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15 day Conducted **Iran (Persia) Tour** for **\$6,495** per person twin share

This price includes airport taxes and levies

This is a wonderful opportunity to visit the isolated and seldom visited country of Iran. The price includes all of the following:

- Economy Class airfares from Sydney, Melbourne and Perth into Tehran and out of Shiraz with Qatar Airways.
- A 12 day coach tour of fascinating Iran (Persia), visiting Tehran, Kashan, Isfahan, Yazd, Shiraz and more. The tour includes a visit to Golestan Palace, the incredible archaeological site of Persepolis, Isfahan's Imam Square and the famous Treasury of National Jewels in Tehran.
- Day use accommodation in Doha, Qatar.
- Nearly all meals.
- Very good accommodation, mainly 3 to 5 star.
- Entrance fees and all transport and transfers.
- Prepaid gratuities to the main tour guides and drivers.
- Services of English speaking local guides and an Australian tour escort.



If you don't have a travel partner, but wish to travel at twin share rates, we will try and assign you with another person, but this is not guaranteed. If you require a single room there will be an additional charge of \$995.

This tour visits many fascinating off-the-beaten-track destinations, with histories dating back thousands of years.

This is a special group tour just for Macleay Valley Travel clients with a maximum number of about 22 passengers.

Tour departs Australia 1st November and returns 15th November 2017

We try harder to find you the best travel deal

Itinerary for Iran (Persia) Tour

Included meals are indicated as B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

01.11.17 Australia – Doha, Qatar

Sydney passengers depart at 10.10pm on QR 909, arriving in Doha at 5.05am the next morning (02.11.17).

Melbourne passengers depart at 11.10pm on QR 905, arriving in Doha at 5.25am the next morning (02.11.17).

Perth passengers depart at 11.10pm on QR 901, arriving in Doha at 5.20am the next morning (02.11.17).

02.11.17 Doha - Tehran, Iran

(L/D)

All passengers depart Doha at 7.50am on QR 482, arriving in Tehran at 10.25am. Upon arrival we are met and transferred to the hotel for some free time to recover from our flights. Later we will visit Azadi Tower before having dinner at a local restaurant. The Azadi Tower was formerly known as the King's Memorial Tower and is one of the symbols of Tehran. The Tower is located in Azadi Square, and marks the western entrance to the city. It is built of eight thousand blocks of white marble stone from the Isfahan Province.

Accommodation: Espinas Hotel or similar

03.11.17 Tehran

(B/L/D)

Today we have a city tour of Tehran. Our first stop is a visit to the Archaeology Museum. This is followed by a visit to the Treasury of National Jewels, which is a collection of some of the most expensive jewels in the world. Collected over centuries, the value of the objects exhibited cannot be judged by price.

Our final stop for today is Golestan Palace, which is one of the oldest historic monuments in Tehran. The Golestan Palace belongs to a group of royal buildings that were once enclosed within the mud-thatched walls of Tehran's historic Arg (citadel). The palace complex consists of 17 structures including palaces, museums and halls. Almost all of this complex was built during the 200 years rule of Qajarian Kings. The palaces were used for many different occasions, such as coronations and other important celebrations.

Afterwards we return to the hotel. Breakfast, lunch and dinner today are included.

Accommodation: Espinas Hotel or similar

04.11.17 Tehran

(B/L/D)

Our tour of Tehran continues today with a visit to Saad Abad Palace. The palace is situated on a 300 hectare complex built by the Qajar and Pahlavi monarchs. The official residence of the President of Iran is located adjacent to the complex. The complex includes more than 180 hectares of natural forest, streets, galleries and museums. We then visit the Tajrish bazaar, which is located in northern Tehran and is considered more aesthetically pleasing and tourist-friendly than the central bazaar. It is a great venue for shopping, boasting a vibrant central section which sells fresh fruit, vegetables, traditional Iranian sweets, alongside traditional crafts and tourist merchandise. The bazaar backs onto the picturesque Imamzadeh Saleh shrine, a popular local pilgrimage site. Afterwards we visit Darband Hills before returning to the hotel. Breakfast, lunch and dinner today are included.

