



فدراسیون چوگان جمهوری اسلامی ایران
POLO FEDERATION OF I.R. IRAN

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CHOGAN TOUR IN IRAN

Chogan, an ancient Iranian horse-riding game accompanied by music and storytelling, has been inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The game is commonly known around the world as polo. It has a history of over 2500 years in Iran and has mostly been played in royal courts and urban fields. In Chogān, two rider teams compete and the aim is to pass the ball through the opposing team's goal posts using a wooden stick. Chogān includes the main game, a corresponding musical performance and storytelling. Bearers include three primary groups: the players, the storytellers and the musicians. Chogān is a cultural, artistic and athletic element with a strong connection to the identity and history of its bearers and practitioners. It has a strong presence in the literature, storytelling, proverbs, handicrafts and ornaments that are valuable parts of the symbolism of its practitioners. As an element that promotes the health of the body and soul, Chogān also establishes a connection between nature, humankind and horses. Traditionally, transmission has occurred informally within the family or in workshops, and Chogān techniques continue to be actively safeguarded by families and local practitioners. However, over the last decades, Chogān associations have also been established, which hold training courses, support local masters and provide assistance in transmitting all aspects of Chogān while safeguarding local diversity.

TOUR LENGTH: 10 DAYS, 9 NIGHTS



History of Chogan (Polo)

For the first time, Chogan was played during Achaemenians in Iran. As Achaemenians extended their borders to far and vast geographical spots, this ancient Iranian game found its way to other countries too.

It dates back to the centuries before Christ when it was quite popular among kings, rulers, wealthy people and those who could afford it as an entertaining sport. They also held horse riding races. One of the amusing activities among kings was playing Chogan. Of course, it was played differently back then. Horse riding was more of a military and warfare practice. Therefore, this entertainment included horses' military-style marching and riding war horses. As the time went by, Chogan changed to the present-day style.

"Kar-Namag i Ardashir i Pabagan", is a middle Persian prose tale written in Sassanian Era. It narrates the story of Ardashir I, the founder of this dynasty. It's the first written document that mentions Chogan as an Iranian game. After Mongols had invaded Iran, they learned Iranian arts and culture, including Chogan, and promoted it all across their empire. This created interest among all East Asian countries in this entertaining game as a unique amusing competition.

The history of Chogan doesn't end in Mongolian Era. We have observed traces of it going back to Safavid Era and the time when Shah Abbas I reigned in Iran. When he settled in his new capital city, Esfahan, he ordered Naqsh-e Jahan Square to be built for playing Chogan.

When Indian and British officers were part of the foreign ruling systems in Iran, they learned this Iranian game and its rules. Later, they transferred these skills to their countries. So, in 1860, polo was played for the first time in England. The popularity of Chogan in the UK was a prelude to expanding it further to the US. In American continent, this intangible cultural heritage of Iranians was performed at Latin American countries and attracted lots of fans in this part of the world.

Today, all countries are familiar with Chogan calling it polo. Golf and Hockey have been inspired by this entertaining game of ancient Iranians. Some rich people ride on elephants instead of horses in Chogan.



Chogan Game Equipments

Riders and the horses must be both ready for the game. It's a strategic game that requires plenty of readiness. Players were not ordinary horse riders and horses were not just any horses. They could even go to war easily. Today, in Chogan, ponies are full-sized horses used for this traditional Iranian game. In Persian, they are referred to simply as Chogan horses. They should be equipped with safety gears to be ready for the races.

They are supposed to have special leg wraps to be protected against the mallets. The line attached to the curb bit must be adjusted in a comfortable and freeway so that ponies can be easily levered. Horse riders must have special safety helmets, gloves, whip, riding boots, knee pads, elbow pads, and Chogan outfits. The players are supposed to be

already remarkably skillful as horse riders. Each player holds a special long-handled wooden mallet with which he tries to lead the ball during the game. This mallet is 129 cm long and is attached to another piece, 20-25 cm, perpendicularly attached to it. Polo mallet stick is generally made of bamboo. The Chogan ball is hard and a bit larger than a tennis ball. It's called "Gooy". Its diameter is approximately 25 cm and weighs around 140 gram.



Chogan Game & Polo Field

Some of the most important ones are:

- Chogan field dimensions: 274 m by 145 m
- Goal post length: 7 m

The number of players at each team: 4 players:

- No.1 is the offense-oriented one who must try to score goals against the other team.
- No.2 is both offense-oriented and defense-oriented who must play both roles.
- No.3 is the tactical leader who creates opportunities. He changes the defense cases to an offense.
- No.4 is the goalkeeper who is the primary defense player.

