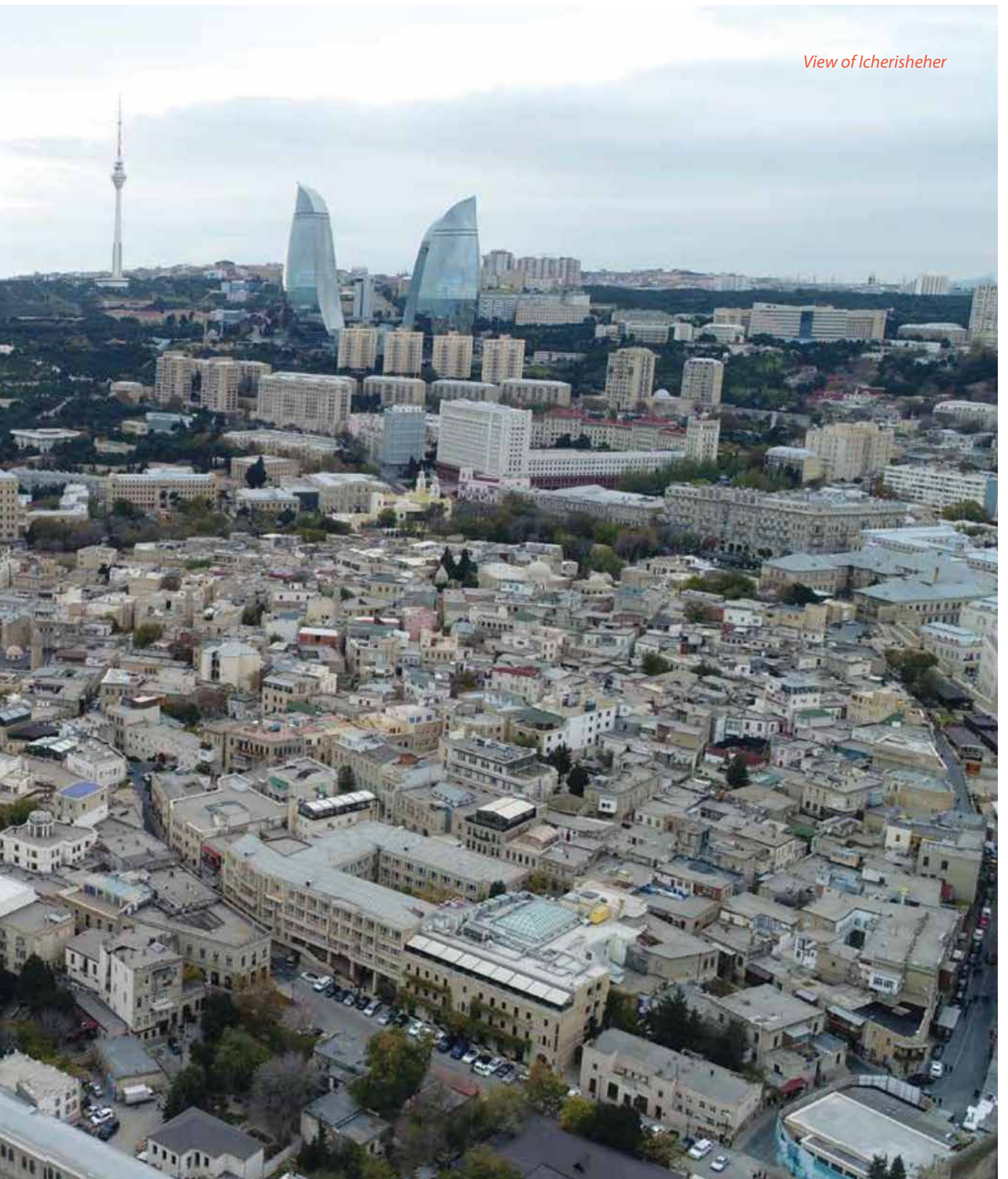


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ICHERISHEHER:
history, archeology,
architecture of Baku

