Budapest to Tehran

March 26 to April 13, 2016

“A variety of sights and experiences, plus World Heritage sites, in five countries...Waking up to a new adventure in a new place every day!”

—Patti Schleuning, ’58, Budapest to Tehran, 2015
Traveling from Budapest, Hungary, to Tehran, Iran, enjoy the comfort and charm of Old World rail travel coupled with modern conveniences, off-train tours and great company. The rails lead from the heart of old Europe through Transylvania and into Ottoman territory. From here, we return by train to Istanbul and fly to Mashhad to begin our exploration, again by train, of contemporary Iran, where the treasures of ancient Persia—fabulous archaeological sites, vibrant bazaars and soaring mosaic-clad architecture—demonstrate the long and proud history of the Persian people. We’ll finish our epic journey, during which we’ll have explored 10 UNESCO World Heritage sites in five fascinating countries, by experiencing the openhearted hospitality of the people of Iran. Join us on this eye-opening adventure through an unfamiliar and atmospheric part of the world.
Faculty Leader

Professor Scott Pearson is professor emeritus of agricultural economics at Stanford and former director of the Food Research Institute. As a 6-year-old growing up in a small town in Wisconsin, Scott Pearson was fascinated by geography. After he mastered the state capitals, his interest shifted to foreign countries and eventually to the seven continents. He remembers voraciously reading *National Geographic* articles, particularly those on the peoples of Africa. He joined the Peace Corps in 1961 and served in Nigeria, which strengthened his commitment to understanding and improving the lives of others less fortunate. Thereafter, Scott realized his childhood dream of experiencing the world and studying its people; his career focused on international trade and development and his retirement on the rise and fall of empires. Since retiring, he has lectured on more than 70 educational travel trips, and he is one of Stanford Travel/Study’s most popular lecturers.

- Professor of agricultural economics, Stanford University, from 1968 until his retirement in 2002
- Director, Food Research Institute, Stanford University, 1991–1996
- Regularly advised governments in Asia, Africa and southern Europe on food and agricultural policy
- Dean’s Award for Teaching, Stanford’s School of Humanities and Sciences, 1978
- MA, international relations, Johns Hopkins University
- PhD, economics, Harvard University

“Scott Pearson is what you hope for in a faculty leader. He was not only a great lecturer, but also a great fellow traveler...we would certainly like to travel with him again.”

—Walter Franz, ’62, Voyage from Singapore to India, 2011
Itinerary

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, MARCH 26 & 27
DEPART U.S. / BUDAPEST, HUNGARY
Depart the U.S. on overnight flights to Budapest. Upon arrival, transfer to our five-star hotel conveniently situated in central Budapest on the banks of the Danube River. Meet fellow travelers this evening at a welcome reception and dinner. SOFITEL CHAIN BRIDGE HOTEL (3/27: D)

MONDAY, MARCH 28
BUDAPEST
Budapest, Hungary’s exquisite capital city, boasts a wealth of baroque, neoclassical and art nouveau buildings, and elegant shopping avenues. Visit the huge neo-Gothic Parliament building with its striking 16-sided rotunda, and this evening enjoy a cruise on the Danube. SOFITEL CHAIN BRIDGE HOTEL (B,L,D)

TUESDAY, MARCH 29
BUDAPEST / EMBARK DANUBE EXPRESS / LAJOSMIZSE / KECSKEMÉT
Attend a reception in the Royal Waiting Room of the Nyugati Station before boarding our private train. Stop in Lajosmizse for a spectacular horse show, during which local riders display their expert horsemanship, then continue across the Hungarian Plain to Kecskemét. Marvel at the city’s art nouveau buildings and sample local apricot brandy before heading on our train to Romania. DANUBE EXPRESS (B,L,D)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30
SIGHISOARA, ROMANIA / BRASOV
We arrive in UNESCO-listed Sighisoara this morning for a stroll through this charming medieval Saxon town in Transylvania. Enter the house of Vlad Dracul, Vlad the Impaler’s father, then climb the Scholar’s Stairway to visit the 14th-century Gothic church. Travel by train through the scenic Carpathian Mountains to Brasov and tour Bran Castle, sometimes called “Dracula’s Castle,” built in the 14th century. Reboard our train and continue on to Bulgaria. DANUBE EXPRESS (B,L,D)

THURSDAY, MARCH 31
VELIKO TARNOVO, BULGARIA
Explore the remains of the Royal Fortress atop Veliko Tarnovo’s Tsarevets Hill, then stroll through the town, whose houses cling to the hillsides. Reboard our train before it begins its climb to Shipka Pass, which is marked by a monument commemorating a victory over the Ottoman Turks. This evening our train heads for Turkey. DANUBE EXPRESS (B,L,D)

