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# INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION (IORA)

*Travel with IORA: Discovering the countries, cultures and cuisines of the Indian Ocean Region*

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# Message from the Acting Secretary-General of JORA

Dear Readers,

Thank you for showing us your appreciation on the first edition of the IORA Secretariat's Tourism Newsletter, which showcased the vast tourist offerings of some of our Member States before the COVID-19 pandemic struck in early 2020.

I believe that, at this difficult time with the world facing the challenges associated with fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, we must remain positive and optimistic and prepare for the day when we will reconnect globally.

We must not forget that the Indian Ocean is home to a melting pot of 2.5 billion beautiful people (one-third of the world's population) comprising of diverse origins, cultures, languages and religions. We are made of different ethnicities and traditions that reflect the story and customs of different communities.

I believe that, more than ever before, this great diversity must be more appreciated, respected and welcomed into our multicultural reality. Indeed, what richness we come to know when we take the time to listen to each other, to experience another's culture and values, and to witness the beauty of their spirit towards all of life!

It is also estimated that the direct global value of culture and heritage exchange through tourism is well over US\$1 billion annually, and accounts for many millions of jobs and livelihoods across the globe. Socially it promotes preservation of local traditions, customs and culture, while the experiences and traditional projects provide critical economic support for keeping these skills and traditions alive. Environmentally, it supports a culture of preservation and encourages residents and visitors to be mindful about their impact on the natural and built environment.



It is in this spirit that I am very pleased to share this second edition of the Tourism Newsletter that highlights and explores the myriad exciting facets of eight (8) of our Member States' (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iran, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Sri Lanka and Thailand) cultural and heritage tourism offerings.

Finally, I would like to thank you, the contributors and readers, for your interest in the Tourism Newsletter and I encourage you to continue to send us your invaluable feedback and ideas for further improvement.

In the meantime, let us discover the beauty of our cultures together!

Yours,  
Dr Gatot H Gunawan

# BANGLADESH

## Cultural Tourism

Bangladesh is a country of rich cultural and archaeological heritages. Some of the heritages got the international recognition by the UNESCO while some other heritages have religious, historical, and cultural significance. Paharpur Buddhist Relics is one of the prominent world's archaeological heritage sites which is famous for its aesthetic beauty, and historical and religious value. Mahastangarh and Mainamati are two other heritages of same kind. Sixty Dome Mosque is another masterpiece which was also declared world heritage site for its exceptional architectural ensemble. Kantanagar Temple is renowned for its terracotta beauty. Lalbagh Fort, Ahsan Manzil (the pink palace) are few of other remarkable historical and archaeological monuments. Bangladesh has some intangible cultural heritages too. Pohela Baishakh, the celebration of first day of the Bengali new year, has been declared as an intangible cultural heritage; the historic 7th March Speech of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman has got the recognition of documentary heritage by the UNESCO. Shitolpati, Jamdani are also part of our cultural heritages.



7th March Speech of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman



Jamdani: Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity



Shitolpati: Intangible cultural heritage declared by UNESCO

## Folklore music and dance

Folk music is described as that type of ancient music which springs from the heart of a community, based on their natural style of expression, uninfluenced by the rules of classical music and modern popular songs. Any mode or form created by the combination of tune, voice and dance may be described as music. Thus, the combination of folk song, folk dance, and folk tune may be called folk music. For example, Baul songs are a combination of tune, music, and dance. In Bangladesh folk music has great variety, with songs being composed on the culture, festivals, views of life, natural beauty, rivers, and rural and riverine life. These songs are also about social inequality and poverty, about the material world and the supernatural. Mystical songs have been composed using the metaphors of rivers and boats. Since the country is basically riverine, the Bhatiyali forms an important genre of folk music. Folk music is formed and developed according to the environment. Differences in the natural environment are reflected in the culture of the people from different regions. The dialects too vary across the different regions. Bangladeshi folk music therefore varies from region to region. Thus, there are the northern Bhawaiya, the eastern Bhatiyali and the southwestern Baul songs.

Folk dances are performed in single or in groups. Group dances are more common, reflecting community or collective thinking. Folk dances in Bangladesh are mainly of three kinds: religious, social, and cultural. Religious dances outnumber other forms. Dances relating to Kirtan, Penance, Baul Rites, Gambhira, Jari and Fakir Rites are associated with different religious beliefs and rituals. Dhali and Lathi dances are related to the martial arts, while Chhokra, Ghatu, and Khemta dances provide entertainment.



Baul Song: Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

# BANGLADESH



Tribal Dance



Eid Ul Fitr: One of the largest Muslim religious festivals

## Festivals

Festivity means something special in Bangladesh where colors, traditions, beliefs, social norms are strongly reflected in various forms. The history of festivity in Bangladesh dates to 3000 years back. With changes in social and economic structures, the nature of festivals also changes, but some festivals are so deeply rooted in the social organism that they continue to entertain people from generation to generation. Some of the festivals bear the mark of the community and nation, some have the stamp of religion, and some bear the impression of politics. The people of Bangladesh enjoy series of festivals. Among the festival that are celebrated, Pohela Boishakh–Mongal Shobhajatra has been recognized as UNESCO intangible cultural Heritage of Humanity.

The 1st Boishakh or Pohela Boishakh is the first day of Bangla New Year and the greatest celebration of the people of Bangladesh. It is a festival for all, irrespective of religion, caste, and creed. Baisabi is the main social festival of the indigenous people living in the hill districts of Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari. This festival is celebrated by the Chakma and Tanchyanga as “Biju”, by Marmas as “Shangrai”, Tripuras as “Baisuk” or “Baisu”.



