

Embrace nature in Dohezar Forest of Mazandaran Province

Iranica Desk

In recent years, ecotourism and camping in nature have emerged as some of the most enjoyable forms of travel and recreation. Iran offers various regions for camping, including deserts, seas, mountains, and forests, with the Dohezar Forest in the north of the country being one notable destination. The best time for camping in this area is from May to November, while winter camping is not recommended due to harsh conditions. To fully enjoy this exciting experience, having proper camping equipment such as tents, sleeping bags, and hygiene supplies is essential. Additionally, careful consideration should be given to selecting an appropriate location, particularly avoiding camping near rivers.

The Dohezar Forest, located in Mazandaran Province near the town of Tonekabon, is part of the ancient Hyrcanian forests, dating back millions of years. The road leading to this forest takes travelers from Tonekabon to the Dohezar region, offering stunning views of mountains, rivers, and lush pastures along the way. The name Dohezar, meaning two thousand, derives from the area's elevation, as parts of this forest are situated at altitudes of two thousand meters or more above sea level. Alongside its neighboring forests — namely Sehezar and Almistan — Dohezar is considered one of the most popular ecotourism destinations in northern Iran, IRNA wrote.

In terms of flora, the Dohezar Forest boasts a variety of native trees, including oak, Persian ironwood (Zaban Gonjeeshki), poplar, and beech, making it an excellent destination for botany enthusiasts. Additionally, numerous medicinal plants like thyme, chamomile, and saffron thrive naturally in this forest. From an animal perspective, the forest's natural environment serves as a habitat for wildlife such as boars, rabbits, deer, and large birds like eagles, hawks, and owls. The diverse animal species contribute to the forest's rich and complex ecosystem.



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Attractions

Daryaser Plain: Known for its beautiful landscapes and diverse vegetation, the Daryaser Plain is a fantastic spot for hiking and enjoying nature.

Falakdeh village: The village, with its wooden houses and pristine surroundings, offers visitors a taste of rural life. The hot springs in Falakdeh village are perfect for relaxation and healing.

Chaldareh Forest Park: With lush trees and a tranquil environment, Chaldareh Forest Park is an ideal location for picnicking and resting.

Best time for camping

The camping conditions in this ecosystem vary throughout the year:

Spring: The Dohezar Forest comes alive in spring, showcasing vibrant greenery due to seasonal rains, blooming trees, and flourishing plants and flowers. The weather is pleasant, and the aroma of wild grass adds to the experience. This period is ideal for camping and hiking, though it is advisable to avoid setting up tents near river paths and to be prepared for heavy rain.

Summer: Summer is also a favorable time for camping in the Dohezar Forest. During this season, temperatures in the mountainous areas are mild, and the high altitude keeps the intense summer heat at bay. The cool

and pleasant nights enhance the overall camping experience.

Autumn: Autumn is one of the most beautiful times to experience the nature of Dohezar. The forest is adorned with vibrant yellow, orange, red, and brown leaves, creating a stunning landscape ideal for camping and photography. The temperatures are mild, making it perfect for exploring the outdoors. Remember to pack warm clothing and sufficient gear for the chilly nights and early mornings.

Winter: In winter, camping in the Dohezar Forest is not advisable due to snow and severe cold. Enduring the frost in this high-altitude area can be extremely challenging, and various risks may arise.

Eco-friendly camping

Dohezar Forest is one of the most important protected areas in Iran, and many of its plant and animal species are threatened. When camping here, it is crucial to observe environmental regulations and avoid harming this delicate ecosystem.

Accessibility: Choose locations with easy access to roads or walking paths.

Safety: Consider the safety of the area by avoiding remote and secluded spots. If necessary, camp near roads or busier locations.

Distance from trees: Ensure the campsite is located away from tall trees to minimize the risk of falling branches during strong

winds or heavy rainfall.

Flood risk: If camping near rivers or seasonal springs, steer clear of areas prone to flooding or rising water levels at night.

