

# TRAVEL LUST

OCTOBER

Vol.1 No.4

2023

## Memorable Iran

(Text by Prabir Dasgupta, some pics by Ratna Dasgupta)



*Aerial view of Tehran with the Elburz Mountains in the background*

We were circling over Tehran and all 6 in our group scanned the skyline of Tehran. The dazzling white snows of the Elburz mountains made such a stunning background that we were glued to our windows till the plane landed.

Iran is not very popular with Indians but if you read the history of Iran you will learn about the close relation between both countries. Iran, our close neighbor to the West with whom we shared a common boundary till 1947, known historically as Persia, has deeply influenced Indian history and culture over centuries. From the 16th to the 19th century, Farsi or Persian, became the lingua franca of India as English is today. Hindu kings communicated with each other in Farsi, which became the language of art, culture, administration and science of the ruling classes. Hindu religious and philosophical texts came to the knowledge of scholars globally through Farsi translations. Farsi directly impacted the growth of Urdu/Hindustani – and indirectly the language of Bollywood today! Persia also left its enduring mark on our art, architecture, dress, food, music, social graces and etiquette. Historians like Richard Eaton, aptly describe this period of Indian History as the 'Persianate Age'. Yet, few tourists from India travel to Iran!

We flew from Kolkata on 3rd October morning and reached Tehran, by Kuwait Airways at around 6:45 the same evening, checking in straight to our quaint and comfortable hotel. We had planned to spend 1 day at Tehran, to get a flavor of the country and board a late evening flight to Shiraz, South Iran, which was the starting point of our Iran tour.

Iran is twice the size of France with a population of 90 million. One of the 10 largest countries of the world, Iran has land borders with 7 countries! Teheran, the capital, is a modern city of 9 million with elegant buildings, chic shops, fancy restaurants, handsome people and women in head scarves, called 'chador.' Women make up a significant number in the Iranian workforce and outnumber men in universities! People are courteous and welcoming, especially, to Indians. Our tour began next morning. We had planned the day to visit key places of Tehran. Including the Golestan Palace and National Museum.

The Golestan Palace, built in the 16th century, is a former Qajar – a Persian dynasty - complex of Tehran enjoying world heritage status. The immaculately maintained Palace comprises of gardens, royal buildings and a stunning collection of Iranian art and crafts including European antiques. The National Museum, comprises of two complexes; the Museum of Ancient Iran and the Museum of Islamic Archaeology and Art of Iran.

The institution displays historical artifacts dating from ancient and medieval Persia, including pottery vessels, metal objects, arms, textile, rare books and coins. Quite an incredible collection, very well maintained and displayed, providing a glimpse into Persia's rich and ancient history.

We reached the airport to find that our Shiraz flight was delayed by more than 2 hours! But time passed quickly – observing our fellow passengers from different parts of Iran, mostly quite well dressed, courteous and disciplined. Suddenly a friendly and important looking person came and shook hands asking if we were from India. This led to an interesting encounter.

He introduced himself as the Mayor of Kerman, an important city, and had studied in India. He warmly invited us to accompany him to Kerman, promising all arrangements for our travel and stay as his guests to show us the 'real Iran!' He would not take 'No' for an answer and was very disappointed when we declined his offer, regrettfully!



Porcelain vase, probably Chinese

Jame Mosque Payab in Yazd, a world heritage site





Nasir-ul-Mulk or Pink Mosque in Shiraz

We arrived at Shiraz, late 4th evening and were driven to our hotel built in traditional style with a central courtyard and garden. Shiraz, very close to the Persian Gulf is a large bustling, historical city close to Iran's huge gas and oil refining centers. Shiraz once famous for its red wine – still fondly referred sometimes as 'Shiraz', is now famous for its historical monuments and beautiful mosques.

Until mid- 7th century Persia was a Zoroastrian Empire with a monotheistic faith founded by Zarathustra. Around 660 CE, the Muslim Arabs conquered Persia threatening its culture and language. With time the Persians accepted Islam and the Arabic script. In the 10th century Firdowsi composed 'Shah Nama' a heroic ballad on the exploits of Persian kings, resurrecting a national pride and leading to a renaissance of Persian language and culture. Though under US sanctions since 1979, we hardly felt any economic distress; shops and bazaars were crowded and there seemed no shortage of anything.

With our driver and guide we had a good overview of Shiraz. In the morning we visited the beautiful Nasir-ul-Mulk mosque, also known as the 'Pink Mosque' built in the 19th century. This beautiful mosque with its stained glass designs, intricate blue tiles and 'five concaved' architecture, is considered a national heritage.

We also visited the marble tomb of Hafiz at Musalla Gardens, on the North bank of a seasonal river.

During Tagore's visit to Iran as state guest in 1932, he visited Hafiz's tomb and remarked that Hafiz was well known to him through his father, Debendranath, a great admirer of Hafiz and a Persian scholar. We rounded up our eventful day with a visit to the spice market. What an abundance of colors, spices, herbs, dried fruits and fragrance—visually and aromatically overwhelming! Our itinerary from Shiraz involved a 1500 km drive in a deluxe tourist coach heading generally East and then North with planned stops at Yazd, Isfahan, Kashan, Qom and finally Teheran.

Most of Iran is a plateau at about 1000 metres altitude, with cities well connected by excellent highways built through arid, desert landscape. Trains are limited but the country is extensively serviced through a network of airlines.

We left for Yazd early morning on the 6th. On the way to Yazd we visited Persepolis, the ceremonial capital of the great Achaemenid Empire, founded by Cyrus and built by Darius the Great in 6th century BCE. In 332 BCE Alexander conquered Persia and razed Persepolis - a major blot in his career. Even today a visitor is awestruck by the enormous ruins of Persepolis with its wall friezes depicting gifts being offered to Darius

Persian carpet at a showroom in Yazd





*Naqsh-e-Jahan square in Isfahan at night*

in homage by his vassal kings. Designed to exhibit the power and pomp of the Achaemenid empire, hold receptions and festivals, Persepolis was also an administrative seat of the empire. On the way out of Persepolis we visited Pasargade, housing the imposing tomb of Cyrus the Great, founder of the Achaemenid Empire.

Our next stop was Yazd, where we checked in at a very old and interesting, traditional hotel, with a large central courtyard and fountains, surrounded by rooms. Yazd was an extremely interesting, old city with well-preserved clay and baked mud structures many centuries old. Ancient travelers like Marco Polo visited the city, known for its wind catchers mounted on houses, tall minarets, silk textiles, carpets and an ancient water supply system from nearby mountains, called qanats. The front doors of old houses had separate knockers for men and women! While walking down the narrow lanes we came across a Jewish temple where a prayer service was being conducted. Yazd also has an active Zoroastrian population with a Tower of Silence and Fire Temple. We were fortunate enough to visit the Fire Temple – a privilege denied to us in India! Though officially an Islamic Republic, Iran now recognizes Monotheistic faiths such as Judaism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism.

Early next morning, 7th, after checking out, we did a final round of Yazd including the Jame Masjid, museum of water – very interesting – and the Towers of Silence. We then drove about 325 Kms to Isfahan, Iran's most beautiful city, where we arrived late evening and checked into a comfortable hotel. Next day 8th, we explored Isfahan, with wide boulevards, gardens and palaces, an urban jewel created by Shah Abbas. The Naqsh-e-Jahan, a vast rectangular square with gardens, fountains, artistic shops, with the exotic blue-tiled Loftollah and 17th century Shah Mosques covered with mosaic tiles and intricate calligraphy were a feast for the eyes.