Mangal Shobhajatra: Intangible Cultural Heritage in the World



Durga Puja: One of the largest Hindu religious festivals

## Arts and Crafts

Arts and Crafts of Bangladesh are regarded as the oldest heritage which are widely recognized for their aesthetics. Archaeological evidences authenticating this fact have been brought to light by the excavations at Mahasthangarh, Bogura, Mainamati, Cumilla and most recently since 2001, from Wari-Bateshr in Narsingdi district. The people of ancient Vanga (Bengal) dating to the earliest human settlements or Janapads of approximately 500 BC were producing pottery, iron implements, wooden objects, and a range of agricultural, ritual, and domestic items. People's arts and crafts are central to the study of any culture from historical perspectives. Hand-crafted objects provide essential pointers to the socio-economic and cultural status, the spiritual and intellectual development, and values of a society.



Pottery making in Bangladesh



Jute Crating



# INDONESIA

## Cultural Tourism in Indonesia

Living on more than 13,400 islands, the Indonesian nation today counts some 200 million population comprising of over 200 ethnic groups with their own languages and cultures that range in population from the Javanese to peoples numbering in the thousands on remote islands.

The Indonesian archipelago is a collection of islands that holds untold treasures in its diversity from diving in largely untouched waters and indulges in the bliss of Bali to exploring the UNESCO World Heritage sites.

Currently, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy is focusing on building the 10 Priority Tourism Destinations, which is usually called as the 10 New Bali. These destinations consist of Lombok Mandalika, Lake Toba, Wakatobi Islands, Thousand Islands, Tanjung Lesung, Morotai Islands, Tanjung Kelayang, Mount Bromo, Labuan Bajo-Komodo National Park and Borobudur Temple.

The Borobudur temple is a pyramidal base with five concentric square terraces, the trunk of a cone with three circular platforms and, at the top, a monumental stupa. The walls and balustrades are decorated with fine low reliefs, covering a total surface area of 2,500 m<sup>2</sup>. Around the circular platforms are 72 openwork stupas, each containing a statue of the Buddha. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site and is considered one of the greatest Buddhist sites in the world.



The Labuan Bajo-Komodo National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage site, encompasses five main islands and a number of smaller ones, as well as the surrounding marine areas. These islands are inhabited by a population of around 5,700 giant lizards, whose appearance and aggressive behaviour have led to them being called 'Komodo dragons'. They exist nowhere else in the world and are of great interest to scientists studying the theory of evolution. The rugged hillsides of dry savannah and pockets of thorny green vegetation contrast starkly with the brilliant white sandy beaches and the blue waters

surging over coral, unquestionably one of the most dramatic landscapes in all of Indonesia.

## The Dramatic Kecak Dance



A visit to the dramatic island of Bali will not be complete without watching some of the most captivating traditional performances the island has to offer. Aside from Barong and Janger Dances, another dazzling performance you definitely don't want to miss is the traditional Kecak Dance, one of Balinese artistic masterpieces in the form of a dance and musical drama.

Held in the open air at sunset, usually above a cliff facing the sea, the drama depends entirely on the natural light of day. Starting at dusk, the story continues into the dark, when only light comes only from flickering bamboo torches.

What makes this dance particularly unique is that the drama uses no artificial backdrop, involving no musical instrument. The focus is entirely on the concentric circles of about 50-60 men, bare-chested, wearing only distinct Balinese sarongs sitting cross-legged around a set of torches in the centre.

Instead of the traditional "gamelan" orchestra which usually accompanies other Balinese traditional performances, the Kecak is simply accompanied by the chanting of the chorus of men representing an army of monkeys continuously intoning "Cak! Cak! Cak!" or "Keh-Chak" in polyrhythmic sounds during almost the entire performance. This amazing human voiced orchestra is led by a soloist, who is in charge of indicating the high and low notes, and also acts as narrator. The effect, after a while, is to provide a wall of dramatic sound against which the action of the play is enacted.

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The performance relates the shorter version of the epic Ramayana Saga with dancers playing as Rama, Shinta (Sita), Lakshmana, Rahwana (Ravana), Hanoman (Hanuman), Sugriwa (Sugriva), and other characters. The storyline starts when Prince Rama wanders into the woods with his wife Shinta and brother Lakshmana. There, the giant Rahwana kidnaps Shinta and holds her in his palace. Rama then seeks help and sends Lakshmana to find his friend Sugriwa, the King of the Monkey Kingdom. Sugriwa sends his commander the white monkey, by the name of Hanoman, to check on Shinta in Rahwana's Palace.

A dramatic scene is portrayed when Hanoman is captured by Rahwana's troops and put inside a circle of fire to burn him alive. Instead of burning to crisp, the white monkey warrior remains unharmed and breaks out only to burn Rahwana's palace instead. Thus, began the battle between the two forces.

At first, Rahwana and his troops manage to overrun Rama. However, Sugriwa and Hanoman then come to Rama's aid along with the rest of the monkey troops, defeat the evil king once and for all.

Kecak Dance is said to originate from a Balinese ancient ritual called Sanghyang, aimed as a form of exorcism or to repel evil spirits in which dancers fall into a trance. The dance first appeared in 1930, after Balinese Dancer, Wayan Limbak worked together with German painter Walter Spies to create a dramatic performance version of the Sanghyang by incorporating the epic Ramayana saga. They took the innovation on a world tour; thus the dance became popular ever since.

Kecak Dance is regularly performed in many places all over Bali Island. However, the best place to watch this spectacular show is at the Pura Uluwatu, where the dance is performed daily with as background the dramatic sunset. The dance can also be found at Tanah Lot, GWK Cultural Park, Pura Dalem Ubud, Padang Tegal Stage, Batubulan, Umadewi Stage, and more.

<https://www.indonesia.travel/gb/en/destinations/bali-nusa-tenggara/ubud/kecak-dance>

## Delicious Satay, Indonesia's Most Famous Dish!

Sate, juicy slices of marinated meat on thin bamboo skewers grilled to perfection on a charcoal open fire and accompanied by a delectably savoury sauce - it is no wonder that this dish is one of former President Barack Obama's childhood favourites. Sate (or more commonly known as Satay) is undoubtedly one of Indonesia's most famous dishes. It is also one of those dishes that most South East Asian countries claim as their own. However historically, it can be traced back to Java as the place where the Indian kebab, imported by Muslim traders, first took on a distinctly more eastern flavour.



