

## “Majestic Iran” salutes travel, culture enthusiasts and exhibitgoers

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TEHRAN – The 13th Tehran International Tourism Exhibition opens tomorrow morning with all hopes to well introduce lesser-known destinations, services and travel businesses, yet to offer pocket-friendly travel packages to the visitors.

“Majestic Iran” has been picked as the motto of the exhibit, which this year in an innovative approach is being held concurrent with the 33rd National Handicrafts Exhibition at the Tehran Permanent International Fairground till February 15.

Organizers say the synchronization could help boost synergy among the two sectors as people have chance to visit them maybe a day-long visit!

A total of 12 exhibition halls have been dedicated to the event, divided to hundreds of booths and stands running by travel agencies, airlines, sea or rail companies, entrepreneurs, startups, banks, insurance brokers, agents or hospitals in charge of health, medical tourism, sports clubs, pilgrimage & eco-tourism companies, representatives of hotels, guesthouses, tourist villages, and free zones to name a few.

Several halls have been dedicated to craftspeople, artisans, live performers and tribespeople who are coming together from every corner of the ancient land to promote skills inherited from generation to generation.

Though its main goal of the sales exhibit is to make money and sails of the handicrafts, souvenirs, foodstuff, and various other regional products, it can really be a venue for dialogue between exhibitors and visitors and even visiting officials.

Such face-to-face talks may summon up powers of inspiration and enable artisans to come up with a solution to make more and more novel or applied designs.

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Like previous editions, the 33rd National Handicrafts Exhibition will showcase arrays of personal ornamentation, woodwork, illuminated manuscript, miniature, textile printing, enamel, leatherwork, handwoven textile, calligraphy, traditional musical instrument, metalwork, and marquetry among tens of others while nomadic culinary arts, live workshops, and performances will be gathering own fans every corner.

Handicraft exports from Iran reached \$146 million since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (started March 21, 2019), tourism ministry announced last month.

Iran was ranked the third fastest-growing tourism destination in the globe in 2019, with 27.9 percent growth year on year, according to the latest statistics released by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Some eight million foreign nationals have visited Iran since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2019) despite [U. S. sanctions and a sharp decline in flights by some foreign airlines, tourism minister Ali-Asghar Mounesan announced earlier this month.

The country welcomed some 7.8 million foreign nationals last year, achieving a 52.5 percent increase year on year.

In January, Mounesan issued a statement, inviting all travelers and holidaymakers to visit the ancient land, saying that the country-size guesthouse is wholeheartedly ready to receive tourists from around the world.

He emphasized that the Iranian government is trying its best to host incoming tourists by improving tourism infrastructure, offering attractive and pocket-friendly packages, as well as incentives such as visa waivers or 90-day visas on arrival.

The Islamic Republic expects to reap a bonanza from its numerous tourist spots, including 22 ones that have been placed on the UNESCO World Heritage list. Under the 2025 Tourism Vision Plan, the country aims to increase the number of tourist arrivals from 4.8 million in 2014 to 20 million in 2025.