## **Behind the Scenes**

#### SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK

We love to hear from travellers – your comments keep us on our toes and help make our books better. Our well-travelled team reads every word on what you loved or loathed about this book. Although we cannot reply individually to your submissions, we always guarantee that your feedback goes straight to the appropriate authors, in time for the next edition. Each person who sends us information is thanked in the next edition – the most useful submissions are rewarded with a selection of digital PDF chapters.

Visit **lonelyplanet.com/contact** to submit your updates and suggestions or to ask for help. Our award-winning website also features inspirational travel stories, news and discussions.

Note: We may edit, reproduce and incorporate your comments in Lonely Planet products such as guidebooks, websites and digital products, so let us know if you don't want your comments reproduced or your name acknowledged. For a copy of our privacy policy visit lonelyplanet.com/privacy.

#### **OUR READERS**

Many thanks to the travellers who used the last edition and wrote to us with helpful hints, useful advice and interesting anecdotes: Adriaan van Diik. Adrian Ineichen, Adrien Bitton, Adrien Ledeul, Agapi Galenianou, Alan & Lynn Taylor, Alan Keltner, Alberto Ibanez, Alexis Haneke, Alfred Schupp, Amanda Löwenberg, Amir Oaredaghi, Ana Hocevar, Ana Louro, Andrew Coker, Andrew Rerttman, Angus Lee, Ankur Agarwal, Anna Zavyalova, Anne Ataii, Anton Kerst, Arlo Werhoven, Arne Gerberding, Aurélien Grollemund, Bas Geelen, Basia Jóźwiak, Bastiaan Bijl, Basudeb Banerjee, Behnaz Shaabani, Bojan Bokal, Cale Lawlor, Catherine Waters, Chevallier Elodie, Chiara Pentini, Christian Kaved, Christina Gade, Cinzia Mina, Damjan Sinigoj, David Cassan, David Droob, David Treller, Desislava Slavcheva. Dominik Hetzer, Edda Senior, Edo Willemse, Elise Vonk, Elizabeth van Tilborg, Eloise de la Croix, Ester Vila, Eugenio Ariztia, Eva Anita Steiger, Farnoush Shevkhani, Florian Siebeck, Franca Gilissen, Franco Pagnoni, Frank Westerhof, Frans Ewals, Geert van Waveren, Gert Fisahn, Gilda Gazor, Greg Minshall, Hadrien Cazeaux, Helen Carmichael, Helena Foito dos Santos, Helena Henneken, Henry Bacon, Hojat Kermani Nejad, Hon Chiu Vincent Ko, Ian Thomson, Ioannis Mamoukaris, Jaap Hooiikaas, Jacek Janczarek, Jan Setnan, Jan-Pieter Visschers, Jascha de Ridder, Jason Pemberton, Jeanne Watt, Jenny Hess. Jessie Toose, Jim Lowther, John Pasturel, Jonas Keil. Joris Tieleman, Julia Dorenwendt, Julian Madsen, Kaldia Douag, Kamran Hasani, Katharina Lüke, Kay

Martin, Klaas Flechsig, Larissa Chu, Leigh Dehaney, Leonie Gavalas, Lianne Bosch, Lisandra Ilisei, Luis Maia, Luzius Thuerlimann, Maarten Jan Oskam, Maksymilian Dzwonek, Manfred Henze, Marc Verkerk, Marcel Althaus, Marei Bauer, Marianne Schoone, Mario Sergio Dd Oliveira Pinto, Marjolijn Polman, Martin Hausmann, Mary Gavan, Mehmet Gavremoglu, Michael Chow, Mike van kruchten, Mina Rahimi, Mirka Badinska, Mohammad Afshinfar, Mohammad Ebrahimi, Mohsen Rezaie-Atagholipour, Momo Nedderwedder, Monica Coppi, Monica Santosuosso, Monika Marek, Nga Bellis, Nicholas James, Nick Lubout, Olav Wissink, Oleg Zhernovoy, Olivia-Petra Coman, Olivier Drouin, Parniyan Fakharzadeh, Parto Shahvandi, Paul Downing, Paul Faust, Paul Tijam, Paul-Noël Dumont, Petros Mouchas, Phuong Tran, Pier Giorgi, Regi & Andi Keller, Regine Fisahn, Remko Donga, Rens Geerse, Reto Vogt, Ricardo Puerto. Richard & Joan Williams, Roderick van de Weg, Roëlla de Ruiter, Ronald De Hertogh, Rouhollah Fallahi, Roya Moradifar, Rvan Mckechnie, Rvan Teo, Rvo Kakiuchi, Sadra Beygi, Sebastian Lopienski, Shahireh Nozari, Simon Coombe, Simon Walo, Simone Zoppellaro, Siska D'hoore, Stefan Gruber, Stefanie Mikkers, Stela Prodanovic, Stephane Baudemont, Susanne Janssen, Svein Skalevag, Sveta Selivanova, Terry Hooper, Thessi Summer, Thibaud Marcesse, Thomas Nash, Thomas Sarosy, Thomas Schneider, Tim Rom, Tobias Leupold, Tobias Wolski, Tom De Mits, Tomasz Kozaczek, Ursula Streit, Vida Pirlou, Xavier law, Xin Tian Yong, Yao Zhang, Yasi Ayat, Yorian Bordes

#### WRITER THANKS

#### Simon Richmond

Many thanks to the following for their assistance in preparation for and during my research in Iran: Andrew Burke, Gabe Kaminski, Laili Sadr, Mathew Scott, Yi-Juan Koh, William Lodder, Navid, Sogand, Matin, Shirin, Ali, Farah, Ramin, Armin, Masoud, Jalal and Berzhad

#### Jean-Bernard Carillet

A huge thanks to everyone who helped out and made this trip an enlightenment, especially Mojtaba, Eric, Amir, Ibrahim, the young couple met on Qeshm and all the people I met on the road. At Lonely Planet I'm grateful to Helen for her trust, and to the hard-working editors. At home, a gros bisou to Eva and lots of love to Morgane, whose support was essential.

