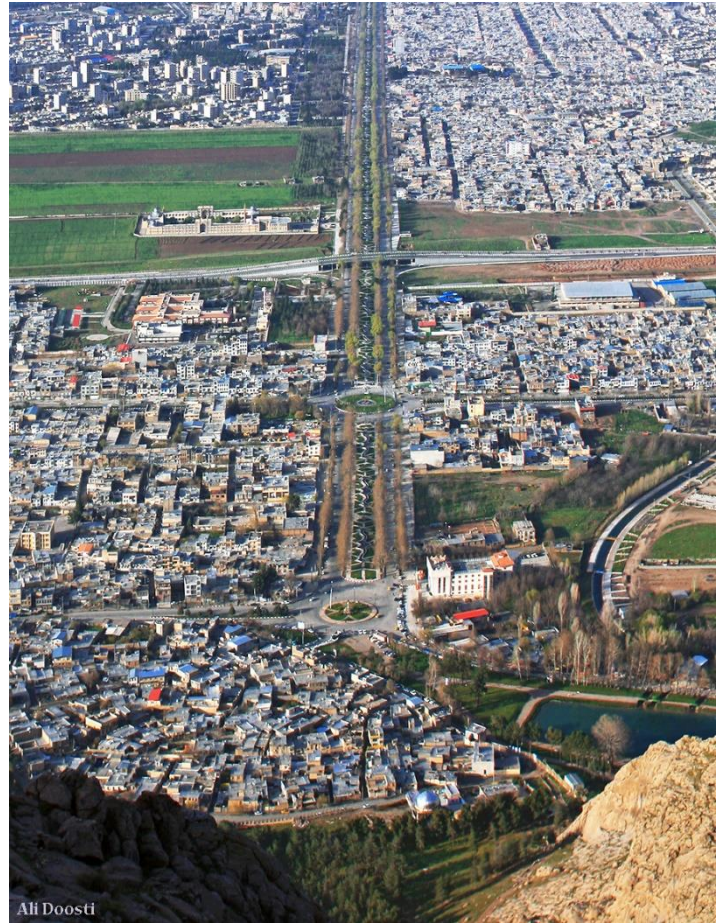


## About Kermanshah (Compiled by Dr. Mehdi Doosti)

Located in the western part of Iran, **Kermanshah**, the capital city of Kermanshah Province, was founded in the 4th century AD under the patronage of the Sassanids. As the largest city in the west of the country, Kermanshah is situated on the foothills of the Zagros Mountain Range, 525 km from Tehran, the capital of Iran and has a total of 371 kilometers of shared border with Iraq. Enjoying a population of around one million people, it is also the 9<sup>th</sup> populous city in the country. Being situated in a mountainous region, the city enjoys a mountain climate with colder winters and milder summers, although owing to global warming and subsequent climate change the summers might get hotter than it is expected. The hottest month of the year in Kermanshah is July, with an average high of 38°C and a low of 18°C. The coldest month of the year is January, with an average low of -3°C and a high of 8°C.



Being surrounded by several rolling mountains and hills, having a large number of natural springs, rivers, lakes, gardens, and farms, as well as a myriad of historical sites and monuments, the city offers a unique blend of history and natural beauty and diversity. With its generous nature, the city also enjoys exquisite food culture with unique wildflowers and aromatic herbs to give a different touch of flavor to foods. Having about 80 types of food, 11 sorts of bread, 20 types of sweets, and various kinds of snacks, Kermanshah was registered as the 37th creative city of gastronomy in 2021.



As to people, Kermanshah residents are both nationally and globally well-known for their amiability and unique hospitality. They speak both Persian and various dialects of Kurdish language including Kalhori, Hawrami, and Sorani. The majority of inhabitants are Shia Muslims, but there are also Sunni Muslims, Christians, and followers of Yarsanism who have lived together in harmony and with mutual understanding in terms of culture and religion for centuries. Kermanshah has a rich history of culture and is one of the oldest centers of civilization, possessing monuments illustrating its people's values for life and humanity throughout historic and prehistoric periods.



