

Journeys to Legendary Destinations
at the Crossroads of Europe & Asia

Persian Odyssey

Prepared for The Women's Travel Group
Tehran • Yazd • Shiraz • Persepolis • Isfahan

Dates: Nov 3-13, 2017
(as of May 26, 2016)

Open the door to enigmatic Iran, once the seat of the mighty Persian Empire that grew up alongside the ancient Greeks and Romans. Modern Iran is a place of searing beauty, with its billowing domes and mosaic-clad mosques and madrasahs. Its monumental archaeological sites are some of the finest in the world, its architecture is infused with color and energy and its bazaars are without equal. Iranians are unfailingly warm and engaging, adhering to a culture that prizes hospitality. On this journey of discovery, admire the treasures of Iran, from the Crown Jewels in Tehran to the Zoroastrian Fire Temples of Yazd and the luminous bridges of Isfahan. Along the way, experience five fabulous UNESCO World Heritage Sites.



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Overview Daily Itinerary

Day 1, Fri, Nov 3	Depart USA
Day 2, Sat, Nov 4	Arrive Tehran
Day 3, Sun, Nov 5	Tehran
Day 4, Mon, Nov 6	Tehran • fly to Yazd
Day 5, Tue, Nov 7	Yazd
Day 6, Wed, Nov 8	Yazd • drive to Shiraz via Pasargadae
Day 7, Thu, Nov 9	Shiraz • day trip to Persepolis
Day 8, Fri, Nov 10	Shiraz • drive to Isfahan
Day 9, Sat, Nov 11	Isfahan
Day 10, Sun, Nov 12	Isfahan
Day 11, Mon, Nov 13	Depart Isfahan

Tour Special Features

- Tehran – Marvel at the **spectacular crown jewels**, including the world's largest uncut diamond, stored in the basement vault of the central bank.

- Yazd – Visit the **Zoroastrian Fire Temple** in Yazd, where the eternal flame is said to have been burning since 470 BC. Watch the sun set over Yazd from the **Zoroastrian Towers of Silence**.

- Shiraz – Discover the inspiration for Iran's greatest lyric poet, Hafez, in the **gardens of Shiraz**.

- Shiraz – Explore the remains of ancient Persia at **UNESCO-listed Persepolis**, a wonder of the Ancient World.



- Isfahan – Survey the complex Persian architecture of Isfahan's gracefully proportioned **Imam Square, one of the largest public squares in the world**, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Isfahan – Browse the **fabled bazaar of Isfahan**, bargaining for fine Persian carpets, silver jewelry, brilliant woven fabrics and hand-painted ceramics.

Descriptive Daily Itinerary

Day 1, Fri, Nov 3

Depart USA

Depart USA on international flights bound to Tehran.

Meals: In flight

Day 2, Sat, Nov 4

Arrive Tehran

Upon arrival to Tehran meet your transfer agent and drive to the centrally located hotel.

Meals: In flight, D

Espinas Hotel or similar

The Espinas Hotel features a great location across from Laleh Park, a gym and spa, free WiFi in the lobby and the rooms, and four different restaurants. The modern and stylish rooms include satellite TV and Internet access.



Day 3, Sun, Nov 5

Tehran

Explore Iran's capital and largest city, Tehran. After the Mongols destroyed the Silk Road city of Rey, Tehran rose in its place as the region's most important trading center. By 1789 Tehran became the capital of Persia under the Qajar ruler, Agha Mohammed Khan. While the city grew in prominence, it remained basically unchanged until the massive modernization efforts of the 1920s. Since then, Tehran has grown in population from less than 300,000 to a metropolis of more than eight million.

Modern Tehran is full of shops, museums, mosques, minarets, restaurants, teahouses and a sprawling bazaar. The touring today includes a visit to the local bazaars and a sampling of Tehran's best museums, beginning with Iran's **Archaeological Museum**. This museum displays Persian antiquities, art and artifacts from Iran's long past. French architect and archaeologist Andre Godard designed the museum's main building in the early 20th century, and was for many years director of the Archaeology Department as well. Tools thought to



have been made by Neanderthal man, figures from the Achaemenid Empire, bronzes, carvings, pre-historic pottery and artifacts from Susa and Persepolis can be seen here.

