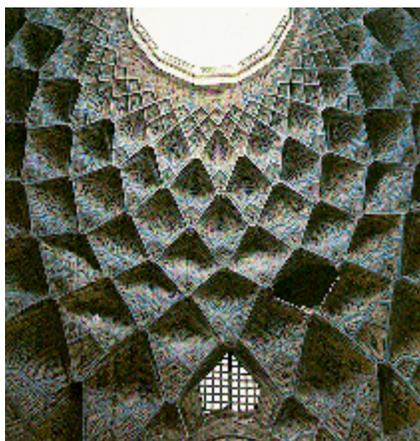


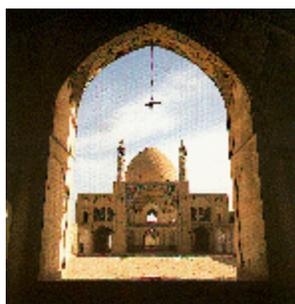
*Province of Esfahan. Altitude 1,600 meters. 260 km S of Tehran, via Qom (105 km) on a good road. 220 km N of Esfahan, via Natanz, on road and track. 250 km N-W of Nain, on road and track.*

Kashan is the first of the large oases along the Qom-Kerman road which runs along the edge of the Great Desert. Its charm is therefore mainly due to the contrast between the parched immensities of the Kavir region and the greenery of the well-tended oasis, to the lively atmosphere of this almost compulsory halt, the restful shade of cupola- or vault - covered houses and the coolness of gardens made even more pleasant by their water - fountains. The caravanserais near the city are in ruins but Kashan's secular function remains.



☛ *"Vault decorations of Bazaar (Timcheh Aminoldowledh)"*

Between Kashan and Fin, there is a mosque-mausoleum overlooked by cypress-trees which serves as a dwelling-place for several families of carpet-weavers. Nearby, a small museum contains a few fine long-beaked vases, a speciality of ancient Kashi craftsmen which later became popular throughout Persia.



☛ *"Aqa's School, (Madresa-e Aga), 19th Century"*

In Kashan and in the neighboring towns of Ravand and Natanz, a picturesque event draws large crowds each year during the month of Moharram. The audience participates enthusiastically in the three day-reconstitution of Hossein's "passion-play" as a great martyr of the Shi'ite faith. The argument of this was written by a Kashi poet at the end of the 16th century.



● *"The portal of Maydan's Mosque"*



● *"The Soltani School 19th Century"*



● *"Broujerdi House"*



● *"Portal of the main portico and the wind towers of Broujerdi House"*

Kashan's water-supply comes from a system of qanats which converge up on the oasis. But the city also benefits from the presence of nearby of an abundant spring which enabled King Shah Abbas the Great to create a blooming garden in the suburb of Fin (6 km south). Bagh-e Fin has its poetic appeal and gardeners are attempting to restore the luxuriance of flower-beds overlooked by century-old cypress-trees.