

Chamkhaleh Beach, an ultimate tourist destination in Gilan Province



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Chamkhaleh Beach in Gilan Province was

awarded the title of the best beach in the province in 2011. It is renowned as one of the most stunning, well-equipped, and safest beaches in Iran. The town of Chamkhaleh is a highly sought-after tourist destination in Gilan Province, drawing numerous visitors annually and is considered the second tourism hub in the province, after Bandar Anzali.

Chamkhaleh Beach offers various recreational and welfare facilities, making it an attractive destination for picnicking, photography, water activities, and swimming. Chamkhaleh is 10 kilometers east of Langerud, 20 kilometers east of Lahijan, and 40 kilometers west of Rudras. The beach is conveniently situated 1.6 kilometers (a four-minute drive) from the center of Chamkhaleh, and approximately 370 kilometers (four hours and 50 minutes) from Tehran.

Chamkhaleh was a village located in a district called Chaf, and was part of Langerud until a few years ago. The beach of this village was one of the most popular sandy beaches in Iran prior to the Islamic Revolution. In the early years after the revolution, tourism in Chamkhaleh declined, and its beach went underwater due to sea advancement. Several years later, as the sea calmed down, the beautiful beach of Chamkhaleh reappeared and gradually regained its former popularity. In 2019, the village of Chamkhaleh was merged with several other villages and is now known as the city of "Chaf and Chamkhaleh," although the locals and tourists still refer to this area as Chamkhaleh. In the following, we will introduce you to the recreational activities of Chamkhaleh Beach.

Walking, picnicking, and photography

Strolling along the sandy shores of Chamkhaleh Beach, playing with sand, and constructing sandcastles are among the delightful experiences to be had at this beach. Additionally, you can spread a picnic cloth in the beach shelters with your family and loved ones; please be aware that some of these shelters may require a fee for use.

Don't miss the opportunity to capture stunning photos at Chamkhaleh Beach, particularly during sunrise and sunset, when the sunlight creates breathtaking images on the sea. The beach also features a series of red-colored tunnels, creating a unique setting for capturing enchanting images by the sea.

Water activities

Chamkhaleh Beach offers a variety of water activities:

Boating: Boating in the vicinity of the beach and navigating the wavy waters with a motorboat is a popular activity for people of any age.

Jet Skiing: Jet skiing is an exhilarating water activity, particularly enjoyable for young people, providing an adrenaline-pumping and thrilling experience.

Shuttle riding: Shuttle riding is a popular water activity at the beach. The shuttle is an inflatable tube tied to the back of a motorboat and pulled along the sea's surface.

Shuttles are available for two or four people.

Swimming: Visitors can enjoy swimming and snorkeling in the safe and designated areas of Chamkhaleh Beach.

Cycling and ATV: Tourists can rent bicycles from the recreational complexes at the beach and delight in its beauty by pedaling along designated paths, experiencing one of the best cycling routes in Iran. ATV riding is also a popular option, especially among children.

Soccer and volleyball: Chamkhaleh Beach provides soccer and volleyball fields, offering the opportunity for group games.

Best time to visit Chamkhaleh

For many tourists, the prime time to visit Chamkhaleh is from mid-spring to late summer, as it offers a range of water activities on the beach. It's worth noting that Chamkhaleh summers, like those of other northern cities in the country, can be humid and warm. If you prefer milder temperatures, consider planning your trip for other seasons of the year.

The Persian New Year (Nowruz) and early spring, as well as early to mid-autumn, are also excellent times to visit Chamkhaleh. During these periods, the weather is delightful and idyllic. From mid-autumn to late winter, the weather turns cold. However, some tourists opt to visit Chamkhaleh during this time to avoid the crowds and relish the tranquil winter beach view.



Persian painted cotton fabric, Weltmuseum Wien, Vienna

Evolution of collecting in Vienna and influence of Persian objects

Many of the transformative developments of the 19th century are reflected in the history of collecting in Vienna.

In this period, the exclusive privilege of collecting opened up to a larger part of society and the audience for viewing art broadened. Private collections gradually became more public.

In the Austrian Habsburg context, this transformation began already in the 16th century, when the Viennese imperial collections, such as those of Ferdinand of Tyrol at Schloss Ambras in Innsbruck and Rudolf II's collections in Prague, were made accessible to a very select, or even exclusive, public. These collections revealed their owner's tastes and were used to impress foreign diplomats and gentlemen travellers, who in turn could spread their fame. In 1601 parts of the Ambras armoury were sumptuously published, making its content known to the public. Gradually the number and nature

of visitors to Viennese collections increased.

Catalogues to the collections were written and during the 18th century visitors were charged entry fees to visit some spaces, such as the imperial armoury in Vienna. The imperial collections constantly grew in volume and were often moved within the palaces where space was usually scarce.

Many items were lost, given away, worn out or disposed of over the centuries. The continued accumulation, reorganisation, specialisation and systematisation of the single parts of the collections intensified during the reigns of Emperor Franz Stephan (ruled from 1745-65) and his sons, Joseph II (ruled from 1765-90) and Leopold II (ruled from 1790-92). The latter had also reorganised the Medici collections in Florence where he ruled as grand duke before he became emperor in 1790. Emperors continued to increase their collections and scholarly

studies about them increased.

The creation of the large Viennese museums during the second half of the 19th century can thus be seen as a consequence of enlightenment attitudes developed during the preceding centuries. It is necessary to contextualise the provenance of the Persian objects in 19th-century Viennese collections in order to demonstrate their complex history. Objects of Persian origin permeated Habsburg collecting from the later Middle Ages onwards.

Over the centuries Persian artistic items were conceived of as relics, functioned as reliquaries, inspired court artists, and acted as valuable merchandise and as historical documents of diplomatic exchanges. Occasionally they also represented pieces of booty. As the arch-enemy of two of its neighbours, the Habsburg dominions and the Safavid Empire, the Ottoman army took rich booty from both. But at the same time, it

also traded intensively with them. Weapons were often recycled and refurbished by those who captured them and because of this, Persian weapons that were used by the Ottoman army occasionally fell into the hands of Habsburg soldiers.

Valuable Persian textiles were used as burial shrouds and church vestments as early as the 14th century. This is the date of the earliest surviving textile from the Persian cultural sphere that possesses an uninterrupted provenance in the Viennese context. Objects from the Islamic world, hence often also from modern-day Iran, were an integral part of the encyclopaedic concept of the early modern Kunstkammern, as well as the more specialised baroque Antikenkabinett. The history of Persian objects in Vienna mirrors the history of the exchange, both direct and indirect, between eastern and western powers over some six hundred years.