Across this colourful archipelago and its diverse ethnic groups, most cultures have made sate their own by creating different variations of this crowd-pleasing dish. Where they differ is the spices used, its complimenting sauces and even the way it is skewered.

Here are 7 different types of sate you can find in this wonderfully diverse country.

### 1. Sate Ayam (Chicken Satay)

One of the most common types of sate sold across Indonesia (and also the world), Sate Ayam can be bought from street hawkers to 5-Star fine dining establishments. This sate consists of chicken meat marinated in sweet soy sauce and cooked on an open flame grill. It is then served with a spicy peanut or sweet soy sauce, sliced shallots and chopped chillies.

### 2. Sate Kambing (Lamb Satay)

Another common type of sate sold across this country is Sate Kambing. Consisting of diced lamb and marinated in minced pineapple (to remove any unpleasant smells and help tender

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the meat), this Sate is served with two options of sauces – peanut or sweet soy sauce.

### 3. Sate Maranggi

Originating from the city of Purwakarta in West Java, Sate Maranggi is made from lamb or beef. The meat is marinated in a mixture of green chilli paste and cuka lahang (sugar cane vinegar) and served with sliced shallots and diced tomatoes.

### 4. Sate Kerang (Scallop Satay)

Sate Kerang is a delicacy from the city of Surabaya in East Java. This dish consists of boiled scallops marinated in lime leaves, ginger, sweet soy sauce and tamarind juice. Once cooked, it is then briefly grilled or sautéed to char its edges.

### 5. Sate Padang

Derived from the regency of West Sumatra, home of the popular Padang food, this particular sate is made from ox tongue or beef. The meat is boiled in a mixture of lime leaves, lemongrass, coriander, ginger and turmeric, then char grilled before being served with a thick spicy yellow sauce.

### 6. Sate Lilit

A specialty from Bali, this sate can be made from a variety of meats such as chicken, fish, pork or even turtle. Most commonly it is made from minced fish which is mixed with shredded coconut, lime juice, coconut milk and shallots. The mince is then wrapped around a skewer of lemongrass and then grilled over an open flame. When in Bali do not fail to order this yummy sate.

### 7. Sate Buntel

A dish famous in the regency of Central Java, this Sate is made from minced beef or lamb that is wrapped in a layer of animal fat. Similar to a skewered sausage, the mincemeat is mixed with shallots, garlic, ginger and cumin, stuffed into a fatty membrane and then basted with sweet soy sauce while cooked over a grill.

<https://www.indonesia.travel/gb/en/trip-ideas/delicious-satay-indonesia-s-most-famous-dish>

<http://image.indonesia.travel/home/index?wonders=Culinary-%26-Wellness>

## Angklung, where Sundanese Art and Culture Thrive and Gained Proper Respect Worldwide

Angklung is an Indonesian musical instrument consisting of two to four bamboo tubes suspended in a bamboo frame, bound with rattan cords. The tubes are carefully whittled and cut by a master craftsman to produce certain notes when the bamboo frame is shaken or tapped. Each Angklung produces a single note or chord, so several players must collaborate in order to play melodies. Traditional Angklungs use the pentatonic scale, but in 1938 musician Daeng Soetigna introduced Angklungs using the diatonic scale; these are known as angklung padaeng. The Angklung is closely related to traditional customs, arts and cultural identity in Indonesia, played during ceremonies such as rice planting, harvest and circumcision. The special black bamboo for the Angklung is harvested during the two weeks a year when the cicadas sing, and is cut at least three segments above the ground, to ensure the root continues to propagate. Angklung education is transmitted orally from generation to generation, and increasingly in educational institutions. Because of the collaborative nature of Angklung music, playing promotes cooperation and mutual respect among the players, along with discipline, responsibility, concentration, development of imagination and memory, as well as artistic and musical feelings.



The famous place to watch and learn Angklung is the Udjo's House of Angklung, which located in the bustling eastern part of Bandung. Udjo's House of Angklung attempts to manifest beautiful harmony of vibrating bamboos that echo from this simple amphitheatre all the way to the other side of the world. It spreads the values of simplicity, co-operation, unity and togetherness, as well as maintaining mutual relationship between human and the environment.

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Established in 1966 by the late Udjo Nalagena (1929-2001) and his beloved wife, Uum Sumiyati, Saung Angklung Udjo was built with purpose and dedication to conserve West Java's Sundanese traditional art and culture. It was Udjo Nalagena who brought the passion and principles which made Udjo's House of Angklung a place where Sundanese art and culture thrive and gained proper respect worldwide. His efforts to introduce and promote angklung finally paid off when UNESCO inscribed Angklung in the Intangible Cultural Heritage List in November 2010.

Udjo's House of Angklung also dedicates itself to the conservation and preservation of the natural environment. As a form of environmental responsibility, Udjo's House of Angklung cooperates with the Ministry of Forestry, getting involved in the 'Indonesia Planting' Campaign, known as *Kampanye Indonesia Menanam*, and created the Forestry Counseling Centre.

Udjo's House of Angklung adopts the philosophy of easy, affordable, educative, attractive, massive, and cheerful performances that are essence of their ultimate show called "Kaulinan Urang Lembur" or villagers' playtime. The show is packed with spectacular short performances, commencing with wayang golek (wooden puppet) show, helaran (agricultural harvesting celebration) rites, traditional dances, kids games, introduction to angklung, angklung orchestral performance, interactive angklung performance that involves visitors playing angklung, and arumba performance.

## The Penti Sacred Rituals in the Village of Wae Rebo on Flores

Every November, the Manggarai ethnic group in East Nusa Tenggara Province will conduct the sacred rituals of Penti which takes place at the Wae Rebo Traditional Village on Flores Island. As this is a unique occasion, make sure to witness the event.