Overall, its natural beauty and diversity, people's various dialects and religious beliefs, numerous historical sites and cultural centers, and exquisite local foods and pastries have made the city quite unique in the region and a paradise for tourists as well as international students choosing to continue their education at one of the several top-ranked universities in this beautiful historical city in the western part of Iran.



## Top Tourist Attractions

### Bistoon (Behistun) Historic Site

Located 30 km from Kermanshah in the northeast, **Bistoon Historic Site** is one of the country's most outstanding archeological sites. The site became a UNESCO world heritage in 2006. It houses the famous rock relief of Darius and a number of cuneiform inscriptions inscribed on a cliff at the base of Mount Bistoon. Being the world's largest inscription, Bistoon inscription has been written in three languages (Old Persian, Elamite, and Babylonian) and refers to legends describing the king and the rebels.

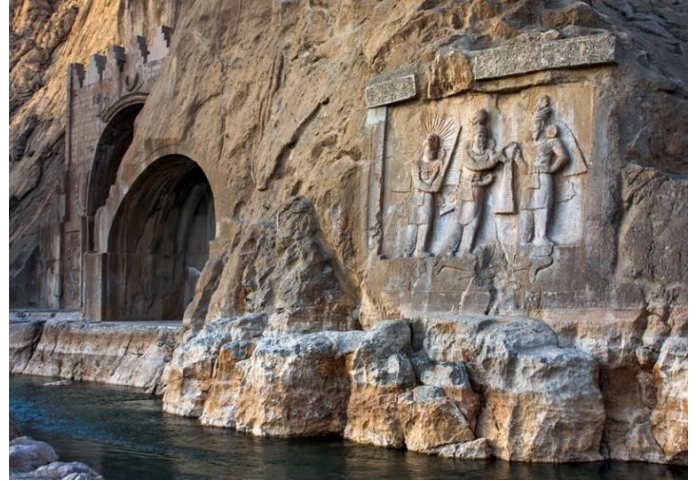


It is believed that Darius placed the inscription in an inaccessible position to make it tamper-resistant. However, the existence of a pool of water and a beautiful scenery at the bottom of the cliff has led to attraction of a large number of people to the area and the consequent damage to some of the figures.



### Taq-e Bostan (Bostan Arch)

Built in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, Taq-e Bostan, one of the most popular and top-rated tourist attractions in Kermanshah, is located northeast of the city. This complex, which is known for its magnificent bas-reliefs (rock carvings) and lithographs (inscriptions) of Sassanid origin, consists of a series of properties from prehistoric to historical periods. The site, which consists of a series of rock reliefs carved on a mountain near a spring streaming into a pool at the base of the mountain, has been turned into an archaeological park in which a series of late Sassanid and Islamic column capitals have been brought together.