View of Icherisheher



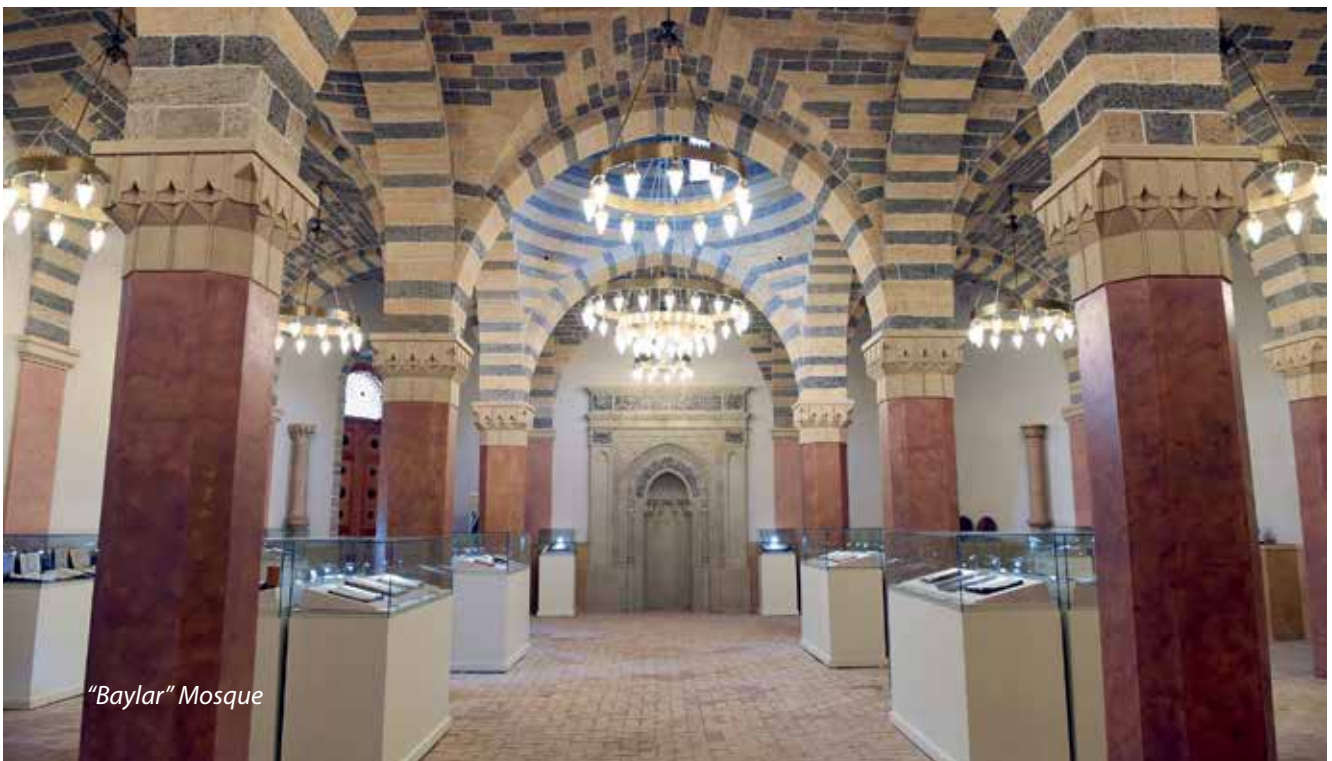
Maiden Tower



Icherisheher is the Baku fortress, the oldest part of the capital of Azerbaijan. The fortress with its narrow streets and old houses is a precious relic of the history of the Azerbaijani people. In November 2000, at the 24th session of UNESCO, Icherisheher, along with the fortress walls and famous monuments, the Maiden Tower

and the Palace of the Shirvanshahs, were included in the World Heritage List. Currently, there are three historical monuments of global, 93 national and 453 local significance on the territory of the "Icherisheher" State Historical and Architectural Reserve. More than 1,300 families live in the Baku fortress, which covers an area

"Baylar" Mosque





of 22 hectares. Having a peculiar layout typical of the historical cities of the East, "Icherisheher" (translated as "inner city") preserves the unique spirit of Baku and naturally ranks among the most popular tourist attractions not just in the capital but throughout Azerbaijan. With this in mind, the "Icherisheher" Museum Center has been established on the territory of the fortress, overseeing the Palace of the Shirvanshahs, the Maiden Tower, the Baylar Mosque, the underground bathhouse, the arched religious and architectural complex, as well as the Gala State Historical and Ethnographic Reserve in the same-named village 30 km from Baku.