Time permitting, visit the **Abgineh Museum of Glass and Ceramics**. The Glassware Museum of Tehran displays objects made from both glass and clay that date back as early as the 4th millennium BC. As well as archaeological artifacts, the museum displays etched glass from the 18th and 19th centuries and decorative objects from the modern period.

Also visit the carpet museum. One of five major museums in Tehran, the **Carpet Museum** has a wonderful collection of hand loomed Persian carpets, *kilims* and designs dating from the 17th

century and beyond. Designed by the last Queen of Iran, the museum building is reminiscent of a weaver's loom.

Enjoy a Welcome Dinner this evening, possibly accompanied by traditional music.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 4, Mon, Nov 6 Tehran • fly to Yazd

The **Gulestan Palace** complex is the oldest of Tehran's historic monuments, begun in the 16th century as a fortress by the Safavid dynasty. Encompassing several palatial buildings around a cool green garden, the complex includes the Marble Throne, created from 65 pieces of yellow Yazd marble. In 2013, Gulestan Palace was inscribed onto the **UNESCO World Heritage List**.

Take a fascinating tour of **Iran's Crown Jewels**. Among other treasures, the State Jewels Museum safeguards the Darya-ye-Nur, the world's largest uncut diamond, and the Peacock Throne, covered with over 23,000 gems. The collection is housed in the vaults of the Central Bank of Iran.

Afternoon/early evening flight to Yazd [times subject to change].

Arriving in Yazd this evening, check in to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Meals: B, L, D

Moshir Garden Hotel or similar

The comfortable three star Moshir Garden Hotel is designed and decorated in old Persian style and surrounded with a cool green garden. The beautiful restaurant serves Iranian specialties, and rooms are equipped with air conditioning, satellite TV and fridge.

Day 5, Tue, Nov 7 Yazd

Stretching between two deserts, the ancient city of **Yazd** has a quiet history most notable for its reputation along the caravan routes as a silk weaving center. Marco Polo, on his way through, called the city "good and noble." Founded in the 5th century AD, its isolated location and desert climate proved to be the city's greatest assets, concealing it from the waves of invaders that destroyed other more favorably situated cities. Yazd means "to feast and worship" and many people here maintain the Zoroastrian traditions that this word expresses. Zoroastrians fleeing Arab invaders found safe haven in Yazd, as did artists and poets escaping the Mongols. Combined, they made Yazd a city of tolerance and beauty.

Yazd is renowned for its textiles, in particular *termeh*, a type of silk brocade that has been produced here for centuries.





Take an introductory tour of the town starting with the **Friday Mosque**. Originally founded in the 12th century and added to in the 14th and 15th, the Friday Mosque stands on the site of an ancient Zoroastrian fire temple and is renowned as one of the best-preserved mosques of its age in the country. Its beautiful tiled entrance portal, or *iwan*, is the highest in Iran. The dome and altar inside the mosque display sophisticated tile decoration and decorative brickwork, though much is restoration from the 18th and 19th centuries.

The **UNESCO-listed Dowlat Abad Garden** is a classical Persian walled garden, watered by a *qanat* and with the tallest *badgir* in the country cooling the residence of the khan who created it. Originally built for Mohammad Tagi Khan-e Yazdi in 1783, the traditional garden surrounds his pavilion, which is decorated with beautiful latticed doors and stained glass. Inside, you can experience first-hand how the *badgir* system works.

Used to ventilate buildings in Yazd, the ***badgir*, or windcatcher**, is an ingenious Persian architectural structure that stands high atop a roof like a large chimney. The *badgir* helps pull fresh air into the building and across a pool of water that cools it. At different times of the day it acts as an intake or exhaust vent as well as a heat sink. The device has existed for many centuries and functions well enough to be used to refrigerate goods. You can see these distinctive objects on top of many of the older buildings in Yazd.