*Chehel Sotoun Palace in Isfahan built by Shah Abbas II*

We also visited Chehel Satoun, a beautiful palace, with garden and fountains and exquisite paintings, Siosepol Bridge and the Vank Cathedral of the Armenians.

On 9th, we checked out early in the morning to drive to Kashan about 215 Kms from Isfahan. On the way we stopped at Tepe Sialk on the outskirts of Kashan. Tepe Sialk is a large, ancient archeological site in central Iran. This ancient settlement dating back to around 6500–5500 BC, including a ziggurat tower is acknowledged as one of the five most important archaeological sites in Iran. The day at Kashan was spent sightseeing at Bagh e Fin, Sultan Amir Ahmed Bath house and the Abbasi Tea House, famous for its Iranian cookies. We spent a restful night at the Kashan hotel, checking out the next day 10th and drove to Qom.

Qom is the equivalent of the Vatican to the Shia faith, with two famous mosques, theological seminaries, where earnest young black robed seminarians train for a religious life; the Head Ayatollahs of the Shia faith also reside in Qom. In the 8th century Qom became a center of Shia Islam. In 816 Fātimah, the sister of the eighth imam died in the town and was buried there. It became a place of pilgrimage in the 17th century, when a golden-domed shrine over Fatimah's tomb was built. From Qom we drove down to Tehran in the evening, where we spent our last night in Iran at a Tehran hotel.

*Ruins of Persepolis near Shiraz*



*Having breakfast in the Shiraz hotel*



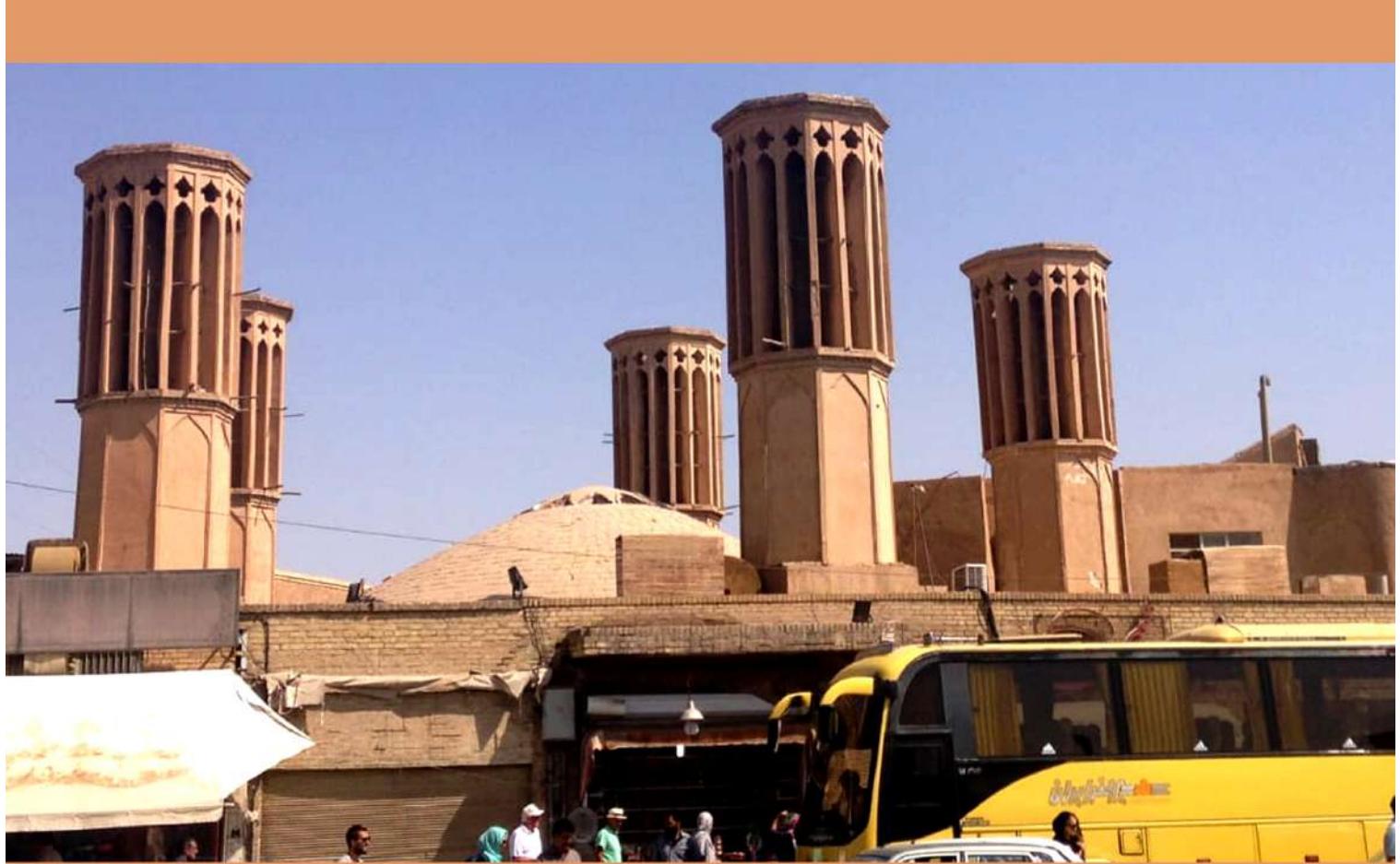


*Fatima-al-Masuma shrine in Qom*

On 11th October, our last day, we checked out at 9 AM to visit the Iran Jewellery Museum, housed in massive underground chambers of the Iran Central Bank; exhibiting a dazzling display of Persian state jewels from over the centuries, including the peacock throne and an unparalleled collection of ceremonial weapons and arms, encrusted with gold and precious stones.

*Tombs of Cyrus the Great in Pasargade, 40 km from Persepolis*





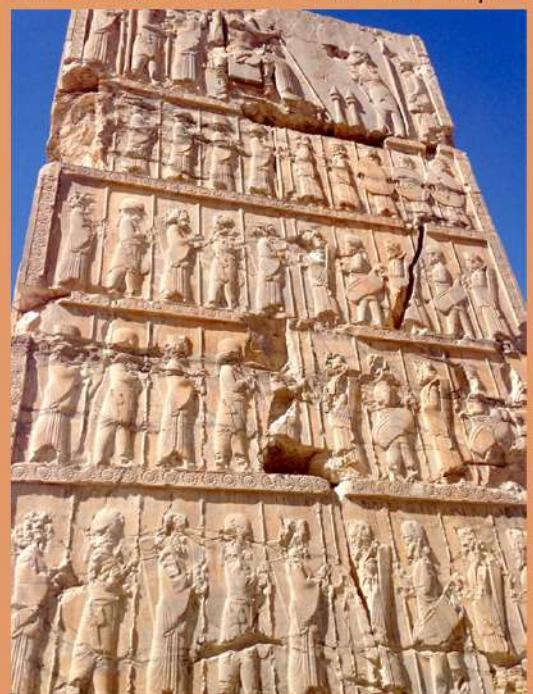
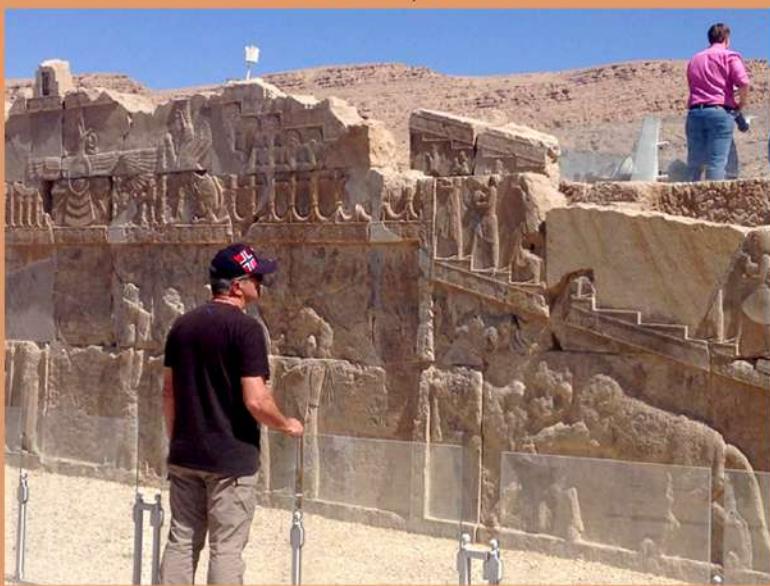
*Windcatchers or badgirs in Yazd*