#### Mark Elliott

Many, many thanks to gallant guides Shahram and Mojtaba, to Helen, Dylan and Megan for making things possible and to Sally Kingsbury and my unbeatable parents for so much love and support. Thank you also to countless kind Iranians and travellers who were so generous with their time, hospitality and information, notably Vali, Reza and family, Rino, Ahmad, Amir, Jalal, Mohammad and Akhar

#### Anthony Ham

A big thank you to my editor, Helen Elfer, for trusting me to write about such a wonderful part of the world we both love. And to my co-authors – Mark Elliott, Jean-Bernard Carillet, Simon Richmond, Jenny Walker and Steve Waters – who together represent some of the finest writers writing guidebooks anywhere.

#### **Jenny Walker**

Iran is acknowledged as a country of wonders – and this includes the legendary hospitality extended to visitors. A general thanks, then, to all who helped contribute to the information in the Central Iran chapter. Specific thanks to Bijan Nabavi for setting the scene, to Mostafa Ramezanpoor for attention to detail and most especially to Mojtaba Heidari for his extreme efforts in extreme circumstances – not forgetting his signature coffee stops! Biggest thanks to beloved Sam (Owen), husband, co-researcher and fellow traveller.

#### Steve Waters

Thanks to all the beautiful Iranian people who smoothed my way, picked me up when I was miles from nowhere, bought me tea and chocolates, or *chelo kabab*, who taught me lessons in humility, patience and honesty, who told me subversive jokes, made me laugh, shared their food and persevered with my mangled Farsi. And thanks to Rahel, Kaz, Hamish, Megan and Roz for being yourselves.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Climate map data adapted from Peel MC, Finlayson BL & McMahon TA (2007) 'Updated World Map of the Köppen-Geiger Climate Classification', Hydrology and Earth System Sciences, 11, 163344.

Cover photograph: Masjed-e Sheikh Lotfollah (Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque), Esfahan, JPRichard/ Shutterstock ©

## THIS BOOK

This 7th edition of Lonely Planet's *Iran* guidebook was researched and written by Simon Richmond, Jean-Bernard Carillet, Mark Elliott, Anthony Ham, Jenny Walker and Steve Waters. The previous edition was written by Andrew Burke, Virginia Maxwell and lain Shearer. This guidebook was produced by the following:

**Destination Editors** Helen Elfer, Lauren Keith

**Product Editors** Joel Cotterell, Anne Mason

**Senior Cartographer** David Kemp

**Book Designer** Nicholas Colicchia

Assisting Editors Sarah Bailey, Imogen Bannister, Carly Hall, Ali Lemer, Kristin Odijk, Gabrielle Stefanos, Ross Taylor, Saralinda Turner **Assisting Cartographer** Julie Dodkins

**Cover Researcher** Naomi Parker

Thanks to Jordan Hallewell, Indra Kilfoyle, Kate Mathews, Claire Naylor, Karyn Noble, Martine Power, Kirsten Rawlings, Alison Ridgway, Shadi Salehian

## Index

12 imams 307

Abyaneh 157-8 accommodation 336-8, see also individual locations language 362-3 activities 20-1, 338-40, see also individual activities. locations Afghanistan, travel to/ from 351 Afin 242 Ahmedineiad, Mahmoud 291-2 Ahvaz 144 AIDS 360 air pollution 67, 330, 361 air travel airlines 351 airports 350 to/from Iran 350-1 within Iran 353 Alamut Castle 121 Alamut Valley 15, 118-22, 120.15 Alborz Mountains 12, 72-3. 12 alcohol 305 Ali Sadr Caves 131 Andimeshk 139 Arab people 218, 293

96.351 art 48 318-19 art galleries, see also museums Ab Anbar 64 Art Centre Galleries 64 Assar Art Gallery 64 Fine Art Museum 49 Gallery Mellat 64 Iranian Artists' House 64 Jahan-Nama Museum & Gallery 49-50 Muzeh Sanati 233 Seyhoun Art Gallery 64 Tehran 12, 64, 12 Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art (TMOCA) 46-7 Ashura 22, 1362 Asiatic cheetahs 115, 328 Astane Sq 147 atashkadehs, see fire temples ATMs 344 Azerbaijan, travel to/from 95, 351 Azeri people 293 B Badab-e Surt travertines

