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► Vesse's line Dubai Creek - much of the trade with Iran comes through these quays

The promise of greater freedom has lured many Iranians to the United Arab Emirates, where their economic and cultural influence far outstrips their actual number, as Alma Kadragic discovers

Land of opportunity

Five years before the revolution that overthrew the Shah, Hosseinzadeh, along with other prominent Iranians at the time, was looking for another place to set up his business... just in case

them with characteristic patterns and colours.' His family, including sister Minoo, sell some of these new carpets and some very expensive museum pieces to residents and tourists in Abu Dhabi. 'We've had many chances to open a store in New York, London or Paris,' he adds, 'but taxes, rent and the

cost of shipping from Iran would have made the business less profitable.' On

the walls of the Centre for Original Iranian Carpets are photos of Jalil and Dawood with various members of royal families, among them the late founder of the UAE, Sheikh Zayed.



Jalil Hosseinzadeh sent his eldest son, Dawood, from Tehran to Abu Dhabi back in 1974. Hosseinzadeh was a prominent citizen and owner of one of Tehran's most famous carpet stores, dealing in some of the museum-quality carpets for which Persia had been known for hundreds of years as well as less expensive contemporary versions.

Five years before the revolution that overthrew the Shah, Hosseinzadeh, along with other prominent Iranians at the time, was looking for another place to set up his business... just in case. Dawood came to Abu Dhabi, liked what he saw, and opened the Centre for Original Iranian Carpets in the upmarket Khalidya quarter. Today, the Hosseinzadehs run the centre plus a showroom in Tehran.

Dawood Hosseinzadeh says: 'In Iran, hundreds of cities and thousands of villages are producing carpets,' many of



ABU DHABI

Centre of Original Iranian Carpets is on the corner of Corniche Road and 30th Street. Tel: (+9712) 681 1156.

Inside the Middle East

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