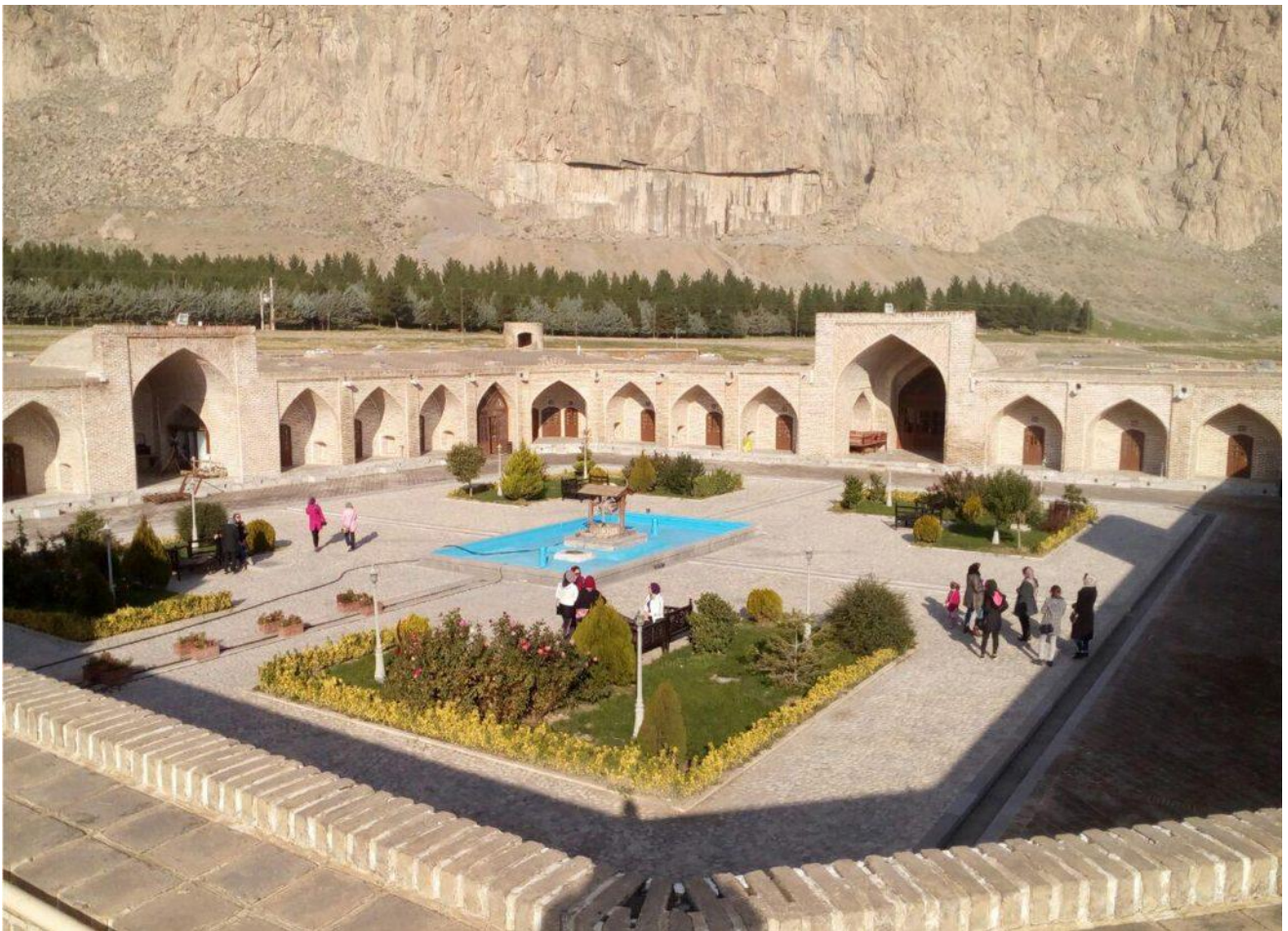


**Taq-e Bostan historical complex** comprises a rock relief standing on its own and several more reliefs associated with two rock-cut arches. They illustrate the investiture ceremonies of the kings Ardashir II, Shapur II, Shapur III, and Khosraw II (also known as Khosrow Parviz). The reliefs also depict the hunting scenes of Khosrow Parviz.



### **Shah Abbasi Caravanserai**

Shah Abbasi Caravanserai belongs to the Safavid period and is located in Bistoon, Kermanshah, an area where monuments from almost all historical periods can be found. This caravanserai, which is listed as an Iranian national heritage, was built during the rule of Shah Abbas I, the most famous ruler of the Safavid dynasty. There is also an inscription from Shah Suleiman, the eldest son of Shah Abbas II. The infrastructure of this building was made of stone and its walls of brick and mortar. The caravanserai consisted of four porches and two alcoves, 22 rooms with porches for passengers to rest, and 5 storehouses to keep the goods and caravan establishment. However, today the halls are used for reception and various celebrations, restaurants, and cafés for public use.



