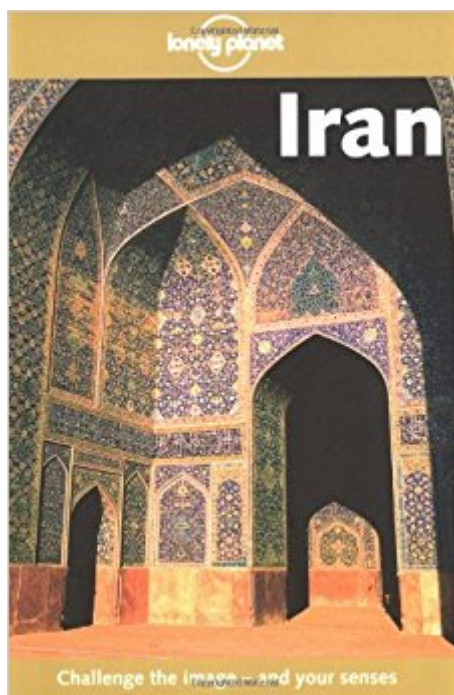


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Lonely Planet Iran (3rd Edition)



Synopsis

Contains essential cultural information, including tips on etiquette and appropriate dress; all the must-see sights from the ancient ruins at Persepolis to Esfahan's glorious mosques and palaces; accommodation and restaurant listings for all budgets; and fascinating special sections on Persian arts and architecture.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I traveled to Iran for 2 weeks earlier this year and found it fine for my needs. Some of the info was outdated (travel agents in the US, some hotel stuff, etc). I can't speak about remote areas that other reviewers mentioned, but if you are planning to visit the major areas (Tehran, Shiraz, Esfahan), the book has everything you'd need.

It started with Mr. St. Vincent, continued with Mr Greenway and now a new gentleman has continued this trend in travel writing. This third edition to Iran is simply a mere augmentation of the second. After traveling Iran on the Second edition, a few years after its publication, it's comforting that future travelers can budget and plan with up to date prices and information. However, one can travel Iran and write a new book with updated practical information, however it's another thing to give an update a new outlook on the slowly changing Iran. Some places in Iran are not worth going to while some are hidden treasure troves of spectacular people and undending fulfillment. It's understandable that the author of a lonely planet guide can not give too much personal credence to places. Paul loved

Kermanshaw, I hated it. Paul said a thing or two about Hamadan, he should have said a hundred, and the update doesn't change this form of writers liberty. Tehran is a fantastic city well worth spending time, as with many places, which is something I believe the authors miss. With this kind of coverage of places, a traveler has to let their intuition get the best of them. One must use the guide as what the word implies, guidance. In general it is a good book, and since it is the only proper guide available in the West, it is essential. However it misses the essence of Iran in the new millennium. There is too much personal opinion. As well, it would be useful if information was provided for upscale travelers as well, who are merely visiting on business. Hopefully the next edition will not only include the updated prices, but also include the updated Iran.

While the guide is relatively useful for hotels (prices are outdated), it is not very interesting for the restaurants nor transport (many many obvious options aren't listed), nor for other practical information as many of Pat Yale's comments are negative, predicting hassle, bureaucracy or cheating when there is only friendliness, smiles and enough english to handle the situation. Her comments on wearing the Hedjab are displaced. If wearing a scarf ruins your holiday to that point, are you really the right person to write a guide book? Pat Yale seems to have been afraid during her trip in Iran, and annoyed by iranians. They are the most friendly people I have encountered on my many trips. I travelled on my own, and was not pinched in the back or molested by anyone, never. The Lonely Planet, full of comments warning lone women travellers to better take a guided tour, made me hesitating unnecessarily before my departure. I did not appreciate her comments on the american blocus, where she pretends that other countries, including Europe and Japan, are too eager to tap on Iran's resources. Iran and the Iranians, and you as a tourist, definitely deserve a better guide, and Lonely Planet needs more competition.

I am surprised that the Lonely Planet allowed the publication of this guide book; the authors would have looked more objective if they had reduced the number of sarcastic remarks. I am also concerned that the authors highlighted too many warnings to lone female travelers; Iran is one of the safest countries for male and lone female travelers of any nationality. As the authors accurately report, Iranians are hospitable to the point of embarrassment. Please consider purchasing the 2006 edition of this guide instead, as the authors were changed.

The overwhelming impression one gets when reading Pat Yale's contributions to this book are that here we have a woman who, due to her own ill-founded preconceptions, has almost completely

failed to understand and appreciate the beauty of the culture into which she finds herself immersed. As a result, her comments regarding Iranian culture come across as being crude and disrespectful, often obnoxious, and even downright racist. Perhaps as a Westerner she cannot help being the way she is, but if that is the case, what on earth is she doing going to Iran in the first place, and what kind of an authority is she to write a travel guide? For example, in the section on p.51 entitled "The Iranian Way of Life", we are forced, amongst other things, to put up with the unnecessary snide comment, "It's a rare husband... who would as much as carry a dirty dish to the sink, let alone do any housework" - now would this not just as aptly describe a typical British or American husband (perhaps even her own?), who would rather spend his evenings down the local pub with his mates - and who will later urinate on someone's wall on the way home, while singing loudly and hurling abuse at innocent passers-by? And then there are the ridiculous comments about rising divorce rates - which the author idiotically puts down to the existence of arranged marriages, failing completely to realise that the divorce rates in countries where arranged marriages are prevalent are MUCH lower than in the West where pre-marital sexual promiscuity is taken for granted. If she had half a brain, she would have reached exactly the opposite conclusion - that it is the gradual Westernisation of Iran that was leading to the increase in divorce rates (which is presumably one of the many reasons that they would rather do without the rapidly spreading disease of Westernisation - and if the satellite TV propaganda machine fails, there are always the bombs, eh?). And the section ends with the stereotypical and spitefully Islamophobic comment, "These days it's a rare man who can afford to take up his Islamic right to have four wives". And she does rant on and on about the oppressive hijab that she has been forced to wear, and the segregation between men and women. Sadly for her, the author does not appreciate the beauty of a society in which modesty and piety are valued so greatly. Rather, the author (deducing that all Iranian men must be sexually repressed) expresses her surprise at not having been fondled! She did in passing mention the fact that she was treated with great dignity as a lone woman while queuing for her visa extension, but apparently failed to see past her veil enough to realise that this elevated respect for women permeates the whole of Islamic culture. And she would do well to note that it is precisely this modesty which makes arranged marriages work so well (in complete contradistinction to the misguided promiscuity and sexual freedom in the West, which effectively renders marriage meaningless and leads them to fail). So the result is a book which is technically sound and reasonably comprehensive, interspersed with the most outrageous Islamophobic/Iranophobic Western hate propaganda - an irritating and unusual combination which leaves you wanting to kick [...]

Perfect then, for your stereotypical FOX-News/CNN-educated American tourist, who probably

should never have been let out of the country in the first place. Until something better comes along (perhaps a new edition completely rewritten by someone who actually ENJOYS being in Iran and APPRECIATES its culture), then unfortunately this otherwise dubious piece of hate-literature remains a useful guide. [If the spiteful comments get too much, simply striking through the offending paragraphs/pages with a thick black marker pen may help].

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