Nagsh-e Rajab 210

Pasargadae 210-11

Oal'eh Salosel 143

Shushtar Historical

Tag-e Bustan 127

Ardabil 97-100 98

area codes 17, 348

architecture 20, 310-14

Armenia, travel to/from

Hydraulic System 142

Takht-e Soleiman 103, 105

208. 11

Susa 140

Nagsh-e Rostam 210

Persepolis 11, 207-10,

251

Kashan 154 Tehran 38 **Qeshm Island 223** Yazd 182, 183, 184, 185, Bagh-e Sangi stone garden 232 Baha'ism 308 Baigiran 257 Baluchi people 294 Bandar Abbas 219-22, 221 Bandar-e Lengeh 219 Bandari people 218 hathrooms 349 bargaining 19 Bayanat 211-12 Bavazeh 181 bazaars 14, 21 Bandar Abbas 220 Bazaar (Kashan) 151 Bazar-e Bozorg 160-1. 8 Bazar-e Sartasari 232-3 Bazar-e Vakil 196-7 Caravanserai Azizolaof 260 Covered Bazaar (Kermanshah) 128 Covered Bazaar (Qazvin) 114 Grand Bazaar (Tehran) 39 Old Bazar (Qom) 147 Sa'd-al Saltaneh Caravanserai 113 Semnan Bazaar 252 Tabriz Bazaar 14, 85-6, 14 Zanjan Bazaar 100 Bazargan 80

bazaris 295

Bijar 136-7

birds 328-9, 330

Bisheh waterfalls 138

Biriand 243-4

Bishapur 212

Risheh 138

bicycle travel, see cycling

badgirs 186, 223, 313

Bisotun 130 boat travel 353-4 Bojnurd 270-1 books 274, 321-2 Bog'eh-ye Khajeh Rabi 258 border crossings 351-2 Afghanistan 351 Armenia 96, 351 Azerbaijan 95, 351 Irag 352 Pakistan 352 Turkey 81, 91, 352 Turkmenistan 255, 352 bridges Band-e Lashkar 143 Khodaafarin Bridge 97 Mir Baha-e Din Bridge 101 Pol-e Chubi 167 Pol-e Ebrahimabad 98 Pol-e Jaiim 98 Pol-e Khaju 166 Pol-e Shadoryan 142-3 Pol-e Shahrestan 167 Si-o-Seh Pol 166 Tabiat Bridge 41 budget 17 bus travel 356 to/from Iran 352 within Iran 354-5 business hours 17, 345

calendars 348

calligraphy 318

camel trekking 241 caravanserais 313 Bisotun 130 Caravanserai Azizolaof 260 Dehnamak 254 Kashan 151 Kuhpayeh 178

Pichebon Caravanserai 119 Robat Qarehbil 257

Map Pages 000 Photo Pages 000

Aras River Valley 95-7

archaeological sites 20

Choga Zanbil Ziggurat 12.

logical Site & Museum

Haft Tappeh Archaeo-

Hegmataneh Hill 131-2

Belgays 271

142.12

140-1

Harireh 215

Mt Bisotun 130

caravanserais continued Sa'd-al Saltaneh Caravanserai 113 Shush 141 Zafaraniyeh 271 Zein-o-din 194-5 car travel 352, 355-6 driving licences 355 fuel 355 hire 355 insurance 355 carpets 315-18 castles & fortresses Alamut Castle 121 Arg-e Karim Khan 197 Arg-e Rayen 242 Arg-e Tabriz 86 Behestan Castle 102 Ghal'e-ye Portoghaliha 228 Lamiasar Castle 121-2 Maku Fortress 80 Narin Castle 194 Narin Ghale 181 Qa'en Castle 244 Qal'eh Babak 97 Qal'eh Rudkhan 111 Qaleh Tarikhi 243 Saryazd Fortress 195 cathedrals, see churches & cathedrals caves Ali Sadr Caves 131 Karaftu Caves 104 Katale Khor Caves 101 Khare Namaki 223 Khorbas Caves 225 Quri Qaleh Cave 126 cell phones 16, 349 central Iran 32, 146-212, 148-9 accommodation 146 climate 146 food 146 highlights 148-9 travel seasons 146 Chahar shanbe-soori 22, 299 Chahkooh Canyon 224 Chak Chak 194 Chelgerd 177 children, travel with 340 health 361 Choqa Zanbil Ziggurat 12, 142, 12

Map Pages 000 Photo Pages 000 Christianity 309 churches & cathedrals Armenian Evangelical Church 133 Dzor Dzor Chapel 80 Kantur Church 114 Kelisa-ve Vank 167 Maryam Church 98 Qareh Kalisa 80 Sarkis Cathedral 47 St Mary's Church 87 St Stephanos Gregorian Church 133 cinema 323-5 climate 16, 22-3, 340 climbing 338-9 Alborz Mountains 115 Ardahil 98 Farhad Tarash 130 Ganjnameh 137 Kelardasht 113 Khorramabad 145 Maku 80 Meygoon 73 Mt Damavand 74 Mt Tochal 51 Zagros Mountains 177 Zendan-e Soleiman 104 Colourful Mountains 101-2 consulates 341-2 crafts 157, 319 golabtoun douzi 226 credit cards 345 cultural considerations, see also women travellers clothing 18, 333-4 etiquette 18-19, 334-5 food 305 photography 346 ta'arof 300 culture 21, 295-301 currency 345, 346 customs regulations 341 cycling 338, 353 Kish Island 215