FRIDAY, APRIL 1
ISTANBUL, TURKEY
This morning we arrive in Istanbul, the world’s only city that straddles two continents. This cosmopolitan city that was first known as Byzantium and then Constantinople has been home to many diverse peoples. During our two-day visit here, we stay at a centrally located hotel in the old part of the city. Choose to visit the Blue Mosque with its six minarets; Hagia Sophia, built in the 6th century by Emperor Justinia and Topkapi Palace, once the enormous residence of the Ottoman Sultans and now a renowned museum of the arts. Alternatively visit the Modern Art Museum and the Museum of Innocence in elite Nisantasi, a modern upper-class Westernized home. PERA PALACE HOTEL (B,L,D)
SATURDAY, APRIL 2
ISTANBUL
Spend the morning visiting the Grand Bazaar, one of the largest covered markets in the world, filled with treasures of every description, and Süleymaniye Mosque, masterpiece of the 16th-century architect Sinan. A prominent landmark on the skyline of Istanbul’s old city, the mosque is but a small part of the vast complex designed for the sultan whose name it bears. This afternoon return to our train and continue our journey eastward to Cappadocia. DANUBE EXPRESS (B,L,D)

SUNDAY, APRIL 3
CAPPADOCIA
Arrive mid-morning in mesmerizing Cappadocia, known for its striking topography formed by wind-and-rain erosion of local tuff rock. In the Goreme Valley, marvel at the “Fairy Chimneys,” tall columns of basalt formed in ancient times by cooling volcanic lava. Visit cave-homes dating back thousands of years that are carved out of the soft tuff rock, and also stop at the more recent underground Christian monasteries and frescoed churches. YUNAK EVLERI HOTEL (B,L,D)

MONDAY, APRIL 4
CAPPADOCIA
Today we explore more of the geological and cultural wonders of Cappadocia before embarking the train and making our way westward back to Istanbul. DANUBE EXPRESS (B,L,D)

TUESDAY, APRIL 5
ISTANBUL / DISEMBARK DANUBE EXPRESS / MASHHAD, IRAN / EMBARK GOLDEN EAGLE
We enjoy a leisurely day and a lecture onboard today as our train makes its way to Istanbul. Disembark this afternoon, and transfer to the airport in Istanbul for our non-stop flight on Turkish Airlines to Mashad, Iran. Upon our late arrival in Mashad, after passing through customs, transfer directly to the Golden Eagle train for our overnight. GOLDEN EAGLE (B,L,D)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6
MASHHAD
This morning after breakfast aboard our train, we begin our touring day in Mashad. Made famous by the death and enshrinement of Imam Reza, the city is one of the most sacred sites of Shi’ite Islam. Visit the areas of the Imam Reza shrine that are open to non-Muslims, the tomb and museum of Nadir Shah, and the Khajeh Rabi Mausoleum. GOLDEN EAGLE (B,L,D)

THURSDAY, APRIL 7
YAZD
Today we explore the ancient town of Yazd, located between two deserts and an important silk-weaving center on the old caravan routes. Zoroastrians fleeing Arab invaders found safe haven here, along with artists and poets. Admire the Fire Temple’s eternal flame, which represents Ahura Mazda, the supreme being, and has been burning for more than 1,500 years. At Amir Chakhmag Square, view the lofty tiled entrance portal of the 12th-century Friday Mosque. GOLDEN EAGLE (B,L,D)

FRIDAY, APRIL 8
PERSEPOLIS / SHIRAZ
Travel by train to one of the high points of our rail adventure: the impressive ruins of Persepolis, an important ancient site and capital of the Achaemenid kings, a powerful dynasty that included Darius I. Nearby rock carvings are said to mark the tombs of Darius the Great and Xerxes. We continue by bus to
one of the most important cities of medieval Islamic times, Shiraz, birthplace of the Persian language, Farsi and is known for its poetry, gardens and extravagant architecture. Enter the city by the Koran Gate and continue to the Tomb of Hafez, Iran’s favorite poet, and the Citadel of Karim Khan, a massive medieval stronghold. GOLDEN EAGLE (B,L,D)

SATURDAY, APRIL 9
ISFAHAN
Spend today in magnificent Isfahan. Begin our tour at the Chehel Sotoon Palace, built by Shah Abbas II in the 17th century. Twenty wooden columns support the entrance, and inside are frescoes, miniatures and ceramics. Also visit Vank Cathedral, a reminder of the Armenian migration to Isfahan that is now used as a memorial to the Armenian genocide. After a traditional Iranian lunch, visit immense Imam Square, locale of two mosques and a palace—all lavishly and beautifully decorated—and a bustling bazaar. GOLDEN EAGLE (B,L,D)

