

# Starry nights in the **deserts** of Iran

## Iranica Desk

A country steeped in rich history and culture, Iran boasts

an incredibly diverse array of landscapes. One of the most enthralling experiences one can have is stargazing in its deserts.

Thanks to the vast expanse of deserts and arid areas, Iran offers stargazing enthusiasts an exceptional opportunity to

marvel at a sky filled with stars. From the Lut Desert to the Kavir Desert, known as Iran's central desert, the absence of city lights

and unique natural features make these places popular destinations for stargazing enthusiasts from around the world.



arasbaran.org

## Maranjab Desert

Situated close to Kashan and bordering a national park, Maranjab Desert is one of Iran's prime locations for stargazing. This desert attracts desert trekkers and astronomy enthusiasts with its stunning sandy landscapes and dunes. It becomes an even more appealing destination thanks to its well-equipped desert camp, offering suitable facilities and exciting activities.

This makes it a popular choice for desert tours departing from Tehran and Isfahan. Here, astronomy enthusiasts have a fantastic chance to admire a star-studded sky, along with other attractions like the underground city of Nushabad, the Salt Lake, aqueducts, caravanserais, and the desert's unique vegetation. When stargazing and traveling the road leading to Maranjab Desert, exercise extreme caution and never leave the main road. Swampy areas in the vicinity can be hazardous.

## Mesr Desert

Situated in Mesr village in Isfahan Province, Mesr Desert is an extraordinary destination for stargazing. The area's vastness, along with its sandy dunes and hills, makes it an ideal location for those interested in astronomy and nighttime sky watching. Thanks to its clear skies, Mesr Desert provides excellent conditions for observing stars and even planetary astronomy. This is why it ranks high among

popular destinations for astronomy tours, surfiran.com wrote.

Accommodations in the village have expanded, with multiple guesthouses and eco-lodges available. If you're in the area, you can also visit the nearby village of Farahzad. While traveling from Semnan and Jandaq, you might even have the opportunity to see the Jandaq waterfall on your way.



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## Matinabad Desert

Located in Isfahan Province near the village of Matinabad, this desert offers another excellent choice for desert aficionados and stargazers. Many groups and individual travelers from Teh-

ran and Isfahan come here to enjoy the starry nights away from urban clamor. For accommodations, you can stay at a desert camp equipped with appropriate facilities for travelers.



iranroute.com

## Mazinan Desert

Mazinan Desert in Khorasan Razavi Province serves as another exceptional location for sky observation. Situated on the northern edge of Kavir Desert, it's recognized as a captivating historical and desert area perfect for night sky watching. Limitless landscapes of sands and hills on one side, and a grand sky on the other, create a unique experience for astronomy enthusiasts. The desert's geography sets the stage for excellent stargazing conditions. Aside from sky observation, you can explore salt flats and salt marshes near the Kaal Shur River.



yjc.ir

## Shahdad Kaluts

The Shahdad Kaluts Desert is another mesmerizing destination for stargazing. It is located in South Khorasan Province, north of the Lut Desert. Access to this area is also available from Kerman. The kaluts are unique mountains formed by the cohesion of sand over time. Shahdad kaluts make for an excellent choice for stargazing, offering a fantastic opportunity to observe stars in a star-studded sky. For accommodations, you can stay in desert camps set up for travelers. Besides enjoying the endless night sky and the silence of the desert, you can explore nearby attractions like underground reservoirs, Sirch's cold regions, elevated gardens, and mud-brick cities.



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## Zamanabad Desert

If stargazing amid sweeping sand dunes has been on your bucket list, Zamanabad Desert in Turan, or Khaar-Turan, a vast area of 1,400,000 hectares in Semnan Province, is the destination for you. This desert forms part of Iran's central desert (Kavir Desert), and is an ideal location for overnight stays while taking in the celestial canvas. Situated near Zamanabad village, this desert is a protected area, making it one of the top choices for desert trekking and astronomical observation.

In the absence of city lights, Zamanabad Des-

ert becomes a tranquil oasis for skywatchers. During your stay, expect to be mesmerized by the endless sky and its dazzling stars.

Luckily, reaching Zamanabad is straightforward. The roads are paved, so you can easily drive to this haven. Once there, immerse yourself in the local culture by staying in a community-based accommodation in Zamanabad village. Additional activities you can indulge in include camel riding and desert trekking. If you venture away from the village with a guide, you can achieve an unparalleled stargazing experience.



kojaro.com

## Khor Desert

Khor village in South Khorasan Province is one of the best desert areas for night sky observers. The village has a single desert area and is a great destination for trekking and star watching. Low population density and the rustic desert setting create a perfect atmosphere for nature and astronomy lovers. You'll find the narrow, winding alleys of this and surrounding villages, like Hemat Abad, filled with mud-brick homes and wind-catchers, irresistibly enchanting. Iran's desert regions, with their infinite allure and star-filled skies, are a paradise for night sky observers. From south to north and east to west, the captivating natural vistas these areas offer are satisfying for anyone.



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