed behind the above-mentioned portal.

An interesting point to note is that the sewerage system of the bath has caused the southeast tower to shrink, giving it the appearance of the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

The interior court measures 93.6 m by 72.8 m, containing two pools and a garden full of orange trees and flower rows. There are three big porches (ayvans), each bearing two tall, stone pillars, in the middle of the north, south and west sides of the courtyard. In turn, each Porch contains halls, three-door rooms, and stairways leading to small rooms and porches on the upper floor. The citadel of Karim Khan is largely made of mud-brick, with wooden doors and rafters.

# Karim Khan Citadel of

6



However, the foundations, lower walls, pillars, and pavements of the castle are of stone. As K.Afshar says: "the base of the outer walls and towers are faced with rough-hewn square stone (badbor-e shirazi), while the upper portions of them are faced with interlaced brick ornamentation (heshtogir-e shirazi)."

Interior decorations included arabesque and floral patterns featuring Persian flower and bird (Gol-o morph) motifs. These Shirazi-style patterns were painted in vivid colors and gilt on the upper parts of the walls and ceilings. The herbal colors and gold plates were used in the ceiling's ornaments. The interior used to be abundantly decorated with tiles, marbles, plaster works and gilded paintings. Large carved stone panels used to adorn the lower parts of the courtyard and large mirrors, brought from Russia, Europe, and Ottoman lands were installed here.

The Arg served as the residence of successive Zand rulers, and its towers were occasionally used as a prison during this time. Then, during the Qajar and early Pahlavi periods, it became the seat of governor general of [Fars](#). A hut was built in place of the long wall of the citadel in 1901. Later, when the modern general governor's office (Ostandari) of Fars was established, a new building was built on the eastern edge of the Arg which functioned as the city's police headquarters and prison. In 1977, the monument underwent restoration and some of its damaged decorations were brought back to life.

## 7 Tomb of Hafez



Probably the most celebrated Persian poet, whether among Iranians or literature enthusiasts from around the world, is Khaje Shams al-din Mohammad known as Hafez. The 14th-century poet has profoundly influenced and continues influencing Persian poetry, and invariably evokes admiration of his readers. His words, masterfully mingled with mystical concepts and embellished finely with oratory, have served as more than a collection of poems for Iranians during the centuries. As a custom, mostly in special ceremonies like Yalda or Nowroz, people close their eyes and open Hafez's poem collection randomly, hoping the poet will tell their fortune.

From the 17th to 19th centuries, the tombs of famous poets in [Shiraz](#) were the main destinations for travelers. Hafez's mausoleum, locally called Hafeziyeh, is located in the northern edge of the city, in the middle of the pretty garden of Mossalla. As you enter from the southern section, a pretty sour orange orchard (Narenjestan) with water streams and rows of flowers draw your attention. Hafez's tombstone sits solemnly in the center.

For sixty years, his burial place was a plain tombstone. In 1477, Shams al-Din Mohammad Yaghmai, the minister of Gurkani court, built a domed vault with a pool in front of it.

Much later, in the 18th century, Karim Khan-e Zand expanded the surrounding area and ordered a hall to be built in the middle of the garden. The tomb of Hafez is covered with a marble gravestone surviving from Karim Khan's era (1751 to 1779). The current mausoleum was designed in 1935 by Andre Godard, a French architect, with the help of some Iranian architects. It consists of an octagonal pavilion structure topped with a hat-shaped dome. The vaulted hall, with two rooms on the east and west wings, was expanded by the additional 16 columns, turning it to a spacious 20-columned veranda. The interior layer of the dome is adorned artistically with colorful tiles. Every eight monolithic column is surmounted by an azure tiled inscription bearing a verse from Hafez's book. The marble stone on Hafez's grave was inscribed in Nastaliq calligraphy in Karim Khan's era with two sonnets from Hafez's book starting with:

In the hope of union, my very life, I'll give up

As a bird of Paradise, this worldly trap I will hope  
(translated by Shahriar Shahriari)

The northern side of the garden houses a library and a bookshop. The northwestern part holds a cozy teahouse and the west side contains a cistern from Zand era, Qavam family crypt and several graves of famous Shirazi residents.



Abu Mohammad Moshref al-din Muslih bin Abdallah, known as Saadi Shirazi, was one of the major Persian poets and literary figures, born in [Shiraz](#) in the 12th century. He is widely recognized as one of the greatest poets of the classical Iranian literary tradition around the world. His wisdom is ever present in the Iranian culture and language as people frequent his tomb, recite his poems and use his aphorisms in their daily conversations.

