

Rock houses of Bibi Kand; A blend of nature, ancient engineering

Iranica Desk

Rock architecture has a long history in Iran and around the world, shaped by various climatic, defensive, and cultural factors that have led to the emergence of some of the most beautiful examples of this architectural style. They are located southwest of Shahin Dej in the southern part of West Azarbaijan Province. While the exact time of their construction is unknown, some experts estimate it to have been between 3,000 and 3,500 years ago. This site, dating back to the first millennium BCE and registered on Iran's National Heritage List, features 13 rooms carved into the mountain, offering stunning views for visitors.



West Azarbaijan Province, situated at the intersection of the Alborz and Zagros mountain ranges, boasts a mountainous landscape and has been home to civilizations such as the Medes and other tribes, resulting in pristine examples of rock tomb architecture. Shahin Dej, located in the northwest of Iran and the south of West Azarbaijan Province, attracts tourists and visitors every year with its natural and historical attractions. Among these, the rock houses of Bibi Kand stand out, consistently drawing many visitors, IRNA wrote.

This ancient manmade cave, situated near Bibi Kand village, is carved into a mountain of the same name, located 16 kilometers from the city of Shahin Dej. Excavating such places in the mountains was common in ancient times, serving various purposes, including religious functions and as residences or retreats. While the exact age of this cave, also known locally as Farhad Cave, is unclear, some estimates suggest it is over three thousand five hundred years old.

The rock houses of Bibi Kand consist of several interconnected rooms linked by winding, narrow corridors. The entrance to the complex features a porch where water from a spring emerging from the heart of Bibi Kand Mountain was historically channeled through a narrow pathway. Rocky platforms at the entrance are beautifully and delicately carved. Inside the rooms, hollows serve as niches or ledges, and some rooms feature stunning skylights.

In certain areas, stairs complement the corridors, creating connections between different sections. Accessing this valuable historical site can be somewhat challenging, which has hindered its introduction to enthusiasts of ancient artifacts.

Architectural features

The rock houses of Bibi Kand comprise three levels and five interconnected rooms linked by a tunnel. These features demonstrate precision and expertise in the design of this rock structure, attesting to the knowledge and engineering

skills of past civilizations. The rooms are carved into natural stones, resulting in walls formed directly from rock. These rooms have ceilings that rest naturally on the outer stones, likely designed to protect inhabitants from cold and heat. The rock structure not only provides resistance against weather conditions but also offers concealment from enemies.

Connections and tunnels

One of the unique features of Bibi Kand is the connecting tunnels that link the rooms. These tunnels are designed to provide access to all rooms through underground passages. This design served not only as a defensive feature but also as a means of transporting people and essential materials during natural or human-made threats.

Entrances

The entrances to the rocky structure are constructed to limit access from the outside, allowing only those familiar with the environment to enter. This feature was particularly important in historical

periods when the likelihood of enemy attacks was higher. The ventilation system has been naturally integrated into the design of the complex, allowing interior spaces to be indirectly ventilated through air currents and surrounding open spaces. Additionally, the area surrounding this rock structure boasts beautiful natural scenery, combining mountains, valleys, and agricultural lands. These features enhance the significance of the rock complex, both historically and in terms of natural beauty. Given the historical and cultural values of the rock houses of Bibi Kand, protecting this site is essential to prevent destruction and damage. Developing tourism infrastructure in this region could attract more visitors and further promote this historical site. Today, the rock complex is recognized as a tourist attraction in West Azarbaijan Province, offering history and archaeology enthusiasts the opportunity to explore one of the region's most unique historical treasures.



● neshan.org

Trekking through enchantment of Tang-e Solak

Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province has many natural attractions due to its location in the mountainous region of Zagros and also abundant rainfall. The presence of roaring rivers, beautiful villages and lakes are among the attractions of this province, which has caused

many enthusiasts to travel during the year, especially in spring. Among the attractions of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province are its many valleys that can be seen throughout the province. In the west of this province and on the border of Khuzestan Province, one of

these famous and beautiful valleys is located. Tang-e Solak or Tang-e Sorouk is located in Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province, but the closest city to it is Likak, which is located in Khuzestan Province. Tang-e-Solak is a very beautiful valley with mountainous nature, which is

covered with many trees, including oak. In the middle of the valley, beautiful views can be seen. But the beautiful nature of Tang-e-Solak is not the only reason for its fame. Rather, in the middle of this valley, there are a number of stones with ancient motifs and in-

scriptions that many enthusiasts enter to visit this valley. These motifs are related to the Parthian era. Tang-e-Solak reliefs depict various scenes of magnificent ancient customs, religious symbols, cavalry and infantry battles, coronation and crowning and holding the ring of power, royal

hunting, ceremonies and welcome in the heart of the mountains for the future. It is a bit difficult to visit the stone carvings and you have to walk a distance of about 3km, which takes at least one hour. For this reason, it needs proper physical preparation along this path. There are no

amenities along this route and around the ancient carvings, and it is essential to bring all the necessities for a few hours of mountaineering. The best time to visit this area is late winter and early spring. Early summers in the tropics make it difficult to walk.



● wikipedia.org