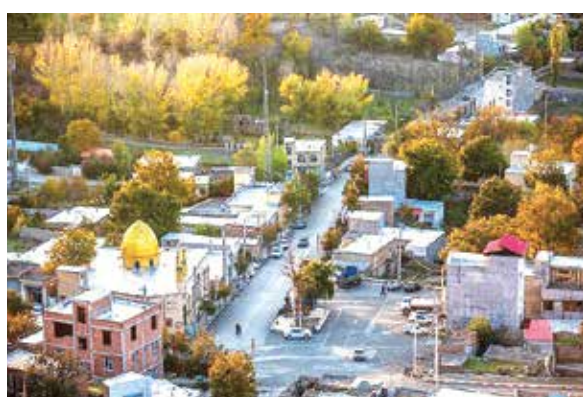




Amazing nature and urban planning of Hir attractive to tourists

IRNA



An overview of Hir
tasnimnews.com

Iranica Desk

Hir is a historical town located in the northwestern province of Ardebil, 23 kilometers southeast of the provincial capital city of Ardebil.

With a population of over 2,000, and as one of the most important tourist destinations of the province, Hir has numerous natural and manmade attractions, ISNA wrote. In terms of urban planning,

the central, ancient section of the town is one of the most amazing sites in the country.

'Hir' literally means fire; it is said that the town was of great significance for Zoroastrian people who lived in the region in ancient times. The town's weather is cold in autumn and winter, but moderate and sometimes hot in the spring and summer.

Hir is home to many fruit gardens, especially cherry



Hir Suspension Bridge
tishneh.com

and sour cherry orchards, so it is called "the town of heavenly gardens" and "the town of cherry blossoms". The town, in which the world's first all-glass, suspension bridge was built, hosts a large number of tourists from various parts

of the country and the world every year.

This suspension bridge is about 200 meters long and about 100 meters above the ground. The width of the bridge is 120 centimeters, and the thickness of the glass is three centimeters.

The tourism sector of Hir entered a new chapter following the inauguration of the bridge in January 2020. A large number of luxury villas and homes have been built in Hir, which is full of cherry orchards.

Neor Lake, in the heart of



Neor Lake
ealya.com

Baghro Mountain, with an eye-catching nature, is another attraction of the town. The lake, having clear and cold water, freezes in the winter. The mountains surrounding Hir, with several fresh water springs and natural waterfalls, are full of rare medicinal plants.

An ancient castle, dating back 3,000 years, a grand mosque, a *huseinieh* (a place in which Shia Muslims gather to hold religious ceremonies) and an

old bazaar are among Hir's historical sites.

Beekeeping and farming are the main occupations of the town's people, who are very kind and hospitable.

Ardebil Province is very cold in the winter and mild in the summer, attracting thousands every year. Each of the natural and historical attractions of Ardebil Province has the potential to turn a province into a tourism hub in the country and the world.

City of cisterns



Ab Anbar of Qazvin Grand Mosque
jahannews.com

Iranica Desk

The Iranian city of Qazvin is famous for its traditional reservoirs or cisterns of drinking water, known as "ab anbars". In the past, they were built underground to store freshwater for domestic use. Due to its geographical situation, Qazvin has always faced water shortages. To tackle this problem, more than 100 ab anbars

had been built in the city. In an interview with Iranian Students' News Agency (ISNA), architecture expert Sanaz Safaei touched upon the significance of the underground structures.

"Ab anbars are among traditional architectural masterpieces of Qazvin, which have had an acceptable status in the culture of its people," she said. Safaei added that the exist-

ence of the cisterns led to the prosperity of Qazvin, and the areas which had several ab anbars were more developed than other regions of the city. She said the Grand Mosque Ab Anbar, built in 1682, is the oldest cistern in Qazvin.

Structure of ab anbar

An ab anbar is made of various brick vaults in different forms. The main structure of an ab anbar consists of an underground storage tank and a dome to cover it. In some areas, a wind catcher is added to this structure. Wind catchers are tall, chimney-like structures that harness cool breezes and redirect them downwards to keep the water cool in the summer.

The construction material used for ab anbars was a special mortar called Sar-rooj, which was made of sand, clay, lime, goat hair, egg white, and ash in specific proportions, depending on the location and climate of the place. Some ab anbars had rectangular storage tanks, while some tanks had a cylindrical shape.

Ferdows Grand Mosque symbolizes city grandeur



ctmeh.com

Iranica Desk

The Grand Mosque of Ferdows in the eastern Iranian province of South Khorasan is among the country's historical monuments.

The mosque is situated in the southwest of Toon archaeological site.

Some researchers believe that this mosque was built during the Seljuk Dynasty in the 11th

century; others, however, say it was constructed in the 7th century. The porch of the mosque is 16 meters high. The decorative brick of this porch repeats a geometric shape. There are also paintings on the stucco in the interior. The mosque has a large *shabestan* (prayer hall) with columns of two meters in diameter. Some 100 columns, which are as tall as 5.2 meters, hold the heavy ceiling of this *shabestan*.

Researcher and archeologist, Rajabali Labbaf-Khaniki, said the city of Ferdows was called Toon until 1936; and the Grand Mosque of Ferdows was called the Grand Mosque of Toon.

The researcher told ISNA that the city was a prosperous area from the 7th century until it was hit by a devastating earthquake in 1968. Labbaf-Khaniki added that famine, invasions and earthquakes damaged the city but failed to remove it from the map.

He said the architecture of Ferdows's mosques, traditional bathrooms, cisterns known as ab anbars, which have remained from old times, are indicative of the significance and credibility of the city. The archeologist believes the Grand Mosque of Ferdows has a special status among the historical monuments of the city.

Labbaf-Khaniki said the Grand Mosque represents the grandeur of Toon (the former name of the city of Ferdows) before it was plundered and destroyed during the invasion of the Mongols in the 13th century.