dangers, see safe travel Darband 253 Darbansar 73 Dasht-e Kavir 178-82 Dasht-e Lut, see Kaluts, the Deh Salm 241 diarrhoea, traveller's 360 diptheria 360 disabilities, travellers with 349

diving & snorkelling 338 Hengam Island 224 Kish Island 215 Dizin 72-3 Dorud 138 Dorud-Andimeshk Railway 138-9 drinks 304-5

earthquakes 327, 333 economy 295-6 Eid al-Fitr 22 electricity 339, 341 embassies 341-2 emergencies 17, 342 language 364 environmental issues 329, 330 Eresk 242 Fsfahan 158-76 164 accommodation 168-71 drinking & nightlife 173 food 171-3 information 174-5 itineraries 167 shopping 173-4 sights 159-68 tours 168 travel to/from 175 travel within 175-6 walking tours 169, 169 Esfandiar 242 Esfarayen 271-2 etiquette 18-19 events, see festivals & events exchange rates 17

Fair International Film Festival 22 Farahzad 181-2 Farsi 362-8 Ferdosi, Hakim Abulgasim 321 festivals & events 22-3 Ashura 23, 136 Chahar shanbe-soori 22, 299 Fid al-Fitr 22 No Ruz 22, 299, 347-8 Sizdah be Dar 299 films 274, 325 fire temples 15, 309, 15 Ateshkadeh-ye Esfahan 168

Fahraj 195

Kerman 236 Niasar 157 Pir-e-Sabz Fire Temple 194 Yazd 184 Firuz Ahad 212 food 10, 20, 302-5 desserts 303-4 dizi 303 Gilan cuisine 108 kababs 302-3, 19 language 363-4 football 65, 297

Ganjnameh 137 gardens, see parks & gardens Garmarud 119-21 Garmeh 13, 180, 13 Garmsar 254-5 gay travellers 342-3 Gazor Khan 121 geography 326-7 Ghal'e-ye Portoghaliha 228 golabtoun douzi 226 Golestan National Park 257 Golestan Palace 37-9 Gonbad-e Kavus 256-7 Gorgan 247-52, 250 guides Boinurd 271 Dasht-e Kavir 179 Esfahan 168 Kashan 155 Kerman 234-5 Kermanshah 128 Mashhad 260 Persepolis 210 Qazvin 115 Rasht 106-7 Shiraz 202 Shush 141 Tabriz 87-9 Yazd 186-7

Hafez 15, 321 haft seen 299 Hamadan 131-6. 132 hammams

> Hammam-e Ali Gholi Agha 166 Hammam-e Khan 151 Hammam-e Sultan Mir Ahmad 153 Hammam-e Vakil 197 Khan Hammam 123

Safa Hammam 115 Haogand 242 Haram-e Razavi 13. 258. 263. **264**. **13** Harireh 215 Hazrat-e Masumeh 147 health 359-61 insurance 359 medical services 359 vaccinations 359 Hengam Island 224 Henna Mill 186 hepatitis 360 hiking, see trekking history 276-92 1979 revolution 286-9 Achaemenids 277 Ahmedinejad era 291-2 Alexander the Great 279 BuAli 135 Flamites 276 Esfahan 159 First Persian Empire 277-9 Green Movement 292 Hormoz Island 227, 228 Imam Reza 260 Iran-Iraq War 289 Islam 280-2 Khan, Genghis 282 Khan, Kuchuk 105 Khan Reza 285-6 Mashhad 257-8 Medes 276 medicine 135 Mongols 282-3 Nader Shah 284 northeastern Iran 247 Pahlavi dynasty 285-6 Parthians 279-80 Persepolis 207-8 Qajar 284-5 Sabbah, Hasan-e 122 Safavids 283-4 Sassanids 280 Second Persian Empire 280 Seliuks 282 Shiraz 196 Silk Road 281 Tahriz 84-5 Tehran 36 Third Persian Empire 283-4 US embassy siege 289 hitching 356 HIV 360 holidays 346-8 Hormoz Island 227-9

Hosseiniehs Aminiha Hosseiniveh 114 Amir Chakhmag Mosque Complex 183 Biglar Beigi Tekyeh 128 Takieh Mo'aven ol-Molk Howraman 125-6 ice houses Meybod Yakhchal 194 Yakkchal Moavedi 233 Zafaraniyeh 271 Imam Reza 260 imamzadehs Holy Shrine of Imam Khomeini 75 Imam Zadeh Jafar 185 Imamzadeh Abdullah 143 Imamzadeh Saleh 50 Imamzadeh Shah-e Abdal-Azim 75-6 Imamzadeh Zeid 39 Imamzadeh-ye Ali Ebn-e Hamze 201 Imamzadeh-ye Hossein (Hamadan) 133 Imamzadeh-ve Hossein (Qazvin) 114 Imamzadeh-ve Yahva 256 immigration 350 insurance 343, 355, 359 internet access 343 internet resources 17 Irag, travel to/from 352 Islam 306-8 itineraries 24-6, 24, 25, 26 Esfahan 167 Tehran 36

J Javaherdeh 112 Jolfa 94-5 Jolfa Sq 168 Judaism 309

K Kalat 270 Kaleybar 97 Kaluts, the 240-2 Kandovan 94 Kang 269 Karaftu Caves 104 Kashan 151-7, **152** Katale Khor Caves 101 Kazerun 212