Take a leisurely **walk through the covered bazaar** and cobbled streets of the Old Quarter of Yazd, stopping to admire the displays of brilliant Yazd textiles.

Visit the intriguing **Water Museum**, opened in 2000 after the first international conference on *qanats*. Persians developed the low-tech but ingenious *qanat* technology in the first millennium BC, and its advent was crucial in bringing water – and agriculture – to the arid regions around Iran. A *qanat* is a vertical shaft similar to a well that is dug down to an underground water source. Sloping tunnels carry the water from the original *qanat* down to the lowlands where it is used for irrigation and drinking. The museum is located in a 1929 merchant's house the sits above two of the ancient *qanats*.



After lunch, make a visit just outside the city to the small **medieval village of Taft**, where many of the region's 60,000 **Zoroastrians** live and worship. Walk the narrow streets to the local Fire Temple, where a flame is always kept burning.

Zoroastrianism is the religion founded by Zoroaster (also known as Zarathustra), who lived in Persia sometime between 1000 and 600 BC. Zoroastrianism may have been the first religion to promote monotheism, the idea of dualism between good and evil, and the belief in a final Judgment Day and resurrection. A devout Zoroastrian believes in the one god known as Ahura Mazda, who is seen as being the source of all wisdom and good.

Zoroastrians believe that they should live according to certain rules in order to preserve their own purity and goodness. These include renouncing alcoholic drink and animal sacrifice. There are also strict rules that govern how a body is buried. **Fire is seen by Zoroastrians as pure and sacred**, and is the central element in their temples. During the time of the Sassanians, varying rules of behavior and worship were codified into a strict orthodoxy. There are still practicing Zoroastrians living in Iran; the largest number can be found in and around the city of Yazd, largely untouched by the Arab invaders due to its remote location.

Zoroastrians from around the world visit the **Fire Temple in Yazd (Ateshkade)** to see its eternal flame, said to have been burning since 470 AD. The flame is visible through a glass in the entrance hall; only Zoroastrians can enter the hall where it burns, attended by priests. The flame represents the Zoroastrian supreme being, Ahura Mazda.



Continue with a **visit at sunset to the Towers of Silence**. Built on hills or low mountains away from city centers, Towers of Silence played their part in a tradition practiced by Iranian Zoroastrians up until the 20th century. Zoroastrians consider the dead body unclean and were prohibited from burying or cremating corpses, thereby polluting the earth or the air. Instead, they placed their dead on top of the **Towers of Silence** for consumption by vultures and cleansing by sun and wind. Although no longer used, the ancient Towers of Silence remain on the outskirts of Yazd.

Enjoy dinner and an overnight at the hotel this evening.
Meals: B, L, D

Day 6, Wed, Nov 8 Yazd • drive to Shiraz via Pasargadae

The journey today continues to the magnificent city of Shiraz, with a stop in Pasargadae.

Cyrus the Great founded **Pasargadae**, the first capital of the Achaemenid Empire, in the 6th

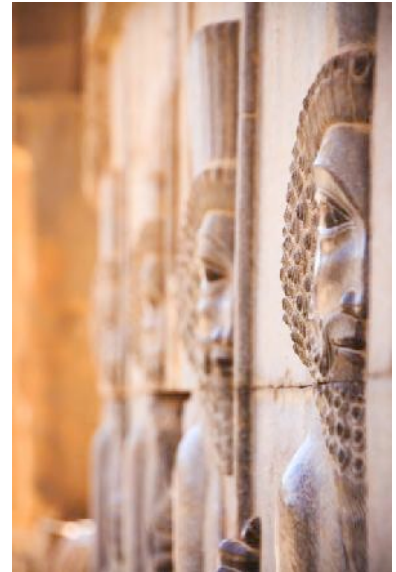
century BC. First explored by archaeologists in 1905, the site was excavated again in the 1960s by **Dr. David Stronach, now at UC Berkeley**. Set apart from the other ruins is the limestone mausoleum of Cyrus, which had been looted by the time Alexander the Great paid it a visit in 324 BC. Darius I began building Persepolis and moved the capital to his city not long after Cyrus' death. Pasargadae has been a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** since 2004, and though little remains of the ancient city, its diverse architectural styles show that the empire respected the diversity of its subjects.

