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National Getaways for the Weary Trauma Surgeon; Part 1: Kish Island

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Operation after operation, day after day, without leave or proper rest, creates a buildup of fatigue and stress. The trauma surgeon, overloaded with professional responsibilities and moral commitments, unconsciously neglects the physical and mental consequences of this daily routine. A buildup of stress is detrimental to one's health and impairs both cognitive function and manual dexterity. It is therefore not surprising that surgeons practicing in stressful medical professions aged 45 years and over have suicidal rates 1.5 to 3 times that of the general population (1). In a study conducted in 2011, which assessed 8000 surgeons, 501 reported suicidal ideation (2). These surgeons were over-worked and "stressed-out". Surgeons, especially those in suboptimal physical shape, become fatigued more easily. Fatigue affects a surgeon's mentality, psyche and self-confidence, which impairs surgical judgment, and thus limits the ability to work efficiently (3). It is therefore imperative that surgeons periodically take leave to "get away from it all", release tension and rest-up. In this issue we present part one of a series of editorials wherein we introduce national attractions and resort destinations for relaxation and recuperation of the weary, over-worked trauma surgeon.

Kish Island

Kish (pronounced Keesh) is a 91.5 square kilometer (35.3 square miles) resort island in the Persian Gulf. It is part of the Hormozgan Province of Iran. Kish has an estimated population of 20 000 and nearly 1 million people visit the island annually (4, 5). Kish Island was ranked among the world's 'top 10 most beautiful islands' by The New York Times in 2010, and the fourth most visited vacation destination in Southwest Asia after Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and Sharm el-Sheikh. Foreign nationals wishing to enter the Kish free zone are not required to obtain visas prior to travel. Valid travel permits are stamped for 14 days at the Kish International Airport. Kish is located in the Persian Gulf 19 km (12 mi) from mainland Iran with an area of around 91 km² (35 sq mi), with an outer boundary of 40 km

(25 mi), and a nearly elliptical shape. Along Kish's coastline are coral reefs and many other small islands. The island is positioned along the 1359 km (844 mi) long Iranian coastline north of the Persian Gulf (6). Kish's climate is considered to be a very dry, semi-equatorial climate. Kish is only a small island, but is laden with tourist attractions.

Shopping Duty-free

It is a free trade zone touted as a consumer's paradise, with numerous malls (Figure 1), and shopping centers.



Figure 1. Paradise Shopping Mall in Kish

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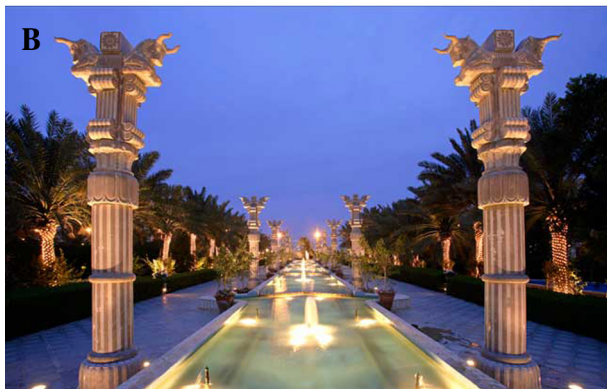


Figure 2. A) Dariush Grand Hotel in Kish, B) Dariush Grand Hotel Entrance at Night.

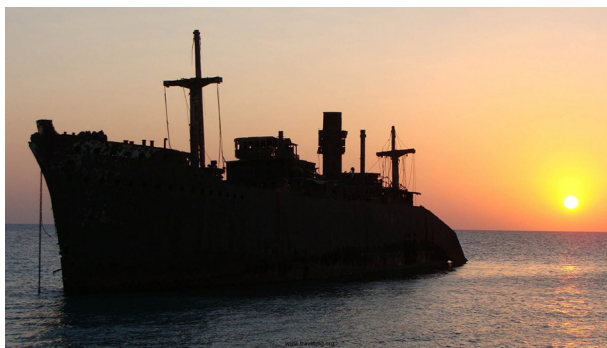


Figure 3. Abandoned Greek Cargo Ship

Resort Hotels

Kish has numerous tourist attractions, and resort hotels. The Dariush hotel architecture mimics the famous Persepolis in Shiraz (Figure 2) (7).