Kelardasht 112-13 Kerman 232-9 234-5 Kermanshah 127-30. 129 Khal Khal 100 Khan, Reza 285-6 Khan-e Abbasian 153 Khan-e Borouierdi 152 Khan-e Lari 184 Khan-e Tabatabaei 152 Kharanag 193-4 Khare Namaki caves 223 Khatami, Mohammad 291 Khayyam, Omar 321 Khomeini, Ayatollah Ruhollah 286, 287, 288-9 Khonik Olya 242 Khonik Sofl 242 Khorhas Caves 225 Khorramabad 144-5 Khov 81 Khur 180-1 Kish Island 214-19. 216 Kong 219 Kuhdasht Salt Mine 254 Kuhpaveh 178-9 Kurdish language 127 Kurdish people 293

Laft 223
Lahijan 109-10
Lake Orumiyeh 85
language 362-8
accommodation 362-3
emergencies 364
food 363-4
glossary 367-8
Hurami Kurdish 127
transport 365
legal matters 343-4
LGBTI travellers 342-3
literature 320-2
Lors people 294
Lut Desert, see Kaluts, the

madrasehs
Madraseh va Masjed-e
Sepahsalar 40-1
Madraseh-ye Chahar
Bagh 165-6
Madraseh-ye Khan 201
Masjed-e Jameh
(Zanjan) 100
Masjed-e Agha Borzog

151-2

Mahan 239-40

Makhmalbaf, Mohsen 324 Maku 80-1 malaria 360 maps 344 Marageh 84 Marghoob 242 Marivan 137-8 Mashhad 257-68, 259, 261 accommodation 260-2 activities 260 drinking & nightlife 265 entertainment 265-6 food 262-5 information 266-7 shopping 266 sights 258-60 tours 260 travel to/from 267-8 travel within 268 Masied-e Jameh (Esfahan) 162-3, **163** 

Mahdishahr 253

Masjed-e Sheikh Lotfollah 161-2 Masuleh 110-11

Masied-e Shah 159-60, 161.

mausoleums Alaviyan Dome 133 Aramgah-e Hafez 201 Aramgah-e Sa'di 201

Aramgah-e Shah Ne'matollah Vali 239 Aramgah-e Shah-e Cheragh 200-1

Cheragh 200-1
Bogh'e-ye Sayyed Mir
Mohammed 200-1
Bog'eh-ye Khajeh Rabi

258 BuAli Sina Mausoleum

BuAli Sina Mausoleum 132, 135 Chalapi Oghli

Mausoleum 103 Gonbad-e Sabz 259-60 Haram-e Razavi 13, 258, 263, **264**, **13** 

Holy Shrine of Imam Khomeini 75 Imamzadeh Shah-e Abdal-Azim 75-6 Nader Shah Mausoleum 258-9

Oljeitu Mausoleum 103 Poets' Mausoleum 87 Sheikh Safi-od-Din

Sheikh Safi-od-Din Mausoleum 97-8 Mesr 181-2

Meybod 194 Meymand 231-2

Mo'allem Kalayeh 121

mobile phones 16, 349 money 16, 17, 344-5 mosaues Ali Mosque 166 Amir Chakhmag Mosque Complex 183, 10 Azim-e Gohar Shad 263 Blue Mosque (Tabriz) 86 Haftado Tan Mosque 258 Haji Fakr Mosque 98 Hosseiniyeh Mosque 100 Imam Khomeini Mosque (Tehran) 39 Jameh Mosque (Ardabil) 98 Jameh Mosque (Qa'en) 244-5 Khanum Mosque 101 Masjed Imam (Semnan) 252 Masjed-e Agha Borzog 151-2Masjed-e Imam 233 Masied-e Jameh (Esfahan) 162-3, 163 Masjed-e Jameh (Fahraj) 195 Masjed-e Jameh (Hamadan) 133 Masjed-e Jameh (Na'in) 179 Masjed-e Jameh (Natanz) 158 Masjed-e Jameh (Qazvin) 114 Masjed-e Jameh (Sanandaj) 123 Masied-e Jameh (Semnan) 252 Masjed-e Jameh (Tabriz) Masjed-e Jameh (Yazd) 182-3 Masjed-e Jameh (Zanjan) 100-1 Masied-e Nasir-al-Molk 198-200 Masjed-e Shah 159-60, 161, **160**, **5** Masjed-e Sheikh Lotfollah 161-2 Masied-e Vakil 197 Mirza Ali Akbar Mosque Nabi Mosque 114 Rasul-Ullah Mosque 101

Mt Tochal 51 museums 20 (Mashhad) 259 Anthroplogy Museum (Oazvin) 114 Asef Mansion 123 132 Carpet Museum of Iran 47 Chehel Sotun 113-14 of Iran 166 Fine Art Museum 49 Gilan Rural Heritage Museum 106 Glass & Ceramics Museum 40 Haft Tappeh Museum 140-1 Iran Holy Defense Museum 41-2 Iranian Art Museum Garden 50 167-8 Islamic Museum 40 Gallery 49-50 Kashani National Museum 154 Mansion 123 Sepahsalar 40-1 Museum 40 Map Pages 000 Mirror & Lighting Photo Pages 000 Museum 185

mountaineering 338-9 Mt Damavand 74-5 Mt Hezar 242 Mt Shahjahan 271 Ahmad Shahi Pavilion 50 Anthropology Museum Automobile Museum 50 Azarbaijan Museum 86 BuAli Sina Mausoleum Decorative Arts Museum Film Museum of Iran 50 Archaeological Site & Imperial Library Museum Isfahan Music Museum Jahan-Nama Museum & Kavir Ethnology Museum Khan-e Zinat ol-Molk 197 Lotfolla Sheik-al-Islam Madraseh va Masjed-e Malek National Library &