Hazardous branches: Be aware that dry trees or broken branches may fall due to adverse weather conditions, so it's best to camp in locations where there is no risk from falling trees or branches.

Suitable locations for camping

Around the lake: One of the best camping spots in Dohezar Forest is the area surrounding the lake in the Daryaser Plain. Nestled among tall trees, this lake offers a calm and pleasant environment. If you're seeking a cozy retreat away from the crowds, the natural lake in Daryaser Plain is an excellent choice. However, be mindful that it may not be suitable for camping in all seasons and can be dry during hot, arid periods.

Around the rivers: Dohezar Forest features several rivers and streams where camping nearby can be quite enjoyable. Choosing a spot close to the river allows you to appreciate the soothing sounds of flowing water and the activity of small river inhabitants at night. Generally, there are flat and suitable grounds for pitching tents, but it's essential to avoid camping too close to the river, especially during rainy seasons, and to maintain a safe distance

from potential flooding.

Highlands: In areas above the forest level, you'll find breathtaking views of the surrounding trees and mountains. Access to these points may be more challenging, but their elevation and stunning scenery make them worthwhile to visit.

Plains: The plains and areas with less vegetation provide good options for camping. These locations offer a more comfortable environment in terms of temperature and humidity, allowing you to fully immerse yourself in the natural surroundings.

Recreational activities

Dohezar Forest, with its pristine nature, clean air, and stunning views, provides an ideal environment for a variety of recreational activities. Here are some common and popular activities you can enjoy while camping in this area:

Dohezar Forest, situated on the southern slopes of the Alborz Mountains, offers a variety of trails for hiking and walking enthusiasts. This area is characterized by tall trees, cool, flowing rivers, and unique natural beauty. Trekking through the forest can lead you to various destinations, including nearby villages and mountain peaks. The hiking trails range in difficulty from easy to hard, depending on the terrain and challenges. If you're seeking a trail for a long hike

with expansive views, opt for paths that lead to higher peaks or elevated areas. For those interested in overnight camping, it is advisable to select trails that provide easy access to water, food, and other facilities. Always check the weather conditions before starting your hike and remember to carry a map and navigation tools like a GPS.

Nature photography

Nature photography is one of the most popular activities in Dohezar Forest, where the pristine landscapes offer beautiful subjects for capturing images. The diverse biodiversity and natural beauty make this area an excellent location for photography. The sturdy trees, wild plants, and flowers, along with clouds and mists dancing through the forest, create stunning visuals. You can also observe wildlife such as wild boars, rabbits, birds, and other creatures, which provide captivating subjects for your photos.

Fishing

Surrounding Dohezar Forest are crystal-clear rivers and streams that offer excellent fishing opportunities. This activity presents a relaxing and enjoyable experience, as some rivers provide a better fishing environment due to their cool, abundant waters.

Campfire nights

One of the main delights of camping in Dohezar Forest is

spending nights immersed in nature. Set up your tent in the woods and enjoy pleasant evenings by the campfire. The nighttime sounds of the forest, paired with the warmth of the fire and a starry sky, create a dreamy and unforgettable camping atmosphere.

Water activities

In certain parts of Dohezar Forest, rushing rivers and streams provide opportunities for water activities such as boating, swimming, or bathing in the cool, clear waters. Swimming in these waters during the pleasant weather is a unique experience; however, be sure to take necessary precautions for your safety and that of your loved ones, and be aware of the potential dangers associated with swimming in rivers and flowing waters.

Cycling

For cycling enthusiasts, Dohezar Forest offers suitable trails for biking. Enjoy pedaling through nature while adhering to safety guidelines and wearing gloves and a proper cycling helmet.

Wildlife watching

If you are interested in wildlife, Dohezar Forest is one of the best places for observing various animal species. In these woods, you can encounter diverse wildlife, including wild boars, deer, rabbits, and a variety of birds.