SUNDAY, APRIL 10
ISFAHAN / KASHAN / TEHRAN
This morning we continue our exploration of Isfahan. This afternoon we travel on to Kashan. Located on the edge of the Dasht-e Kavir salt desert, Kashan is known for its system of qanats (underground channels) that provide water from a nearby spring to water one of Iran’s most treasured gardens, Bagh-e Fin, with its centuries-old cypress trees. The museum located on the garden grounds displays items from an archaeological dig at nearby Tappeh Sialk, one of the oldest-inhabited areas on the Iranian Plateau. This evening we continue by train to Tehran. GOLDEN EAGLE (B,L,D)

MONDAY, APRIL 11
TEHRAN / DISEMBARK
After breakfast, we disembark our train to explore the final destination of our journey, Tehran. After the Mongols destroyed the Silk Road city of Rey in the 13th century, Tehran rose in its place as the region’s most important trading center. By 1789 Tehran had become the capital of Persia under the Qajar ruler, Agha Mohammed Khan. While the city grew in prominence, it remained basically unchanged until the massive modernization efforts of the 1920s. Since then, Tehran has grown in population from less than 300,000 to a metropolis of several million. Tehran has been Iran’s most important city and capital since the 18th century. Now a huge metropolis, it is replete with mosques, museums, minarets and a sprawling bazaar. We visit the opulent Gulestan Palace complex, once a fortress and now a UNESCO World Heritage site. This afternoon we tour the Crown Jewels Museum to view royal jewelry, the world’s largest uncut diamond and the Naderi Throne. ESPINAS HOTEL (B,L,D)

TUESDAY, APRIL 12
TEHRAN
Begin today’s tour of Tehran with an exploration of the lavish Sa’ad Abad Palace complex, the residence of the deposed royal family. Stop at the Tajrish Bazaar and tour the Museum of Glass and Ceramics whose displays include glassware that dates back to the 4th millennium B.C.E. The Reza Abbasi Museum gives us an interesting overview of Iran’s decorative and applied arts. This evening, celebrate the end of our incomparable journey at a farewell reception and dinner. ESPINAS HOTEL (B,L,D)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13
TEHRAN / U.S.
Transfer this morning to the airport for international flights back to the U.S. (B)
What to Expect

We consider this program to be moderately strenuous and at times physically demanding and busy. Participants should be able to walk unassisted on daily excursions (typically two to three hours in length) over uneven, unpaved surfaces and up and down narrow staircases. In many instances, such as at large archaeological sites or in older city quarters with uneven or unpaved streets, there are high thresholds and stairs without handrails. Many buildings do not have elevators. Although the hotels and trains included in this program are air-conditioned, buses and many of the museums, mosques and ruins we visit are not air-conditioned.

Riding the trains can be bumpy and noisy; participants should feel comfortable walking without assistance between train cars while a train is moving, which requires stepping over pivoting raised plates and opening heavy doors between the cars. Participants must be physically fit, active and in good health. We welcome travelers 15 years of age and older on this program.

Trains

**Danube Express** (Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey)
The *Danube Express* private train is one of the finest trains operating in the world today. The 12-car train includes a main restaurant car and a bar car with a part set aside for restaurant seating that offers a pleasant space to relax. There’s also a separate lounge car ideal for lectures by our faculty leader. In the evening, music is provided in the bar car by a pianist. Soft drinks, house wine and beer, tea, and coffee are complimentary; premium wines and spirits are also available for purchase. The restaurant car and a small section of the bar car offer an informal atmosphere, and all meals, which include tempting dishes and regional specialties with a Central European theme, are served during a single sitting. Cabins are converted into sleeping cabins by train attendants each evening during the dinner hour. All cabins have a large picture window; two armchairs; and a full bathroom with shower, wash basin and toilet. Cabins also include air conditioning with individual temperature control, recessed lighting and wardrobe space.

**Deluxe Cars** have five en suite compartments per car, each with two lower sleeping berths in an “L” configuration. Deluxe double cabins are 99 square feet and measure 6 feet 4 inches by 15 feet 6 inches, including the bathroom area.

**Golden Eagle** (Iran)
The *Golden Eagle* private train is one of the finest trains operating in the world today. The 11-car train includes a main restaurant car, which also converts easily to a lecture car where our faculty leader will be giving lectures; a separate kitchen car; and a bar car with a part set aside for restaurant seating that offers a pleasant space to relax. In the evenings, music is provided in the bar car by a pianist. Since alcohol is strictly forbidden in the Islamic Republic of Iran, no alcohol will be served during our Iranian rail travel. The restaurant car offers an informal atmosphere, and all meals, which include tempting dishes and regional specialties with a European theme, are served during a single sitting. Individual cabins are converted into sleeping cabins by train attendants each evening during the dinner hour. All cabins include full bathrooms with power shower, wash basin, toilet and under-floor heating. Cabins also include air conditioning with individual temperature control, recessed lighting and wardrobe space.