Continue the long drive, and arrive in **Shiraz** in the early evening to check in to the hotel. The fabled city of Shiraz has a long and remarkable history stretching over 2,500 years. It is the capital of the Fars Province where the Persian language of Farsi originated. One of the most important cities of the Islamic medieval period, Shiraz has reigned as the capital of several Islamic dynasties. A major artistic, religious, and academic center, the city is famed for its poetry, gardens, learning centers and architecture. Beautiful, romantic and hospitable, Shiraz is the favorite of many travelers, and remains one of the most enjoyable places to visit in all of Iran.

Meals: B, L, D

Homa Hotel or similar

The comfortable Homa Hotel is located in the middle of town. Rooms are air conditioned, and all include satellite TV, an in-room safe, and a minibar. The hotel offers sauna, Jacuzzi, outdoor pool, tennis court, two restaurants, room service, coffee shop, a tea lounge and various shops.



Day 7, Thu, Nov 9

Shiraz • day trip to Persepolis



After breakfast, pay a visit to one of the most important sites of the Ancient World – the **ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid kings, Persepolis**. Arguably the greatest of the Persian dynasties, Achaemenid rule, from the 7th to the 4th century BC, saw the empire at its greatest extent, both in territory and in political, artistic, and philosophical respects. Darius I (the Great) initiated the building of Persepolis, a huge undertaking of art and architecture. **UNESCO** says, “Persepolis was the example par excellence of the dynastic city, the symbol of the Achaemenid dynasty, which is why it was burned by the Greeks of Alexander the Great in 330.”

The complex was built over a century on a colossal 40-acre terrace, partly natural and partly constructed of limestone. After conquering the Persians and plundering the city's riches, Alexander the Great set the stately capital on fire. The abandoned ruins were called, for generations, only the “place of 40 columns.”

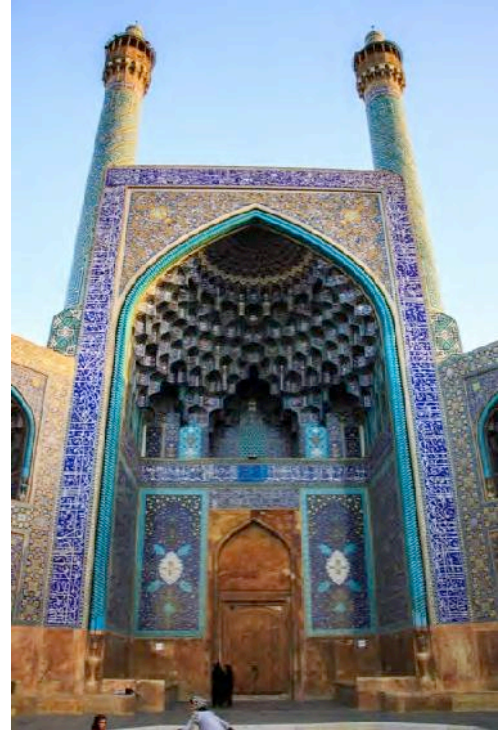
Persepolis encompasses some of the most fascinating ruins in the world. What remains is not only those marble columns, but the wide ceremonial staircase, monumental carvings and the famous bas-reliefs showing kings, courtiers and gift-bearing representatives of the Persian Empire's tributary nations.