Mossadegh, Mohammad

motorcycle travel 352,

driving licences 355

286, 287

355-6

fuel 355

hire 355

insurance 355

Moshtari-ye Moshtag Ali Shah 233 Museum & Art Gallery of Ahmad Nadalian 228 Museum of Iranian Fine Arts 197 Museum of the Holv Defence 233 National Museum of Iran 40 Nivavaran Cultural-Historic Comple 49 Niyavaran Palace 49 Persepolis Museum 209 Qajar Museum 86 Qazvin Museum 114 Osar Garden Museum 42 Rakhatshor-Khaneh 101 Ramsar Palace Museum 111 Rasht Museum 106 Reza Abbasi Museum 47 Royal Costume Museum 49 Sa'd Abad Museum Complex 48 Shahriyar House Museum 87 Sheibani's Museum of Fine Arts 152 Susa Museum 140 Treasury of National Jewels 40, 41 US Den of Espionage 42 Yazd Water Museum 183-4 Zanian Archaeology Museum 100 Zeilo Museum 194 music 65, 322-3

Nader Shah Mausoleum 258-9

Na'in 179-80 Nagsh-e Jahan (Imam) Square 9, 159, 9 Nagsh-e Rajab 210 Nagsh-e Rostam 210 Natanz 158 national parks & reserves 329-30 newspapers 339 nomadic people 11, 294, 11 northeastern Iran 32, 246-72, 248-9 accommodation 246 climate 246

food 246

highlights 248-9

travel seasons 246

No Ruz 22, 299, 347-8 nuclear power 158 Nushabad 'Underground City' 154

n

Old Deyhuk 242 opening hours 17, 345 Orumiyeh 82-4, 82 outdoor activities, see activities

painting 318 Pakistan, travel to/from 352 palaces Apadana Palace 209 Ardashir's Palace 312 Audience Palace 211 Bagh-e Naraniestan 197-8 Chehel Sotun 113-14 Cyrus' palace complex 211 Darius' Palace 140 Golestan Palace 37-9 Green Palace 49 Hasht Behesht Palace 166 Kakh-e Ali Qapu 162 Kakh-e Chehel Sotun 163-5 Khorshid Palace 270 Masoudieh Palace 40 Nivavaran Palace 49 Palace of 100 Columns 209 Private Palaces (Persepolis) 209 Qal'eh-e Doktar 212 Ramsar Palace Museum 111 White Palace 48-9 Palangan 126 Parishan Lake 212 parks & gardens Akhbarieh Garden 243 Bagh-e Dolat Abad 185 Bagh-e Eram 201 Bagh-e Fin 153-4 Bagh-e Nazar 196 Bagh-e Sangi stone garden 232 Bagh-e Shahzde 239-40 Darius' garden 211

Elgoli Park 87

Garden 50

Iranian Art Museum

Recreational Resort Park-e Jamshidiyeh 50 Park-e Laleh 47 Park-e Mellat 50 Park-e Shahr 41 Osar Garden Museum 42 Pasargadae 210-11 passports 350 Paveh 126 Peacock Throne 41 people 9, 21, 275, 293-4 Persepolis 11, 207-10, 208 11 Persian Gulf 32, 213-29, accommodation 213 climate 213 food 213 highlights 214 travel seasons 213 Persian people 293 photography 346 Pigeon Tower (Meybod) 194 Pigeon Towers (Esfahan) 168 pilgrimages 266 planning budgeting 16-17 calendar of events 22-3 climate 16 Iran hasics 16-17 18-19 Iran's regions 31-2 itineraries 24-6. 24. 25.26 tours 29-30 travel seasons 16, 22-3 visas 27-30 weather 16 poetry 15, 320, 321 politics 274-5 pollution 330 population 275, 293-4 postal services 346 public holidays 346-8 Qa'en 244-5 Qalaat 178 Qazvin 113-18, 116 Oeshm Island 222-7, 224 Qeshm Island Geopark

Nazhvan Cultural &

223-4 Oeshm Town 223 Qom 147-50, 150 rabies 360 radio 339 Radkan 269-72 Rageh Canyon 232 Rainbow Valley 227 Ramazan (Ramadan) 347 Ramsar 111-12 Rasht 105-9, 106 Rayen 242-3 Razmiyan 121-2 religion 275, 306-9 Rev 75-6 Reza Mohammad 285-6 Reza Shah 285-6 rock climbing 339 Roein 271 Rumi 321

Sabbah, Hasan-e 122 Sabzevar 272 Sa'di 321 safe travel 332-5, see also women travellers deserts 241 environmental hazards 360-1 LGBTI travellers 342-3 road safety 355-6 southeastern Iran 232 saffron 266 Sanandai 122-5. 124 Sari 247 Sarvazd 195 savaris 357-8 Semnan 252-4