*An agency in Iran whom anyone can contact  
if interested in tour of Iran  
Aliyeh Jafari Sales & Marketing Manager*

*Sales@key2persia.com \*\*\*\*\* Whatsapp+98-9171001376*

*Ancient bas relief on the walls of Persepolis*

*Ruins of Persepolis*



*One of the magnificent mosques of Iran*





Naranjestan Qavam House in Shiraz, a historical house and garden built around 1879

#### Abbasi Tea House in Kashan

We hadn't imagined or seen anything like this before! We returned to Kolkata on 12th October after an incredible trip and with very positive feelings for Iran, the Iranian people, their language, culture and food and a longing to re-visit!

You could plan to visit Iran. It's a great country with a lot of culture, history & World Heritage Sites, with excellent roads, great food and lots to see and admire. Most important: It is also extremely safe and you will love the hospitality!



# Travel experiences good and bad

(This is the second and concluding part)

Text and some pics by Vasant Sukhatme



Stockholm, a city surrounded by water

My train pulled into the main station and passengers piled on to a large elevator that goes up one floor. Each of the passengers is dragging personal baggage and the elevator becomes quite crowded. As soon as the elevators closed and the elevator slowly made its way up one level, passengers jockey near the door to exit as soon as the door opens. I was in no particular hurry and waited for passengers to exit the elevator. Just as the elevator was emptying, I noticed that my wallet was lying on the floor. For an instant I was mystified how the wallet could be on the floor when it should have been securely in my overcoat!

Luckily for me, I didn't spend much time thinking of how the wallet was on the floor. Instead, I moved my leg and placed it firmly over the wallet and stood still while waiting for the passengers to exit. I also saw immediately two young, shifty-looking men who seemed unusually anxious to exit. I realized immediately that the two were a tag team of pickpockets who prey on distracted or exhausted passengers. Usually one would pick someone's pocket and steal a wallet or cellphone and immediately pass that to his accomplice who would exit the elevator first. These pickpockets are itinerants, usually from the "Gypsy" countries such as Romania and Bulgaria. I stood on top of my wallet, watched everyone exit from the elevator, bent down and picked up my wallet and went on my way. It was one lucky escape!



*A view of the castle which dominates the Stockholm skyline*

I have experienced numerous such episodes in many parts of the world. My wife sometimes teases me that I am a jinxed man and that I naturally attract pickpockets! My final story is from Tokyo, Japan. I have traveled to Tokyo several times and have greatly enjoyed my experiences there. Japan is by far my favorite country to travel to, and I say this even when I do not speak Japanese and Japanese people, by and large, are not familiar with the English language. It is a particularly “safe” country and one is unlikely to experience any street crime such as a robbery or purse snatching; one can even leave cash in one’s hotel room and not fret about losing it to the house cleaning staff. Japan is also striking for the fact that one observes no litter anywhere; unlike in the US or in many other countries, people will not generally drink soft drinks or juices or eat any food outside of a restaurant or home. As a result, no food wrap or other paper is thrown outside.

*Interior of one of the splendid churches of Copenhagen*



*A colourful church dome in Copenhagen*



My last visit to Japan was for the purpose of winding up a collaborative venture with a fellow economist at Osaka. My wife had never been to Japan and she was eager to visit the country. So we made a schedule such that she would fly into Osaka from Minneapolis at about the same day that my work was coming to an end. I received her at Osaka airport and we spent a few days visiting Osaka, Kyoto, Nara, and Himeji Castle before going to Hiroshima and the torii at Miyajima. We then took the Shinkansen (Japan's bullet trains) to Tokyo from where we would return to Minneapolis.

Monika and I spent a few days sightseeing in Tokyo before meeting up with long-time friends of ours, Donna and John Vandenbrink, who then lived in Tokyo. These friends have long lived in Japan and have spent much of their professional lives in that country. They are both fluent in the Japanese language and extremely knowledgeable about that country's cultural milieu and norms.

After our delightful time with them, Donna accompanied us in a taxi to a bus stop from where we were to catch the bus to Narita airport. Narita is the location of Tokyo's main international airport; it is about 40 miles (about 60 km) from the center of the city and is expensive to get to by taxi. However, buses and suburban trains are easily available from Tokyo Station to the airport.

*Mount Fuji, icon of Japan, dominates the skyline of Tokyo*



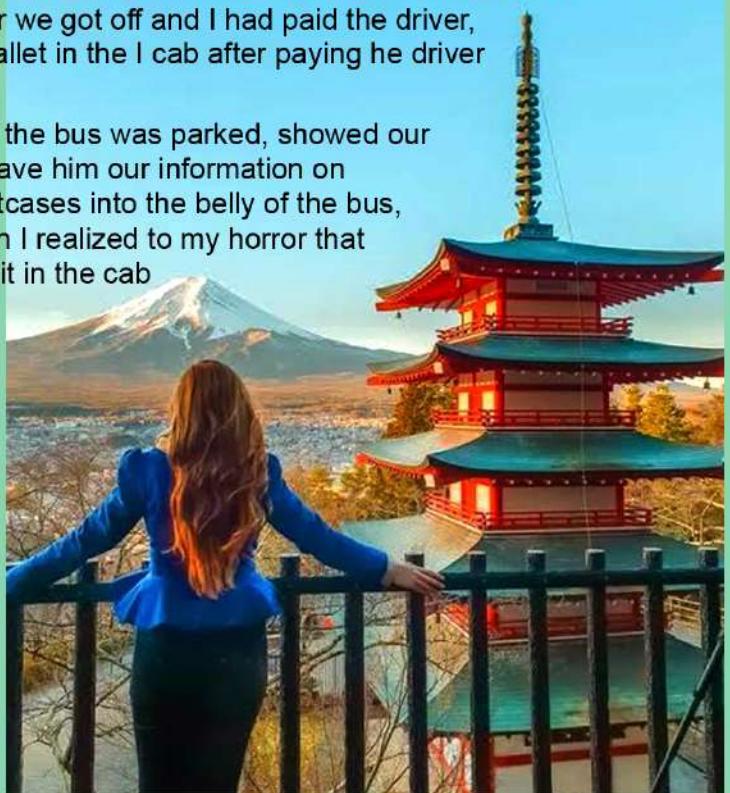


*A colourful garden with Pagoda in Tokyo*

Donna, Monika, and I got into a taxi and Donna requested the taxi driver to take us to the Narita bus drop; we reached in about 15-minutes and after we got off and I had paid the driver, the taxi left. Unfortunately for me, I dropped my wallet in the cab after paying the driver and did not realize that I had done so.