Accommodation: Espinas Hotel or similar

05.11.17
(B/L/D) **Tehran – Kashan**

This morning we commence a 3 hour drive to Kashan, which is a typical Iranian town at the edge of the desert that has been inhabited since antiquity. In Kashan we will find some very devout Muslims and several shrines. Upon arrival into the city we enjoy an included lunch, followed by a sightseeing tour. We visit Fin Garden, which is a historical Persian garden covering 2.3 hectares and dating back to the 17th century. The garden gives a cool refreshing feeling to its visitors. In Kashan we also visit Broujerdi and Tabatabaei houses, which are houses of 19th century merchants of Kashan. The houses have several courtyards and their own interior and exterior sections. Our last stop for today is Sultan Amir Ahmad Bathhouse, which is a traditional Iranian public bathhouse constructed in the 16th century. This evening we enjoy an included dinner.

Accommodation: Saraye Ameriha Boutique Hotel or similar

06.11.17
(B/L/D) **Kashan – Abyaneh – Isfahan**

We have an early morning drive to Isfahan. Travel time is approximately 3 hours. En route we visit Abyaneh village, which has a population of approximately 300 people. The village is one of the oldest in Iran, and is characterised by a peculiar reddish hue. An Abyanaki woman typically wears a long white scarf which has a colourful pattern and an under-knee skirt. The Abyunaki people have persistently maintained this traditional costume. On top of the village sits the ruins of an ancient fort from the Sasanian Empire. We then continue onto Isfahan.

This evening we visit the Khaju Bridge, built in 1650 and also the Bridge of 33 Arches, built in 1602. The bridges of Isfahan display some of the finest architecture in the city. Breakfast, lunch and dinner today are included.

Accommodation: Abbassi Hotel or similar

07.11.17
(B/L/D) **Isfahan**

Today we have a city tour of Isfahan. We visit Naqshe Jahan Square, formerly known as Imam Square. The square is located in the heart of Isfahan and was constructed between 1598 and 1629. The square is 160 metres wide and 560 metres long, and is an important UNESCO World Heritage Site. In Naqshe Jahan Square we visit Shiekh Lotfollah Mosque and Imam Mosque. Shiekh Lotfollah Mosque is unique in terms of its architecture and function, with beautiful decorations built by Shah Abbas I. This mosque has no minarets, which adds to its uniqueness. We also see Ali Qapu Palace and Chehel Sotoun pavilion. Afterwards there is some time to explore the Isfahan Bazaar. Breakfast, lunch and dinner today are included.

Accommodation: Abbassi Hotel or similar

08.11.17
(B/L/D) **Isfahan**

After breakfast this morning we visit Vank Cathedral, which was constructed in the mid 17th century and is famous for its mural paintings and one of the world's best Armenian Museums which is located inside it. There is also a library in the courtyard with lots of valuable manuscripts, which are considered the cultural heritage of the Armenians. We then visit the Jameh Mosque, which is one of the oldest mosques still standing in Iran. It was constructed in 771 and has numerous additions and renovations ever since. The mosque was built in the four iwan

(rectangular) architectural style. This evening we see a carpet show.
Breakfast, lunch and dinner today are included.
Accommodation: Abbassi Hotel or similar

09.11.17 Isfahan – Naein – Meybod – Yazd

(B/L/D)

This morning after breakfast we commence our drive to Yazd. Travel time is approximately 4 hours. En route we stop at Naein to visit the Naein Jame Mosque. We continue to Meybod and visit an ice house building, which was commonly used to store ice throughout the year (prior to the invention of the refrigerator). Then we visit the caravansary of Meybod, before continuing to Yazd. Upon arrival we check into our hotel for a two night stay. Breakfast, lunch and dinner today are included.
Accommodation: Hotel Dad or similar

10.11.17 Yazd

(B/L/D)