Sepid Dasht 138-9

Shah Mohammad Reza

Pahlavi 285-7

Sepidan 177-8

Shahmirzad 253 Shahr-e Kord 176-7 Shahrud 255-6 Shemshak 73 Shihderaz 224 Shiism 307-8 Shiraz 195-207. 198-9 accommodation 202-4 drinking & nightlife 205 food 204-5 information 205-6 shopping 205 sights 196-202 tours 202 travel to/from 206, 207 travel within 206-7

Shush 139-41

Shushtar 141-4 Silk Road 281 skiing 12, 339-40, 12 Alborz Mountains 72-3 Tehran 51-2 Zagros Mountains 177 snorkelling, see diving & snorkelling soccer 65, 297 Soltaniveh 103 southeastern Iran 32, 230-45, **231** accommodation 230 climate 230 food 230 highlights 231 travel seasons 230 sports 65, 297 Sufism 308 Sunnism 307-8 swimming 215

Tabriz 84-94, 88 accommodation 89-90 activities 87 drinking & nightlife 91-4 food 90-1 information 92 sights 85-7 tours 87-9 travel to/from 92-3 travel within 93-4 Takab 103-5 takiehs, see Hosseiniehs Talezang 139 taxis 356-7 tea 110, 304 Tehran 31 34-76 35 38 44-5, 52-3, 56 accommodation 34, 53-8 activities 50-3 climate 34 courses 53 drinking & nightlife 61-4 entertainment 64-5 food 34, 58-61 highlights 35 information 67-8 itineraries 36

shopping 65-6

travel seasons 34

travel to/from 68-9

travel within 69-72

walking tours 43, 43

telephone services 348-9

sights 37-50

tours 53

time 16, 349 tipping 19 Tochal Telecabin 50-1 toilets 349 tombs Aramgah-e Hafez 201 Aramgah-e Sa'di 201 Aramgah-e Shah Ne'matollah Vali 239 Aramgah-e Shah-e Cheragh 200-1 Bogheh-ye Sayyed Roknaddin 185 Bogh'e-ye Sayyed Mir Mohammed 200-1 Bori-e Oorban 133 Chalapi Oghli Mausoleum 103 Haram-e Razavi 258. 263. 264 Hazrat-e Masumeh 147 Holy Shrine of Imam Khomeini 75 Imamzadeh Shah-e Abdal-Azim 75-6 Oljeitu Mausoleum 103 Sheikh Safi-od-Din Mausoleum 97-8 Tomb of Artaxerxes 11 209 Tomb of Artaxerxes III 209 Tomb of Cyrus 211 Tomb of Daniel 140 Toudeshk 178-9 tourist information 349 tours 29-30 Boinurd 271 Dasht-e Kavir 179 Fsfahan 168 Kaluts, the 241 Kashan 154-5 Kerman 234-5 Kermanshah 128 Mashhad 260 Persepolis 210 Qazvin 115 Qeshm Island 225 Rasht 106-7 Shiraz 202 Shush 141 Tahriz 87-9 Yazd 186-7 towers Allah-Allah tower 97

Azadi Tower (Borj-e

Borg-argavan Shah 270

Azadi) 42

Dakhmeh-ye Zartoshtiyun 186

towers continued Gonbad-e Jabalive 233-5 Gorgan Tower 247 Kolah Farangi Tower 143 Milad Tower 47 Mil-e Gonbad tower 256 Radkan Tower 269 train travel to/from Iran 352-3 within Iran 358 travel seasons 16 travel to/from Iran 350-3 travel within Iran 353-8 traveller's diarrhoea 360 trekking 338, 340 Alamut Valley 15, 119, 15 Ardabil 98 Hamadan 133 Kelardasht 112 Oazvin 115 Tahriz 87 Tehran 51 Trump, Donald 275 tuberculosis 360 Turkey, travel to/from 91, 91, 352 Turkmen people 294 Turkmenistan, travel to/ from 255, 352 turtles 223, 224

Unesco World Heritage Sites 310 Akhbarieh Garden 243 Armenian monasteries 87 Bagh-e Chehel Sotun 165 Bagh-e Dolat Abad 185 Bagh-e Eram 201 Bagh-e Fin 153-4 Bisotun 130 Choga Zanbil Ziggurat 12, 142, 12 Darius' garden 211 Dzor Dzor Chapel 80 Meymand 231-2 Mil-e Gonbad tower 256 Nagsh-e Jahan (Imam) Sa 9. 159. 9 Oljeitu Mausoleum 103 Persepolis 11, 207-10. 208 11 Oareh Kalisa 80 Sheikh Safi-od-Din Mausoleum 97-8 Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System 142 Susa 140

Tabriz Bazaar 14, 85-6, 14

Takht-e Soleiman 103,

105

vacations 346-8 Valley of Stars 224 Valley of the Statues 227-8 vegetarian travellers 305 villages 20 visa extensions 29 visas 16, 27-30

#### w

walking tours Esfahan 169. 169 Tehran 43 43 Yazd 188, 188 weather 16, 22-3, 341 weights 339

walking, see trekking

western Iran 14, 31, 77-145. 78-9

accommodation 77 climate 77 food 77 highlights 78-9 travel seasons 77 wildlife 223, 257, 327-9 windtowers, see badgirs women in Iran 297-301 women travellers 333-5 health 361

