

# Damash village, a land of landscapes, culture, and cuisine

Iranica Desk

Nestled in the picturesque Gilan Province, Damash village has captivated tourists with its stunning landscapes, idyllic climate, and delectable local cuisine. As visitors explore Damash, they are enchanted by the sight of *Lilium ledebourii*, locally known as Sousan-e Chehel Cheragh, blooming in all its glory.

The village's strategic location between Rasht and Tehran, nestled in the foothills of the Alborz Mountains, adds to its allure. Situated at an impressive altitude of 1,800 meters above sea level, Damash boasts a drier climate and more abundant vegetation compared to other parts of the province.



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Damash has a fascinating history rooted in its abundance of lush springs, earning it the reputation as the land of plenty. In terms of climate, the region experiences an average temperature of 10°C, and an annual rainfall of 450 millimeters, creating a semi-humid and moderate climate. This unique environment provides the perfect conditions for the growth of rare plant species like *Lilium ledebourii*, which thrives amidst the dry and sunny surroundings and permeable soil found in Damash.

When interacting with the welcoming locals, visitors will learn that the people of Damash proudly speak the Gilaki dialect. Poultry farming, livestock breeding, and handmade crafts are among the primary occupations that sustain the community. The village's mountainous and steep terrain, unfortunately, prevents agricultural endeavors, as suitable flat lands for farming are scarce. Nevertheless, this has not diminished the vibrant culture in Damash, and the inhabitants continue to embrace their traditional clothing. During ceremonies, weddings, and local festivals, men don a charming ensemble consisting of a jacket, trousers, a coat, and traditional local shoes. Meanwhile, women express their cultural heritage through colorful Gilani dresses and accessories. The historical roots of these traditional garments can be traced back to the remarkable artifacts discovered in Marlik Hill. It is fascinating to discover that the intricate decorations adorning the skirts and beautiful dresses of Gilani women draw inspiration from these ancient relics.

With its natural wonders, rich history, and warm-hearted locals, Damash invites travelers to immerse themselves in an authentic cultural experience while basking in the splendor of its surroundings.

When visiting Damash, don't miss the opportunity to explore and purchase the delightful souvenirs unique to this region. Handmade crafts like socks and handwoven rugs are perfect for bringing a touch of local artistry back home. Additionally, you'll find an abundance of fresh agricultural and dairy products such as walnuts, pistachios, milk, yogurt, and butter. By supporting the local econ-



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omy through these purchases, not only will you bring home beautiful and delicious gifts, but you'll also contribute to the livelihoods of the people in Damash. Gilan Province holds the distinction of being the most diverse province in Iran when it comes to local cuisine, boasting an impressive range of 170 to 220 types of dishes. The favorable climate and fertile soil of Gilan Province have nurtured the growth of various natural

food items, including an array of vegetables, fruits, and legumes. This abundance of ingredients contributes to the remarkable diversity of flavors and dishes found in the region. Damash village, like other parts of Gilan Province, is renowned for its culinary delights. When you venture to this beautiful area, be sure to indulge in the delicious local dishes on offer. The unique flavors and traditional recipes will provide a memora-

ble gastronomic experience. The climate in this region is semi-humid and moderate, creating a pleasant environment for exploration. However, it is important to remember that the weather can become chilly. Make sure to dress warmly to fully enjoy your time amidst the enchanting fog, clouds, green meadows, and colorful flowers that grace the landscape. Exploring the forested areas is a must when visiting this lush

highland. Consider joining specialized agencies that can offer valuable insights into the plant and animal life of the region. With their guidance, you'll have the opportunity to witness the traces of extraordinary animals, such as leopards, and gain a deeper appreciation for the area's biodiversity. If you're an early riser, embark on a forest hike before sunrise for an up-close encounter with the region's captivating wildlife.

Lastly, don't forget to visit the ancient Herzevil cypress. With an estimated age of 1,000 years, this majestic tree has stood the test of time. As a testament to its significance, it was mentioned by Nasser Khosrow in his travelogue almost 900 years ago. A visit to this historic landmark will provide a glimpse into the rich history and beauty of the region.

Every year, the charming village of Damash hosts the vibrant Sousan-e Chelcheragh Festival to coincide with the blossoming of its beloved flower. This festival, filled with enchanting local music and cherished indigenous customs, is renowned as one of the most captivating spring events in Gilan Province, drawing in countless visitors from near and far.

Damash itself is celebrated as a truly picturesque natural wonder within Gilan Province, owing to its mountainous terrain, lush green landscapes, and the majestic Alborz Mountain range that graces its surroundings. In addition to immersing yourself in the beauty of the Sousan-e Chelcheragh flower, you can also explore the invigorating mineral springs nestled in Damash. The weather in Damash is typically mild and refreshing during the spring and summer months, transitioning to colder temperatures in autumn and winter.

Rainfall and fog are frequent companions throughout the year in Damash, adding to its ethereal atmosphere. May and June are the favored months for visitors seeking to witness the vibrant bloom of the Sousan-e Chelcheragh flower, which adorns the landscape from early May until the beginning of July.

However, you can also plan your journey to Damash during other months of spring, summer, and autumn to relish the delightful climate that envelops this region.

It is of utmost importance to remember that Damash is an unspoiled sanctuary, and the Sousan-e Chelcheragh flower stands proudly as one of the world's precious natural treasures. As you venture through this remarkable destination, please treat nature with respect, refraining from littering and ensuring the preservation of the Sousan-e Chelcheragh flower by abstaining from uprooting it.