We walked over a couple of hundred feet to where the bus was parked, showed our previously purchased bus ticket to the agent and gave him our information on international airline and destination, loaded our suitcases into the belly of the bus, and were just waiting to board the bus. That is when I realized to my horror that I did not have my wallet with me and had likely left it in the cab. Donna, however, assured me that my wallet was not going to be lost or stolen but would be returned safely, but I remained skeptical.

I had my passport with me but not my wallet which contained my US driver's license, credit cards, and cash. Then, just as the bus was going to depart, the cab driver came running holding a wallet in his hand and speaking in Japanese asking for the owner of the wallet. I recognized the cabbie and stood up from my seat. The driver was visibly relieved at seeing me and immediately handed me the wallet, turned around and started walking away. But from what I knew about the Japanese, this was entirely in character!



*Another beautiful view of Mount Fuji*

The bus started on its way to Narita and my wife and I settled back in our seats with a look of wonderment. We had never experienced anything like this ever in all our travels.

The three episodes in New York, Copenhagen, and Tokyo have taught us that entirely unexpected things occur during one's travels; some end well and some not so. And that we should always be extremely careful with our documents and papers, at home and aboard



Himeji castle, one of the landmarks in Japan



A canal in Osaka downtown, Japan

# Pamukkale -- Natural Wonder of Turkey

*Text and Pics by Diwakar Murthi*



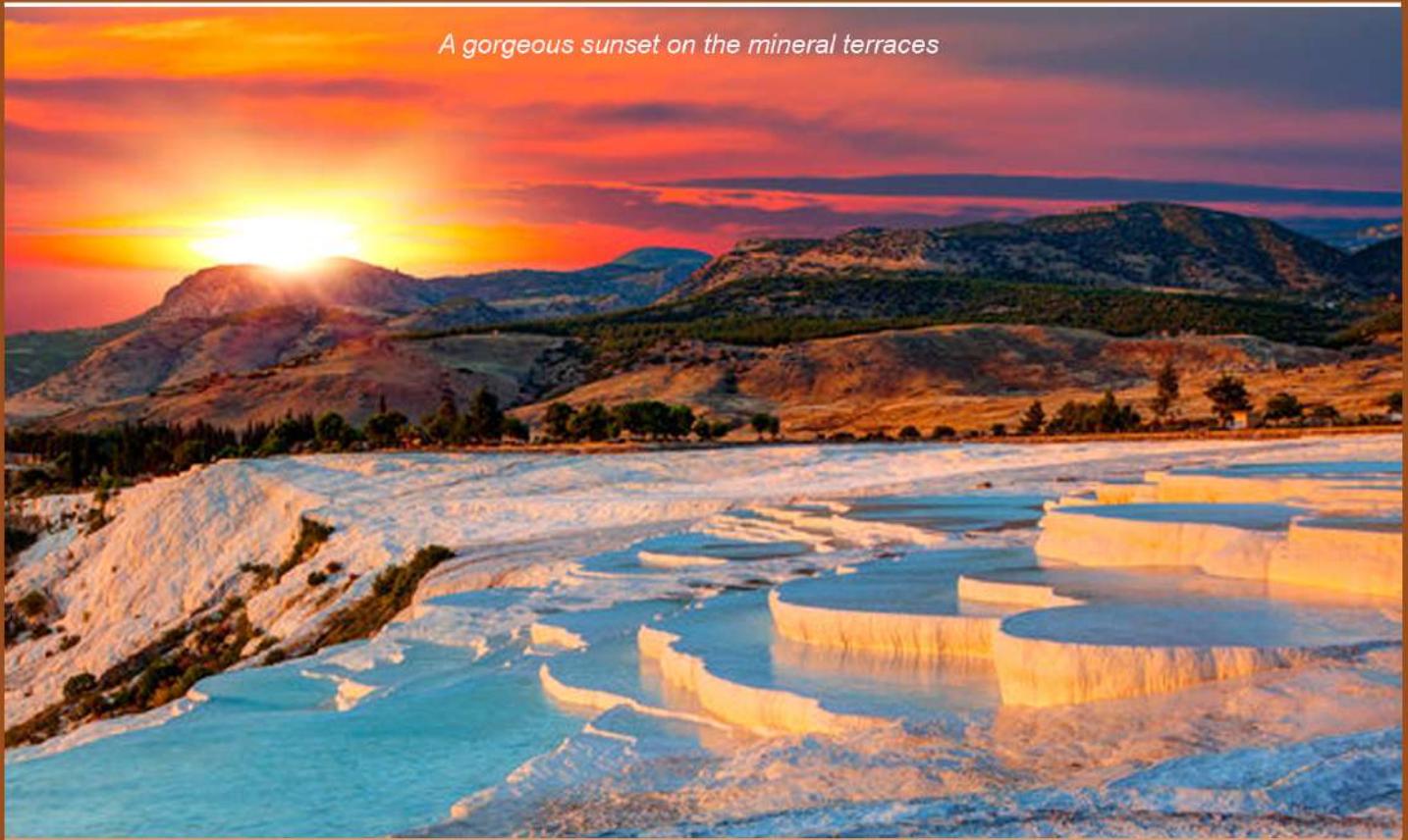
*The breathtaking mineral waters in Pamukkale  
(above and right )*

Last year in May, my daughter was searching for flights for my intended visit to San Francisco and found Turkish airlines to be the best option with a layover in Istanbul. When she asked me if I wanted to look around the city of Istanbul, I jumped at the god send opportunity as I had always dreamt of visiting this lovely historic city. I also realised that I had a very old family friend who had recently relocated to Izmir and would be too happy to host me for 10 days. Thus my trip from Dubai to San Francisco via Istanbul and Izmir took shape.

After exploring the beautiful city of Istanbul for 4 days, I took a flight to Izmir and arrived at my friends' town of Urla, a suburb of Izmir on the Aegean coast. Once there, my friend suggested that I visit nearby places like Ephesus and Pamukkale. Since I had already been to Ephesus many years ago, I decided to visit Pamukkale this time.



*A gorgeous sunset on the mineral terraces*



I took a bus from Izmir bus station to the town of Denzili and a shuttle bus from there to the travertine formations of Pamukkale, meaning cotton castle in Turkish. As we approached Pamukkale, I could see an expanse of white ahead of me resembling snow which are actually calcium carbonate deposits formed over millions of years by conagulation of minerlas in the water

*People walking along the terraces*



# HIERAPOLIS -- ANCIENT CITY IN CENTRAL TURKEY

(Text and some pics by Amara and Gordon, self - styled globe trotters)



*The Theatre of Hierapolis had 45 rows of seats which accommodated 15,000 people*

***Whenever you are visiting Pamukkale in Denzili area of Central Turkey,  
you must make time to visit the ruins of the Ancient city of Hierapolis***



*Two views of the Hierapolis ruins ( above and below)*

Hierapolis is one of the biggest archaeological sites in Turkey due to its size and significance. It takes about 45 minutes to walk between some of the major sites within Hierapolis. If you want to see the ruins well, you could easily spend north of two hours wandering around this historic area.

Hierapolis was initially settled in the 2nd century BC by the kings of Pergamon. These kings were the rulers of an ancient Greek state that ruled much of Asia Minor during this era. The area was valued because it could be used as a thermal spa. How cool that spas were also a thing 2,200 years ago?

