Persian Splendor:
Journey to Ancient Iran

September 13 - 28, 2012
Escorted by Dr. Abbas Alizadeh
Dear Members and Friends of the Oriental Institute,

I want to invite you to join Abbas Alizadeh in exploring one of the most magnificent civilizations of the Near East. The Oriental Institute has long been a pioneer in the discovery of ancient Persia. It was the first American research institution to conduct excavations in Iran with groundbreaking work on Persepolis that revealed the magnificent reliefs of the Apadana and an archive of administrative tablets that recorded the daily life of the Achaemenid Empire (550-330 BC). Subsequent projects over the last eight decades uncovered one of the most complete sequences of prehistoric and historic cultures in Iran.

Dr. Abbas Alizadeh has been critical to the success of the Oriental Institute’s research into Iranian prehistory. Combined with his intimate knowledge of local history, art, and culture, guests will be able to develop a deep appreciation of Iran’s antiquity and the tremendous changes it has experienced through the centuries.

Thursday-Friday, September 13–14
Chicago to Tehran
Flights with KLM depart the US in the afternoon. There is a stopover in Amsterdam with flights arriving in Tehran late in the evening (11:10 PM). Upon arrival, guests transfer to the 5-star Espinas Hotel in downtown Tehran.

Saturday, September 15
Tehran
Today, we discover the masterpieces of Iranian artwork in Tehran’s museums. Iran’s wealth is visible in silk carpets and priceless crown jewels. Its diverse cultural heritage shines in its collection of calligraphy, ceramics, and sculpture. A great day for art lovers.

Sunday, September 16
Day in Tehran, overnight train to Ahwaz
Dr. Alizadeh will explain the highlights of Iranian art and culture from its humble beginnings to the beautiful artifacts of bygone empires at the Archaeological Museum. Then enjoy the traditional life in Iran at the exhibits of Golestan Palace before enjoying a classic Persian meal, Dizi, or “twice-over” soup. Tonight, we transfer to Ahwaz via train.

Monday, September 17
Ahwaz
Explore ancient Shushhtar, whose 1,800-year old mills and bridges symbolize the dramatic changes to Iran’s ancient economy that ushered in a new golden era. Lunch is served beside the Karun River, a perfect vantage point to enjoy the archaeology. Sleep at the beautiful Fair Hotel.

Tuesday, September 18
Ahwaz
Discover the origins of Iran’s oldest civilization, Elam, with a morning visit to Susa. We enjoy an picnic lunch before visiting the grand ziggurat at Chogha Zanbil. Evening at leisure.

Wednesday, September 19
Shiraz
The drive to Shiraz follows the ancient route into the highlands. The major site is Shapur I’s (AD 240–272) grand city of Bishapur. See the nearby reliefs at Tang-e Chogan, which tell the story of Iran’s ongoing rivalry with ancient Rome. Then explore the ruins of Shapur’s city after lunch. Transfer to the 5-star Homa Hotel in Shiraz.

Thursday, September 20
Shiraz
Wake up in Shiraz, the City of Roses, to experience one of the most significant Safavid private palaces. Then we start the day at Chehel Sotun, a magnificent palace of a 1,000-year old mosque architecture of a 1,000-year old mosque. In its heyday under the Safavid king, Shah Abbas I (AD 1587–1629), Esfahan was considered “half the world”. We start the day at Chehel Sotun, a magnificent Safavid private palace. Then we arrive at Esfahan’s grand bazaar with the royal shrine, mosque, bazaar, and government buildings. After lunch at the square, we visit the home of a master miniaturist painter before enjoying some of Esfahan’s historic bridges.

Wednesday, September 26
Esfahan
Esfahan’s Jameh Mosque is a veritable encyclopedia of architecture that has been renovated for over 1,000 years. In the afternoon, we explore Esfahan’s Armenian side at the Vank Cathedral before dinner at the extravagant royal caravanserai.

Thursday, September 27
Tehran
On the morning of the last day we visit the 700-year old shrine at Naqsh-e Rustam. Then we continue to Kashan, an oasis in the desert with a historic bathhouse and gardens. After lunch, guests go inside the private house of one of Kashan’s wealthy merchants and learn about the importance of herbal essences in Iranian cuisine and medicine. Evening in the Esplas Hotel.