Today we have a full day tour of Yazd. We visit the Zoroastrian Fire Temple, which is the most famous fire temple of Zoroastrians all around the world. What makes this temple unique is that the fire is inside a special chamber in the building and has been burning for around 15 centuries, and is rumoured to be much older than the building itself. We also visit the Towers of Silence, which were high places originally used by Zoroastrians to expose dead bodies to wandering vultures in Iran. This tradition has been observed up to contemporary times by Zoroastrians in different parts of the world, but stopped in Iran almost six decades ago. Today Zoroastrians bury dead bodies in a cemetery near this site in Yazd. Following this we visit the old part of the city and Yazd Jame Mosque, which is a 14th century Friday mosque with the tallest minarets being 53 metres high. The architects of Yazd are considered some of the best in all of Iran and this building is considered a masterpiece of Iranian architecture. We also visit Amir Chaqmaq mosque, which is a 19th century building built for Ashura (the martyrdom of Imam Hossein) ceremonies.
Breakfast, lunch and dinner today are included.
Accommodation: Hotel Dad or similar

11.11.17 Yazd – Abarkuh - Pasargadae – Shiraz

(B/L/D)

After breakfast we drive to Shiraz. Travel time is approximately 5½ hours. En route we stop at Abarkuh and view the Old Cypress of Abarkuh. This large cypress tree is approximately 25 metres high. It is rumoured to be over four millennia old and the second oldest living thing in Asia. We continue to Pasargadae, which is known as the gathering place of the Persians, and was the battlefield where Cyrus defeated Astiagus and founded his great empire, known as the Persian Empire. While in Pasargadae we visit the Tomb of Cyrus, which is the burial ground of Cyrus the Great of Persia and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Upon arrival in Shiraz we check into the hotel for a three night stay.
Lunch and dinner today are included.
Accommodation: Grand Hotel Shiraz or similar

12.11.17 Shiraz

(B/L/D)

Today we enjoy a full day tour of Shiraz. Our first stop is at the historic Persian garden of Eram. Next is the Tomb of Saadi, which is dedicated to the Persian poet of the same name. Enjoy some time in Vakil Bazaar, which is the main bazaar in

Shiraz. Then proceed to the Karim Khan Citadel, which was built during the Zand Dynasty and resembles a medieval fortress.

Later we visit Nasir-ol-Molk Mosque, which is a 19th century local mosque with beautiful decorations. Nasir-ol-Molk came from an influential family in Shiraz. He decided to build a local mosque near his house, which is today protected by one of his descendants.

Our last stop today is a visit to Narenjestan Garden, which is an example of an Iranian garden and was once the house of the Chief Judge of Shiraz. The separation of the interior and exterior of the house is very different to other old houses of Iran from that period. Breakfast, lunch and dinner today are included.

Accommodation: Grand Hotel Shiraz or similar

13.11.17 Shiraz - Persepolis - Shiraz

(B/L/D)

Today we have an excursion to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Persepolis and Necropolis. Persepolis is located about 70 Kms from Shiraz and literally means "City of Persians". It was the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire (550 - 330 BC). In Persepolis we walk through a complex of palaces and temples that is said to be one of the architectural wonders of the world. Massive winged bulls, derived from Assyria but given a characteristic Persian stateliness, greet us at the head of a grand stairway wide enough for five horses to ride abreast. The stairway leads up to the vast platform on which the entire site is built and upon which hundreds of carved figures can be seen.

Afterwards we return to Shiraz and if time permits we visit Shah Cheragh shrine and the Tomb of Hafez. Breakfast, lunch and dinner today are included.

Accommodation: Grand Hotel Shiraz or similar

14.11.17 Shiraz – Doha – Sydney & Melbourne

(B)

Early morning transfer to the airport for our flights home. Depart Shiraz at 5.00am on flight QR 477, arriving in Doha at 5.50am.

We will have day-use stopover accommodation at a hotel in the Doha airport area before our evening flights back to Australia.

Melbourne passengers depart Doha at 8.20pm on QR 904, arriving in Melbourne at 5.45pm the next day (15.11.7).

Sydney passengers depart Doha at 8.55pm on QR 908, arriving in Sydney at 7.00pm the next day (15.11.17).