Penti is a ritual of thanksgiving to celebrate the past year's harvest and prayers for a prosperous, new agricultural year. The event is filled with a series of ancient rituals that usually last for one full day and night. The celebration is of such huge communal importance that all village members - even those living outside the village - will join the rituals.

Penti is an annual ritual closely related to the agricultural cycle. The tradition has been passed down through generations from the ancestors of the village, that identifies different months according to variations of location of surrounding natural environments. Penti also marks the turn of the year for the Wae Rebo villagers which occurs in November following the modern calendar. Although nowadays many villages on the island celebrate Penti based on a five-year cycle due to the intensive preparations and high costs involved, in the village of Wae Rebo, however, Penti is still conducted on a yearly basis.

Penti begins with the Barong Wae and Barong Oka rituals in which the people carrying offerings proceed to the courtyard of the *Rumah Gendang* or the Main House in the village, accompanied by the sounds of gongs and gendang traditional percussions. They gather at the natural spring and invite the spirit of the spring's keeper to attend the Penti celebration.

The processions will then move to the *watu pantas* to symbolize the purification of sins, which is followed by a visit to the stone altar or *compang*, which concludes the *Barong Wae*, *Barong Oka*, and *Roi Boa* rituals.

Penti will also be highlighted with the fascinating display of *Caci*, which is the traditional martial art specific to the Manggarai region, in which two men will be involved in a one-on-one combat using whips and simple shields.

During the series of the Penti Ritual, a group of men and women will chant traditional songs with no musical accompaniment which is called *Sanda*. The *Sanda* commences in the middle of the night and continues nonstop until morning. The *Sanda* must be chanted uninterruptedly during the entire rituals to honour the spirits of the ancestors.

Wae Rebo can be reached from Labuan Bajo on Flores. Garuda Indonesia has started operating direct flights to Labuan Bajo's Komodo Airport on Flores island from Soekarno-Hatta international airport six times weekly.

<https://www.indonesia.travel/gb/en/destinations/bali-nusa-tenggara/flores/the-sacred-rituals-of-penti>



# IRAN

## Iran, the multicultural ancient civilization

Iran is one of the world's oldest living civilizations with many great historical and urban settlements dating back to some thousand of years and more than 10000 of culture, and hospitable people. Iran has always been known as a paradise for culture-lovers. It enjoys great potentials of fame as being home to Persian gardens, palaces, museums, bridges, mausoleums, castles, mosques, churches, monuments, bazaars, unique literature, long history, romantic poets, music, and fine artists and handicraft artisans, great variety of cultures, traditions, customs, languages, and lifestyles. A live museum to meet great variety of tastes.

## IRAN Cultural Tourism Potentials

13 Iranian Intangible heritages have been registered in the UNESCO World List, of which 3 are multinational and 10 are mono national.

1. Pahlevani and Zoorkhaneh Rituals (2010)
2. Music of the Bakhshis of Khorasan (2010)
3. Traditional Skills of Carpet Weaving in Fars (2010)
4. Traditional Skills of Carpet Weaving in Kashan (2010)
5. Traditional Skills of Building and Sailing Iranian Lenj Boats in the Persian Gulf (2011)
6. Naqqali, Iranian Dramatic Storytelling (2011)
7. Qalishuyan Rituals of Mashhad-e Ardehal in Kashan (2012)
8. Nowrouz (2016)
9. Flatbread Making and Sharing Cultural: Lavash (2016)
10. Chogan, a horse-riding game accompanied by music and storytelling (2017)
11. Art of Crafting and Playing with Kamantcheh/ Kaman-cha (2017)
12. Traditional Skills of Crafting and Playing Dotâr (2019)



## Iranian Tangible Heritage Sites Listed by UNESCO

24 Iranian World Heritage Sites Listed by UNESCO cover a wide range of various types of properties from samples of

urban engineering and architecture to Bazaars, buildings, etc.

1. Tchogha Zanbil (1979)
2. Persepolis (1979)
3. Meidan Emam, Esfahan (1979)
4. Takht-e Soleyman (2003)
5. Pasargadae (2004)
6. Bam and its Cultural Landscape (2004)
7. Soltaniyeh (2005)
8. Bisotun (2006)
9. Armenian Monastic Ensembles of Iran (2008)
10. Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System (2009)
11. Sheikh Safi al-din Khanegah and Shrine Ensemble in Ardabil (2010)
12. Tabriz Historic Bazaar Complex (2010)
13. The Persian Garden (2011)
14. Masjed-e Jame of Isfahan (2012)
15. Gonbad-e Qabus (2012)
16. Golestan Palace (2013)
17. Shahr-i Sokhta (2014)
18. Cultural Landscape of Maymand (2015)
19. Susa (2015)
20. The Persian Qanat (2016)
21. Lut Desert (2016)
22. Historic City of Yazd (2017)
23. Sassanid Archaeological landscape of Fars Region (2018)
24. Hyrcanian Forests



## Iranian Cities Designed as UNESCO Creative Cities – Out of 246 cities worldwide

1. Rasht, the creative city of gastronomy (2015)
2. Bandar Abbas, city of "crafts and folk art" (2019)
3. Isfahan, creative city of crafts and folk art (2015)
4. Sanandaj, city of "Music" (2019)

# IRAN



## Iran nomads

Iran is a cradle of an ancient civilization at world level - a country of great diversity in ethnic groups - there are many people from different ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. Its plains, mountains, and riverbanks have been the homeland of nomads for many centuries. Throughout the summer you can take a great opportunity to learn and experience nomadic culture and lifestyle. You can taste their special barbecued local food, admire how their style of animal herding not only adds to the richness of Iran's culture, but how it could also be considered as one of the surpassing beauties of the country which makes it a live museum. (Azerbaijanis or Azeris, Kurds, Lors or Lurs, Arabs, Gilakis, the Baluch, Turkmans).