Friday, September 28
Tehran to Chicago
Your flight departs early in the morning with a stopover in Amsterdam before arriving in Chicago in the afternoon (2:10 PM), full of stories, pictures, and an unforgettable experience in Iran.

Abbas Alizadeh is a Senior Researcher at the Oriental Institute Museum and director of the Iranian Prehistoric Project. During the last 30 years, Dr. Alizadeh has provided a vital link between archaeologists in Chicago and Iran, leading important collaborative projects at the National Archaeological Museum and in the field. The result will be a mix of academic and cultural insights that only a professional archaeologist of Dr. Alizadeh’s caliber can bring.

Dr. Gil J. Stein
Director, Oriental Institute
**RESERVATION FORM**

**PERSIAN SPLENDOR: JOURNEY TO ANCIENT IRAN**

Please reserve a space for the following participants:
Name #1 (Legal name exactly as it appears on passport):

Name #2 (Legal name exactly as it appears on passport):

Street Address:

City, State, Zip code:

Daytime Phone:  
E-mail address:

☐ Enclosed is a deposit of $ _________________________ ($1000/PP, payable to Cultural Cache Tours)

☐ Please charge my deposit of $ _________________________ to my credit card

**PAYMENT INFORMATION**

Name listed on Credit card:

☐ MC  ☐ Visa  Card Number___________________________________________________  Exp. __________  CVC (3-digit code)__________

☐ I will be sharing a room with  

☐ I request a roommate and understand a roommate is not guaranteed

☐ I would like to be contacted to discuss travel insurance  

☐ I would like to be contacted to discuss flight options

☐ I /we have read the terms and conditions (below) and agree to all therein

**SIGNATURE**

**DATE**

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<th>Cost of Tour:</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$5,950 (Land Only)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>$7,450 (Includes Airfare from Chicago)</td>
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<td>Single Supplement: $900</td>
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**THE TOUR RATE INCLUDES:**
- Accommodations in 4 or 5-star hotels
- All meals
- All gratuities to tour escorts, guides, drivers, and porters
- A $600 contribution to The Oriental Institute
- All transport inside Iran and airport transfer when you use the recommended KLM flight
- All fees for museums or sites while on tour
- Comprehensive pre-departure guide and notes to help you get ready for your trip

**NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR COST:**
- Passport and visa fees
- Airfare
- Travel insurance
- Excess baggage charges
- Transfer to and from the US airport
- Personal expenses
- Internet and laundry charges

**Deposits and Payments:**
A $1,000 per person deposit is required to book. Final Payment is due 60 days before departure (July 13th, 2012).

**Insurance:**
Purchasing comprehensive travel insurance that includes trip cancellation coverage is highly recommended. By purchasing comprehensive travel insurance within 14 days of your initial deposit, Travelguard will waive the usual exclusion for pre-existing medical conditions.

**Tariff:**
These prices are based on foreign exchange rates in effect on December 2011 and with a minimum of 10 participants. Airfare price guarantee only applies until 60 days before scheduled departure when using KLM (July 13, 2012). The guaranteed rate only applies to the recommended KLM flight.

**Cancellations:**
- More than 30 days before departure: $50 administrative fee per person
- 30-15 Days before departure: 25% of the listed tour price
- 14-03 Days before departure: 50% of the listed tour price
- 02-01 Days before departure: 75% of the listed tour price
- No Show: 100% of the listed tour price

**Limitation of Liability**
The liability of the Oriental Institute as sponsor and Cultural Cache Tours as tour operator is strictly limited. The Oriental Institute and Cultural Cache Tours purchase transportation, hotel accommodation, restaurants and other services from independent suppliers. We will not accept responsibility for wrongful, negligent, or arbitrary acts or omissions of these independent contractors, their employees, agents, or representatives. The Oriental Institute and Cultural Cache Tours are not liable for injury, damage, loss, accident or delay that may be caused by events not within our control, including without limitation, acts of terrorism, war, strikes, the defect of any vehicle, or the negligence or default of any third party.

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**
Please contact the Oriental Institute Membership Office at 773-834-9777  
oi-membership@uchicago.edu or Cultural Cache Tours at info@culturalcache.com