The tour continues to the tombs of **Naghsh-e Rostam**. The monumental rock carvings at Naghsh-e Rostam are thought to be the tombs of Darius the Great, Xerxes and Artaxerxes. Carved in the Elamite, Achaemenian and Sassanid periods, the cliff walls contain the façade of a palace. Admire the Kabe-Zardosht fire temple and sanctuary, and seven magnificent Sassanian rock-reliefs, including Shapur I's famous victory over Roman Emperor Valerian.

A little over half a mile away from Naghsh-e Rostam, you can inspect **Naghsh-e Rostam**, the site of four more rock-reliefs and inscriptions dating from the early Sassanid era. The two ensembles are nominated together to the **UNESCO Tentative List**.

Explore the stunning **Nasir-ol-Molk Mosque**, constructed from 1876 to 1887. The mosque is an explosion of colors with some of the finest examples of Persian Islamic tilework, stained glasswork and architecture in Shiraz. Used as the **Friday Mosque** of Shiraz, it is popularly called the Pink Mosque because of the characteristic pastel color of its interior tiles.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 8, Fri, Nov 10 Shiraz • drive to Isfahan

This morning after breakfast, visit the Narenjestan Garden with its beautiful cypress-lined avenues. The **Naranjestan Ghavam Museum** was once the grand house of the Qavam family who were wealthy governors in the Shiraz region. The house itself is a fine example of 19th century Persian architecture and the gardens have been kept meticulously. Frescoes and carvings in the building depict lions (the family crest) and human figures along with flower motifs. In 1966, the house was donated to Shiraz University and was used as an Asian Art Museum until 1979. Now, it is a museum in and of itself.

Take a walk around the exciting **Vakil Bazaar**, an 11th century covered bazaar lined with little shops, courtyards and bath houses. This is **arguably the finest bazaar in Iran** and a great place to bargain for carpets, handicrafts, jewelry and antiques. Merchandise is brought in by hand or on small carts through the narrow lanes between the stalls.

Time permitting, visit the **tomb of Iran's greatest lyric poet, Hafez**. Surrounded by a lovely garden, the tomb is a place of pilgrimage and reverence. Hafez was born and died in Shiraz in the 14th century, and many Iranians know his poems by heart. The marble tombstone is

engraved with some of his verses. The teahouse by a cooling pool is a wonderful place to sit and people-watch.

Drive to Isfahan after lunch. Arrive to Isfahan in the late afternoon and check in to the exotic **Abbasi Hotel**, built on the site of a 17th-century caravanserai.

Under the rule of Shah Abbas the Great of the 16th-century Safavid dynasty, **Isfahan** became **one of the most celebrated and beautiful cities** of the world, referred to as Nesf-e Jahan meaning “half of the world.” Even after centuries of turmoil and destruction at the hands of foreign invaders, Isfahan’s grace is palpable. Isfahan possesses what many consider the best bazaar in Iran, as well as an abundance of mosques, gardens, palaces, and many other historical points of interest. The **beautiful blue-tiled buildings are considered some of the most extraordinary architecture in the world today.**

Meals: B, L, D

Abbasi Hotel or similar

Built on the site of a 17th century Savafid caravanserai, this beautiful five star hotel has been expertly restored. Located in the center of Isfahan, the hotel has excellent restaurants, lobby arts and crafts shops, and a teahouse in the back garden.

Day 9, Sat, Nov 11 Isfahan

Set off for a full day introductory tour of Isfahan. First, admire some of the five **graceful bridges over Isfahan's Zayendeh River**. The oldest bridge is the **Pol-e Sharestan**, initially built during Sassanian times and renovated by the Seljuks in the 12th century. The **Khaju Bridge (Pol-e Khaju)**, built by Shah Abbas II in the 17th century, has 23 arches and connects the Khaju quarter with the Zoroastrian quarter. Another especially beautiful bridge is the 33-arched **Si-o-se Pol Bridge**, with its arcades on either side of the walkway. Gathering places for local people, the bridges are great for basking in the atmosphere of Isfahan.