However, shortly after being founded by the Greeks, Hierapolis was brought under the control of the Roman Empire. This is why Hierapolis is accurately referred to as Greco-Roman ruins. The ancient city of Hierapolis peaked in its importance during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. Eventually it became one of the great cities in the Roman province of Asia Minor.

The construction of this ancient city next to famous mineral springs is no coincidence. The thermal waters in this area have been considered to have unique therapeutic benefits for centuries. Hierapolis was a popular place to live for elderly and ailing individuals with means.

### ***Some of the Highlights of Hierapolis are:***

#### **Theatre**

There are few things in this world more breathtaking than a beautifully preserved ancient city. Hierapolis' most notable and well-preserved structure is its theatre. Built in the 2nd century AD, this old theatre boasts some of the best-preserved interior details from any ancient Roman ruin. The elaborate carvings and statues that decorate the area around the main stage are stunning.



*The walkway through the ruins*



The theatre boasts 45 rows of seats that could hold up to 15,000 spectators. The central seating area in the front was reserved for priests, special guests, and high-ranking officials.

#### *Antique Pool (Cleopatra's Pool)*

The one-and-only Cleopatra visited Hierapolis to enjoy the thermal waters. But she didn't bathe with the common folks. Nope. Cleopatra has her own pool in the interior of a temple dedicated to Apollo. The temple was destroyed following a massive earthquake. However, the historic and therapeutic bath still remains. Ancient pillars are still scattered at the bottom of the pool.



*The main street of Hierapolis*

*An overall view of the Hierapolis ruins*



#### *The Main Street & Gate Of Domitian*

Easy to find if walking on a parallel path past the travertine cliffs, the main street and the Gate of Domitian showcase an impressive mix of ancient ruins. The gate with its three beautiful arches must have been a grand entrance during the Hierapolis' glory years.

#### *The Necropolis*

Beyond the gate on the main street is the ancient city's necropolis. There are a huge number (over 1,200) of large and elaborately carved tombs. It's amazing to see how the ancient Romans sent the dead into the after life with such glorious tombs.



*Many elaborate exhibits displayed at the ruins site*

*The main arch at Hierapolis*



#### *Apollo's Temple*

Apollo was the most important god during the Hierapolis' Greek period. And even though the temple isn't in the best shape, it is still worth a visit while exploring the ruins. Apollo's Temple was constructed on top of a natural fault line. This was not a lapse in judgment by the designers, but rather a conscious decision to create the impression that the temple had access to the underworld.

#### *Devil's Gate (Plutonian)*

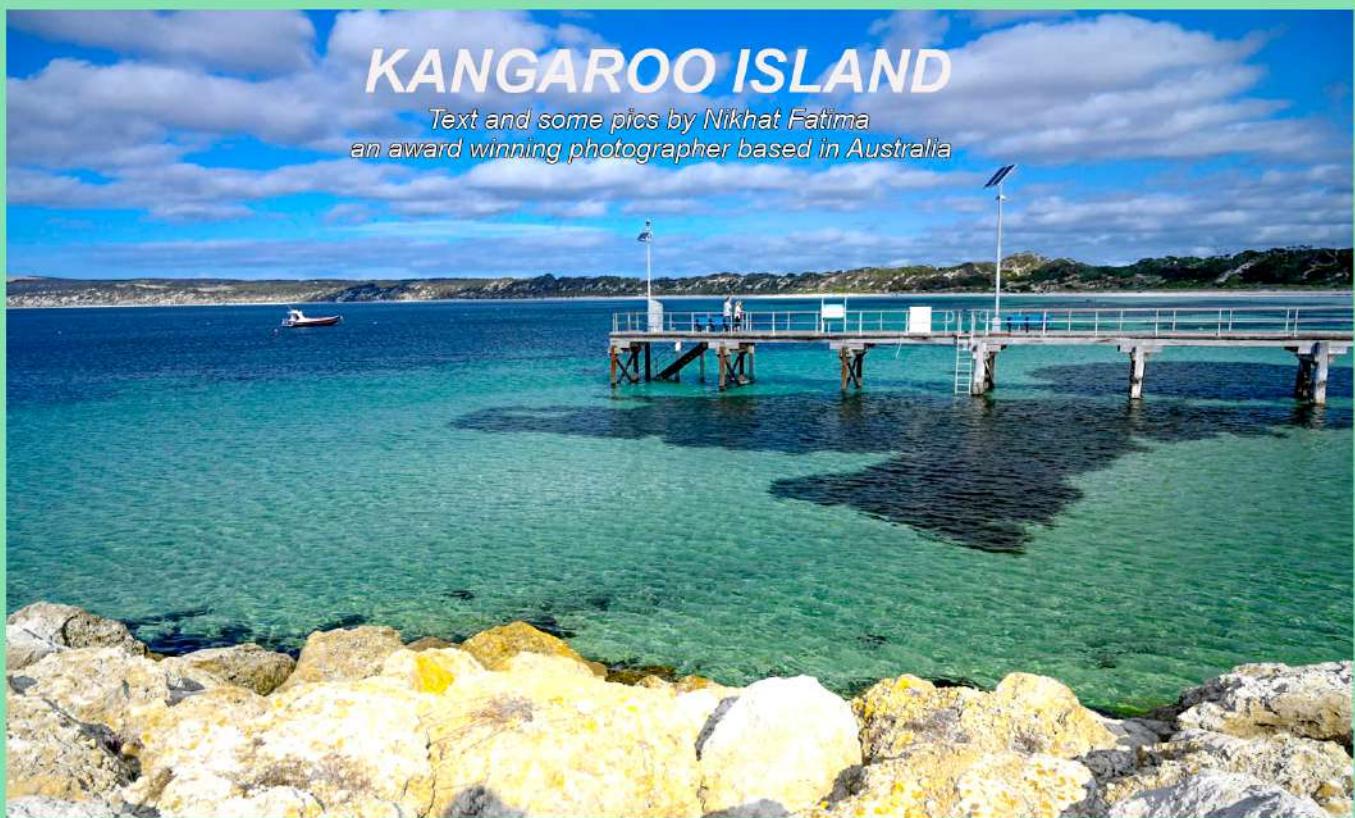
Apollo's Temple contains an area known for being the gates leading to the underworld. The fault lines underneath the temple released a toxic gas that would kill any living creature exposed to it for too long. Ancient priests claimed that it was the gates to the underworld! And the tricky priests knew of ways to enter the toxic part of the temple without breathing in the lethal gases, thereby proving their holiness to the people of Hierapolis. Hierapolis' ancient city wasn't all about good times at the spa. The characteristics of the volcanic environment also led to unique religious practices!



*Cleopatra's swimming pool , now a public bathing place*

# KANGAROO ISLAND

*Text and some pics by Nikhat Fatima  
an award winning photographer based in Australia*



*A beautiful sea scape at Kangaroo Island*

***Our adventure began as we boarded our flight from Sydney to Adelaide. We were excited about our trip to Kangaroo Island, a beautiful destination that we had always wanted to explore. After landing in Adelaide, we picked up our rental car and drove to the ferry terminal at Penne hawk. On the ferry transfer to the island, we enjoyed a thrilling ride and so convenient as our car was able to travel on the ferry, which meant that we could easily explore the island at our own pace.***

We woke up to a breathtaking view of the ocean from our room at Kangaroo Island Sea view Motel. It was the perfect accommodation for us; comfortable, clean and within walking distance of local beaches and cafes. After breakfast, we set off to explore the island. Just as we drove out within 100 metres, we came across an enormous flock of Cockatoos feeding in the grass! It was a sight to behold. As the drive continued, we saw a variety of unique birds and animals native to Australia. It was an unforgettable experience getting up close and personal with these beautiful creatures.

