

Timeless elegance of Arg of Tabriz



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The Arg of Tabriz, also known as Arg-e Alishah, holds significant historical importance in East Azarbaijan Province. This ancient citadel beckons numerous visitors to admire its mosques, religious schools, public baths, old houses, and picturesque old streets.

Despite enduring damage from natural disasters like earthquakes and human conflicts such as wars, the citadel remains one of Iran's tallest and oldest historical fortifications. Adjacent to the renowned Tabriz Bazaar, a global attraction in itself, the Arg Citadel stands out as a prominent destination drawing tourists from various corners of the world.

Throughout the turbulent centuries marked by earthquakes and wars, the citadel has stood resilient. While much of its original grandeur has faded, the remaining structure proudly dominates

the Tabriz skyline as the tallest monument in the region. Offering a glimpse into Iran's architectural and cultural legacy, the citadel's enduring legacy invites exploration and contemplation of its historical significance.

Originally commissioned by Taj Al-Din Alishah Gilani, a minister of the Ilkhanate, the grand Arg of Tabriz, showcases Iran's exceptional construction prowess. Initially intended as an ambitious mosque complex in the 14th century, the citadel's construction faced numerous obstacles from its inception.

Despite enduring earthquakes and the ravages of war, the sturdy walls of the Arg have withstood the test of time, bearing witness to Tabriz's tumultuous past. Under the Qajar dynasty, the complex served practical purposes such as storing grain and weapons, necessitating the construction of a protective

enclosure, thereby earning the moniker arg, meaning "fortress."

A site of resilience and renewal

The early 1900s marked another turbulent chapter for the Arg of Tabriz, as it became embroiled in conflict once more. In 1911, amidst Tabriz's fall to Russian forces, the invaders assailed the citadel's walls, leaving enduring scars that bear witness to that tumultuous period. Remarkably, these very walls provided refuge to individuals championing constitutional rights and revolutionary ideals, notably figures like Satar Khan and Bagher Khan, who courageously opposed the despotic reign of Mohammad Ali Shah.

Following the success of the Constitutional Revolution, a new era dawned upon the structure, heralding the construction of a modern school and a the-

ater modeled after those reminiscent of St. Petersburg, Russia. This resurgence gained further momentum in 1931 when the arg was formally designated as a National Heritage Site, ensuring its preservation for posterity.

Architectural splendor

The citadel stands as a magnificent showcase of Iranian architectural artistry, distinguished in the realm of Iranian Islamic architecture. This grand edifice epitomizes the Azari style, a design ethos originating from Azerbaijani pioneers by the renowned architect, Falaki Tabrizi. Characterized by its resilience and enduring construction techniques, the Azari style, also known as the Mongol or Iranian-Mongol style, found popularity during the Ilkhanate era.

Constructed with sturdy materi-

als like sarooj, the citadel was built to withstand the test of time. However, a significant earthquake in the 10th century wrought considerable damage upon this venerable structure, leaving a prominent crack in its walls that symbolizes its tumultuous past. Despite these tribulations, the Ali Shah Citadel perseveres as a potent emblem of Iranian architectural ingenuity and longevity.

Plan your visit

The optimal time to experience the splendor of the Arg of Tabriz is during May and June. These months offer delightful weather and a vibrant atmosphere, enhancing your visit with an added touch of enjoyment. Conversely, it is advisable to steer clear of visiting during winters when temperatures can plummet to a bone-chilling -30°C.

Tomb of Pir Palandouz, a renowned architectural gem in Mashhad

Mashhad is one of the most visited tourist destinations in Iran, famous for its numerous holy shrines. In addition to its fame as a religious tourist destination for pilgrims, this city houses some of Iran's well-known historical monuments. Among the famous Mashhad tourist attractions is the tomb of Pir Palandouz, which was registered on the Iran National Heritage List in 1977.

The tomb is located in the northeast of the holy shrine of Imam Reza (PBUH), the third Imam of Shia Muslims, and is attributed to one of the mystics named Mohammad Aref Abbasi. Aref Abbasi, whose real name was Darvish Mohammad Karandhi, was born in Karand village and was recognized as one of the famous mystics of the Safavid era. In addition to mysticism, he was skilled in calligraphy and alchemy.

The first building of the Pir Palandouz tomb was constructed in the 16th century by the order of the Safavid ruler Muhammad Khodabandeh. The tomb features a large wooden door, which is its only entrance. Before the recent restoration, the tomb

had a square design with a beautiful dome covered in turquoise-colored tiles, plasterwork and tilework decorations, and unique miniature paintings. One of its unique features was its onion dome placed on a cylindrical building with exquisite decorative elements.

After the restoration, new areas were added, including the entrance portal, yard, fountain, green space, and miniature paintings. However, some original features were also removed, such as the inscriptions around the exterior facade and the uniform turquoise-colored tiles on the dome, which were replaced with a mix of turquoise and buff tiles with geometric patterns.

The tomb of Pir Palandouz is one of the significant tourist destinations in Mashhad, attracting many travelers to its unique historical and architectural features. Other notable attractions near the tomb include the Tavakoli Historical House, Abbas Gholi Khan School, Nazeran Historical House, and Amiri Historical House.