Gulistan and Bustan are the most notable works of Sheikh Saadi. He has widely emphasized on the unity of mankind in his poetries which is the reason why United Nations adorns its entrance by a carpet bearing this poem of Saadi:

Human beings are members of a whole,  
In creation of one essence and soul.  
If one member is afflicted with pain,  
Other members uneasy will remain.  
If you've no sympathy for human pain,  
The name of human you cannot retain!  
(translations by M. Aryanpoor)

Saadi passed away in 1291 and was buried in the very place where his hermitage used to be. The first mausoleum over the grave of Saadi was built by the order of Shams al-din Mohammad Saheb Divani, the vizier of Abaqa Khan, in the 13th century. Then, in 1590, the governor of Shiraz, Yaqub Zol-Qadr, brought down the mausoleum. Nearly two centuries later, Karim Khan Zand (1751 to 1779) ordered the construction of a new building, known as Emarat-e Molukaneh (Royal Monument) over the relics of Saadi's mausoleum. This two-storey monument of plaster and brick consisted of a stairway connecting the two floors of the building and a hallway with two rooms on its either side. Saadi's tomb was placed in the room on the eastern side. Years later, Shurideh Shirazi, another poet from Shiraz, was buried in the room built on the western side of the hallway. However, in the early days of Qajar dynasty (1785 to 1925), the gravestone of Saadi was broken. After a while, Ali Akbar Khan Qavam al-Molk Shirazi had the gravestone repaired and some poems of Saadi which praised the great Prophet of Islam inscribed on it. This slab of marble stone, placed on Saadi's grave by Karim Khan, has survived the passage of time and you can have a look at it in Saadi's tomb.

The restoration of the mausoleum was completed in 1952, inspired by the [Chehel-Sotoun Palace](#) in Isfahan, combining modern and classical architectural elements and decorations.

8

## Tomb of Saadi



It consists of two perpendicular ayvans holding 8 four-sided columns sheathed in layers of red marble. The white marble stones of the building and the turquoise color of the tiles on the dome create a peaceful composition. Saadi's tombstone is placed inside an octagonal room right under the dome. There are seven manuscripts from his poems on the seven walls of the room. The manuscript of the eighth wall accounts for the construction of the building. Stretching to the left, the ayvan leads visitors to the tomb of Shurideh Shirazi.

The entrance to the complex is designed by Andre Godar, a French architect. The building is surrounded by a beautiful garden. In the courtyard, there are two rectangular ponds on either side of the main porch aligned with the north-south direction, and there is a long pool aligned with the east-west direction in front of the main porch of the tomb. There is a small pool in front of the building in which people throw coins for their wishes to come true. There is also an octagonal fish pond on the left side of the building, where people used to wash their clothes, believing they will be blessed. The water filling the fish pond comes from a water qanat.



# Eram Garden

9



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## Narenjestan Qavam House

The garden and mansion of Narenjestan, named after the many citrus trees planted in the garden, was built by Mirza Ibrahim Khan Qavam in 1870. Fifteen years later, sometime around 1885, Mohammad Reza Khan Qavam, son of Mirza Ibrahim Khan, added some other parts to the Naranjestan and completed it.

During these years, Qavam family had established itself as one of the most influential families of the Qajar period (19th century), gaining uncontested rule over the Fars province and coasts of the Persian Gulf. They became so big that Fath Ali Shah-e Qajar, saw them worthy to be entitled as 'Qavam al-Molk'. The first Qavam was a merchant from Qazvin, but his son found his way to the court of Zand rulers and became a minister. Much later, his grandson became the mayor of [Shiraz](#) and the prime minister of two Qajarid kings.

During its prospering days, in the Qajar era, Narenjestan was the meeting place of nobles and dignitaries. In the Pahlavi era, however, Qavam family lost its high status and the governmental positions it had gained during the rule of Qajars. At this time, Narenjestan was donated to the Pahlavi University of Shiraz. After some restorations in 1969, the Asia Institute, headed by Professor Author Upham Pope (1881-1969), was founded there. Also, it contains a museum which was founded by Ibrahim Khan Qavam al-Molk in 1967, at a time when the mansion was going to be donated to the Shiraz University.