### **Moaven Al-Molk Tekiyeh**

This Tekyeh (a place for Shia religious ceremonies and mourning), which is considered as one of the architectural and religious masterpieces of Iran, is located in the center of Kermanshah. As one of the historical buildings of Kermanshah built during Qajar era, Moaven Al-Molk Tekiyeh, with its stunning architecture and decorations, is a perfect example of the Iranian art and culture. It is well known for its exclusive artistic tiling, depicting the scenes of early Islam battles and the story of Karbala next to the illustrations of Persian kings and Persepolis elements. The Tekyeh comprises of 3 buildings (Abbasieh, Hossaineh and Zeinabieh), two courtyards, and a building in the center.



### Traditional Bazaar

The Traditional Bazaar in Kermanshah, the primary structure of which dates back to the Qajar period, is one of the main sections of this city and one of the largest indoor markets in Iran and as well the largest indoor market in the Middle East at the time of construction. The bazaar which was divided into four parts due to the construction of main streets around it consists of several markets such as the Bazzazha Bazaar, Box Maker Bazaar, Bonakdar Bazaar, Mesgarha Bazaar, Turkish Market, Kalimiha Bazaar and Chal Hassan Khan Bazaar. You can find local colored apparel, handicrafts like Giveh (a local Kurdish foot-ware), shoes, carpet, Kilim rug, wooden kitchenware, and leather and hand-woven articles in this traditional bazaar.



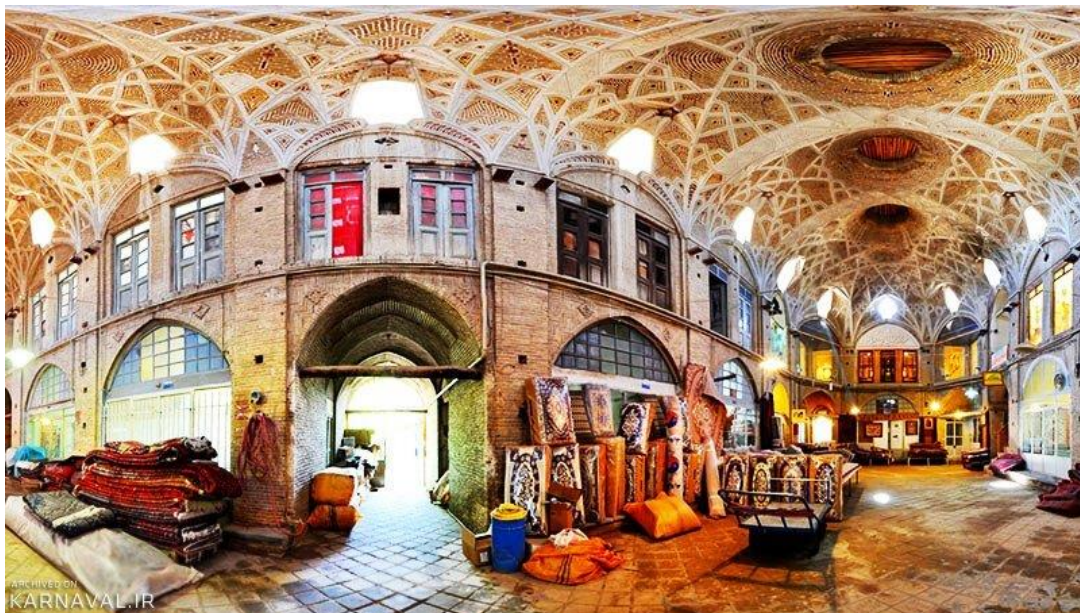
## Climate

Kermanshah has a climate which is heavily influenced by the proximity of the Zagros mountains, classified as a hot-summer Mediterranean climate. The city's altitude makes precipitation a little bit high, but at the same time produces huge diurnal temperature swings especially in the virtually rainless summers. Kermanshah experiences rather cold winters, and snowfall is observed for at least a couple of weeks in January and February. Precipitation commonly occurs in fall and early spring.



## Shopping:

There are both traditional markets and modern shopping centers in the city. The **Traditional Bazaar** in Kermanshah is one of the largest indoor markets in Iran from which you can buy local clothing, souvenirs, and handicrafts. The construction of the main and new streets divided the traditional bazaar of Kermanshah into four areas.