## Iran's Events, Festivals & Ceremonies

- 17 International Tourism Events
- 121 national Tourism Events
- More than 500 Regional Events

Iran known as a historical and cultural country, also has a lot of traditional ceremonies and festivals. Different kinds of climate and the vast area of the country during a long history



have caused a great diversity in language, custom, lifestyle, and handicrafts in different parts of the country. Golab Giri annual festival in Kashan, Nowruz are just some examples.

## Persian cuisine

Iran as a large country with different cultures, so diverse in culinary that every city enjoys a large variety of a number of delicious and tasty foods unique to that area. Every city in every province of Iran has hundreds of local dishes of the area round the year. Here just a few have been picked for your trial in Iran—Joojeh Kabab and Kabab Koobideh, Mirza Ghasemi, Beryani, Gheymeh Nesar, Khoresh-e Ghormeh Sabzi, Khoresh-e Fesenjan, among others.

## Iranian Handicrafts (a rainbow of diversity rooted in old history)

Due to the very old civilization, rich culture and geographical location, Iran plays an important role in the world of arts and crafts. Iran is very rich in handicrafts, with a variety of about 300 fields and several thousand years old. Persian handicrafts, each narrating the stories of the culturally diverse populations in different parts of vast Iran, are among the best souvenirs for the tours to Iran. Distinguished in various fields including Persian Enamelling, Persian Miniature, Hand Woven Carpet, Engraving, Marquetry, among others. Iran is home to one of the richest art heritages and handicrafts in world history.

## Iran World Cities of Handicraft inscribed in UNESCO

1. Mashhad, world craft city for gemstones
2. Tabriz, world carpet weaving city
3. Kalporagan, world craft village for Hand-made pottery
4. Lalejin, world craft city for pottery
5. Abadeh, world craft city for wood carving (Munabbat)
6. Marivan, world craft city for Kelash (footwear/ kind of Giveh) stitching
7. Sirjan, world craft for Kilim
8. Meybod, world craft city for Hand-woven floor covering (Zilu)
9. Isfahan, world craft city
10. Khorashad, world craft village for towel weaving (Two-Bafi)



# MADAGASCAR

## Discover Madagascar, Island of Treasures

Bordered to the West by the Mozambique Channel and to the East by the Indian Ocean, the first images that spring to mind when thinking about Madagascar are its sublime wild beaches, baobab forests (half of which are endemic), hundreds of species of lemurs found only on the Island, and its welcoming people. With 43 national parks and protected areas scattered across the country, as well as a shoreline stretching over 5,000 kilometres, this Island of Treasures can be discovered by land and sea. Relaxing in the sun at Nosy-Be, Sainte-Marie or Tuléar, or visiting the island's 3 UNESCO World Heritage Sites (Ambohimanga Royal Palace, the rock formations in the Tsingy de Bemaraha National Park and the Eastern rainforests). The Big Island never ceases to amaze the traveller.



At sea, the Island's beautiful waves, tropical climate, steady trade winds and exceptional seabed are greatly appreciated by water sports enthusiasts. From scuba diving, recreational fishing, sailing, catamaraning or kitesurfing, thrill seekers will be spoiled for choice. Visiting Madagascar is like having a front-row seat watching the acrobatic antics of hump-backed whales and dolphins in an idyllic, picture postcard-perfect setting. Experience the excellence of Madagascar's legendary hospitality, sample the island's gastronomy with its many flavours borrowed from all around the world, discover its traditions and rich cultural heritage. It would be difficult to find a more beautiful and authentic destination than the Island of Treasures.

## Overview

The island's unique beliefs and traditions, together with its artistic and gastronomic wealth, have given rise to a diversi-

fied culture. In their rituals and rhythmic dance, the Malagasy proudly present their country's values. Plunge into the heart of a strong heritage that makes Madagascar a place not to be missed.

## Folklore Music & Dance



Traditional Malagasy music is either expressed vocally, sung "a capella", or accompanied by instruments made from plants such as the "jejy" with a sound box, the guitar-like "kabosa," the "kilangay" or xylophone on legs or especially the «valiha» which is carved from bamboo. But it has also been able to take over foreign instruments such as the piano for the "Kalon'ny Fahiny" or Songs of Yesteryear inspired by light opera, and especially the "Hira gasy", traditional Highland music and dances that can easily be enjoyed in the capital all year round.

## Gastronomy and gourmet attractions



Here are a few samples from among the most typical dishes:

- «Romazava» is the national dish par excellence. It is a broth made from a mixture of greens including anamalao or «spicy greens, » cooked with beef or grain-fed chicken.
- «Ravitoto sy henakisoa» or pork with ground cassava leave, is always served at promotional evenings and can be prepared in many ways, from the simplest to

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the most refined.

- «Sesika amalona» or stuffed eel is a masterpiece of delicacy, with very tender meat that easily crumbles; slice it open lengthways then stuff it with minced pork, garlic, onions, and cook over low heat with a tomato and ginger sauce.
- « Varanga » or slivered beef is silverside cooked in water for a few hours before being shredded to be braised with small whole onions. And it would be difficult not to mention “hena ritra”, a great classic for celebrations! This is slightly fatty zebu meat that is cooked practically without any ingredients except a few cloves of garlic.

## Important traditional celebrations and festivals

Some perfectly authentic festivities anchored in the depths of the Malagasy soul are open to a foreign audience. Some take place into spaced cycles of several years.

We will list:

- “Tsanga-Tsaigny” ritual of the Antakarana (North) or Ceremony of the mast in presence of the local customary king, to commemorate the advent of the kings of the old Antakarana kingdom
- “Sambatra” collective circumcisions which take place every seven years in the region of Mananjary (eastern coast).



Various areas have organized for a few years, some themed events.

- The Vez'tival in November at Tuléar emphasizes the cultures of the South.
- Music is the major vector of the festive atmosphere of

Donia in Nosy-Be during Pentecost holidays.