15.11.17 Doha – Perth

Perth passengers depart Doha at 2.25am on QR 900, arriving in Perth at 6.15pm.

Note:

Iran is a fascinating country to visit, but often receives adverse (and sometimes exaggerated) media attention. If this is a major concern to you than it is recommended that you do not book on this tour. Macleay Valley Travel intends to run this tour as per the current program. However if the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs states 'Do Not Travel' to a particular destination on this tour prior to its commencement, then an alternative program will be arranged. If Macleay Valley Travel decides to cancel the tour our passengers will be provided a full refund of the basic tour price.

Also note: The streets and bazaars of Iran are very narrow. You will need to be capable of walking several kilometres on some days, and at a pace that can keep up with the group. There are no provisions to hire wheelchair men, tricycles etc. Many of the best sites in Iran are accessed by steep stairs. There are no lifts or ramps. You will need to be able to walk unaided and be able to ascend and descend stairs unassisted. Iran is a large country and there are some long days of driving. It's also a developing economy with less than perfect roads and tourist buses. If you have difficulty sitting for long periods on buses, or need toilet facilities each hour, you will be very uncomfortable. Some hotels are located in back lanes that are inaccessible by car. You need to be able to walk to the hotel through cobblestone lanes with your carry-on luggage. To give you an idea of what to expect, if you can't manage your own luggage and belongings at the airport unassisted then this tour is unsuitable. Iran isn't like other tours where you get dropped at the entrance gate or can sit in a coffee shop while the group goes up a tower. You will need to be able to walk unaided or you will be disappointed with missed opportunities.



Conditions for Macleay Valley Travel's Iran (Persia) Tour

Deposits and Payments - A non-refundable deposit of \$400 per person is payable within 7 days of booking. This deposit is not refundable should you later cancel. The balance is payable in full 10 weeks prior to departure.

Refunds and Cancellations - Cancellations after final payment will result in a refund limited to whatever we can recoup from the airline.

Airline Tickets - Please note that any changes made to airline tickets once they have been issued will likely incur high cancellation and/or reissue fees. These fees are typically set by the airline and are outside of our control.

Insurance - Adequate travel insurance is essential. We can arrange this for you if desired. Macleay Valley Travel offers Suresave Travel Insurance. Please note that we can only process your travel insurance when we have received full payment for the insurance and the signed Suresave Travel Insurance application form, located on the last page of the Suresave Travel Insurance information booklet. Until this time the travel insurance cannot be processed and will not be valid. Macleay Valley Travel will bear no responsibility for any consequences that may occur as a result of an incomplete insurance application.

Passports - All travellers require a current passport with at least 6 months left on it at the end of the tour. Non-Australian passport holders require a re-entry visa for Australia. Visas are required for Iran and need to be obtained from Australia prior to departure on the tour. Current cost is \$160 per person, plus \$30 processing. For an Iran visa you will require a certificate of your travel insurance. Please note that the cost for this visa is subject to change.

Basic Tour Price and Taxes - Air taxes and fuel levies are included in the basic tour price if the tour is paid in full on or before the due date on the final invoice. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to charge for any increase in air taxes and fuel levies if the tour is not paid in full by the due date.

Not Included in the Cost - All items of a personal nature such as telephone calls, drinks, excess baggage, tips, meals, (except those specified in the itinerary), travel insurance etc.

Similarly, credit card payments can only be accepted if 2% is added to the price to help defray the heavy merchant fees charged to us by the credit card companies. There is a 3% surcharge for Diners Club.

Breakaway Fee - All fully inclusive prices are based on group travel and any deviation from the set itinerary will incur a breakaway fee. The breakaway fee for most deviations including a post-tour extension on this tour is \$130 per person. Please inquire with our office for prices on any pre-tour extensions.

Health and Fitness - Macleay Valley Travel recommends that the passenger is reasonably healthy and/or fit to participate in this tour. Persons with a disability requiring special assistance must be accompanied by a companion. Macleay Valley Travel and their representatives cannot provide this service. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to accept/decline or terminate a passenger's participation in the tour under certain circumstances.