**Gold Cars** contain five en suite cabins per car, each configured with an upper and lower berth and able to accommodate a double, twin or single bed occupancy. Gold cabins are 77 square feet (note: the 5th
compartment is of a slightly different layout and measures 68 square feet). The lower berth is a sofa by day and converts to a double bed that is 4 feet 5 inches by 6 feet 3 inches, and the upper berth folds down to a twin bed that is 2 feet 9 inches by 6 feet 3 inches.

Information

Dates
March 26 to April 13, 2016 (19 days)

Size
This program can accommodate 44 participants. Single accommodations are extremely limited; please call for availability.

Cost*
$25,495 per person, double occupancy
$38,995 per person, single occupancy **
  *Association nonmembers add $300 per person
  **Single accommodations in a smaller cabin (33 square feet) are available at a reduced rate.
  Contact our office for details. Tel: 650-725-1093

Included
- 6 nights of deluxe hotel accommodations
- 11 nights aboard private trains
- 17 breakfasts, 16 lunches and 17 dinners
- Welcome and farewell receptions
- Gratuities to guides, drivers and train crew for all group activities
- All tours as described in the itinerary
- Flight from Istanbul to Mashhad on April 5
- Visa fees for Iran
- Group transfers and baggage handling on program arrival and departure days
- Minimal medical, accident and evacuation insurance
- Educational program with lecture series and pre-departure materials, including recommended reading list, a selected book, and travel information
- Services of our professional tour manager to assist you throughout the program

Not Included
- International and domestic airfare
- Passport and Turkish visa fees
- Immunization costs
- Meals and beverages other than those specified as included
- Independent and private transfers
- Trip-cancellation/interruption and baggage insurance
- Excess-baggage charges
- Personal items such as internet access, telephone and fax calls, laundry and gratuities for ongroup services
Terms and Conditions

Deposit and Final Payment
A $1,000-per-person deposit is required to hold space on this program. Sign up online at alumni.stanford.edu/trip?budapest2016 or call the Travel/Study office at (650) 725-1093. Final payment is due 120 days prior to departure. As a condition of participation, all confirmed participants are required to sign a Release of Liability.

Cancellations and Refunds
Deposits and any payments are refundable, less a $500-per-person cancellation fee, until 120 days prior to departure. After that date, refunds can be made only if the program is sold out and your place(s) can be resold, in which case a $1,000-per-person cancellation fee will apply.

Insurance
Stanford Travel/Study provides all travelers who are U.S. or Canadian citizens with minimal medical, accident and evacuation coverage under our group-travel insurance policy. Our group policy is intended to provide minimal levels of protection while you are traveling on this program. You may choose to subscribe to optional trip-cancellation and baggage insurance. Information offering such insurance will be provided to travelers with their welcome materials. The product offered includes special benefits if you purchase your policy within 14 days of written confirmation of your participation on the trip.

Eligibility
We encourage membership in the Alumni Association as the program cost for nonmembers is $300 more than the member’s price. Families and trip companions may travel on one membership. Call (650) 725-0692 or visit alumni.stanford.edu/goto/membership for more information or to purchase a membership.

Responsibility
The Stanford Alumni Association, Stanford University and our operators act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and exercise every care possible in doing so. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any automobile, motorcoach, launch or any other conveyance used in carrying out this program or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the program. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, force majeure or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger as tour rates provide arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to this published itinerary as may be deemed necessary. The right is reserved to cancel any program prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. The right is also reserved to decline to accept or retain any person as a member of the program. No refund will be made for an unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. Baggage is carried at the owner’s risk entirely. The airlines concerned are not to be held responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not onboard their plane or conveyance. Neither the Alumni Association, Stanford University nor our operators accept liability for any carrier’s cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a non-refundable ticket connected with the tour. Program price is based on rates in effect in November 2015 and is subject to change without notice to reflect fluctuations in exchange rates, tariffs or fuel charges.

California Seller of Travel Program Registration #2048 523-50

© COPYRIGHT 2015 STANFORD ALUMNI ASSOCIATION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
Contact Information

Visit us online to reserve space:

Questions? Call us at (650) 725-1093 or email us at travelstudy@alumni.stanford.edu

Stanford Alumni Association
Stanford Travel/Study
Frances C. Arrillaga Alumni Center
326 Galvez Street
Stanford, CA 94305

Stanford Travel/Study is a program of the Stanford Alumni Association