- There is Madajazzcar in the capital in May.
- Nosy-Be Symphonies in September is dedicated to the classical music.
- The carnival of Madagascar in Antananarivo in June and the Festival of the whales, which is held in the Sainte-Marie Island in July, see processions which illustrate the customs and habits as well as the history of the country.

Most of these events are accompanied by multiple activities...

## Art and crafts



It is also through the discovery of the rich Malagasy crafts that we can apprehend all the creativity of the various ethnos groups that populate the island. Zafimaniry Art, wood-carving, is inscribed on UNESCO's World Immaterial Heritage. All areas have their traditional crafts, the most notable of which are:

- “Lamba” (scarf or piece of fabric) out of wild or natural silk
- Antemoro paper decorated with its incrustations of dried flowers
- Lapidary (the precious stones and semi-precious abound)
- The embroidery and its naive and coloured subjects
- Leather goods
- Raffia or horn valorisation
- The amazing recycling of scrap material

Some figurative painters, in particular, deserve to be encountered. In the same way, the country has some “Masters” of photography who have made many talented followers.



# MALAYSIA

## Preamble

United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defined Cultural Tourism as:

“A type of tourism activity in which the visitor’s essential motivation is to learn, discover, experience and consume the tangible and intangible cultural attractions/products in a tourism destination. These attractions/products relate to a set of distinctive material, intellectual, spiritual and emotional features of a society that encompasses arts and architecture, historical and cultural heritage, culinary heritage, literature, music, creative industries and the living cultures with their lifestyles, value systems, beliefs and traditions”.

Malaysia recognizes the importance of culture in stimulating the nation’s development. Culture progresses over the course of human life along with ecological, economic and social values. Culture is also part of the sustainable tourism that promotes sustainability and inclusivity of economic growth, full and productive employability and decent work for all.

Tourism continues to be one of the foremost vehicles for cultural exchange, providing a personal experience, not only of historic cultural expressions but of the contemporary life and society of other cultures and people. This inevitable association between culture and tourism provides the strong base for the mission and vision of the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture as the governing institution in Malaysia to address the significant role of culture and heritage in stimulating the economic growth.

## UNESCO Heritage Sites

In Malaysia there are two cultural and two natural sites inscribed by UNESCO in World Heritage. Two well-known cities of UNESCO World Heritage Sites are Melaka and Georgetown in Penang flooded with tourists as the recognition itself carries market values which capture the economic characteristics of the heritage. In 2018, Melaka and Georgetown received around 17,973,400 visitors. While two natural sites i.e. Mount Kinabalu National Park in Sabah and Mulu National Park in Sarawak received around



747,854 visitors in 2018. There is also one archaeological site, namely the Lembah Lenggong in Perak which was inscribed by UNESCO in 2012.

## Local Craft

Local Craft production generates consistently more than RM500 million from the sales of craft products annually. Therefore, Malaysia has always supported the local craft entrepreneurship by providing training to develop skilful craftsmen and quality products, incentives, as well as the integrated marketing campaign and promotion activities to local and international market. Further, Malaysia Handicraft Development Cooperation ensures that the quality craft products are highly accessible through numerous space/platforms for sales and support for local craftsmen who are to supply the product in stores or online.



## Cultural Institutions

In Malaysia there are almost 200 museums and galleries across the country managed by federal and state government, including public and private institutions. Apart from the exhibition, the museums as well organized a lot of educational activities and community events to enrich the visitor’s experience and to sustain the tourism activities in the area. ASWARA and National Craft Institute, both are training institution that ensure the supply of work force in cultural sector.

# MALAYSIA



## Cultural Events

In conjunction with The Visit Malaysia 2020, there will be hundreds of programs organized by the government, private and also NGOs that promote cultural tourism activities throughout Malaysia. At the national level, there will be marquee events to attract tourists to experience Malaysian arts and performances such as Malaysian Cultural Week or well known as Citrawarna Malaysia, Magic of the Night, KL Biennale 2020 and International Aborigines Festival. The celebration of local arts and events ensure definable economic niche within a broad range of tourism activities and encompassed cultural experiences to the visitors beyond their own living environment.



## Cultural Performance

Various cultural performances such as music, dance, theatre performed throughout the country have been organized by many parties such as the government agencies, private sectors, NGOs and also by the individual. At national level, the promotion of traditional and local arts performances is further facilitated by the National Department for Culture and Arts through planning, coordinating and implementing cultural and arts activities at national level as well as state levels. In addition, Palace of Culture is the prestigious place for arts practitioners and activists to perform cultural heritage theatre such as Mak Yong, Mek Mulong and Awang Batil. The intensification of efforts in continuously organizing cultural performances will maintain the sustainability of the local and traditional performance. This effort will also encourage the growth of the economy through activists' involvement in cultural art activities and eventually supports the growth of tourism industry.



## Conclusion

As a multi-cultural country, Malaysia resembles of truly Asia Culture and has a potential to attract international tourists to participate and enjoy cultural activities and products. To develop a greater appreciation of cultural aspects as a tourism product, inclusive participation of all communities in cultural activities related will be encouraged which will involve communities from both urban and rural areas.



# MAURITIUS

## Brief overview of Cultural Tourism

Cultural tourism is movements of persons for essentially cultural motivations such as study tours, performing arts and cultural tours, travel to festivals and other cultural events, visits to sites and monuments, travel to study nature, folklore or art, and pilgrimages.

Mauritius has so much more to offer beyond its pristine beaches and turquoise lagoons. Mauritius' rich and diverse culture born from European, African and Asian roots is a must for exploring. With no native population, Mauritians are all descendants of immigrants, which may explain the racial and religious harmony, which is a cornerstone of the Mauritian society. There is a huge variety of ways visitors can explore and embrace the island's culture, from colourful markets and vibrant festivals to temples and shrines.