Next day we drove to the Remarkable Rocks, which are a collection of weathered granite boulders located at the edge of the sea. Not only were the rocks a stunning sight, but the view of the ocean was breathtaking. We spent hours exploring the area and taking photos. Later in the day, we took a drive through Flinders Chase National Park, where we saw kangaroos, wallabies, and koalas. It was incredible to see these animals in their natural habitat. We also visited the Seal Bay Conservation Park, which is a cool 800m boardwalk fringing the ocean. At the end of walk is a huge seal colony—which you can only visit with a guide. So excited to see seals swimming and basking in the sun and out numbering the human visitors!

*Seals frolicking on the beach*





*Flinders chase National Park*

We spent the day relaxing and exploring the local town of Kinescope. On one of the drives, we came across a salt lake which was so flat and white, it appeared to be out of this world. Back at the hotel, we enjoyed a cup of pipeing hot tea as the sun went down. The apartment was the perfect size for us, with plenty of room to spread out and relax after a busy day of exploring. We enjoyed a delicious meal together and reminisced about our experiences on Kangaroo Island.

Sadly, it was time to say goodbye to Kangaroo Island. We loaded up our car and headed back to the ferry terminal at Penne haw. We were grateful for the opportunity to explore this beautiful part of Australia, and we couldn't wait to plan our next adventure. As our ferry made its way back to Adelaide, we reflected on the beautiful limestone rocks, endless beaches and the incredible local wildlife we had seen. We knew that we would always treasure the experiences we had shared on this unforgettable journey.