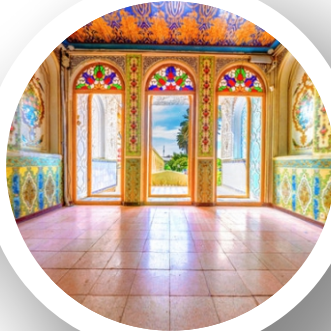
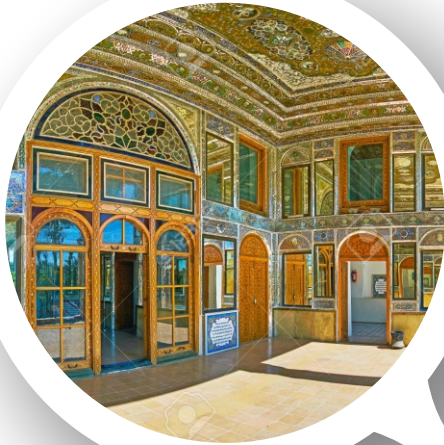
Originally, the present building was used as the public part of the house (Biruni) and the private part of the house (Andaruni) was located on the west.

To enter this monument, first, you should pass through an anteroom with a groined ceiling, where the servants used to live. The best examples of the brickwork and tilework of this house are presented in this vestibule. The rooms here are mounted on a columned veranda, floored with blue and white tiles. The outer edges of the rooms are decorated with floral bands.



The courtyard is surrounded with citrus trees, while a pool is built in the center and a building behind it. The painted panels on the walls depict the servants serving food, and above them, some episodes from the Shahnameh (The Book of Kings) by Ferdowsi. The building holds a central portico decorated with carved stones inspired by Persepolitan reliefs which are the meeting point of the halls and rooms on its either side. The interior of the porch is adorned with mirrors, tiles and 19th-century style paintings. The central gable of the building depicts the emblem of Persia, the lion, and sun along with the blue arabesque patterns and a Quranic inscription.

The iconic in-laid door connects the portico to the surrounding areas. The rooms are decorated with painted wooden ceilings and marble dados. A hall, highlighted by marquetry and mirror work, is located behind the portico. The columns of the hall are carved from a single block of stone. The fireplace in the throne room is decorated with marble stone portraying Persepolitan figures. The basement holds the museum showcasing artistic tiles, ancient coins, lacquered boxes, historical manuscripts and, specifically, luster tiles dating back to the 12th century. There used to be several other buildings, bathrooms, and kitchens located at various points of the house.

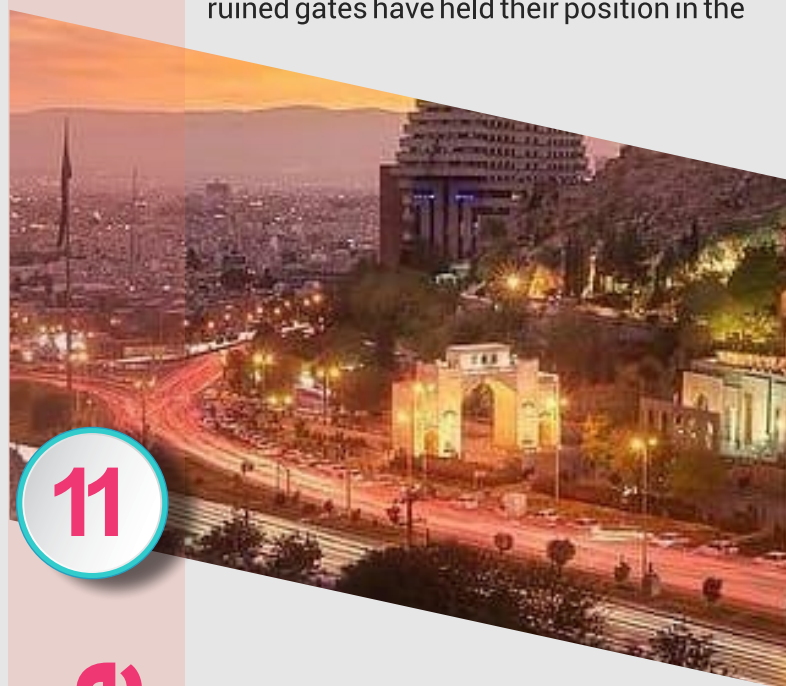


On your way to the [Persepolis](#) in northeast [Shiraz](#) close to the city exit to Marvdasht, you can walk under the vault of a huge religious historical gate called Qur'an Gate. This is one of the oldest and the most prominent gates in its kind, in Iran. Iranians believe if you walk under the holy book Qur'an before traveling, you will have a safe and symbolically blessed trip.

