

# Qalat village, a hidden gem in cultural landscape of Fars Province



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## Iranica Desk

Qalat village, nestled in the picturesque landscape of Fars Province, stands as a captivating tourism destination, drawing in both local and international visitors. This historical gem is a part of the vibrant tapestry of attractions in the region, offering a unique blend of rich history, lush natural beauty, and a serene, cool climate.

Perched at an elevation of 2,065 meters above sea level, Qalat village boasts a distinctive charm, characterized by its stepped houses and the imposing presence of Qalat Mountain, which encircles the village like a protective barrier. The village, with its historical monuments,

verdant surroundings, and refreshing springs, was once a favored retreat for ancient Iranian royalty, and to this day, it remains a haven for leisure and relaxation in the heart of Shiraz. With a population of approximately 7,000, the locals of Qalat village lead a semi-traditional life, engaging in agriculture, animal husbandry, horticulture, and weaving. Their unique customs and traditions, including the use of the local Qalati dialect and traditional Qashqai attire during ceremonies and celebrations, add to the village's cultural allure.

Visitors to Qalat village are treated to a wealth of experiences, from the breathtaking views atop Qalat Mountain to the enchant-



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ing old-world charm of the village's architecture, adorned with ancient trees and meandering streams.

The region is also home to a rich variety of medicinal plants, including yarrow, thyme, and hollyhocks,

adding to its natural splendor. A visit to Qalat village offers a glimpse into its rich histo-

ry, with attractions such as the Qalat Museum House, which showcases ancient instruments, artifacts, and cultural treasures. Additionally, the ruins of an old castle, believed to date back to the Atabakan Fars era, stand as a testament to the village's enduring heritage. The village's natural wonders include three captivating waterfalls, nestled at the foot of the mountain, and the old bathhouse, which is steeped in local lore, with tales of Sa'di once bathing within its walls. Unfortunately, some historical sites, such as the church and the bathhouse, have suffered from neglect and are in need of preservation.

Qalat village also offers a delightful array of locally produced souvenirs,

including walnuts, almonds, grapes, handmade baskets, and traditional wooden utensils, providing visitors with a tangible connection to the village's rich cultural heritage.

The traditional clothing and customs of the Qashqai nomads add a colorful touch to these cultural events, enriching the experience for visitors.

In every season, Qalat village exudes its own unique allure, from the vibrant colors and scents of autumn to the tranquil beauty of its winter landscape. Whether exploring the winding alleys, enjoying the local cuisine, or simply taking in the natural splendor, a visit to Qalat village promises an unforgettable journey through history and culture.

# Khosrow Abad Mansion, a jewel of Kurdish heritage in Sanandaj

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Sanandaj, the capital of Kurdistan Province, is a city steeped in Kurdish heritage and history, featuring a wealth of captivating historical buildings and mosques that serve as significant tourist attractions. Among these landmarks, the Khosrow Abad Mansion stands as a prom-

inent and cherished site. Mansions, symbolizing expansive residential houses, have long been emblematic of the aristocratic lifestyle which was prevalent in ancient Iran. Influenced by what is now recognized as Iranian architectural style, these mansions underwent significant changes in their design and structure following the in-

troductory of Islam to the region. Nevertheless, they still exude the essence of Iranian craftsmanship. Notably, a striking feature of these mansions is their placement within expansive gardens, adding to their allure and grandeur. The Khosrow Abad Mansion, listed on Iran's National Heritage List, is celebrated as one of the most

exquisite mansions, drawing visitors as a key tourist attraction in Sanandaj. Under the ownership of the Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization, many sections of the mansion have been meticulously restored, allowing the public to explore its various parts and experience its historical grandeur. The history of the mansion

traces back to the Qajar period, with Amanollah Khan Ardalan, the governor of Kurdistan at the time, commissioning its construction.

Spanning an area of 6,000 square meters, the mansion comprises distinct sections, including the regal palace with its columned entrance, a bathhouse, a guard room, and servants'

quarters. Some believe that the eastern part of the building, known as the palace, was erected during the Zand era. While the mansion occasionally served as a political and military headquarters, it predominantly functioned as a venue for ceremonial events and royal receptions, such as the wedding ceremony of the Qajar king Fat'h-

Ali Shah's daughter and Amanollah Khan's son.

The mansion's adornment showcases intricate plasterwork and brickwork, embodying the essence of Iranian architecture. Noteworthy is the amalgamation of materials used in different areas of the mansion, such as the castle, kitchen, bath, stable, and the eastern, western, and southern walls, each adding to the rich tapestry of its historical significance.

The Khosrow Abad Garden, an integral part of the complex, holds significant historical value. The presence of a plaque bearing the names of Fat'h-Ali Shah and Amanollah Khan, alongside the date of 1223 AH (after hejira), further underscores its historical significance.

Restoration efforts for this invaluable building commenced in 1994, ensuring its preservation for generations to come. The mansion and its surrounding garden stand as a testament to the rich history and cultural heritage of the region, inviting visitors to step back in time and experience the grandeur of a bygone era.



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