The entire game is divided into 2 half-times. Duration of the game is six periods of 7 minutes. Each time period is called a "Chukka" or "Chukker". The interesting point is that the Persian word "Chukker" was the word used for the servants who took care of horses in such resting intervals. Today Iranians use this work to show they're ready to serve others out of their loving hearts or free wills.

The players of each team need 3 minutes of rest between two Chukkas. Between two half-times, they rest for 5 minutes.

Rules of the Game

Like other sports, Chogan has got its own rules too. It applies both to the equipment as well as playing it.

This refreshing Iranian game requires horse riders to divide into two teams. Each team gets on the horseback and tries to score more goals against the opposite team.

To begin with the game, each team's players stay on horsebacks in a row behind the middle line in the middle of the field. Then, the referee throws the ball between them from approximately 6.5 m away for them to start the game. Players start riding toward the ball to get control over it and launch a tactical offense toward the opponent's goal post. If there's foul during the game or it's time for the rest between two Chukkas, the game is paused.

If anything happens for the ponies or a pony is hurt, the game is paused and the rider uses another horse to continue the game. As Chogan is an

exciting game requiring lots of physical activities, horses get tired quickly. Therefore, tired mounts should be replaced by fresh ones from time to time. So, each rider uses more than one horse during the race.

Chogan's Condition in Iran Today

As Chogan is an expensive game, it's not very popular in Iran, but there's a Polo Federation of Iran that promoted this sport. So, sports authorities give more attention to it and there's a hope it gets more popular among all Iran games.

However, as a universally recognized cultural heritage of Iranians, Chogan is well-known and all Iranians are proud of it. Students read about it in Persian literature and learn about it in various arts especially painting.



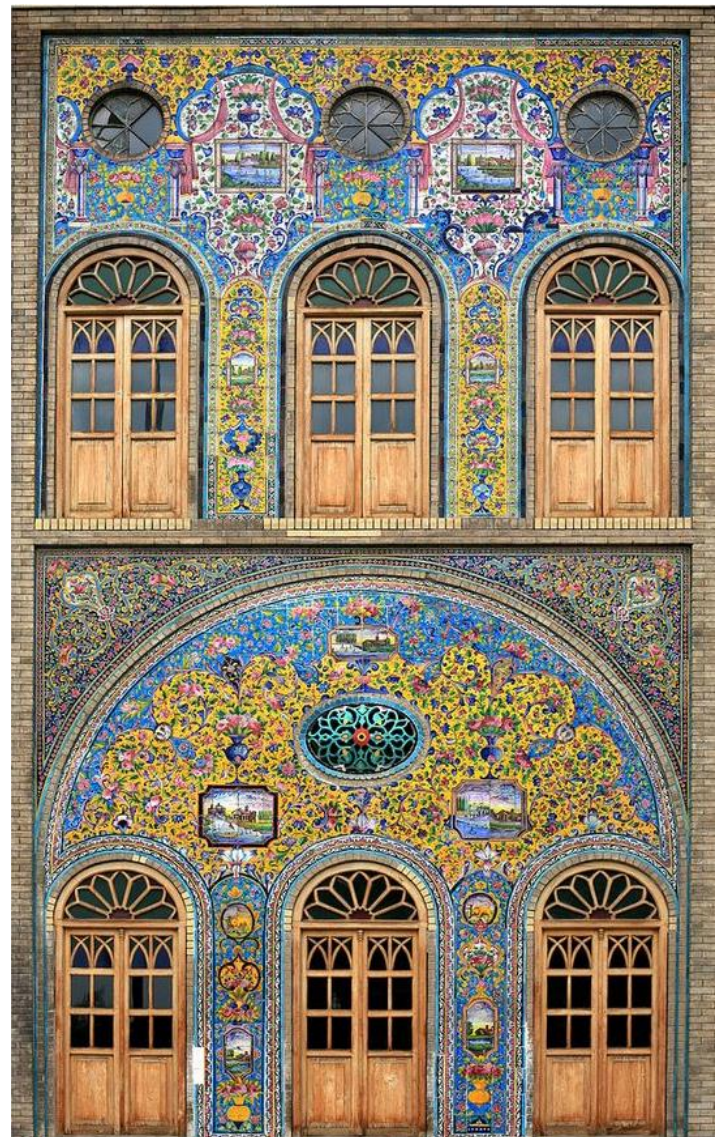
Day 1: Arrival in Tehran

You will arrive in Iran early in the morning and we have a lot to venture, numerous places to visit, so get some good rest to get up all energetic and fresh in the morning.

