

The shelter for merchants from all over Transcaucasia, Iran and Russia in Shusha: Caravanserai of Mashadi Shukur Mirsiyab oğlu

The caravanserai was built at the expense of the merchant Mashadi Shukur Mirsiyab oğlu in 1880 in Shusha. The building was constructed on the site of the demolished caravanserai of merchant Haji Amiraslan. According to Azerbaijani historian Chingiz Gajar, the caravanserai was built by Azerbaijani architect Kerbalai Sefi Khan Karabaghi.

[\[Ch.Gajar. Old Shusha. 2007, p. 69\]](#)

[\[E.Avalov. The architecture of the city of Shusha and the problems of preserving its historical appearance. 1977, p. 63\]](#)

[\[F.Shushinski. Shusha.1968. p. 29\]](#)

Azerbaijani musicologist and researcher Firudin Shushinski in his book "Shusha" (1968) wrote about the building the following: "At the end of the XIX century there were 10 caravanserais in Shusha. But the best one was Mirsiyab oğlu Mashadi Shukur's caravanserai. It was different from all the other city caravanserais in both beauty and size."

The caravanserai was built of stone and consisted of two floors. On the second floor of the building there were 25 rooms for merchants and travelers, and in the rest of the building there were several merchant offices and about 30 different trade shops. There was a barber shop, a shoemaker's shop, a tailor's shop and other workshops at the guests' disposal.

[\[E.Avalov. The architecture of the city of Shusha and the problems of preserving its historical appearance. 1977, p. 63\]](#)

A mosque for visiting merchants and guests was attached to the caravanserai of Mashadi Shukur Mirsiyab oglu in Shusha. The mosque was on the second floor in the corner part of the building. According to Azerbaijani historian Elturan Avalov, the existence of a mosque in this caravanserai was unique, it was the only case in the practise of construction of this type of building and it had no direct analogies in the entire history of the architecture of caravanserais.

[\[E.Avalov. The architecture of the city of Shusha and the problems of preserving its historical appearance. 1977, p. 63\]](#)

Due to the growth of visiting guests, another two-storey residential building with wooden columns was added to the eastern side of the caravanserai. Various retail facilities were located on the ground floor, and guests stayed on the second floor.

[\[E.Avalov. The architecture of the city of Shusha and the problems of preserving its historical appearance. 1977, p. 63\]](#)

[\[Ch.Gajar. Old Shusha. 2007, p. 69\]](#)

Merchants from all over Transcaucasia, Iran and Russia stopped at Mirsiyab oglu's caravanserai. Its goods were exported to all ends of Karabakh Uyezd.

[\[F.Shushinski. Shusha.1968. p. 29\]](#)

During the years of Soviet power, the caravanserai of Mashadi Shukur Mirsiyab oglu was reconstructed into a shopping complex.

[\[Ch.Gajar. Old Shusha. 2007, p. 69\]](#)

[\[E.Avalov. The architecture of the city of Shusha and the problems of preserving its historical appearance. 1977, p. 63\]](#)

After the occupation of the city of Shusha by Armenian armed formations, in May 1992, the caravanserai was in an abandoned state.