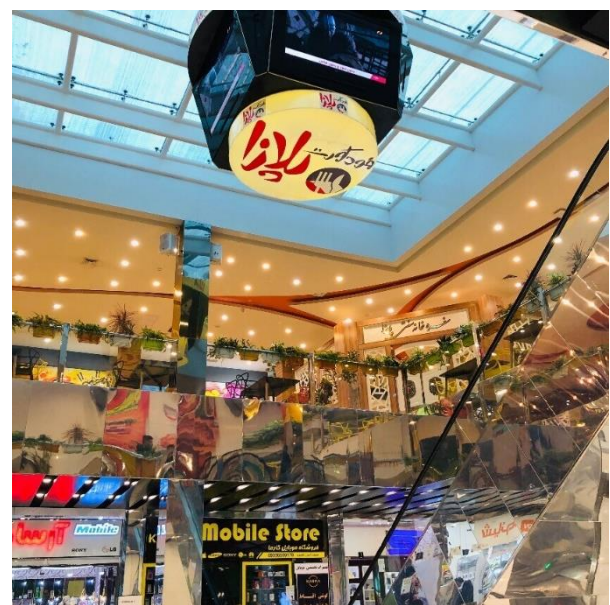
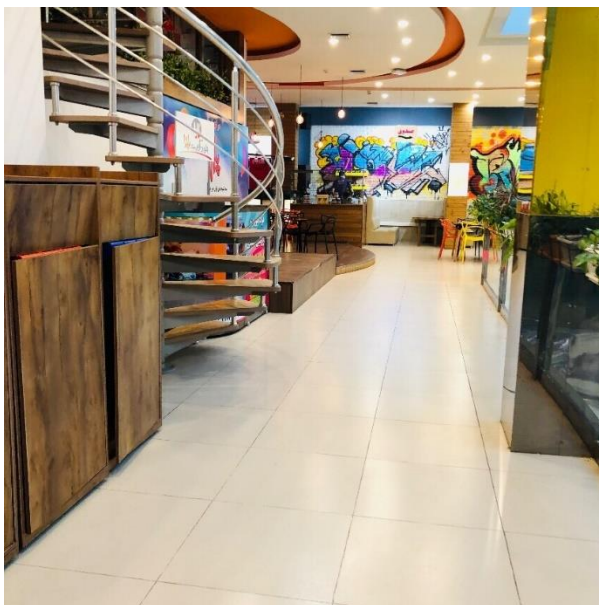


As one of the mostly visited modern malls in Kermanshah, **Arg Shopping Center** is a popular commercial center located in Kermanshah offering a variety of shops and services across its multiple floors. The ground floor is home to men's clothing stores as well as a shop dedicated to bags and shoes. Moving up

to the first floor, you will find a wide selection of women's clothing. Mobile phones are sold and repaired on the third floor of the mall. Additionally, there is a floor selling and fixing laptop computers. Furthermore, on the lower level, there is a jewelry store where you can explore and purchase exquisite pieces. Known for its bustling atmosphere and serving as one of the prominent shopping destinations in Kermanshah, Arg Shopping Center attracts a large number of locals as well as tourists.



**Nobahar Plaza** is one of the most modern shopping malls and business centers located on Nobahar Street in Kermanshah, a street which has become the city's most important urban hangout in recent years. The mall consists of eight levels with a myriad of elegant stores selling everything from clothes and cosmetics to home accessories and jewelry. Shoppers are attracted to the mall by its beautiful architecture, amazing display windows, and friendly and relaxed atmosphere. The mall also provides a popular hangout for young people due to the presence of numerous coffee shops, colorful boutiques, and stylish goods.