A full day Sightseeing in Tehran including: We will enjoy ourselves while visiting **Golestan Palace** (WHS) one of the oldest of the historic monuments in the city of Tehran. The glory and perfection in design of this building will surpass all your expectations of beauty. It consists of gardens, royal buildings, and collections of Iranian crafts and European presents from the 18th and 19th centuries. Next we visit **National Museum of Iran** which holds an incredibly wide range of pre-Islamic as

well as post-Islamic remaining works including pottery vessels, metal objects, textile remains, and some rare books and coins. Make sure not to miss **Treasury of National Jewels Museum**. Here is the most dazzling collection of gemstones and jewelry known in the world; the most spectacular objects have been placed on public display and form one of the country's principal tourist attractions. After lunch we will visit **Carpet Museum**, Carpet-weaving has been around since the advent of early features of urban civilization and is undoubtedly one of the most distinguished manifestations of Iranian culture and art. Carpet Museum exhibits a variety of fine Persian carpets, kilims and sophisticated carpet designs from all over Iran, dating from the 16th century to the present. In addition to its attractive carpet and rug galleries, the museum building has a beautiful architecture and facade resembling a carpet-weaving loom, then we will visit the tallest tower in Iran and 17th-tallest freestanding structure in the world, **Milad Tower** is a multi-purpose tower standing at 435 meters from the base to the tip of the antenna. This landmark accommodates a variety of sections and parts on each floor ranging from a cafeteria, a public art gallery, a library to a five-star hotel.

Overnight Tehran.



Day 2: Tehran

You will have full day Chogan game .

Overnight Tehran.

Day 3: Tehran-Qazvin (150 KM)

After breakfast, we will drive to Qazvin. You visit **Sepah street** (the oldest street in Iran), **Chehel Soton palace**, **Aliqapou mansion**, **Emamzadeh Husein holy shrine**, **Tehran Gate**, **Qazvin traditional bazaar (Sad-o Saltaneh)**, and if it'll be possible **mausoleum of Obeyd Zakani** (he was a Persian poet and satirist of the 14th century).
Overnight Qazvin.



Day 4: Qazvin

You will have full day Chogan game.

Overnight Qazvin.

Day 5: Qazvin-Isfahan (470 KM)

After breakfast drive to Isfahan. Get ready to visit half of the world; Isfahan was once the capital of Persia and one of the largest cities in the world. Even today, the city retains much of its past glory. This hub of creativity was rightly granted the title "Half-of-the-World" due to its flourishing commerce and a great variety of astonishing arts ranging from poetry and handicrafts to unique architectural styles. We begin our journey through Isfahan by visiting **Chehel-Sotun Palace**. This architectural masterpiece is a pavilion in the midst of a park at the far end of a long pool which is a typical design of all Persian Gardens. The palace has been constructed for the King's entertainment and receptions during Safavid-era. Chehel Sotun Palace literally means "Forty Columns" which was inspired by the twenty slender wooden columns supporting the entrance pavilion, which, when reflected in the water of the fountain, are said to appear to be forty. The most startling feature of the pavilion is the brilliant interior design and paintings which includes fabulous roofs, old tile-covered floors, and painted walls featuring scenes of battles and celebrations hold by the king. Chehel-Sotun Palace is not just an old building; it tells us about history and each and every crack on the walls or the floors holds a story of the past. Then in the afternoon we will visit **Siyosepol bridge** which literally means 33 arches is a bridge highly ranked as being one of the most famous examples of Safavid bridge design. It is the longest bridge on Zayandeh Rood River connecting east of Isfahan to its west. then visit another well-known bridge over Zayandeh Rood River called **Khadju** and next to see the oldest bridge on Zayandeh Rood River. The Zayandeh Rood River can be considered as a contributing factor to the growth of the population and the economy of the city; it helped established Isfahan as an influential center, and gave a green landscape to Isfahan, a city in the middle of a desert.

Overnight Isfahan.

