Budapest to Tehran by Train

ABOARD THE GOLDEN EAGLE
DANUBE EXPRESS

March 26 to April 13, 2016
Board the luxurious *Golden Eagle Danube Express* in Budapest, Hungary, bound for Tehran and experience 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 Transylvanian and Ottoman territory into 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 explore 10 UNESCO World Heritage sites in five fascinating countries along the way, and finish by experiencing the openhearted hospitality of the people of Iran. Join us on this epic journey through an unfamiliar and atmospheric part of the world.

![Persepolis, Iran](cover:Persepolis, Iran)

**Highlights**

**BE AMAZED** by a show of traditional expert Hungarian horsemanship on the *puszta*, the vast Hungarian plain.

**EXPLORE** an underground residential area and church, all hewn from soft tuff rock in Turkey’s otherworldly Cappadocia region.

**PONDER** the past amid the ruins of legendary Persepolis, Darius I’s ceremonial capital and one of the best-preserved sites remaining from the ancient world.

**STROLL** through Shiraz’s peaceful gardens where Sufi poets meditated in medieval times, and marvel at the tiled mosques and squares of Isfahan.

![Akdamar Island on Lake Van, Turkey](cover:Akdamar Island on Lake Van, Turkey)
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

WALTER FRANZ, ‘62, VOYAGE FROM SINGAPORE TO INDIA, 2011

S T A N F O R D T R A V E L / S T U D Y

OR BY PHONE: (650) 725-1093
**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 (B/L/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 and 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. GOLDEN EAGLE DANUBE EXPRESS (B/L/D)

**TUESDAY, MARCH 29**
**BELGRADE / 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. GOLDEN EAGLE DANUBE EXPRESS (B/L/D)

**THURSDAY, MARCH 31**
**VELIKO TARNOVO, BULGARIA / KAZANLUK**
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. Near Kazanluk, visit an ancient UNESCO-listed Thracian tomb site. This evening we head for Turkey. GOLDEN EAGLE DANUBE EXPRESS (B/L/D)

**SATURDAY, APRIL 2**
**ISTANBUL**
After a morning spent visiting several of Istanbul’s numerous historic sites, return to our train and continue our journey eastward to Cappadocia. GOLDEN EAGLE 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. Visit the Blue Mosque with its six minarets; Hagia Sophia, built in the 6th century by Emperor Justinian; Topkapi Palace, once the enormous residence of the Ottoman Sultans and now a renowned museum of the arts; and the Grand Bazaar, one of the largest covered markets in the world, filled with treasures of every description. ISTANBUL HOTEL TBD (B/L/D)

**MONDAY, APRIL 4**
**CAPPADOCIA**
Today we explore more of the geological and cultural wonders of Cappadocia before continuing our journey east across Turkey’s Anatolian Plateau. GOLDEN EAGLE DANUBE EXPRESS (B/L/D)

**SUNDAY, APRIL 3**
**CAPPADOCIA**
Awake this 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 EVLERİ HOTEL (B/L/D)

**TUESDAY, APRIL 5**
**LAKE VAN / VAN**
The next destination on our rail journey is Lake Van in easternmost Turkey, where we stop at Tatvan on the shores of this large lake. Visit Akdamar Island’s 10th-century Armenian Church of the Holy Cross, known for its high reliefs and interior frescoes. Continue to the Old City of Van, the ancient...
capital of the Urartu Empire and later an Armenian city that was destroyed in World War II. Tonight our train crosses the border into Iran. GOLDEN EAGLE DANUBE EXPRESS (B,L,D)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6
ZANJAN, IRAN
After breakfast, visit Zanjan’s UNESCO-listed mausoleum at Soltaniyeh, built in the 14th century by a Mongol sultan to house the remains of Imam Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed. The sultan later decided that he himself should be buried there instead. The 150-foot-high dome, or gonbad, covered in turquoise faience, is a masterpiece of early Islamic architecture. Later tour the Rakhkt Shoor Khaneh with its displays of regional costumes and Zoroastrian relics. Continue eastward by train across Iran toward Mashhad.

