

Harmony of nature, nomadism in Ilam’s springtime celebration



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Iranica Desk

The land of the Zagros dwellers adorns itself with a fresh garment of nature’s softness each spring. This region, rich in culture and authentic Iranian symbols, welcomes travelers who experience Nowruz not only amidst flowers and greenery but also at the heart of the untouched life of the nomads. This time, the black tents (known in Persian as *siah chador*) — these warm nomadic homes birthed from nature — have been re-erected to serve as a bridge between the modern world and a past that still stands with dignity, IRNA wrote.

Stories and traditions within the tents

Inside these black tents, stories come to life, infused with the aroma of fresh bread baked in a local clay oven, the scent of stews seasoned with wild spices, and the warmth of hand-made crafts that reflect the artistry of nomadic women. Together, these elements showcase a remarkable harmony between humans and nature. The black tents are not just a refuge for Nowruz (Iranian new Year) tourists; they also host traditions, local music, and stories that have emerged over generations from the dust of creation. The heights of Ilam, with the spring breeze and the echo of



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nomadic flutes inviting tranquility to its evenings, find new meaning within these tents. Mohammad Javad Khanzadi, director general of Ilam Province’s General Governorate’s Nomad Affairs’ Office, stated that holding these events is not only a way to preserve the cultural heritage of the region but also offers a unique and memorable experience for Nowruz travelers. In these black tents, life flows in all its authenticity. This year, the peak of the valley in Ilam, the historic city of Seimare, and other tourist attractions in the province will host exhibitions of crafts and

traditional nomadic products. These exhibitions will showcase the art of men and women who not only understand nature but also create beauty from it, featuring colorful handwoven items and the taste of warm bread from clay ovens, allowing tourists to closely experience the rhythm of nomadic life.

A cultural fusion of Nowruz and Ramadan
Khanzadi also mentioned the coincidence of the holy month of Ramadan with Nowruz and announced plans for special cultural programs, stating that these black tents will narrate



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the lifestyle and art of the nomads while providing venues for spiritual and ceremonial events fitting the atmosphere of Ramadan. Through this event, Ilam once again presents the authenticity and cultural richness of the nomads to travelers with a fresh perspective, transforming the black tents into more than just places for rest or recreation. These tents reflect the vibrant spirit of the Zagros people, and every visitor, upon entering them, will not only become acquainted with nomadic achievements but will also engrave a part of the history and identity

of these hospitable people in their memory. Khanzadi pointed out the establishment of a nomadic element at Ilam Airport to showcase the achievements of the province’s nomads, emphasizing that holding various cultural programs in the erected black tents, especially given the coincidence of the holy month of Ramadan and Nowruz, is one of the most important initiatives for nomadic affairs during this time. Undoubtedly, with the presence of black tents and nomadic elements along the route to Ilam Airport, travelers will encounter the symbol of nomadic life

before embarking on their Nowruz journeys. From this point onward into the heart of Ilam’s nature, tourists will flow along the river of the region’s culture, as the black tents serve as a window into the history of the indigenous people who have intertwined their lives with simplicity and beauty for centuries beneath the steadfast mountains and within the embrace of nature.

Embracing authenticity

In the upcoming Nowruz, Ilam will not only serve as a passage for travelers but also as a destination where they can experience the pure essence of Iranian life. Amidst the traditional bustle, travelers will not merely be spectators; they will become part of a poetic coexistence with nature, especially when they hear the cooing of doves or the song of a nearby cuckoo. Perhaps for the first time during their journey, they will truly feel the authentic meaning of life. With the offering of its nomadic black tents for Nowruz, Ilam not only spreads a table of services and beauties for its guests but also provides a rare opportunity to get acquainted with a part of Iran’s national culture. Here, every tent has a story, every sound brings an experience, and every gaze is a return to a forgotten authenticity that has faded in the corners of modern life.



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Qalieh mahi, a southern Iranian delight

The local and traditional foods of southern regions of Iran have a crucial position in Iranian food culture and many of these foods constitute the routine meal of them. There are many different foods relevant to the warm and humid conditions in the southern regions of Iran. Living in the unbearable warm and highly humid areas needs particular healthy meals to compensate the harmful consequences of the weather in which fish is a highly beneficial food-stuff. The warm water in the south is a good source of providing fresh fishes for cooking delicious foods. *Qalieh mahi* is one of the most famous traditional

yummy and highly nutrient food the which is greatly popular in the south; It is cooked by the same method anywhere in Iran. In fact, *qalieh mahi* is a kind of spicy *khoresh* (stew) in which fish has an important role. In order to prepare a good *qalieh*, we can use mackerel or any other fishes in the southern region of Iran with little bones along with vegetables such as, coriander and fenugreek, onion, pepper, turmeric, garlic, oil and tomato paste. Tamarind is also added in order to make a sour taste. *Qalieh mahi* is usually served with rice; however, you can eat with some bread. The *qalieh mahi* delicious

taste, aromatic smell and good appearance arise from the vegetable and garlic. In addition to *qalieh mahi*, the southern regions of Iran are known for other delicious dishes that showcase the local ingredients and culinary techniques. The emphasis on seafood, particularly in coastal areas, reflects the rich maritime culture of the south, where fishing is not just a livelihood but also a way of life. Overall, the foods of southern Iran are a vibrant testament to the region’s history, climate, and the ingenuity of its people in creating meals that are both satisfying and deeply rooted in tradition.