

Enchanting Shahyun Lake in Dezful

Iranica Desk

Shahyun Lake, also recognized as Dez Dam Lake, is celebrated as one of Iran's most beautiful lakes and a prominent tourist destination in Dezful, Khuzestan Province. Situated in the northwest of Dezful, approximately 23 kilometers north-east of Andimeshk, adjacent to Pamnar village, the Shahyun region spans over 302 square kilometers and is located 15 kilometers north of Dezful.

This enchanting lake was formed 50 years ago with the construction of the Dez Dam, earning the titles of Shahyun Lake or Dez Dam Lake. Regarded as one of the nation's most stunning artificial lakes, it offers an ideal setting for boating and recreational activities.

The lake stretches for 65 kilometers, with its area fluctuating slightly during high and low water levels, typically around 6,000 hectares. The lake reaches depths of up to 50 meters. Sourced from the mountains of Arak and Aligudarz, the lake's water flows through the Zagros Mountains and various small streams before entering the lake.

Within the lake, numerous small and large islands can be observed, adorned with almond trees, enhancing the lake's beauty. The sizable island at the lake's center, spanning over 60,000 square meters, creates a stunning landscape.

The area around Shahyun Lake is geologically split into north-

ern and southern sections, forming part of the Zagros Mountains. As you approach the central region, hilltops, cliffs, and sandstone formations emerge. The foothills and abundant springs in this region showcase themselves, adding to the lushness and beauty across seasons. The Shahyun region lies near the Zagros Mountains to the north and the warm plains of Khuzestan to the south, resulting in a distinct climate in this area. Winds from the southeast bring hot summers and mild winters, while those from the northwest moderate summer temperatures and bring cooler winters.

The wildlife around Shahyun Lake includes small animals such as foxes and rabbits, alongside beautiful birds like partridges, quails, and seabirds. Leopards have also been spotted in the more rugged areas of these regions. Additionally, the lake is home to fish species such as trout.

One of the wonders of Shahyun Lake is its varying temperatures. Being a large reservoir, the lake exhibits different temperature zones due to the entry of cool seasonal currents from the region's heights in some areas or the emergence of underground springs into the lake bed. These factors have significantly lowered the water temperature compared to its surrounding environment, creating a favorable habitat for trout.

Travel tip: For those who enjoy exploring new destinations,

you are recommend visiting the charming tourist villages near Shahyun Lake. Pamnar village is a standout location that offers delightful sights, enriching your travel experiences. The mesmerizing view of Shahyun Lake from this village is truly captivating and definitely worth experiencing.

Fishing regulation: Dez Dam Lake plays a vital role in the freshwater ecosystem and serves as a habitat for various indigenous fish species. Fishing is strictly prohibited during the breeding season, typically from mid-February to April. Engaging in fishing activities during this period or without the required permits in other seasons is deemed illegal and harmful to the freshwater ecosystem.

Safety advisory: When visiting the lake, it is advisable to avoid swimming. Even if you are a skilled swimmer, it is best to refrain from swimming in this reservoir without local guidance. The vicinity of the dam walls poses a significant risk of being drawn into the water turbines, leading to perilous whirlpools.

For those interested in an overnight stay in the Shahyun, Pamnar village is an excellent choice. Situated close to the lake, this village provides accommodations where you can relish a rustic evening and admire the picturesque lake scenery. Additionally, setting up tents and camping by the lake can offer an exciting and memorable experience.



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Mysteries of Seh Gonbadan Tower

Seh Gonbadan Tower, which translates to "three domes," is a historic monument situated in the southeast of Urmia, the capital of West Azarbaijan Province. While its relief suggests it was constructed in the 12th century, it was officially brought to public attention in 1852 by Nikolai Vladimirovich Khanykov, a Russian ethnographer. To explore this exquisite and distinctive tower, visitors must make their way to Ostad Barzegar Street.

The historical and architectural significance of Seh Gonbadan led to its inclusion on Iran's National Heritage List, recognizing its value as an ancient structure. Some historians and experts in Islamic architecture speculate that a fire temple stood in place of the tower during the Sassanid dynasty era. However, no concrete evidence has been uncovered to substantiate this claim.

The relief on the tower, on the other hand, offers valuable and trustworthy information. Alongside the precise construction date, the text reveals the tower's patron as Sheith Ghate al-Mozafari, an elder of the Seljuk dynasty. The design and façade of Seh Gonbadan Tower bear a striking resemblance to struc-



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tures from the 12th century, particularly those found in the city of Maragheh, East Azarbaijan Province, belonging to the Seljuk dynasty.

Seh Gonbadan Tower stands atop a tall cylinder-shaped base with a diameter of approximately five meters. The current height of the tower, known as Seh Gonbadan, is thirteen meters, featuring two stories. Ventilation and natural light are facilitated by windows on each of the tower's four sides.

The lower story serves as a basement, separated from the upper story by a vaulted cover. The upper level houses a tomb chamber accessed through

a doorway measuring two and a half meters in height, indicating the tower's likely use as a tomb as well.

Thankfully, much of the original structure remains intact, including the façade, tablets, and brick walls. Decorations on the entrance gateway of the tomb chamber, crafted from stone and plaster, are notably unique, showcasing geometric motifs and inscriptions in Bannai script.

It's worth noting that the base of the building is constructed from gray stones, extending up to six meters, transitioning to quadrilateral bricks for the tower's upper sections.