This is the only remaining gate out of the ones built around Shiraz. However, the ruined gates have held their position in the

Unfortunately, the gate was destroyed in 1936 during an innovation project; 12 years later, one of the prominent Shirazi merchants, Hossein Igaar, known as 'Moein Al Tojjar' built another gate near the destroyed one. The new Qur'an Gate, which still exists, is bigger, has a pointed arch and two small entrances reaching the top chambers. The small room on the left side of the gate houses Tomb of Moein Al Tojjar. The precious Qur'an volumes are kept in Pars museum nowadays.

Qur'an Gate is located in Allah o Akbar strait near the nice green Tausiye square. It is in a ten meters distance from Khaju Kermani tomb, less than 500 meters to Jahan Nama garden and less than 1000 meters to Hafiz tomb. Most visitors find Qur'an Gate a must-see spot,



active memory of the people who still mention them in conversation, like Kazeroon gate.

Qur'an Gate was built by the order of Azad Al Doleh of Deylami dynasty. They named it [Qur'an gate](#) and placed a volume of Qur'an on top to bestow protection upon the people leaving the city.

At the time of Zand dynasty, Karim Khan renovated the gate and added a chamber on top of it in order to put two precious Qur'an volumes inscribed by Soltan Ibrahim Ibn- e Shahrokh of Timurid dynasty there. Later renovations added two chambers on either side of the gate.

especially when visiting the tomb of [Khaju Kermani](#) after a short hike. Modern parks, water channels, pools, and gardens have made the area really delightful.





## Nazar Garden & Pars Musum

As the capital city of the Zand dynasty (1751-1794), Shiraz boasts most of the monuments remaining from this period. Nazar Garden, shaded by soaring cedar, pine, and sour orange trees, is one of them. Although originally, dating back to some time before the Zand dynasty, [Nazar garden](#) was an area covered with trees, it got its prominence during this period. As this garden is known as the administrative garden of the Zand rulers, it was dedicated to receiving foreign guests and holding salute ceremonies. The octagonal pavilion was built by the order of Karim Khan, the ruler of Zand dynasty, who was buried in the same place. However, later on, Aqa Mohammad Khan, the founder of the Qajar dynasty (1785 to 1925), ruthlessly took Karim Khan's bones to his palace in [Tehran \(Golestan Palace\)](#) and buried them under the stairs he used to pass over every day.

During Qajar era, the garden retained its prosperity, as Edward Scott Waring, (a 19th-century traveler) who visited Nazar garden in those days described it as [Shahzadeh Garden](#) (garden of the prince) and the best garden of that time.

Later, in Pahlavi I era, several Zand and Qajarid buildings were ruined due to urban planning and only some parts of this garden survived. Therefore, Reza Shah, the founder of Pahlavi dynasty, had the remaining bones of Karim Khan brought back and buried in the garden.

The only building still standing in the garden is the pavilion. It is located on the north-eastern side and fronted by a long rectangular pool. There are two small pools on each side of the pavilion. There used to be another large pool on the northern side of the building which was ruined in Pahlavi era and the discarded stones were used to build a pool in [Hafeziyeh](#).



## Shahcheragh Shrine

When Sultan Mir Ahmad, one of the brothers of Imam Reza (the 8th Shiite Saint) was killed in 9th century near [Shiraz](#) he was buried there near the tomb of his brother, Mohammad. The first tomb was built in the 12th century, about two centuries after his death, and an extensive magnificent shrine with a huge dome and a theological school were ordered to be built by Tashi Khatoon, mother of Shah Eshaq Injoo. Moreover, she dedicated exquisite manuscript volumes of Qur'an to the shrine. Since then the shrine has been destroyed many times due to the earthquake and other reasons, but it has been restored again and the most notable restoration was during the reign of Qajar dynasty (1785 to 1925).

Being the chief religious site in Shiraz, [Shahcheragh Shrine](#) boasts a glorious and noticeable architecture. Having two main lavishly tiled entrance portals in the northern and southern sides, it has a spacious courtyard with a turquoise blue star-shaped fountain pool in the middle and soaring trees around it. Sultan Ahmad's tomb is located at the eastern wing, fronted by a 10-columned porch (ayvan). The original wooden columns are now replaced by the golden-hued steel columns. The structure is flanked by two tiled minarets and topped with a bulb-shaped 72-sided (pieces) dome, a relatively rare dome structure in religious sites of Iran. Inside the porch (ayvan), there is an entrance at the middle leading to the tomb hall while 12 chambers are built in two stories on both sides of the entrance. Inside the shrine, you might see one of the most artistic mirror-works ever. The walls and the ceiling are decorated with millions of tiny pieces of glittering mirror, and the floor is covered by light green marbles. Sultan Mir Ahmad's tomb is enclosed by a silver plated zarih in the dome sanctuary, covered every inch with glazed tiles and sparkling glasses. Mir Ahmad's brother's mausoleum in the

southeastern side of the courtyard has a similar structure but is relatively smaller in size. Established in 1965, the Museum of Shahcheragh showcases valuable collections of pottery vessels including cone-shaped ewers; Sassanid and Parthian coins and several precious manuscript volumes of Qur'an.



