

Esfahan

the never-ending Splendour



Mansour Ghasemi

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Author: Mansour Ghasemi
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Text Reviewer: Dr. Roderick Henney, Pezhman Azizi Sohrfiroozani,
Mohammad Hassan Davari
Scientific and Technical Assistance: Mohsen Moslehi
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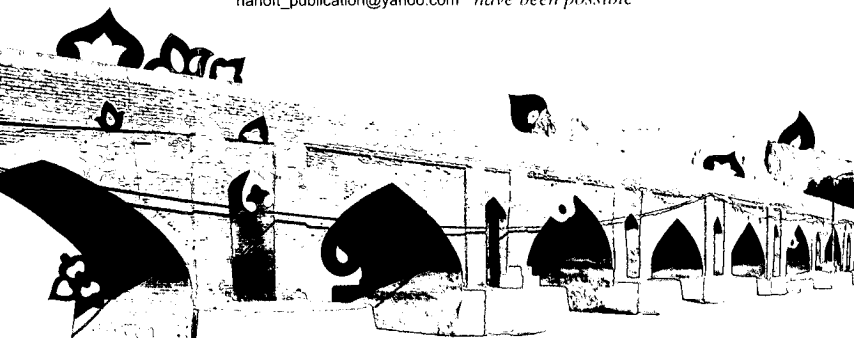
www.nahoft.ir

Info@nahoft.ir

nahoft_publication@yahoo.com

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Foreword

Esfahan is an old city with dozens of historical monuments. It is a living museum where people enjoy a most pleasant climate with joyous spring mornings and refreshing autumns. Esfahan is a city with a history as old as Persia itself. This eternal city with its favourable climate and unique geography has been the focal point for art and culture through the Seljuk (11th and 12th century) and Safavid (16th and 17th century) eras until the present day. Famous artists have described its great beauty and have brought Esfahan to the world's attention. The noble ancestors of Esfahan have been the inspiration for what is now recognized as the cultural capital of the Islamic world. The ancient skills are evident in the historic monuments themselves as they capture the visitor's attention and open a window to the past. As these buildings have witnessed the more modern souls of the

province offer more than 198 different types of handicraft, making it impossible for the tourist to return home without some wonderful souvenirs. The people of this city speak Persian and are witty and quick to respond. The Esfahanis are a hospitable people and are recognized by other Iranians as intelligent and good at business. Esfahanis are typically described as ever-curious, intelligent, and lovers of the arts. These characteristics are clearly seen in all aspects of the city, from the ancient red-bricks of the *Mashhad* to the *Masjed Jame* with its high minarets, in the fine and magnificent mosques and the Nagsh-e Jahan (Court of the World) Square. All these offer proof to the values of the Esfahanis. Today Esfahan would be truly peerless, if the Qajars had not neglected and even intentionally destroyed some magnificent monuments. However, Esfahan holds wonderful secrets awaiting your discovery. You will not be disappointed.

