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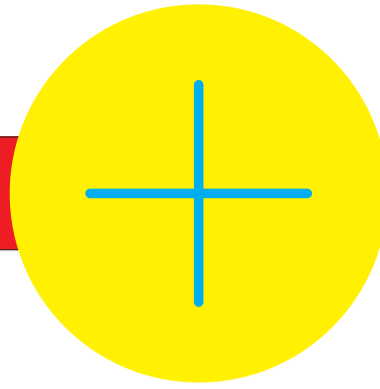


Over 160 performances to be staged in Fajr Music Festival

IRNA – A total of 166 musical performances will be staged in 15 Iranian provinces during the 38th Fajr Music Festival, Iran's most prominent Music Festival.

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Best caving destinations in Iran

If you thought that Iran is only desert, you will be surprised. Indeed, Iran is a vast mountainous land, with high peaks, cliffs, and ... caves. For amateur speleologists and caving fans, Iran has great potential with plenty of destinations to explore. In this article, you will see what the best caving destinations in Iran are, according to travelers, surfiran.com reported.

Iran, a great potential for caving

In Iran, caving has a lot of fans who travel all over the country to enjoy this activity. If you're not familiar with this term, caving consists of the recreational exploration of caves. It was in 1945 that caving truly started in Iran. Caving can be practiced by professionals (who are called cavers) as well as amateurs (called spelunkers). As a sport, caving requires skill and proper equipment. Yet, since many caves in Iran have been made accessible to the public,

it is possible to explore them as easily as you would visit any other site.

Over 2,500 caves have been discovered in Iran, mostly over the past 50 years. There are probably thousands more left undiscovered, and even among the caves that have been found, most of them have not been completely explored. Most caves in Iran are sedimentary caves, formed by the erosion of water. They often have rivers and pools, stalagmites and stalactites, and their walls are sometimes covered with rainbow colors due to the different minerals. Some caves in Iran also have historical interest, as they show evidence of ancient civilizations and human traces.

Top 5 caves to visit in Iran

There are many caves that deserve visitors' attention in Iran. Choosing among them is not easy and is pretty subjective. Here are the top ten caves visi-

tors appreciated in Iran:

Ali Sadr Cave

This is by far the most famous cave in Iran. Ali Sadr Cave, in Hamedan Province, is considered the world's largest water cave and dates back to the Jurassic Era (208 to 146 million years ago). Ali Sadr creates a maze with various chambers and small passages that can be explored by paddling canoes. The ceilings can go up to 35 meters in height, with a depth of water that goes up to 17 meters in some areas.

Namakdan Salt Cave

The salt cave of Namakdan, on Qeshm Island, Hormuzgan Province, is the world's largest salt cave and a UNESCO geosite. The length of the cave is 6,850 meters but it hasn't been fully explored. Visitors can walk on the first 100-150 meters inside the cave, and admire the salt sculptures, stalactites, and its unique specificity: Its walls are covered with dif-

ferent layers of color.

Chal-e Nakhjir Cave

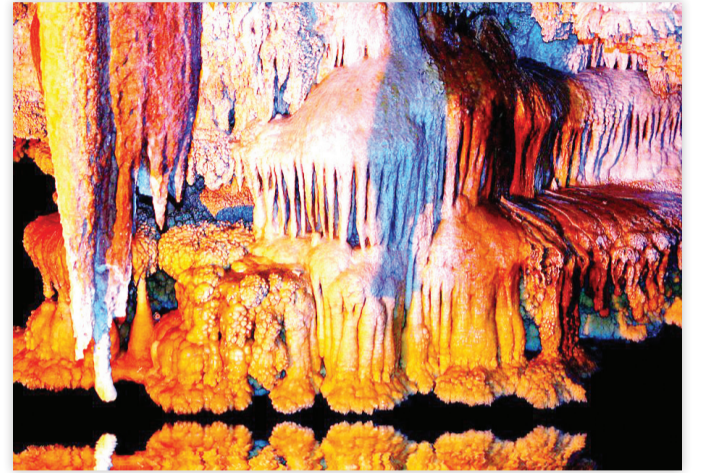
Chal-e Nakhjir Cave, located west of Kashan, Isfahan Province, is a 70-million-year-old cave that was only discovered in 1989. Part of the cave is accessible by walking and allows the visitor to admire this rare geological phenomenon. It contains calcite stones, spongy crystals, pools, and interior lakes.

Shapur Cave

Shapur Cave, with its statue of the Sassanid King Shapur I, is probably one of Iran's most famous caves. It is located near the ancient city of Bishapur in Kazerun, Fars Province. Shapur I's statue is seven meters high and two meters wide, and was entirely carved from one stalagmite. It stands at the entrance of the cave. The cave continues over 16 meters and contains three water basins.

Khorbas Cave

If Khorbas Cave on Qeshm Is-



Ali Sadr Cave
wikipedia.org

land existed naturally at first, what we now observe is a result of human dwellings made some 500 years ago.

Located on top of a hill, 20-30 meters high, villagers have dug shelters with halls, corridors, and various rooms to live in. There is even a pond to store water inside the cave, which was used for defense against invaders but could also have been an Anahita Temple.



Shapur Cave
ouriranphotos.com



Chal-e Nakhjir Cave
bartarinha.ir



Namakdan Salt Cave
lugs-geoheritage.org



Khorbas Cave
itto.org



People watch the water released in Zayandeh Rud on February 11, 2023, which is the largest river of the Iranian Plateau in central Iran. The river is dried up most of the year due to the drought which has hit the country in recent years.
ZAHRA BACHBAN/IRNA

Egypt's share of global tourism less than 1%: Expert

EGYPT INDEPENDENT – Tourism expert Mostafa al-Naggar said that while the global tourist industry brings in an estimated two trillion dollars annually, Egypt's share of the volume of global tourism investments is less than one percent. During an interview with the talk show "Hadith al-Qahira" (Cairo Talk) on the "al-Qahira wal Nas" (Cairo and the People) channel, Naggar explained that tourism is a vital resource for the state that contributes about 12 percent of the gross domestic product. There are currently two million tourism workers in Egypt, he said. Naggar added that 2010 was the best year for the Egyptian tourism in terms of income, and said that Egypt needs strong tourism media capable of promoting tourism to the country. He also noted that the new road network being implemented by the state is of great importance to the tourism sector.



He noted that despite tourism being such an important part of the national economy, the state is lacking in a system that treats tourists and provides good services.