GOLDEN EAGLE DANUBE EXPRESS (B,L,D)

THURSDAY, APRIL 7
MASHHAD
This morning arrive in Mashhad. 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 DANUBE EXPRESS (B,L,D)

FRIDAY, APRIL 8
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 DANUBE EXPRESS (B,L,D)

SATURDAY, APRIL 9
SHIRAZ / PERSEPOLIS
One of the most important cities of medieval Islamic times, Shiraz, birthplace of the Persian language, Farsi, 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. Later, 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. GOLDEN EAGLE DANUBE EXPRESS (B,L,D)

SUNDAY, APRIL 10
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 DANUBE EXPRESS (B,L,D)

MONDAY, APRIL 11
TEHRAN / DISEMBARK
After breakfast, arrive in Tehran and disembark our train. 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. Begin our tour by visiting the Crown Jewels Museum to view royal jewelry, the world’s largest uncut diamond and the Naderi Throne. After lunch, tour the opulent Golestan Palace complex, once a fortress and now a UNESCO World Heritage site. ESPINAS HOTEL (B,L,D)

TUESDAY, APRIL 12
TEHRAN / U.S.
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)
Golden Eagle Danube Express

The Golden Eagle 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. Since alcohol is strictly forbidden in the Islamic Republic of Iran, beer and wine will be served with meals and in the bar only during the portion of the trip from Budapest to the Iranian border. No alcohol will be served once inside Iranian territory. 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 arm-chairs; 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, each with two lower sleeping berths in an “L” configuration. Deluxe double cabins are 99 square feet and measure 6’4” by 15’6”, including the bathroom area.

Program Cost*

Rates are per person, based on double occupancy, unless otherwise noted.

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<th>CATEGORY</th>
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<td>DELUXE DOUBLE CABIN</td>
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<td>DELUXE SINGLE CABIN</td>
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* Association nonmembers add $300 per person.
** Single accommodations in a smaller cabin (33 square feet) with shared bathroom and shower are available at a reduced rate. Contact our office for details.

Below, image on left depicts a cabin by day and the next image a cabin by night.
DATES
March 26 to April 13, 2016 (19 days)

SIZE
Limited to 40 participants

INCLUDED
6 nights of deluxe hotel accommodations ■ 11 nights aboard the Golden Eagle Danube Express private train ■ 17 breakfasts, 16 lunches and 17 dinners ■ Welcome and farewell receptions ■ Gratuities to guides, drivers and train crew for all group activities ■ All tours and excursions as described in the itinerary ■ Visa fees for Iran ■ 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 U.S. 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 nongroup services

AIR ARRANGEMENTS
International and U.S. domestic airfare is not included in the program cost. Round-trip, economy-class airfare on Lufthansa from San Francisco to Budapest via Frankfurt and return from Tehran via Frankfurt is approximately $1,500 as of July 2015 and is subject to change without notice. Information on recommended flight itineraries will be sent by our designated agent.

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 included in this program and the train are air-conditioned, buses and many of the museums, mosques and ruins we visit are not air-conditioned. Riding the train can be bumpy and noisy; participants should feel comfortable walking without assistance between train cars while the 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.

Deposit & Final Payment
A $1,000 deposit is required to hold space for this program. Sign up online at alumni.stanford.edu/trip/budapest2016 or call the Travel/Study office at (650) 725-1033. 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 & 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. We recommend trip-cancellation insurance; applications will be sent to you.

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 baggage and trip-cancellation 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 members’ price. Families and trip companions may travel on one membership. For more information or to purchase a membership, call (650) 725-0692 or visit alumni.stanford.edu/goto/member.

Responsibility
The Stanford Alumni Association, Stanford University and our operators act only as agents for the passenger with respect to transportation and rail arrangements and exercise every care possible in doing so. However, 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. It is understood that the train’s ticket, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the passenger and the train company. 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 nonrefundable ticket in connection with this tour. Program price is based on rates in effect in July 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
“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 BY TRAIN, 2015