Palace of the Shirvanshahs

The state of the Shirvanshahs, one of the most important Azerbaijani states in history, existed from the 9th to the 16th centuries and played a major role in the development of Azerbaijani culture. The capital of the state was repeatedly transferred from one place to another. In the 12th century, Baku became the main city and the Shah's residence was built here. In the 14-15th centuries, it was expanded. The compound has survived to this day and covers an area of 0.6 hectares. The palace is located on a slope and is therefore divided into three

tiers. These accommodate the residency, the divan-khane (court), the Shah's tomb, the tomb of prominent philosopher Seyid Yahya Bakuvi, the family tomb of the Shirvanshahs, a bathhouse, the Murad gate, the remains of the Keykubad mosque.

Maiden Tower

This is a recognized pearl of Azerbaijani architecture and cultural heritage in general. It has long been considered a symbol of the city of Baku. It is believed that the Maiden Tower was built in the 8-7th centuries BC. The height of the northern wall is 28 meters, of the southern wall 31 meters and the thickness of the walls reaches 5 meters. This is an eight-story cylindrical building with a buttress. There is a museum inside the tower.

Arched religious and architectural complex

In 1964, during architectural excavations to the north of the Maiden Tower, an old market square and a colonnade with lancet arches, which originally had a religious purpose, were discovered. This monument belongs to the 12-13th centuries. Several cultural layers have been identified. After restoration, an open-air museum of artistic stone carving began to operate on the territory of the site.

Gala settlement, an open-air museum



Baylar Mosque

This is the latest of the mosques on the territory of the Baku fortress built in 1895. Restoration has been carried out in this temple and then the museum exposition "Holy Relics" was established, displaying editions of the Koran relating to various periods of history.

Underground bath

The monument, dating back to the beginning of the 17th century, was discovered during archaeological excavations near the Twin Gates of the Baku fortress in 2016. Subsequently, restoration and conservation work was carried out. Found on the territory of the bath covering an area of 340 square meters were ceramics, fragments of glass and pottery, a lot of oil lamps, bronze icons, copper and silver coins. There is currently a museum exposition there, reflecting the traditional bathing culture of the Azerbaijani people – an integral part of the centuries-old bathing culture of the Near and Middle East.

Palace complex of Baku khans

Restoration and conservation work was carried out on the territory of the palace of Baku khans, built by order of Mirza Mahammad Khan in 1750. A square was established, combining modern requirements and historical tradition. By the end of this year, there are plans to create a museum of the history of Baku here.



Gala settlement. Ethnographic museum

Baku House of Photography

The House of Photography was established in the House with Chains, one of the best architectural monuments of the 19th century Baku, in 2019. The four halls of the House display an exposition of the best examples of national and world photographic art. The presented photographs reflect the spirit of the city of Baku through historical events and remarkable personalities.

Gala State Historical and Ethnographic Reserve

The reserve covers the historical part of the village of Gala and covers an area of 81.5 hectares. A total of 216 monuments of national and local significance are under protection here, the oldest of which is a settlement dating back to the 3rd millennium BC. The architectural monuments include five mosques, three baths, four ovdans (underground storages of fresh water), underground kahrizes (watercourses), ruins of a castle, a tomb, burial places, and residential buildings. The Antiques Museum and the Archaeological and Ethnographic

Museum complex also function on the territory of the reserve. The Museum of Antiques was founded in 2011 on the basis of the personal collection of an engineer, restorer, philanthropist and disabled veteran of the Karabakh war, Shahid Khabibullayev. The exposition of the museum currently consists of almost 3,000 items. The Archaeological and Ethnographic Museum was established in 2008 on the initiative and under the leadership of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation. Displayed on an area of 1.5 hectares are archaeological materials and architectural monuments typical of the Absheron Peninsula. Among them are burial mounds and dwellings dating back to the 3rd-2nd millennia BC, medieval buildings for residential and public purposes in their original appearance.

In conclusion, we note that permanent and mobile expositions of the Icherisheher Museum Center are shown to visitors with the aid of state-of-the-art technology, thus promoting knowledge about the history and culture of Azerbaijan. 🌟