Afterwards, visit the **Armenian Quarter**, the location of several churches. The sand-colored stonework of the **Vank Cathedral** conceals a beautiful ornate interior with delicate tilework and gilt embellishments. During the 17th century, Armenians began settling at the southern bank of the Zayandeh Roud River and the cathedral dates from some of the earliest settlement in 1606. Used today as a museum, an Armenian genocide memorial and the home of a historic printing press, Vank is still the heart of the Armenian-Iranian community and houses over 20,000 volumes of literary and religious works in Armenian.

Stroll through one of the world's largest public squares, **Maiden-e Naghsh-e Jahan**, also known as **Imam Square**. In the center of Isfahan, it is one of the **largest urban squares in**

the world. Shah Abbas the Great built the graceful ensemble in the early 17th century after he moved the capital here. A **UNESCO World Heritage** Site, the square was the symbolic center of the Safavid Empire. Some of the buildings surrounding the square are the fabulous Imam Mosque, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, the Ali Qapu Palace, and the Quaisarieh Bazaar. Only on Fridays, Namaaz-e Jom'eh, Friday prayer, is held in this square.



Isfahan's **Imam Mosque**, at the far end of Imam Square, is considered by many to be the most beautiful in the world. Flanked by two tall turquoise minarets, its massive entry portal is 80 feet high, and decorated with cobalt, turquoise and lapis lazuli mosaic tiles and complicated stalactite moldings. The inner courtyard surrounds a reflecting pool, and four *iwans*, or portals, lead into four fabulously decorated sanctuaries. Begun in 1611 by Shah Abbas I, the Imam Mosque was dedicated in 1629.

The **Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque** is an exquisite small mosque on Imam Square. This beautifully decorated 17th century mosque took nearly 20 years to complete and was once called the Women's Mosque, because of a tunnel running between it and the Ali Qapu Palace, which allowed the royal women to attend prayers without being seen in public.

Here, find the **Ali-Qapu Palace**, where Safavid Kings watched polo games from the balcony. The Ali-Qapu Palace was built at the end of the 16th century. Its central feature is the tall verandah overlooking the square, its ceiling richly decorated with painted plaster. The music room on the sixth floor has a gorgeous ceiling punctuated with cutouts of vases and musical instruments, which served an acoustical as well as decorative function.

Meals: B, L, D

Day 10, Sun, Nov 12 Isfahan

Begin the day with a visit to the **Chehel Sotun Palace**, built by Shah Abbas II in 1647. Set in a park by a long pool between the Ali Qapu Palace and Chahar Bagh Avenue, the pavilion was used for receptions and entertainment. The name means "**40 Columns**," and refers to the 20 wooden columns supporting the entrance to the Great Hall, multiplied by their reflection in the pool. Inside are wonderful frescoes, miniatures and ceramics.

Continue touring in Isfahan with a visit to the spectacular **Friday Mosque**, an excellent example of Persian architecture. Isfahan's Masjid-e-Jameh, or Friday Mosque, looks more austere from the outside than the mosques in Imam Square. Its interior, however, encompasses over 800 years of Islamic architectural styles. With over 200 vaults, some of them decorated with the then-innovative *muqarnas* (small pointed niches or stalactite formations), the complex makes up the largest and most eclectic mosque in Iran. It was included on the **UNESCO list in 2012**.

Visit the Ali Minaret and walk through the **Jewish Quarter, or Juibareh**, one of the oldest neighborhoods of Isfahan and the location of several synagogues. Jews no longer live here, although 1,000 still live in Isfahan. Jews trace their relationship with Persia to the 6th century BC, when they were exiled to Babylon and scattered throughout the area. It was Persian Emperor Cyrus the Great who allowed them to return to the Land of Israel.

