

Unveiling secrets of Behnam House in Tabriz



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The Maqsudiyeh neighborhood, nestled in Tabriz, East Azarbaijan Province, is celebrated for its rich historical tapestry and numerous ancient sites. Among these landmarks stands the venerable Behnam House, a historical edifice named in honor of its proprietor, Behnam Ganjei. Beyond Behnam House, the Maqsudiyeh neighborhood is also home to other notable residences, each bearing its own unique story, including the Ganjei-Zadeh Mansion, Salmasi House, and Shahrari's House, contributing to the area's dis-

tinctive historical ambiance.

History

Behnam House is believed to have originated towards the end of the Zand dynasty and the inception of the Qajar era, around the late 18th century. It is well-documented that the house underwent significant restoration during the reign of Nasereddin Shah Qajar in the latter half of the 19th century. The architectural structure visible today largely reflects this period of renovation, with its ornate decorations and diverse

paintings dating back to this time.

Behnam House, along with four other historical houses in its vicinity, now forms an integral part of the Tabriz University of Art, adding to its cultural and educational significance.

Architecture and features

Spanning approximately 900 square meters, Behnam House exemplifies traditional Iranian mansion architecture, featuring distinct internal and external sections. Designed with both summer and winter living quarters, the house strategically allocates more space to the summer area to accommodate Tabriz's extended cold season. The building's facade captivates observers with its remarkable brickwork and exquisitely designed doors and windows. Upon entering, a vestibule connects the house's entrance to a courtyard adorned with a beautifully arranged flowerbed. The windows, embellished with colorful panes, frame picturesque views visible from the courtyard, oriented towards the north and south.

The southern part of the summer residence boasts a tall, pillared porch that matches the height of the residence itself.

Rooms flank both sides of this residential area.

A notable feature of Behnam House is its interior decoration, highlighted by an array of paintings. During a restoration, several Iranian fresco paintings were uncovered, reminiscent of those used extensively during the Renaissance period. The presence of these paintings suggests that the house's original owners and designers were keen on incorporating European-style interior decorations. The summer residence's walls and ceilings also showcase stunning paintings. In the southern part of the house, a summer terrace is supported by columns crowned with plaster capitals. Beneath the summer residence lies a pond sheltered by a dome-shaped roof. The basement of this section is notably spacious, showcasing an admirable alignment of architectural proportions through its arches and domes.

The inner section of the house, positioned on the northernmost side, features rooms on its east and west sides that overlook the courtyard. This area, designed to capture maximum sunlight, served as the primary residential space



during the colder months. Behnam House was officially recognized as a site of national significance in 1997 when it was inscribed on Iran's List of National Heritage.

A must-visit destination

Tabriz boasts a history that dates back over a millennia, making it one of the key cities in Iran's cultural and historical landscape. Once the capital of

the Ilkhanate and an essential city in the Safavid dynasty, Tabriz has witnessed the rise and fall of empires. Its influence in trade, especially during the Silk Road era, brought prosperity and attracted travelers and merchants from far and wide.

The city stands as a city where history, culture, and modernity converge, making it a must-visit destination for anyone interested in Iran's diverse heritage.

Atashgah Waterfall; nature's symphony in southwestern Iran



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Atashgah Waterfall is one of the most stunning natural attractions in Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, located about 40 kilometers from Lordegan. This magnificent waterfall, often referred to as the Miniature Waterfall due to its unique landscape, is a must-visit destination for nature lovers and adventure seekers alike. Its roaring cascade and picturesque surroundings make it one of the most popular attractions in the southwestern Iran. The Atashgah area features a collection of several waterfalls, which is why they share the same name. These small waterfalls flow along a three-kilo-

meter stretch, earning them the title of one of the longest waterfall systems in Iran. The number of waterfalls can vary significantly throughout the year, depending on seasonal changes in water volume; at times, visitors may witness as many as seven to ten distinct waterfalls cascading down the rocky terrain. The source of these waterfalls is the Dena Mountains, located in the central Zagros range, which lies south of Isfahan and north of Kohgiluyeh and Boyer-Ahmad Province. The waters eventually feed into the Khorasan River and, after navigating various valleys and elevations, contribute to one of the

main tributaries of the Karoun River, ultimately flowing into the Karoun Dam. The proximity of Khuzestan Province influences the region's climate, resulting in warm weather that makes it an appealing destination for travelers year-round. Visitors to Atashgah Waterfall can enjoy well-maintained facilities, including an asphalt road, resting areas, and canopies, ensuring a comfortable experience amidst nature. In addition to the breathtaking waterfalls, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province boasts vast valleys and lush meadows, providing ample opportunities

for hiking and exploration. The region's geological features, characterized by stunning limestone and gypsum formations, enhance its natural beauty, creating a unique backdrop for photography and outdoor activities. To reach the Atashgah Waterfall, travelers must cover a distance of approximately 40 kilometers from Lordegan to the nearby villages of Milas and Sardasht. From the nearest village, a short hike is required to access the waterfall itself. For those traveling from Shahr-e Kord, the capital city of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, the journey spans about 200 kilometers,

making it a rewarding adventure for those willing to explore this enchanting region.

Lordegan and beyond

Lordegan, the gateway to Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, is surrounded by a wealth of attractions that highlight the region's natural and cultural heritage. The city itself offers a glimpse into the rich traditions of the Bakhtiari people, known for their nomadic lifestyle and vibrant handicrafts. Visitors to Lordegan can explore local markets filled with traditional goods, such as woven rugs and handcrafted pot-

tery. The city's strategic location also makes it an ideal base for day trips to nearby attractions, including the stunning Zardkuh Mountain, which offers breathtaking views and a chance to experience the region's diverse flora and fauna. Overall, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, with its enchanting waterfalls, captivating landscapes, and rich cultural experiences, is a hidden gem waiting to be discovered by adventurous travelers. Whether you're seeking tranquility in nature or a deeper understanding of local traditions, this province has something to offer everyone.