## Overview of Folklore Music and Dance

### • Geet-Gawai

Geet-Gawai is an expression of community identity and collective cultural memory. Geet-Gawai is a pre-wedding ceremony that combines rituals, prayers, songs, music and dance. It is performed mainly by Bhojpuri-speaking communities of Indian origin in Mauritius. The practice also provides participants with a sense of pride and contributes to greater social cohesion, and breaking class and caste barriers. Knowledge about the practice and its associated skills are transmitted from older to younger generations on an informal and formal basis. This is done via observation and participation by families, semi-formal teaching houses, community centres, and academies. Nowadays, the practice of Geet-Gawai extends to public performances where men also participate.

### • Sega dance

The Sega is a dance which originated from the ritual music of Madagascar and the mainland of Africa, and it is the musical expression of the Mauritian Way of Life: Joy and Liveliness.



Originally sung by men and women who had been sold as slaves but whose souls had remained sensitive to music, the Seggae is nowadays a folksong which has integrated itself within the framework of our folklore. The Seggae song is usually sung in Creole (mother tongue of Mauritians). All along the coastal fishing villages, traditional instruments such as the "Ravanne", "Triangle", the "Maravanne" and the traditional guitar are still being used.

## Seggae Music Instruments

- The Ravanne, is a wooden hoop over stretched over a piece of goat skin.
- The Coco, (Maracas) which represents percussion
- The "Triangle", a triangular piece of metal which tinkles when tapped with an iron rod
- The traditional guitar is a single string instrument with an arc attached to an empty "Calebasse"
- The "Maravanne" -wooden rectangular box containing sand or seeds

## Overview of Local Signature Dishes

The multicultural composition of Mauritian society is tastefully expressed in its cooking. Mauritian cuisine, whether traditional, homely or sophisticated, showcases an amazing choice of creative fusions, a special talent at mixing spices, colours, savours and aromas, offering the visitor an impressive array of tantalising dishes. Today, the island's multifaceted cuisine takes its inspirations as much from China, India, Middle and Far East as from France and South Africa. All it takes is a stroll around to understand that Mauritians love street food. Every corner presents a variety of local specialties. Some of the popular exotic preparations are dhal puri, farata, samoossa, gato pima, gato arouy. For Chinese food lovers, the must-do is a visit to the yearly Chinatown Festival and its food stands for a sampling of specialities and delicacies. There are many good quality and varied restaurants in Mauritius, and it is worth knowing that several Michelin-starred Chefs are at work locally, ensuring that the most exquisite gastronomic delights are on offer.

## Overview of Festivals

The main festivals and religious events celebrated in Mauritius are Cavadee, Chinese Spring Festival, Christmas, Divali, Easter, Eid-ul-Fitr, Ganesh Chathurti, Holi, Maha Shivaratree, Père Laval Pilgrimage and Ugadi, among others.

### • Cavadee

Cavadee is celebrated in January/February. Along with the fire-

# MAURITIUS

walking and sword-climbing ceremonies, Cavadee is among the most spectacular Tamil events. The body pierced with needles and the tongue and cheeks with skewers, the devotee, trance-like and in penance, walks in procession to the temple bearing the "Cavadee", a wooden arch covered with flowers with a pot of milk at each end of its base, which he or she places before the deity.



- **Chinese Spring Festival**

The Spring Festival, which is the Chinese New Year, is celebrated in January/February, depending on the adjustment of lunar days. Red, symbol of happiness, is the dominant colour. Food is piled up to ensure abundance during the year and the traditional wax cake is distributed to relatives and friends. Firecrackers are lit to ward off evil spirits.



- **Divali**

Divali is the most jovial of all Hindu festivals. Celebrated in October/November it marks the victory of righteousness over evil in the Hindu mythology. Traditionally, clay oil lamps were placed in front of every home turning the island into a fairyland of flickering lights; these have now been replaced mostly by decorative electric lights.

- **Eid-ul-Fitr**

Eid-ul-Fitr is celebrated to mark the end of Ramadhan, the Muslim holy month of fasting. It is a day of thanksgiving and rejoicing for Muslims. Prayers are offered at mosques during the morning.

- **Ganesh Chaturthi**

Ganesh Chaturthi is celebrated sometime in September, on the 4th day of the lunar month of the Hindu calendar. It marks the birthday of Ganesh, the God of wisdom and remover of all obstacles according to Hindu mythology.

- **Holi**

Holi is the festival of colours. It celebrates the beginning of spring and people of the Hindu faith enjoy themselves by squirting coloured water and powder on one another. It is a time for rejoicing and exchanging greetings.

- **Maha Shivaratree**

Maha Shivaratree is celebrated in honour of Hindu God, Siva (February). Hindu devotees, clad in spotless white, carry the "kanwar" - wooden arches covered with flowers – on pilgrimage to Grand Bassin, to fetch holy water from the lake. The whole scene is reminiscent of the great rituals on the banks of the Holy Ganges in India.

- **Père Laval Pilgrimage**

In September, people of all faiths flock to the shrine of Father Jacques Désiré Laval, a 19th century French missionary, in Sainte Croix, Port Louis. One is reminded of Lourdes in the fervour of the crowd who attributes miraculous healing powers to this holy man.

- **Ugadi/Gudi Padwa**

In the month of March and April, the Telugu and Marathi Community celebrate their New Year. The festival is conducted with a morning prayer either at home or at the temple, followed by a cultural programme in a community centre.

## Overview of Arts and Crafts

There are many different crafts practised in Mauritius. Recycling and upcycling have long been part of the arts culture and artisans use their skills on everything from reclaimed furniture to driftwood. Ceramic, bamboo, textile and coconut crafts are all used to produce homewares, fashion, jewellery and souvenirs, and basketwork skills are passed down through generations, using leaves from the vacoas, sugarcane, bamboo and aloe plants that grow on the island. More recent craft is ship modelling, where artisans create miniature detailed ship replicas from original plans.