*A general view of Kangaroo Island with steep cliffs reaching down to the sea*



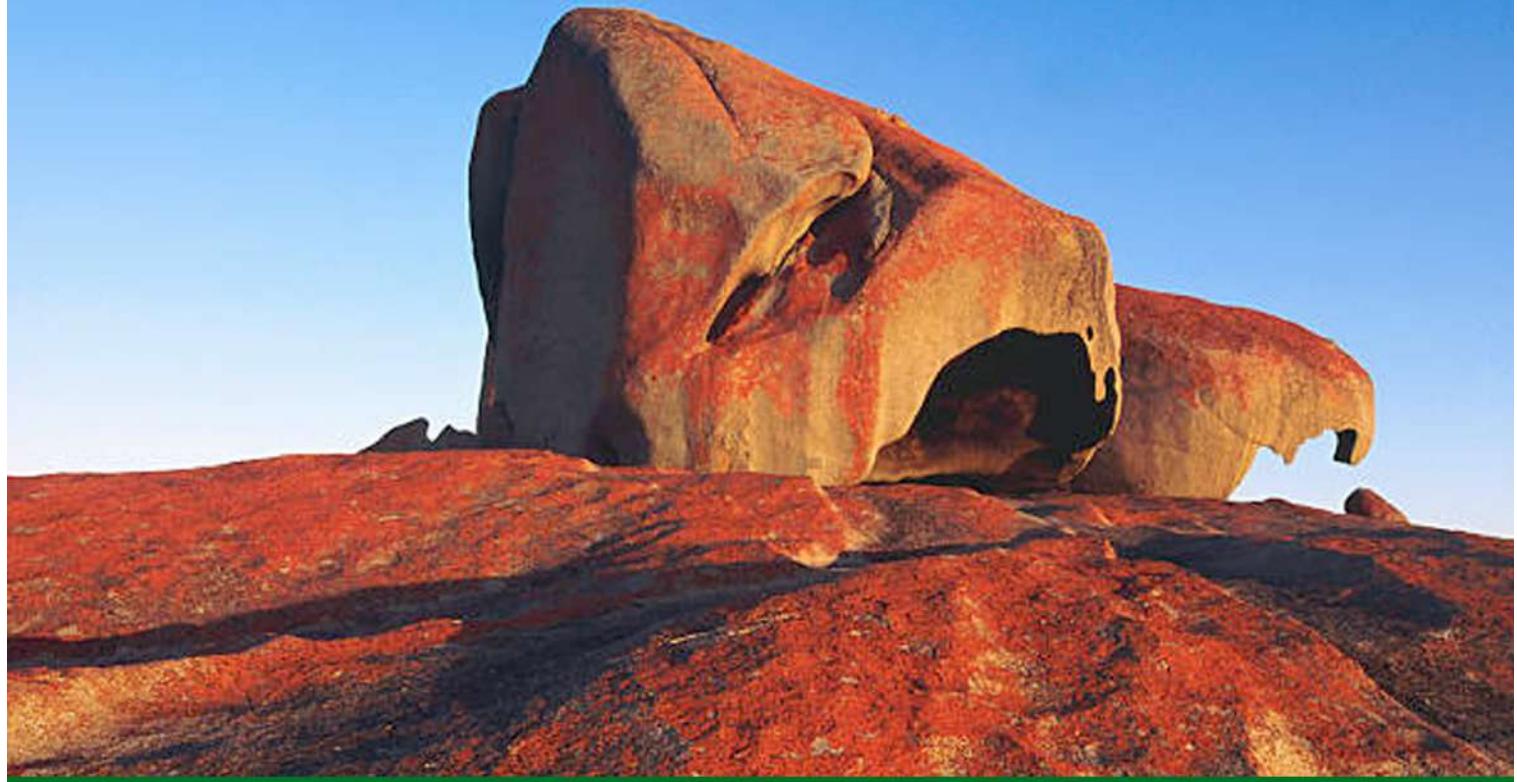
*Cape Barren goose*



*The numerous Kangaroos found there give the name to the island*

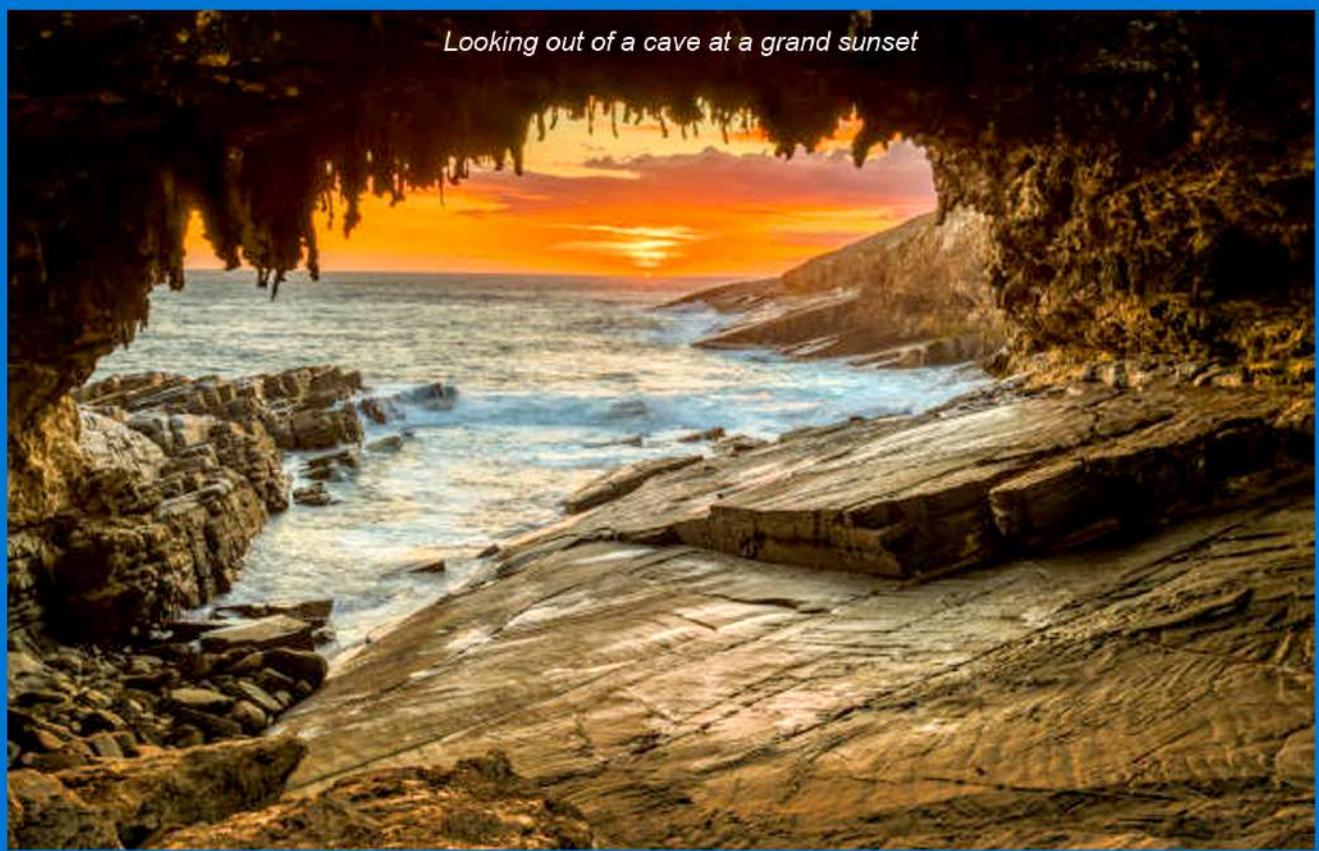


*Huge boulders of different shapes are a peculiarity of the island*





*The azure seas contrasting with brown rocks make for a superb scene*



*Looking out of a cave at a grand sunset*

# Lunenburg---- Pride of Nova Scotia

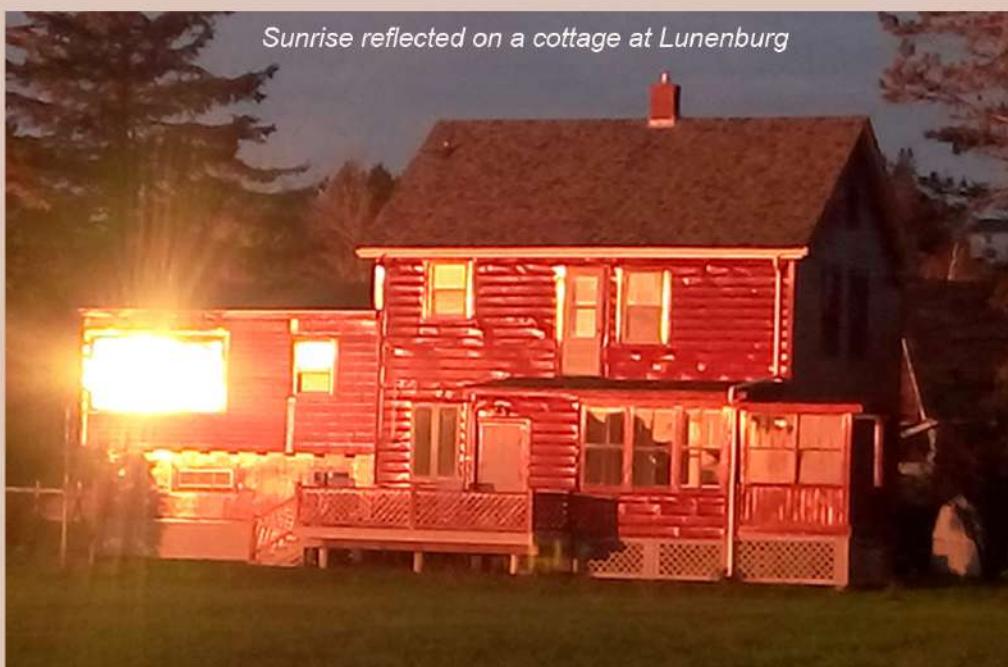
*Text and pics by Abbas Tyabji*



*Fishing boats at the Lunenburg harbour*

When I was thinking of going to Canada way back in 2017 I had a plan to visit Nova Scotia in the fall. While researching on places to visit during this tour, I chanced on some pictures of a place called Lunenburg near the capital Halifax. I was fascinated. Awed you can say. Then and there I decided this was a MUST SEE if we ever made the trip. When I told my son, he was game. "Whatever you decide, We will go along," he said. "We all know you will select the most picturesque places".

That did it so we both sat down and made out an itinerary from Toronto through Quebec and New Brunswick provinces to Nova Scotia.



*Sunrise reflected on a cottage at Lunenburg*

*A heritage church is one of the monuments worthy admiring*



Among the places we pinpointed were the Hopewell Rocks in the Gulf of Fundy (which have the highest tides in the world), the Cabot Trail which loops around the northern part of Nova Scotia, Louisburg, the first fort built on Western soil, and of course, Lunenburg.

Having seen all the other places, we descended on Lunenburg one late evening in mid October. We passed Mahone Bay, a poorer cousin of Lunenburg which gave us an insight into what to expect....and sure enough, Lunenburg did not disappoint. We had booked a homestay right on top of a hill from where we could get a bird's eye view of the basically fishing town. But what a setting. As we sipped tea in the balcony of our room, we realized why Lunenburg had been given a UNESCO World Heritage tag.

I dreamt of seeing the sunrise the next morning and awoke much before dawn to walk down to the water front to await the arrival of the sun God. And what an entry it was. The reflection of the town and the surrounding hills in the bay was unbelievable. I was transfixed, rooted to the ground , just watching the changing colours and the fantastic reflections.

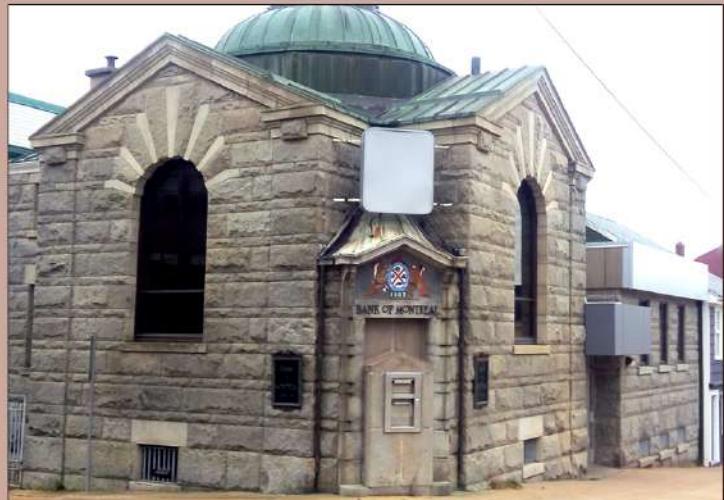
I walked back to the homestay, had breakfast and we all drove around the town to see its beautiful architecture and houses/shops painted in various colours, making for an enchanting scene . Unfortunately, the Bluenose schooner for which Lunenburg is famed, was not in town but we got a brief history about it from the locals, which we reproduce in a box separately.

Thus ended our very interesting sojourn with the renowned sea faring town of Lunenburg.

