

Beauty and charm of Kelachay in Gilan Province

Iranica Desk

Kelachay is a vibrant city in Gilan Province that attracts numerous tourists from across Iran each year. One of its main attractions is Kelachay Beach Park, renowned as one of the best beaches in the province. In addition to its stunning coastline, Kelachay features lush forests, fruit orchards, and popular destinations such as the Panjshanbeh Bazaar (Thursday Market). Nestled 20 to 25 meters below sea level, the city enjoys a mild, rainy climate due to its proximity to both the sea and the mountains.

Visitors to Kelachay can marvel at breathtaking landscapes filled with rice paddies, tea plantations, and citrus and kiwi orchards. The area also boasts clean, calm sandy beaches, flowing rivers, and lively traditional markets. Local handicrafts include intricately turned wooden items, woolen garments like socks and hats, pottery, felt creations, woven baskets, mats, and tools for hunting and fishing.

Thanks to its unique location and well-developed access routes, Kelachay has become an important economic center in the region. The Thursday Market stands out as the most significant and well-known local market in eastern Gilan Province, where residents from nearby cities gather to sell their goods.

The rocky and sandy beach of Kelachay, located north of Teacher Boulevard, is ideal for family recreation and walking due to its quiet and safe environment, with designated spots for sitting and picnicking. Watching the sunrise and sunset at this pristine beach is truly memorable.

Kelachay Beach has two sections: rocky and sandy. Visitors can sit on the large rocks in the rocky area and listen to the soothing sounds of the sea. The sandy section is suitable for swimming, sports, wading, and walking. Generally, the first half of the year is the best time



to visit the beach; during winter, its beauty is enhanced by the increasing number of seagulls.

The Polroud River, one of the largest and most water-rich rivers in eastern Gilan Province, originates from the central Alborz Mountains in Rahimabad. Flowing approximately 60 kilometers, it ultimately empties into the Caspian Sea near Kelachay.

The banks of the Polroud river are among the best spots for camping, picnicking, birdwatching, photography, wading, and fishing in Kelachay. The clear water, pristine nature, desir-

able vegetation, tranquility, and clean air make spending time by the river very enjoyable.

The beautiful Kelachay River flows through the city, dividing it into eastern and western halves before emptying into the Caspian Sea. This river has brought prosperity and fertility to the city's agricultural lands, creating a unique landscape. Along its banks, numerous spots are ideal for camping and relaxation for both locals and tourists. Visitors can enjoy various activities, including fishing, wading, nature walks, photography, birdwatching, and picnicking by the river.

The tomb of Amir Bandeh, also known as Imamzadeh Seyed Ahmad and Imamzadeh Seyed Heydar, is a registered cultural heritage site in Gilan Province. It is the resting place of two descendants of Imam Musa Kazem (PBUH), the seventh imam of Shia Muslim, Amir Ahmad and Amir Heydar. The main building of the shrine is small, with light green-painted outer walls and wooden columns. The tiled, gabled roof reflects the architectural style typical of northern Iran. This Imamzadeh is regarded as one of the most important sites for mourning and religious cere-

monies in the village, with grand ceremonies held on Tasu'a and Ashura to commemorate the martyrdom of Imam Hussein (PBUH) and his companions. Vajargah is one of the charming towns in Kelachay, known for its stunning mountainous landscapes and access routes that make it a beautiful natural tourist destination. The lush, tree-covered heights surrounding Vajargah are perfect for nature walks, offering visitors a unique experience of walking among the clouds.

Located in the northern part of Vajargah at the end of Arghavan

Street, the Sarina Recreational Complex, also known as Sarina Beach Park, is a popular attraction that delights visitors with its appealing amenities. The park provides facilities for various activities, including jet skiing, shuttle rides, boating, and billiards. Kelachay is home to numerous picturesque villages that attract many tourists each year, thanks to their stunning scenery, pleasant climate, and historical and natural attractions. Bibalan village, one of the oldest villages in eastern Gilan Province, is particularly noteworthy for its rich heritage and beauty.

Bukhara-duzi, a cultural mosaic of patterns and colors

Bukhara is a renowned city in Transoxiana, with a rich history, known as a hub of scientists and scholars. Today, Bukhara stands as one of Uzbekistan's largest cities, known for its production of silk and cotton, with enough cotton exported to Iraq. For centuries, Bukhara has been a center for unique handicrafts, particularly the intricate art of *Bukhara-duzi* an appealing form of em-

broidery. This elaborate sewing technique, which requires significant time and skill, unfortunately lacks a coherent historical narrative. However, it gained prominence during the Seljuq dynasty, with many Bukhara artifacts preserved in museums worldwide.

The true flourishing of Bukhara-duzi occurred during the Mongol and Timurid Empires, when the city at-

tracted numerous artists and scholars. As these artisans honed their craft, they began applying Bukhara designs to *tafteh*, a crisp and lightweight fabric that is commonly used to make a variety of types of high-end women's apparel.

The color palette of Bukhara-duzi is vibrant, featuring red, indigo, white, jade green, yellow, mustard, brown, and orange. Commonly

used fabrics include cotton and less frequently, wool or silk. This craft is employed to embellish a wide range of items, including drapes, *korsi* (a low Iranian table with a heater underneath), tablecloths, bedding, prayer rugs, cushions, and decorative tableaus.

Notable collections of Bukhara-duzi can be found in prestigious museums, such as the Armitage,

Metropolitan, Louvre, Museum of Decorative Arts, and the British Museum.

Typically, this technique is applied to ornate drapes exceeding three meters in length, with artists dedicating years to perfecting their creations. Today, the art of Bukhara-duzi has seen a revival in cities like Tehran, ensuring that this rich cultural heritage continues to thrive.

