

Efforts underway to promote unknown attractions of Mazandaran Province

Iranica Desk

The roads in northern Iran that connect to Mazandaran Province boast numerous historical, natural, and cultural attractions, making them some of the busiest routes in the region. The province is home to a vast number of sightseeing spots, so much so that visiting even a third of them would take months. Official statistics indicate that over 2,800 cultural heritage landmarks in the province are registered on the National Heritage List, establishing it as a unique collection of tourist destinations. However, the distribution of visitors to these must-see locations is significantly unbalanced. An analysis of the travel statistics for Mazandaran Province reveals an imbalance between the number of trips and the attention given to the various attractions. For instance, during the Iranian New Year Holidays (Nowruz) in 2022, out of 4.5 mil-

lion visits to the province's tourist destinations, 2,255,273 were to natural sites. During the same period, 289,990 visitors explored the historical attractions, while 182,406 people toured the province's museums. The recreational infrastructure of Mazandaran Province also recorded 1,440,427 visits. The released official figures indicate that the majority of visitors travel to Mazandaran Province to visit the shores of the Caspian Sea and the nearby forests. As a result, the four main roads leading to the province are primarily seen as transit routes, leading to a situation where a large number of historical and cultural landmarks located along these roads receive less attention. The officials of the Mazandaran Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Organization have decided to prioritize this highly important tourist potential of the province and concentrate on promoting the must-see spots situated along the roads.

Hossein Izadi, the head of the organization, believes that Mazandaran Province has a wealth of cultural, recreational, and historical attractions that have the potential to attract travelers. However, these attractions remain largely unknown and untapped, despite their significant tourism potential. In an interview with IRNA, he emphasized the importance of taking a long-term approach in this regard, which would help create economic development in the surrounding communities. He pointed out that the villages along Chalus, Haraz, Savadkuh, and Kiasar roads have the potential to attract a large number of travelers. Izadi also noted that there are many natural and historical sites in the area that are still undiscovered by most tourists. He said that efforts will be made to promote these attractions as travelers enter the province in order to increase their visibility and draw in more visitors.

Resket Tower, Sari
● IRNA



Chehel Sotoun Garden, Behshahr
● wikimedia.org



House of Nima Yushij, Baladeh
● tehranpicture.ir

Historical significance of Shahrestan Bridge in Isfahan

The city of Isfahan, the capital of Isfahan Province in central Iran, boasts numerous attributes that justify its status as one of Iran's most visited cities. It is renowned as one of the best places to explore the grandeur of Persian history, architecture, and culture. In addition to the breathtaking beauty of Naqsh-e Jahan Square, Isfahan is famous for its stunning bridges. Eleven bridges span the Zayandeh Rud, a 400-kilometer river flowing from the Zagros Mountains to southern Isfahan, providing life to the city and its surrounding villages. Among the most famous bridge-

es such as Si-o-Se Pol and Khaju Bridge, Shahrestan Bridge also holds significant historical importance. The oldest among the eleven, this bridge was constructed during the Sassanid Empire, making it approximately 14 centuries old. Although Zayandeh Rud no longer passes under the bridge due to re-direction, an artificial lake surrounds it, protecting the ancient structure from potential damage. Shahrestan Bridge, also known as the City Bridge, is situated in the eastern part of Isfahan. In ancient times, the city was referred to as "Jay," leading to the bridge's previous name "Jay Bridge". Its

foundation dates back to the Sassanid Empire, which ruled over Persia from the 3rd to the 7th century. This bridge was the first to be constructed over the Zayandeh Rud and remains the only historical bridge in Isfahan built before the Safavid era. Throughout history, it served as a vital passage for caravans and pedestrians commuting between Isfahan and the southern villages. The architectural style of Shahrestan Bridge reflects the Sassanid era, distinct from the Safavid influences seen in most historical sites in Isfahan. The bridge's design, with a length

of 107.8 meters and an average width of 5.2 meters, incorporates a two-level structure, with 13 arches on the bottom and eight on the top level. The bridge's foundation, consisting of 12 large stone foundations and 11 waterspouts, were directly laid on the natural stones of the riverbed. Notably, the bridge features two parabolic structures to enhance stability and resistance to river flow. The vertical parabolic structure elevates the middle point of the bridge to alleviate pressure from passing caravans, while the horizontal parabolic structure creates a bend to

increase resistance to the river current. Additionally, hollow structures called "Kaneh" were strategically integrated to reduce the weight of the bridge and bolster its resilience, particularly during floods. Despite being less renowned than Si-o Se Pol and Khaju Bridge, Shahrestan Bridge holds immense historical significance and was inscribed on Iran's National Heritage List in 1970. Visitors can explore this ancient marvel free of charge. While located in the southeastern part of Isfahan, away from the historical city center, the bridge is easily accessible by taxi or nearby

bus stations. Although the southeastern location may not be the most convenient for short-term accommodation, the bridge's proximity to historical and archaeological sites, such as Al-Rashid Mausoleum, Ashraf Historical Hill, and Mehrbin Fortress offers additional cultural exploration opportunities. Moreover, its close proximity to the historical center and Naqsh-e Jahan Square, reachable in about 15 minutes by taxi, makes it a worthwhile destination for visitors seeking a deeper understanding of Isfahan's rich history and heritage.



● wikimedia.org



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