Lunenburg is the best surviving example of a planned British colonial settlement in North America. Established in 1753, it has retained its original layout and overall appearance, based on a rectangular grid pattern drawn up in the home country. The inhabitants have managed to safeguard the city's identity throughout the centuries by preserving the wooden architecture of the houses, some of which date from the 18th century.

### *Bluenose, Queen of the North Atlantic*

Bluenose was a fishing and racing, schooner built in 1921 in Lunenburg. A celebrated racing ship and fishing vessel, Bluenose, under the command of Angus Walters, became a provincial icon for Nova Scotia and an important Canadian symbol in the 1930s, serving as a working vessel until she was wrecked in 1946. Nicknamed the "Queen of the North Atlantic", she was later commemorated by a replica, Bluenose II, built in 1963. The name Bluenose originated as a nickname for Nova Scotians from as early as the late 18th century.



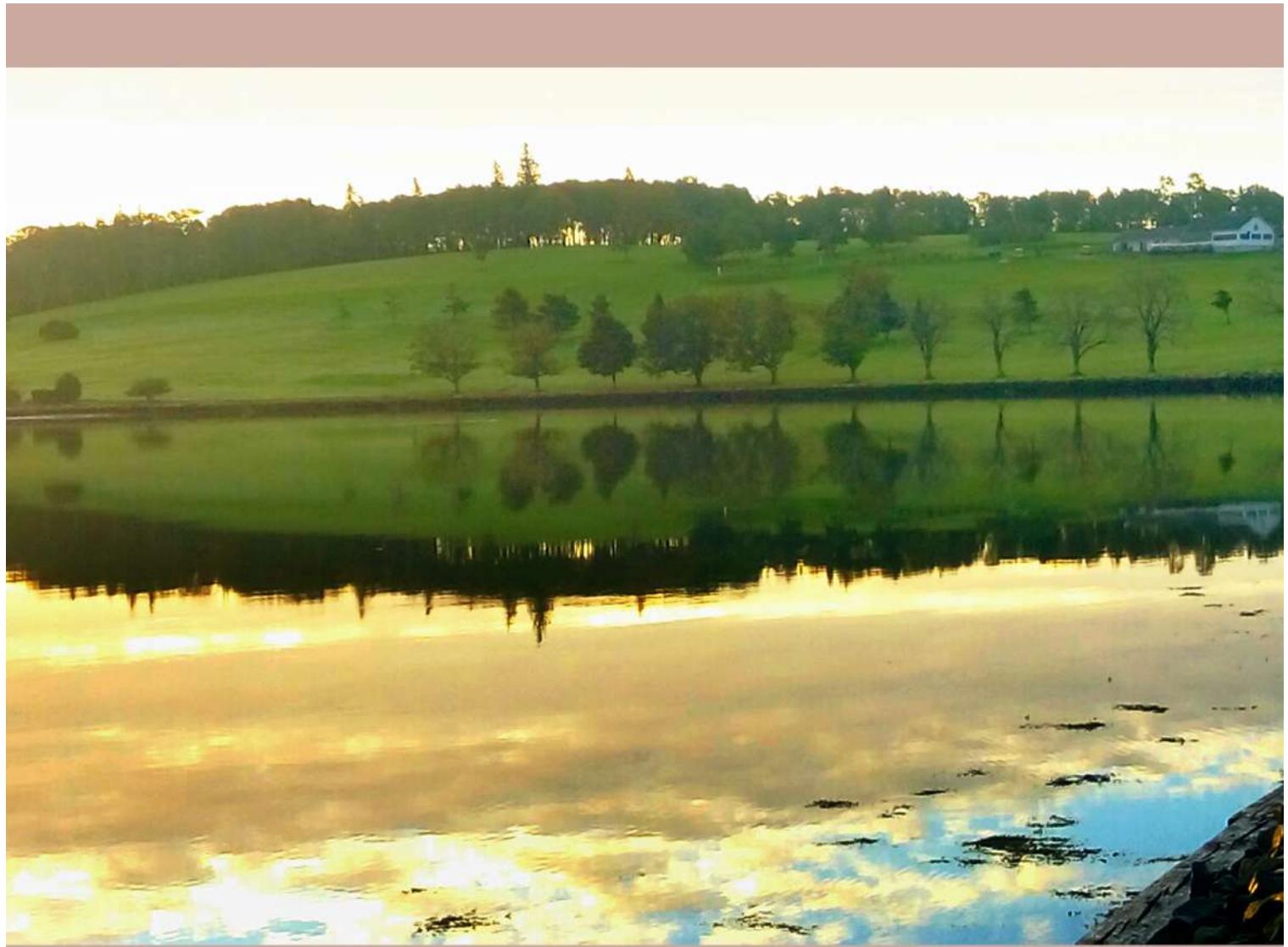
*A stone church stands proudly after many centuries*

Bluenose has been commemorated not once but 3 times by having its image on postage stamps of Canada: in 1929, Bluenose in full sail, was pictured on a 50 cent stamp issued by the Government of Canada. Again on a 60 cent stamp in 1982 to celebrate the International Philatelic Youth Exhibition; and in 1988 the skipper of the vessel, Angus Walters was honored and a stamp depicting Bluenose was issued. The schooner has found place on Canadian coins and is featured on the Nova Scotia driving license plate.

Bluenose appears on a silver dollar issued by the Royal Canadian mint. Bluenose and her captain were included in the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame in 1955. So... in fact Lunenburg, where she was built, deserves much of the credit, and a visit to this historic town is definitely worth it.

*One of the beautifully designed buildings lining the streets*





*Stunning reflections in the sea at Lunenburg*





A ship at anchor at the colourful wharf. Inset features the Bluenose ship on a stamp of Canada



*A magnificent sunrise at Lunenburg*



Colourful houses and stores line the streets of Lunenburg



# ABOUT THE EDITOR

Abbas A, Tyabji is a Hyderabad, India, based photo journalist, who left Tata Motors, one of the largest auto makers in India after heading the Publications Division of the Company over a career spanning nearly 3 decades.

During his tenure he travelled all over India and to neighbouring countries like Nepal, Bhutan, Mauritius and the Middle East on photo journalistic assignments. His articles, pictures and photo features appeared not only in the Company publications but in national and international magazines.

He was invited by the then People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (S Yemen) to photograph the natural and man made wonders of that ancient land and prepare publicity material for their govt. The effort was appreciated by Govt officials and even India's Ambassador to S Yemen wrote an appreciation letter to Tatas on his efforts.

He is the recipient of over 50 national and international awards including:

The President of India's Award for Excellence in Designing and Printing on TWO OCCASIONS

Best Feature Writer Award from the Association of Business Communicators of India 4 times

Best Photo Feature Award from the Association of Business Communicators of India 5 times

The internationally circulated magazine "Bus Ride" from the US found his pictures so exceptional that they selected 2 for the First Place Award in their 1989 Worldwide photo competition, the only time in their history that two pictures were given this honour.

Almost half a dozen of his pictures appeared in Japanese calendars and dozens have graced Indian calendars.

He has also published a book on Hyderabad, for which the text, photography and design was done by him.

For his photo journalistic achievements he has found mention in "Who's Who of India", and "Reference Asia".

He also operates guided, customised tours from Hyderabad and is listed in LONELY PLANET as a Tour Guide.

Contact : email : [abbastyabji@gmail.com](mailto:abbastyabji@gmail.com), mobile : 0091-9391010015



Abbas Tyabji receiving the President of India Award for Excellence in Designing and Printing from then President of India Dr. N. Sanjeeva Reddy