Day 6: Isfahan

We will start our tour to **Meidane Emam** (Naghsh-e-Jahan) (WHS) Square which is an oblong-shaped square built in Safavid era. We enjoy playing **Chogan game** in the square with its lively atmosphere has always been a perennial tourist attraction; it is bordered on all sides by aesthetically remarkable monumental buildings linked by a series of two-storied arcades of shops. The monuments surrounding the square are named Shah Mosque, Ali Qapu Palace, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque and last but not least Isfahan, in next we visit **Imam Mosque** situated on the south side of the Shah square. The mosque was built during Safavid period by the order of the first Shah Abbas of Persia. The undeniable beauty and Sophistication in design of the mosque do mirror ages and years of experience in constructing mosques by Iranians. All parts of the mosque have been woven together in great harmony to present a seamless, matchless whole. Religious concepts along with traditional symbols are all fully tangible in the design of the structure. The dome of the mosque standing on top with tall Minarets soaring into the sky, seem to invite every passerby in to worship and pray the Lord. **Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque**, standing on the eastern side of Naghsh-e-Jahan Square, is considered as one of the marvels of Persian architecture. Every element of the building is a true embodiment of elegance; it enchants every viewer by its dome changing color from dawn to dusk. There is an underground corridor offering a passage from the building to Ali-Qapu palace which is going to be the next piece of history to visit. **The Pavilion of Ali-Qapu** is a grand palace located on the western side of the Naghsh-e-Jahan Square, opposite of Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque. The building was named Ali-Qapu which means "great gate" in as much as it was right at the entrance to the Safavid palaces which stretched from the Naghsh-e-Jahan Square to the **Chahar Bagh** Boulevard. The structures were a symbol of the government's power and were originally used as a place to hold important political negotiations. Ali-Qapu is rich in naturalistic wall paintings; they abound with floral, animal and bird motifs. The building is also embellished with mirrors, arcs and magnificent colorful tiles, after that we will have a free time to **Grand Bazaar** and free time.

Overnight Isfahan

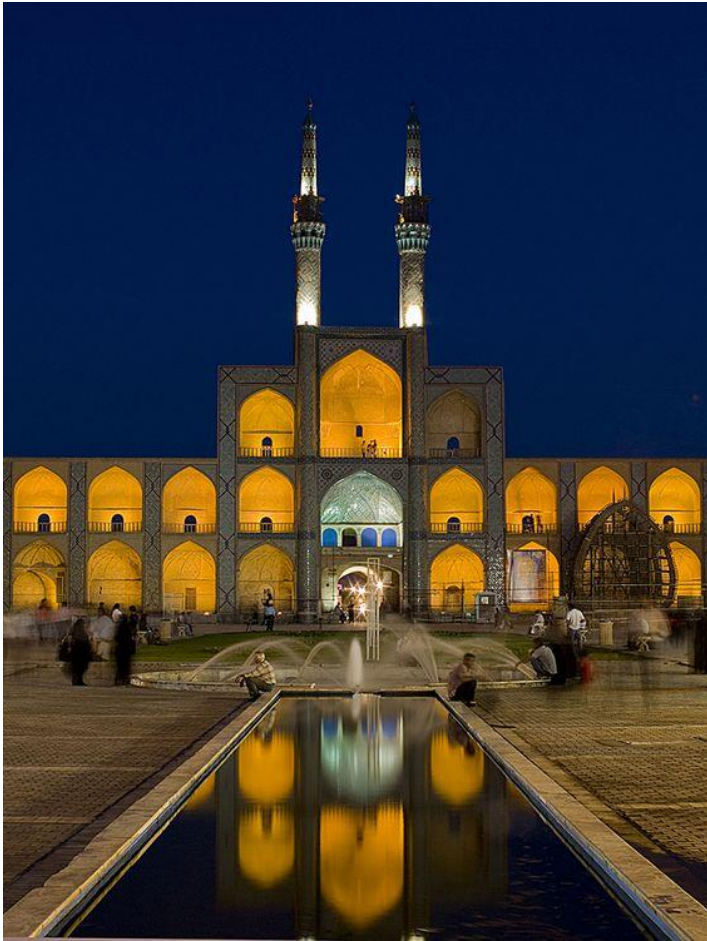


Day 7: Isfahan-Yazd

In the morning drive to Yazd, In the route, we will have a short stop in Naein city to visit **Nain Jame Mosque** situated in the old texture of the city. The Mosque was built after the Mohamad's Mosque in Medina. Then drive continue to **Meybod**. The city receives great credit for minting-coins workshops which we also will visit. On the way to Isfahan we stop to visit **Narin Castle** Remains located in the middle of historical texture of **Meybod**. Another must-see monument in Meybod is **Shah-Abbasi Caravanserai** built in Safavid era. Just like travelers in the past who could rest and recover from the day's journey, we also stop here on our way to Isfahan to enjoy the architecture of the structure having

rooms all around it traditionally used as shops and stores. Now it is time to visit **Mud-Brick Ice house** which has a shaped of an up-side down cone which has a subterranean storage space; it was often used to store ice, but sometimes was used to store food as well. Then drive continue to Yazd.