Through the centuries the Jews in Persia were alternately tolerated and persecuted. In the 16th century Shah Abbas I encouraged Jews to settle in Isfahan, but by the time Lord Curzon visited in the 19th century many restrictions were already in force. Before the Islamic revolution in 1979, there were perhaps 3,000 Jews in Isfahan, many of who fled to Israel or the U.S. Today several synagogues hold Sabbath services in other parts of the city, including an unmarked synagogue on Meidan Felestin (Palestine Square) near the Arbassi Hotel.

End the day with a visit to the **Qaisarieh Bazaar**. Enter Isfahan's amazing 17th century bazaar at the Quaisarieh entrance on Imam Square and stroll the narrow lanes lined with artisans and shopkeepers. More than a mile of covered walkway shelters brass and copperware craftsmen, jewelers, miniature painters, rug merchants and throngs of shoppers.

Dinner and rooms are available until late night transfer to the airport for the early morning flight tomorrow.

Meals: B, L, D



Day 11, Mon, Nov 13 Depart Isfahan (based on returning to the USA on Turkish Airlines)

Transfer to the airport for an early morning flight to Istanbul and onward connections.

Meals: In flight

Land Tour Package Inclusions

- All accommodation based on double occupancy per itinerary with breakfast daily, local service charge and tax (standard hotel check-in/out times apply unless otherwise noted) Tehran (2 nights); Yazd (2 nights); Shiraz (2 nights); Isfahan (3 nights)
- Arrival and departure transfers for passengers arriving to Tehran on Nov 4 and departing from Isfahan on Nov 13
- Transportation per itinerary including one-way domestic flight in economy class from Tehran-Yazd on Day 4 with taxes and fees included
- All sightseeing and excursions including entrance fees per itinerary
- Special features as listed in the itinerary
- Local English-speaking National Escorting Guide throughout itinerary
- Meals as listed in the itinerary
- Bottled/purified water with meals and on buses during tours and drives between cities
- Baggage handling at the hotels where available
- Destination preparation information packet

Land tour cost per person, double occupancy: \$4,895

Single room supplement: \$1,050

** For travelers looking for a room share, the single supplement will apply until a match is found. If a room match does not work out during the tour, single rooms can be arranged on the spot for the single supplement rate.*

Price Does Not Include

- International airfare between the U.S. and the start and ending cities; air taxes or fuel surcharges; pre- or post-tour services; visa or passport fees; medical and trip interruption insurance; gratuities to the escorting guide, local guides and drivers; evacuation costs; food or beverages not included in group meals; items of a personal nature such as laundry, telephone expense, excess baggage fees, photo/video expenses inside museums (where allowed); other items not expressly listed as included.

Additional Information

- Please see or request the reservation form to sign up for this journey.
- The deposit to sign up for the trip is \$1,000 per person and is non refundable.
- Rates are based on receiving the final trip by check or wire transfer.

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Regional knowledge is crucial to the success of any trip to our corner of the world. MIR combines detailed information about geography and infrastructure, history and art, language and culture, with the depth of knowledge that comes only from decades of regional experience. You may wonder how we differ from other tour operators...

Destination Specialization

MIR focuses exclusively on the exceptional region at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. This area has been our overriding passion since 1986; we don't do the rest of the world. Our hard-earned expertise gained over the last 28 years can take you from end to end of the largest country in the world – Russia – and to all of its neighbors. We specialize in travel to Siberia, the Silk Route, St. Petersburg & Beyond. Our destinations include: Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, the Baltics (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia), the Balkans (Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Central Asia (the five 'Stans), Iran, the Caucasus (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan), Mongolia, China, Tibet, DPRK and Central/East Europe (Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Romania).

28 Years of Experience – A Solid Track Record

A travel company doesn't last 28 years in the business without a solid track record. Our dedication and experience have earned us their trust and the trust of many well-respected institutions. Today MIR is the preferred tour operator for museum, alumni and special interest organizations across the country.

Award Winning Travel

MIR has twice been named one of the “Best Adventure Travel Companies on Earth” by *National Geographic Adventure*. Several of our tours have won awards in top travel publications, such as *Outside* magazine and *National Geographic Traveler*.



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