Booking through other Agents - As we keep the cost of our tours as low as possible, there is insufficient margin for us to be able to pay commission to other travel agents, so some bookings can only be accepted if the client pays the other agent's commission.

Accreditation - Macleay Valley Travel is a fully accredited travel agency under the AFTA (Australian Federation of Travel Agents) ATAS - AFTA Travel Accreditation Scheme. As such, you are assured of a consumer focused and quality assured business, ensuring professional conduct and ethical business practices. We are happy for any prospective traveller with us to check us out with your local Consumer Affairs (Fair Trading) department.

Twin Share Bookings - If you do not have a travel partner, but wish to travel at twin share rates, we will try and assign you with another traveller but this is not guaranteed. We assign passengers by their gender, on a first come, first served basis and do not assign twin share passengers according to their age, profession, interests etc. There are risks with sharing a room with a person you do not know, and Macleay Valley Travel accepts no responsibility if you are incompatible with your assigned room mate. Additionally, if you are assigned a travelling companion to share with and they cancel off the tour prior to making the final payment, then you will either be required to pay the single room supplement or we will try our best to assign you with another twin share passenger, if one is available.

Limitation of Liability - As Macleay Valley Travel acts only as agent for the Airlines, Hotels, Coach Companies etc., providing accommodation, transportation and other services, Macleay Valley Travel shall not be liable or responsible for death or injury to any person or loss or damage to any property including baggage arising out of or connection with any transportation, accommodation or other services, or resulting directly or indirectly from acts of God, fire, breakdown in machinery or equipment, acts of Government or other authorities, de jure or defacto wars, whether declared or not, hostilities, civil disturbances, strikes, riots, thefts, epidemics, quarantines, medical or customs regulations, delays or cancellations caused by changes in schedules or itinerary, or over bookings or defaults or for any causes beyond Macleay Valley Travel's control or any loss or damage resulting from improper or insufficient passports, visas or other documents and neither Macleay Valley Travel, and its servants or employees shall be or become liable or responsible for any additional expenses or liability sustained or incurred by the tour member as a result of the foregoing causes. Additionally you must meet the entry requirements for each country you visit. Macleay Valley Travel will not be liable if you are denied entry to a country for any reason, including a past criminal history. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to decline bookings made for any group tour. Any tour booking confirmation is conditional, contingent on our view of the ability of a person to be able to participate in a tour without the likelihood of conflict between members of a tour whether perceived or actual. Macleay Valley Travel reserves the right to modify the itinerary or the accommodation if circumstances make this necessary, provided that the amended itinerary is of equal value or greater value than that of the original program.

MACLEAY VALLEY TRAVEL - BOOKING FORM

PLEASE PRINT DETAILS CLEARLY IN BLOCK LETTERS AND ALSO

A PHOTOCOPY OF YOUR PASSPORT MUST BE SENT WITH BOOKING FORM

Name of Tour : _____ Departure Date: _____

Passenger 1 (as written in passport) _____

Title: **Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss. Dr.** _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Passenger 2 (as written in passport) _____

Title: **Mr. Mrs. Ms. Miss. Dr.** _____ Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Postal Address: _____

_____ **PostCode** _____ **Email** _____

Telephone / Fax Number: _____ **Mobile** _____

Passport Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Passport Number: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Passport Nationality: _____

Passport Nationality _____

(Passport must have 6 months validity from the time of tour completion)

Single room / Twin beds / Double bed: (Room type is subject to availability)

Circle which airport you wish to depart from: SYDNEY / MELBOURNE / PERTH

Do you have any existing medical conditions?: _____

Special Dietary Requests: _____

Optional Extensions: _____

Would you like to receive details of our travel insurance?: YES / NO (Please Circle)

In case of emergency, please notify :

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Please return this sheet with your non-refundable deposit of \$400 per person.

DECLARATION. I have read and understand fully the booking conditions and I accept them.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

A copy of passport is required to verify spelling of name; If this is not provided and the information we have for the airline is incorrect and ticket is issued, then the airline will charge a reissue fee.