

Jalalabad Citadel, a pillar of Sistan's historical heritage

Iranica Desk

Southeast Iran is home to many valuable historical sites, ranging from the Burnt City (an archaeological site of a sizable Bronze Age urban settlement) to Dahan-e Gholaman (a major Achaemenid center and archaeological site). Sistan and Baluchestan Province is the cradle of some of the oldest civilizations and cities. Throughout Sistan, one can observe traces of numerous cultural and historical artifacts. Before the onset of drought in this area, Sistan was lush and green, attracting many tourists seeking to enjoy its natural beauty. One of the important cities in Sistan in terms of culture is Hirmand, with Dost Muhammad as its center.

In Hirmand, there are 45 ancient sites and pristine historical attractions, including the Jalalabad Citadel, the Karkooy Fire Temple, the Niatak Forest, and ancient wells. The Jalalabad Citadel is considered one of the must-see places in Zabol, the capital city of Sistan and Baluchestan Province, and holds special significance due to its geographical and strategic

location in proximity to Afghanistan. This valuable site dates back to the Qajar era and has been registered on Iran's National Heritage List, IRNA wrote.

The Jalalabad Citadel was built by Mohammad Ali Khan Kiani, known as Khan Malek, during the late reign of Nasereddin Shah. This citadel featured many gardens constructed by Indian arti-

sans. The residents of the Hirmand share numerous stories about this citadel. Some say "In the past, before the drought in this region, the livelihood of the people was good, and at one time, due to the abundance of grains, this province became the granary of the country." However, even though there is little water now, many treasures remain hidden in

this region, and optimizing their use is important for the livelihood of the local people.

The preservation and restoration of the Jalalabad Citadel began in 2004. This project is expected to encompass 15 restoration phases. The ultimate goal of the restoration is to create a tourist hotel, which, according to officials, will be operational

before 2025.

The Jalalabad Citadel has a square plan and features a central courtyard with four watchtowers at the corners of the structure. The materials used in the construction of the citadel mainly consist of raw clay and brick. Like other prominent buildings in Sistan and Baluchestan Province, the Jalalabad Citadel was built on a natural hill

to protect it from moisture. Due to the hot weather in the southern part of the country, it is recommended not to visit the Jalalabad Citadel in the summer, as the access route may be challenging for some vehicles. It is worth mentioning that historical artifacts are part of our cultural heritage, and we must appreciate and preserve them.



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Ganjehei Gorge is a slice of paradise in Iran's nature capital



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Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, renowned for its springs, recreational areas, stunning waterfalls, and roaring rivers, offers visitors a unique array of tourist landscapes. This province boasts 280 natural recreational sites, approximately 2,600 historical sites, and 750 registered historical monuments on the national heritage list. With its abundant natural resources, it stands out as an ideal destination for tourists, particularly nature lovers.

Yasuj, located in the cooler regions of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, is often dubbed the "Nature Capital of Iran" due to its diverse natural, tourist, and recreational attractions. The city is gracefully nestled on the slopes of Dena Mountain, resembling a piece of green silk. Its captivating beauty and pleasant climate draw tourists and nature enthusiasts each year during the lush seasons.

Ganjeh village, situated in a cold temperate climate, enjoys mild and cool weather year-round. This area receives substantial snowfall and rainfall, ensuring a vibrant ecosystem.

The main water source for Ganjeh village is a river that originates from the majestic Dena Mountain. This river flows continuously throughout the year and has remained resilient even during droughts, with its water level only decreasing in 2008 during a national drought; however, it did not dry up completely.

A prominent attraction in the village is Ganjeh Gorge (Tang-e Ganjei), known for its lush landscape featuring diverse groves of trees such as mulberries, terebinth, and oak, enticing countless tourists each year. Among the region's other natural wonders are the mountains, with Dena being the most notable. Dena is blanketed in snow for much of the year, offering select areas suitable for skiing enthusiasts.

The local vegetation consists of tall, robust trees that provide ample shade for the cool springs, creating inviting spaces for visitors. Stunning trees such as oak, terebinth, and hawthorn contribute to the area's natural splendor. Due to the high density of forest cover, autumn lovers can experience a remarkably colorful season, accompanied by the soothing rustling of plane tree leaves within the gorge. Winters in Gan-

jeheh Gorge are equally mesmerizing, where visitors can revel in the enchanting sight of snowflakes dancing on the bare branches of trees during snowy days.

The best times to visit this natural attraction are spring and summer. The lush greenery, pristine beauty, and cool, pleasant climate make this area incredibly inviting. As the river meanders through the valley and among towering plane trees, it creates a captivating landscape that appeals to tourists seeking tranquility in nature.

In this region, the expansive sky offers magnificent views framed by the extensive branches and towering trunks of plane trees. Moreover, the availability of sanitary and recreational facilities, including piped water in the gorge, has drawn numerous travelers seeking enjoyment and relaxation during the spring and summer months, far removed from the hustle and bustle of urban life. Its strategic location along the Yasuj-Sefid Dasht road, one of the busiest routes in the province, ensures easy access for visitors eager to explore and appreciate the area's breathtaking natural beauty.