## Food

According to UNESCO, Kermanshah is home to dozens of different types of food. The city is considered a paradise for foodies where they can have an incomparable food experience by choosing among a wide range of delightful dishes. The generous nature of the region provides unique herbs to give a different touch of flavor



to foods. Believing that food and gastronomy perfectly mirror the creativity of local cultures, Kermanshah was registered as the 37th creative city of gastronomy in 2021. Three dishes that you must have in Kermanshah include:

### **Dande Kebab (lamb ribs kebab)**

Dande Kebab (lamb ribs kebab) is one of the original, official and delicious kebabs in Kermanshah which can be considered as one of the most famous, delicious and popular foods in this province. Containing a large amount of meat which is broiled in a certain way, Dande Kebab, which looks like Shishlik but with a different taste, is cooked in most restaurants, especially those around Taq-e Bostan. Usually, a sauce containing tomato paste, salt, pepper, lemon juice and saffron is prepared and poured on kebabs repeatedly during the cooking and preparation process. The dish can be served with rice or bread decorated with onions, lemon, or the sour orange.



### **Khoresh Khalal Badam (Slivered Almonds & Barberry Stew)**

Khoresh Khalal is the city's special dish which is commonly served in ceremonies and celebrations. This tasty stew has a magical power to satisfy every taste. Served with rice, the stew is made with a large amount of chopped lamb meat, slivered almonds, saffron, and black barberry.



### **Ash Abbas Ali**

As a kind of thick soup served during the cold months of the year, Ash Abbas Ali is one of the city's most popular winter dishes which was chosen as the best traditional dish in National Festival for Traditional Foods. The dish contains different types of beans, wheat, rice, and shredded lamb as its ingredients.



## Transportation

### International transportation

Kermanshah International Airport (Shahid Ashrafi Esfahani Airport), a midsized airport in Kermanshah, is located in the eastern part of the city near Imam Khomeini Square (Airport Square) and serves the city and the surrounding areas with daily domestic and seasonal international destinations.



### Intercity transportation

To travel to Kermanshah, you have several options, which include travelling by trains, buses, airplanes, and private vehicles.

- Air travel: Shahid Ashrafi Esfahani Airport situated in the eastern part of the city receives daily flights from Tehran, Mashhad, Isfahan, and Kish Island.
- Bus trip: Shahid Kaviani Terminal is also located on the northeastern side of the city close to Kermanshah International Airport and serves as the main entry point for bus travelers coming from and heading for Tehran and other eastern destinations. The Karbala Road Terminal, located in the western part of the city, serves as the entry point for travelers coming from and heading for Baghdad and Erbil in Iraq.
- Train travel: Having four platforms, Kermanshah Railway Station is one of the largest ones in Iran. The railroad routes include Kermanshah to Tehran, Kermanshah to Malayer, and Kermanshah to Mashhad. The train travel to Malayer is a short one with no stops on the way. It takes around ten and a half hours to get to Tehran; the train stops at Firoozan, Malayer, Arak, and Qom stations on the way to Tehran. The train travel to Mashhad takes about ten hours and ten minutes and the train stops at Malayer, Arak, Qom, Tehran, Semnan, Shahrood, and Neyshaboor stations on the way.



➤ Private Vehicle: There are several highways from around the country leading to Kermanshah. You can hire a private car from taxi companies to travel to almost all cities throughout the country. You can also use intercity taxis services mostly based in bus terminals (Shahid Kaviani Terminal, Karbala Road Terminal, ...), which cost much less than hiring private cars.

### **Intracity transportation**

➤ Bus Network: Kermanshah has a simple bus network with two terminals in Azadi Square. The buses run along multiple bus routes throughout the city. Taking a bus is an affordable way to get around the city.



➤ Urban taxis: Taking a taxi is a convenient way to get around the city as taxis are abundant and available from early morning till late at night.



➤ Taxi calls:

Dialing 1881 and declaring your location, a taxi will be provided at your place after a few minutes. The taxi calls often stop at certain stations in the city and based on the passenger's request to the company's message center, the nearest car is sent to the passenger's location. The destination of these taxis is determined based on the passenger's demand and the fare is calculated and paid based on the taximeter.

➤ Online taxi services:

Ride-hailing applications (Snapp, Tap30, ...) in Iran act as a bridge between the passenger and the driver and provide a quick and easy solution to ask for a car or a motorcycle. This service allows you to save considerable amount of time and money since the company sends the nearest vehicle to the passenger's location at a reasonable cost.