

In Case You Missed

Sour Orange Fragrance
Fills Mazandaran Air

The air in northern part of Iran, especially Mazandaran, which is a paradise in its own right, is filled with fragrance of sour orange blossoms these days.

According to the Persian daily 'Iran', a total of 12,700



hectares of citrus gardens and thousands of tangerine trees are in Mazandaran, which will typically be affected by spring rainfalls until late May. A total of 20,000 tons of tangerine are produced in the ever-green province every year.

Tourists, who visit northern areas of the country in spring, can enjoy unparalleled peace and calm, as well as the delicate scent of orange blossoms.



Women of the province collect the sour orange (citrus aurantium) blossoms for making delicious jams. Moreover, orange blossoms are used for producing perfume. The blossoms have also medicinal value. They are used for alleviating headaches, mental disorder, abdominal problems and improving appetite.

Persian Gulf Confab
In Qeshm

Iran held a Persian Gulf conference under the theme of culture and tourism to commemorate the national day of the Persian Gulf.

The 4th Cultural and Tourism Persian Gulf Conference opened in Iran's Persian Gulf island of Qeshm with a message from the Iranian president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, reported Press TV.

"The Persian Gulf, as the cradle of Iranian-Islamic civilization, enjoys an important position. The Persian



Gulf plays a significant role in political and economic interactions of the region," President Ahmadinejad said in his message to the conference.

He added that names and geographical symbols are of great importance in history, identity, culture and constructive interactions among nations. It is important to safeguard the heritage of the region on national, regional and international levels.

Ahmadinejad emphasized that the Persian Gulf must be a gulf of amity, brotherhood and cooperation.

"Development of the tourism industry in the Persian Gulf will be an important factor in boosting positive and constructive cooperation in the region," the chief executive added.

The conference is to reviewed the historical aspects of the Persian Gulf, the Iranian islands of Abu Musa, Greater and Lesser Tumbs, as well as the tourism potential of the Persian Gulf islands and port cities.

The Cultural Tourism Conference was held on April 29-30.

A Unique Attraction
K h o r h e h

Markazi province in central Iran has various cultural attractions.

The collection of monuments of the historical area of Khorheh in the city of Mahallat raises many ambiguities about the age, architectural style and application of buildings among local and foreign historians, as well as archaeologists. Historians have cited the collection from which only two columns remain as a fire temple, palace, center for festivities and religious rituals, summer resort building and cemetery.

According to IRNA, in the wake of archaeological findings in the region various works belonging to the Seljuk, Arsacides, Sassanids and the Islamic era have been obtained.

The village of Khorheh is located northeast of Mahallat along the Khorheh River between the villages of Dodahak, Varin and Ab-e Garm. Khorheh means sunrise in Avesta (Zoroaster's holy book) while the word Khor is also referred to as sun and summer resort building in ancient scripts.

Several spas, such as the warm spa located six kilometers south of Khorheh Plain, have existed in Khorheh since a long time ago. Moreover, 200 meters northeast of the Khorheh columns, a mausoleum is located which belonged to two brothers and a sister called Prince Abolqassem, Prince Eshaq and Hakimeh Khatoon, respectively.

Khorheh columns are made of limestone stones, which have been brought to the site from a 500-meter distance. The remnants of the columns reveal that they do not have patterns engraved on them similar to the columns of Persepolis.

The columns become narrower from their root upwards in the form of an incomplete cone. The lower diameter of the columns is 75 centimeters and the upper diameter is about 45 centimeters. Each column comprises of six pieces laid above one another. Some six cylindrical pieces form the leg of each column. The base of the columns is simply circular.

The column heads have been built in compliance with the Ionic style, which is one type of Greek architecture. Meanwhile, the length of the column heads is more than their diameter.

No historical document regarding the architectural plan of the collection is available, except an analysis made by a veteran architect, Ali Hakemi in 1976.

Based on the analysis, the collection covers an area of 3,550 square meters and comprises of a main veranda, northern collection and southern collection. The main veranda has 12 columns in two rows. The veranda has entrance and exit doors in the western and eastern sides, where there are also corridors with stairways for access to the second floor.

The northern section of the building comprises of corridors and chambers, which are located around the central courtyard.

The collection is tilted some 45 degrees toward northeast. This geographical position is also commonplace in Mishijan, Choghazanbil and some remnants of the Seljuk and Arsacides situated near Baghdad.

Several pieces of pottery dating back to the Arsacides and Samanid eras have been found in the region.

Most of these works were found in diggings of 1976. Furthermore, other artistic works such as spherical jars, decorative stones and metallic and glass works have been found in the region.

Khorheh collection is the first historic building of Markazi province registered as national heritage.



Vakil Mosque Renovated

Vakil Mosque has been renovated by Fars Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Department.

According to Persian daily 'Iran', the stones of the floor and tile-works were renovated, lighting system of the interior was improved, exterior of the nocturnal prayer rooms were renovated and the plasterworks were upgraded.

Vakil Mosque is situated west of the famous Vakil Bazaar. It was built in 1187 (AH) during Zand Dynasty. It covers an area of 8,660 square meters. On the two sides of the entrance gate there are magnificent tile-works and arches.

The left and right corridors of the entrance gate are connected to the main room. Alongside the altar there is a 14-step tall platform made of green marbles where the speaker has to climb a number of stairs to reach the top to address the audience. On the inscription of the entrance gate there are Quranic verses engraved in Sols and Nosakh scripts. The historic building was registered as national heritage about 76 years ago.

Vakil means regent which was the title used by Karim Khan the Zand ruler of Persia. Shiraz was the seat of Karim Khan's government and he endowed many buildings, including this Mosque.