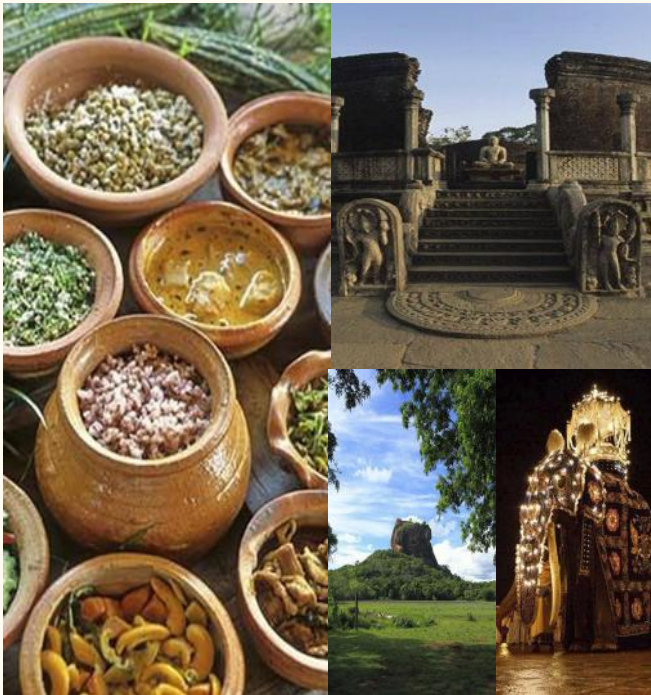
The best place to pick up some of the local crafts is at one of the markets. Port Louis Grand Bazaar is open every weekday and Saturday morning, Mahebourg Central Market is open on Mondays, Bazaar de Grand Baie, Monday to Saturday and the Clothes Market in Quatres Bornes is open on Thursdays and Sundays.



# SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka is a country where celebration and culture mingle. These cultural pageants are born into colourful platforms of a diverse ethnic and religious community; Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Christian.

Buddhism has been the biggest influence in weaving the multi-coloured cultural heritage of Sri Lanka. In addition, culture of South India has largely influenced the social fabric of the Island. The Europeans, particularly the Dutch and the British, who colonised the Island, have added their own cultural influence creating a motley blend which is evident in the architecture, sculpture, paintings, dances, theatre, cuisines etc.



## Folklore Music & Dance

- Kandyan (Udarata), Pahatharata and Sabaragamuwa are the three main styles of Sri Lankan dance.
- Folk theatre is a rich blend of dance, masked drama, drumming and exorcism rituals.
- Prashasti Gee is one of Sri Lanka's most traditional music trends, which has been used during early Kingdoms of Sri Lanka.

## Festivals

- Vesak Festival, Poson Festival, Deepavali / Diwali, Sinhala and Tamil New Year, Ramadan and Eid, and Madu Festival are the main festivals representative of the multi-ethnic, multi-religious character of the country.
- Esala Perehara, the world-famous pageant takes place every year in August in Kandy. The Tooth Relic of the Lord Buddha is carried in a sacred casket around the city during this ritual.





# SRI LANKA

## Cuisines - Local Signature Dishes

- Rice and curry are the main cuisine which includes dishes of vegetables, meat and fish.
- A unique Sri Lankan snack 'Hoppers' can be served with an egg, honey etc.
- Delicious seafood is available in the coastal areas.
- In addition, tropical fruits are generally served as part of Sri Lankan menus.
- The world-famous Ceylon Tea is the preferred beverage in the Island.



## Arts & Crafts

- Wood carving, weaving, pottery and metal work provide a touch of rare artistry.
- The classical architecture, sculpture and paintings of the Island showcase the influence of Buddhism. Buddhist Stupas from ancient times are scattered all over the country, and there are several Buddhist sculptures, especially at Aukana and Buduruvagala.



# THAILAND

## Folklore Music, Dance & Sport

- Thai traditional music and dance are an integral part of Thailand's rich culture and provide an insight into the country's identity and heritage.
- Amongst these different types of cultural performances is Khon a traditional high-art masked performance, based on the ancient Indian Ramayana epic.
- Thai Khon in its uniqueness combines the elegance of Thai choreography and drama with classic traditions and magnificent costumes.
- Muaythai shows how the fighting spirit always begins and ends with respect. Thai Boxing rose to international fame, and Muay Thai is simply a great way of exercise for good health.



## Cuisine – Local Signature Dishes

- Thai food is internationally famous. Whether chilli-hot or comparatively bland, harmony is the guiding principle behind each dish.
- Thai cuisine is essentially a marriage of centuries-old Eastern and Western influences harmoniously combined into something uniquely Thai.
- The popular dishes in Thailand are: Tom Yum Kung (spicy soup), Phat Kaphrao (stir-fried meat with basil and chilli), Pad Thai (stir-fried rice noodle dish) and Massaman curry (rich Thai sauce).



## Festival

- Thai festivals are usually related to religions such as the Candle Festival on Khao Phansa Day (Buddhist Lent Day), the Tak Bat Thewo Festival on Awk Phansa Day (End of Buddhist Lent Day), the Flower Alms Offering Festival, the Kathina or Annual Buddhist Robe Offering Ceremony, and the Buddhist Forest Robe Offering Ceremony.
- The biggest and renowned festivals in Thailand are Loi Krathong, and Songkran which is observed as the New Year Day for Thailand where thousands of tourists come to join in the fun.



## Arts and crafts

- The natural landscape lends itself to craft with an abundance of rattan, wicker, coconuts and palm leaves ideal for making handicrafts while religious influences reflecting dazzling gold, coloured and mirror artworks pay homage to Thailand's spectacular temples.
- Traditional Thai art and craft ranges from paintings and musical instruments to beautiful silk, silver wear, pottery, puppets, model warships, bronze wear, soap carving, sculptures, wood and stone carvings, ceramics and much more.