The Greek Shipwreck

The Greek shipwreck, located just off the beach on Kish's south-west coast, is a 1943 cargo steamship, called the Koula F (8). It was originally a British ship, the Empire Trumpet, and was built in Scotland (8). She ran aground



Figure 4. Kish Underground City



Figure 5. The Beach of Kish

in 1966 and all attempts to salvage it failed (8). When the Koula F's crew abandoned the ship they set it on fire, and all that remains is a steel hull (Figure 3).

The Ancient Underground Aqueduct

The ancient underground aqueduct is another attraction, also called the 'Underground City', which is partly open for tourists. It was built about 1000 years ago for transporting and routing the water supply across different parts of the island (Figure 4).

Beautiful Beaches

Beautiful beaches are other attractions that captivate the eyes with their bluish tint and long shoreline which delights many tourists during the winter season. The water is crystal clear and exotic fish can be seen to great depths all year long (Figure 5).

Golfing

As part of the Flower of the East project, Kish will have an 18-hole championship golf course based on PGA standards and a 9-hole course for beginners.



Figure 6. A) Diving in Kish, B) Colorful Exotic Marine Life Near the Shores of Kish



Figure 7. Asphalted Two-Way Bicycle Road on the Shoreline Encircling the Island of Kish

Carting

The Kish Carting Track is one of the largest in Southwest Asia, and one of the first of its kind in Iran which is great for kids.

Water Sports

A wide array of water sports are also available in Kish, such as: snorkeling, scuba diving, jet skiing, diving cruises, water skiing, sea skiffs, cruises to other islands around Kish, parasailing, jet boat rides, cruise fishing boats, pedal boating, banana boat rides, and windsurfing (Figure 6).

Exclusive Swimming Resort for Foreign Nationals

This swimming resort is located on the island's eastern coast with a beautiful panorama of exquisite coral reefs. Tourists prefer to use this spot for scuba diving. Foreign nationals and their family members can use this swim-

ming resort after they have made necessary arrangements with the Kish Tourism Development Center.

Bowling

The Maryam Bowling Complex includes 16 bowling lanes, a health club with fitness suites, and Jacuzzis.

Horse Racing

The Kish Equestrian Club hosts national races and is capable of holding international competitions.

Dolphin Park

The Dolphin Park is a 70-hectare (170-acre) park located at the south-east corner of Kish Island. It is surrounded by over 22 000 palm trees, and includes a dolphinarium, butterfly garden, silkworm compound, bird garden, artificial rain forest, volcanic mountain, orchid garden, and cactus garden. The dolphinarium includes the largest man made pool on the island, and exhibits dolphins, sea lions, and white whales (6).

Bird Garden

The Bird Garden, situated in the park, is home to more than 57 species of birds from around the world, including: pelicans, ostriches, blue-and-yellow macaws, storks, toucans, and swans.

Art Center

The Art Center on the island includes an aquarium that displays marine life unique to the Persian Gulf (6).

Bicycling

The asphalted two-way bicycle road along the shoreline, which encompasses the whole island of Kish, is 75 km long, and besides being a good means of exercise, is also a great way to sightsee and enjoy the scenery. Bicycles may be rented extremely cheap and is fun for the whole family (Figure 7) (9).

Recreational Facilities for Kids

An abundance of recreational facilities are available for children and adolescents. These include: a car track, train ride around Venus Bazaar, tennis courts and an amusement center (10).

Glider Flying

Training classes have been set up for those interested in flying gliders. This has been accomplished in collaboration with the country's Civil Aviation Organization. Recently the first class of trainees obtained their licenses (10).

Boat Rides

Riding in glass-bottomed boats is a convenient way to view the unique Kish underwater world. Tourists can enjoy the beauty and splendor of the natural coral reefs, and the boats are equipped with spotlights which afford clear viewing up to a great depth even at night.

These attractions along with the fine hotels make Kish Island the Editor's number one choice for a vacation for stressed trauma surgeons.

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