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Isfahan, once one of the largest cities in the world, is the former capital of Persia. It is famous for its architecture with beautiful boulevards, covered bridges, palaces, mosques, and minarets and has long been one of the centers for production of the famous Persian rug. This flourishing beauty found its expression in the Persian proverb "Esfahān nesf-e jahān ast" (اصفهان نصف جهان است): «If you have seen Isfahan you have seen half of the world's beauty».

Isfahan is an important scientific and educational center. One of the most renowned engineering universities in Iran, the Isfahan University of Technology, is located in the city.

Photo: Before a thunderstorm — Isfahan, Iran, July 2007