Overnight Yazd.



Day 8: Yazd

Reaching Yazd, we begin by visiting Zoroastrian's **Tower of Silence** which a circular and raised structure built by Zoroastrians on top of a hill. It was used for incarnation for dead bodies to be exposed to carrion birds. We next have the chance to visit **Yazd Fire-Temple**, a place of worship for Zoroastrians, which contains in its heart a 2500-year-old fire and the Zoroastrians' Museum containing numerous ancient writings. We then head to the **Water Museum**, an ancient house which possesses a **Qanat** (WHS) in its basement providing the house with a fabulous cool pleasing air. We will experience walking through narrow allies of **Fahadan District** with tall mud and straw walls, which are reminiscent of the ancient architecture of the city. The passages of the city were previously replete with arcs, curves, and bends, wide enough for just two or three pedestrians to walk through. Among in numerable attractions of Yazd, here we will visit **Amir Chakhmakh Complex**. The complex is decorated by along rectangular pool, surrounded by small shops; not only can one enjoy shopping for souvenirs from such traditional and local shops which mainly sell handicrafts, but he/she can also rest their eyes on alluring beauty of the architecture of the mosque. Last but not Least, is **Dowlatabad Garden** (WHS) which is renown all across the globe due to its tallest wind tower of the world.

Overnight Yazd.

Day 9: Yazd-Tehran

Morning flight to Tehran and free time in Iran capital to visit **Natural bridge** and enjoy to be with the people.

Overnight Tehran



Day 10: Tehran-Departure

Early in the morning we will transfer to IKA airport for our departure flight.

Saying goodbye is never easy, but it is time to go to the airport. Iran is a kind of place that you cannot get enough of it and to appreciate its beauty thoroughly in such few days is not possible. Therefore, until next time we will have the honor to host you here in Iran take care and enjoy your flight.

Services Included		Excluded																			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visa as invitation letter (if required)• 9 nights' accommodation at mentioned Hotels• Daily buffet breakfast• English Speaking Guide• Entrance Fees of mentioned sites• Refreshment• 18 Meals (9 lunch + 9 Dinner)• A/C Vehicle for transportation per itinerary• All airport – hotel – airport transfers with A/C Vehicle• Portage		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fee for issuing visa at embassy• International air ticket• Tip of guide & driver• Extra services that not included in above																			
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		<table><tr><th>City</th><th>Hotel</th><th>Nights</th></tr><tr><td>Tehran</td><td>Espinas 5*</td><td>2 N</td></tr><tr><td>Qazvin</td><td>Marmar 4*</td><td>2 N</td></tr><tr><td>Isfahan</td><td>Abbasi 5*</td><td>2 N</td></tr><tr><td>Yazd</td><td>Safaiyhe 5*</td><td>2 N</td></tr><tr><td>Tehran</td><td>Espinas 5*</td><td>1 N</td></tr></table>	City	Hotel	Nights	Tehran	Espinas 5*	2 N	Qazvin	Marmar 4*	2 N	Isfahan	Abbasi 5*	2 N	Yazd	Safaiyhe 5*	2 N	Tehran	Espinas 5*	1 N	
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Note			Validity																		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visa Procedure is 7 working days. (for Canadian , British and USA passport holders takes 25 working days and resume is required as well.)• Early check in and late checkout are not included in the package additional supplement will be added according to the flight details.• Sightseeing is subject to change as most sites are closed on religious holidays, Jewelry museum of Tehran is working from Saturday till Tuesday. Please check again detail of itinerary once the departure flight is fixed.•			2019																		
<u>Tours’ Cancellation Policy:</u>																					
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 21-30 Days before tour : 25% of tour price• 8-20 Days before tour : 45% of tour price• 2-7 Days before tour : 75 % of tour price• 2 – departure time of the group 100% of total price																					