## Top Restaurants in Shiraz

Good food is one of the essentials of everyday life. Also, it is a refreshing, invigorating part of our travels, whether short or long. So, here we will introduce you some restaurants in Shiraz where you can have an amazing experience of Iranian cuisine and also re-energize your body for the rest of your day.

### Haft Khan Restaurant Complex

- Modern Environment
- International, Middle-eastern and Persian dishes

### Baghe Raaz (Raaz Garden)

- A garden-like environment
- Middle Eastern, Persian, International, Vegetarian Friendly and Halal dishes

### Soofi Traditional Restaurant

- Modern Environment
- Italian, Armenian and Persian dishes

### Sharzeh Restaurant

- Traditional-looking Restaurant
- Middle Eastern and Persian dishes
- Live Music

### Kateh Mas Traditional Restaurant

- Traditional Restaurant
- Middle Eastern and Persian dishes

### Shapouri Garden Traditional Restaurant

- An Old Mansion turned Restaurant
- Middle Eastern and Persian dishes

### Shater Abbas Restaurant

- Traditional-looking Environment
- Middle Eastern, Persian and Helal dishes

### Parhami Traditional Restaurant

- Traditional House turned Restaurant
- Local Food of Shiraz

### Vakil Cultural House

- Modern Environment
- Café, European, Middle Eastern, International and Persian dishes

### Humerz Café and Restaurant

- Modern and Luxurious
- Café, Juice, different types of sweets, International and Local dishes

### Café Arg

- A Traditional Persian House equipped with 19th-century looking furniture
- Café and Persian dishes





## Hotels & Hostels

You can find different types of accommodations suited to your budget in Isfahan, from five star hotels to hostels and traditional houses. Here, we have listed the best choices in Shiraz.

### **Zandiyeh Hotel**

Ÿ 5 star

### **Shiraz Grand Hotel**

Ÿ 5 star

### **Chamran Hotel**

Ÿ 5 star

### **Homa Hotel**

Ÿ 5 star

### **Royal Hotel**

Ÿ 4 star

### **Karim Khan Hotel**

Ÿ Boutique hotel

### **Forough Boutique Hotel**

Ÿ Boutique hotel

### **Darbe Shazdeh Hotel**

Ÿ Boutique hotel

### **Taha Traditonal House**

Ÿ Traditional house

### **Niyayesh Boutique Hotel**

Ÿ Boutique hotel

## Airport, & Railway station Bus Terminals



### Ÿ **Airport**

Shiraz International Airport, also known as Shahid Dastghaib International Airport, is a joint civil and military airport, is the second most equipped airport in Iran. It is located about 30 minutes away from the center of the city, at the end of Shahcheraq boulevard. It has two terminals: terminal 1 houses domestic flights and terminal 2 is dedicated to international flights. Domestic flights include daily flights to major cities of Iran and International flights are mostly to neighboring countries around the Persian Gulf.

### Ÿ **Shiraz Railway Station**

Shiraz railway station is among the most advanced railway stations of Iran. You can use this railway station to travel to cities such as Tehran, Isfahan, Mashhad and Qom. It is located in the vicinity of Shahrak-e Sadra, about 15 km away from Shiraz.

### Ÿ **Bus Terminals**

Shiraz has four bus terminals. Shahid Karandish terminal is the oldest and largest bus terminal in Shiraz. It measures around 10 sq.km, and is located at Salman-e Farsi boulevard. It is from this terminal that you can travel to other provinces of Iran. In addition to Shahid Karandish terminal, there are four other terminals which you can use if you intend to go to other cities of Fars province. They are: Shahid Modares terminal on the east of Shiraz, Amir Kabir terminal on the south-west of Shiraz, Shahid Tabatabayi terminal on the northwest of Shiraz and Ali Ibn Hamzeh opposite to Karandish terminal.