

The gracious hospitality of Iranians

When it comes to hospitality, generosity and kindness, the people of Iran rank at the top of the list. Iranian people hospitality is famous. To Iranians, hospitality has a much deeper meaning. They like to share part of their existence with you, part of their hearts and they are not satisfied until they fulfill that desire!

People from Iran are some of the most genuinely hospitable people you've ever met. They never want anything in return, they just want to show you a good time and hope that you'll spread the word back home that Iran is a safe place to visit.

Like many other people who have the idea of traveling to Iran, you might have heard about Iranian hospitality. So what is especial about Iranian Hospitality that everybody talks about it?

Have you ever been offered to stay with a random local person that you just met five minutes before? Have you ever been pampered by local people because they believe visiting their town means being their special guest? Have you ever been in a place where people generously offer their food and snack without expecting anything back? Have you ever had a last minute invitation to a local traditional wedding or ceremony and be treated like a VIP guest? If the answer to these questions is "not yet", you should definitely travel to Iran to experience Iranian Hospitality! Iran is a place where you would never be worried about accommodation, food and loneliness!

You might see random people who cannot speak English but they do their best to sort out your confusion. While traveling around Iran, you will see people happily starting a chat with you or welcoming you. Therefore, the English word you will hear more than any other word is: Hello, Welcome!

The minute you pull out a map, someone is there to help you. Often if you look thirsty, someone will invite you in for tea and it only takes about 3 minutes of honest conversation before your new Iranian friend will offer up their home, their table, and their life in hopes of making you feel welcome. Granting hospitality to foreigners is deeply ingrained in the Iranian culture and they feel very embarrassed about how they are portrayed in the global media.

Many foreigners think Iranians are Arabs. They're not.

People think that bombs go off in Iran. They never do!

People think that Iranians are terrorists. You'd be hard pressed to find a terrorist outside of sketchy border areas.

People think that Iranians hate the West. They don't. Some hate Americans and if you look at their history, you'll maybe understand why.

Iranian people are well aware of the media coverage they receive abroad and they are appalled by it. They know who they are and it is pure discrimination of press that causes westerners to gasp when you mention travelling Iran. Iranians are a proud people, who stand for what they believe in and have made great changes in government and human rights throughout their history. The current state of the country is still a work in progress, and the locals often express their pride for their nation and in the same breath, disapproval of certain government policies.

There is an attraction in Iran that is not listed on the UNESCO world heritage sites or the national treasury list, or on any map or guiding books and applications; it is only in the heart of its people and will be devoted to the guests with kind eye contacts, genuine smiles, small friendly talks, and invitation for tea or dinner. And no matter what city or region in the country you go, since there are so many different ethnicities in Iran, you will be received with open arms. Undefined Iranian hospitality is one of the reasons "Lonely Planet" called Iran the most rewarding destination on Earth.

Taarof !

Taarof basically is a manner of being polite and hospitable, but everybody knows that it should not be taken seriously! You might see the Taarof words, when you are to pay for taxi or shopping. The salesperson or taxi driver might tell you something which means: That's alright! You don't have to pay!

However, the truth is you should decline the offer politely and pay your money! Maybe it looks so confusing, but it will be fun as well.

You will find similar examples as soon as you start traveling in Iran! Don't panic though! You will easily realize when it is about Taarof and when it is a serious offer! But what if you are doubtful about an offer? Don't worry! Just memorize the word "**Taarof**" and ask if it is a Taarof!