Yazd 10, 182-93, 184 accommodation 187-90, 190 drinking & nightlife 191 entertainment 191 food 190-1 information 192-3 shopping 191-2 sights 182-6 tours 186-7 travel to/from 192, 193 travel within 193 walking tours 188. 188

Zafaraniyeh 271 Zagros Mountains 11, 176-8 Zanian 100-3. 101 Zayandeh River 166-7 7ein-o-din 194-5 Zendan-e Soleiman 104 Zoroastrianism 15, 308-9, see also fire temples zurkhanehs 297 Mashhad 265-6 Saheb A Zaman Zurkhaneh 183









# **Map Legend**

#### Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Ŏ lain
- 0 lewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- ø Shinto Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

#### Activities. Courses & Tours

- Bodysurfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kavaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

### Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

#### **Eating**

Eating

#### Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
  - Cafe

#### Entertainment

Entertainment

#### Shopping

Shopping

### Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate ♣ Hospital/Medical
- @ Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone (II) Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

#### Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse Lookout
- ▲ Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- ) ( Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

#### **Population**

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- Citv/Large Town
- Town/Village

#### Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- ++ € ++ Cable car/Funicular
- −Si − Cycling
- -@- Ferry
- Metro station
- Parking
- Petrol station Subway station
- Taxi
- → Train station/Railway
- -@- Tram
- Underground station Other Transport

Note: Not all symbols displayed above

### Routes

Tollway Freeway

Primary Secondary

Tertiary

Unsealed road Road under construction

Plaza/Mall Steps

> = Tunnel Pedestrian overpass

Walking Tour

Walking Tour detour Path/Walking Trail

#### **Boundaries**

--- International

 State/Province Disputed

Regional/Suburb Marine Park

Cliff - Wall

#### Hydrography

River, Creek Intermittent River

Canal Water

Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake

Reef

#### Areas

Airport/Runway

Beach/Desert Cemetery (Christian)

Cemetery (Other)

Glacier

Mudflat

Park/Forest

Sight (Building)

Sportsground

Swamp/Mangrove

appear on the maps in this book

#### **©Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd**



Jenny Walker

Central Iran A member of the British Guild of Travel Writers and the Outdoor Writers and Photographers Guild, Jenny has written extensively on the Middle East for Lonely Planet for more than a decade. With her husband, Wing Commander (retired) Sam Owen, she also authored Off-Road in the Sultanate of Oman – a country they have made their home for nearly 20 years.



#### Steve Waters

Western Iran Travel and adventure have always been Steve's life, and he couldn't imagine a world without them. Steve has been using Lonely Planet guidebooks for more than 30 years in places as diverse as Iran, Central Asia, Kamchatka, Tuva, the Himalaya, Canada, Patagonia, the Australian Outback, NE Asia, Myanmar and the Sahara. Little wonder then that he finally got a gig with the company! Steve has contributed to Iran, Indonesia and the past four editions of Western Australia, and

come any September you're likely to find him in a remote gorge somewhere in the Kimberley.



### OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born. Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London,

Melbourne, Oakland, Dublin, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## **OUR WRITERS**



#### Simon Richmond

Tehran Journalist and photographer Simon Richmond has specialised as a travel writer since the early 1990s and first worked for Lonely Planet in 1999 on their Central Asia guide. He's long since stopped counting the number of guidebooks he's researched and written for the company, but countries covered including Australia, China, India, Iran, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar (Burma), Russia, Singapore, South Africa and Turkey. For Lonely Planet's website, he's

penned features on topics from the world's best swimming pools to the joys of urban sketching.



#### Jean-Bernard Carillet

Persian Gulf Jean-Bernard is a Paris-based freelance writer and photographer who specialises in Africa, France, Turkey, the Indian Ocean, the Caribbean and the Pacific. He loves adventure, remote places, islands, the outdoors, archaeological sites and food. His insatiable wanderlust has taken him to 114 countries across six continents, and it shows no sign of waning. It has inspired lots of articles and photos for travel magazines and some 70 Lonely Planet guidebooks,

both in English and in French.



#### Mark Elliott

Southeastern Iran, Northeastern Iran Mark Elliott had already lived and worked on five continents when, in the pre-Internet dark ages, he started writing travel guides. He has since authored (or co-authored) around 60 books including dozens for Lonely Planet. He also acts as a travel consultant, occasional tour leader, video presenter, speaker, interviewer and blues harmonicist.



#### Anthony Ham

Plan Your Trip, Understand and Survival Guide chapters Anthony is a freelance writer and photographer who specialises in Spain, East and Southern Africa, the Arctic and the Middle East. When he's not writing for Lonely Planet, Anthony writes about and photographs Spain, Africa and the Middle East for newspapers and magazines in Australia, the UK and US.

## OVER MORE PAGE WRITERS

#### Published by Lonely Planet Global Limited

Although the authors and Lonely Planet have taken all reasonable care in preparing this book, we make no warranty about the accuracy or completeness of its content and, to the maximum extent permitted, disclaim all liability arising from its use.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be copied, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, except brief extracts for the purpose of review, and no part of this publication may be sold or hired, without the written permission of the publisher. Lonely Planet and the Lonely Planet logo are trademarks of Lonely Planet and are registered in the US Patent and Trademark Office and in other countries. Lonely Planet does not allow its name or logo to be appropriated by commercial establishments, such as retailers, restaurants or hotels. Please let us know of any misuses: lonelyplanet.com?!



© Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'