

Iran: Not what you'd expect?

I already knew some facts about Iran since I studied about Iran earlier in ninth grade. I already had a view of the Iranian people based on what I had learned. Therefore I knew most of my expectations were valid. I thought the Iranian people were very strict with religion (Islam) and that Iran was ruled in a religious way. From what I heard and learnt earlier I also expected woman in Iran to be below the men and ruled by them. I also thought that Iran was a poor country and that most Iranians were poor. My view pretty much was a strict country ruled by extremely religious leaders and completely supported by the inhabitants that were isolated from the rest of the world. After learning about this some of my expectations changed. I thought the three most interesting areas were the life for women in Iran, the relationship with West and about the religious conditions in Iran.

In Iran there's not a lot of freedom for the women. They're not allowed to do simple things such as riding a bike. It is very strict indeed but what's interesting is that lately a lot of women have started to protest in different ways. A lot of woman has started to wear make up and it's now common to see you women showing their hair (which they're not allowed to otherwise). The reason to that they have started to protest is because they've become more powerful in Iran. The reason to why women have become more powerful and integrated into the society is thanks to the increased access to education. In fact Iran woman are among the most educated and accomplished women in the Muslim world. But the women in Iran are still below the men and a man can easy divorce a woman in difference to a woman who has to get permission from the man. The Iranian woman are on the way though, they're getting more and more freedom and the cloths is just one way to protest.

Iran has for a long time been influenced by the west. It has been allied with USA since the 1950's thanks to the oil resources in Iran (that also made Iran rich). . USA has been influencing Iran in other ways as well. It's illegal to broadcast any other opinions than the government in radio or television but the internet is used by a big part (23 millions) of the Iranians. There they get information and ideas from the world and speak out about their real political feelings. It is pretty surprising that so many people are against the government and thanks to the internet they now can communicate. The internet is from USA so you might say that USA influenced them that way. Then there always been influences in for example movies so even though the government does all they can Iran aren't totally isolated.

Religion is a important and big part of the society and public in Islam. Islamic extremists are ruling the country and the laws are based on the Koran. When you're out in public there are dress codes and for example couples should not hold hand since that is violating the rules. There are plenty of rules such as that and there are "basjis" out there to enforce them (religious guards). Except that the government controls the country by the religion, the majorities of Iranians believes and are Muslims. This might be because a lot of the Iranian culture has been kept trough time thanks to Islam and by keeping its own language. For the moment trough, the truth is that the government with the religion is pushing down Iran the religion at home is different from the one forced on to them.

The most of what I expected about Iran were true. The government is controlling the people and it's very strict in Iran thanks to them. The people and especially women are being living by a lot of rules as I thought. What I didn't expect though was that they are protesting and disobeying against a lot of the rules. I also was wrong when I thought that they were isolated from the rest of the world because thanks to the internet they are connected to the world. Iran are also not a poor country and not all the people support the leaders.