

Adventure-seeking travelers on Hengam Island’s shores

Iranica Desk

For many years, traveling to southern Iran and its beautiful, unique beaches has been part of the plans for numerous tourists. This region of the country is always a welcoming host to nature lovers. The Persian Gulf is home to many islands, with Qeshm Island being one of its most stunning. Silver Beach is considered one of the main attractions of Qeshm. Silver Beach is among the famous beaches in southern Iran and a highlight in Hormozgan Province, located in the northwestern part of Hengam Island. The beauty of this beach captivates everyone who visits, with its black and silver sands. Walking on the soft, shimmering sands of Hengam Island while watching the beautiful waves of the azure Persian Gulf invokes a sense of childhood dreams. Natural attractions remain valuable and appealing only as long as they remain untouched. Every nature lover and tourist should take this matter seriously to avoid destroying the divine gifts of the country out of selfishness or negligence. Unfortunately, the removal of sand from this beach by tourists has put the area at risk of permanent destruction. To prevent further damage to this natural wonder, tourists are currently prohibited from accessing Silver Beach or disembarking there. Instead, travelers can only view the beach from a distance while aboard their boats or ships. To reach Hengam Island, one must travel from Bandar Abbas to Qeshm. The distance from Shahid Zakeri Port in Qeshm to Shibderaz Jetty is approximately 56 kilometers, taking about 50 minutes. At the jetty,



tickets can be purchased for travel to Hengam Island via boats and vessels. If the sea is calm, sightseeing boats head toward Hengam Island, located just two kilometers south of Qeshm. This sea journey takes around 10 minutes. The Silver Beach of Qeshm is one of the country’s unique natural landscapes and perhaps the most beautiful beach in Iran, known for its glowing sands. The stunning Silver Beach of Hengam Island is visually striking both during the day and at night. When the waves reach the shore and collide with the luminous particles, their brightness multiplies several times, and this shimmer lasts for a few seconds. The shine of the sands on Silver Beach is due to shiny mineral grains that sparkle under sunlight, reflecting light. Additionally, crushed plankton and seashells contribute to the beach’s luminescence. Phytoplankton are tiny living organisms

that thrive in ocean and sea waters. Their chlorophyll gives the water a green hue, and when the sea becomes turbulent, these organisms emit blue light. This phenomenon occurs mainly during midday in autumn, although the luminescence shines even brighter at night. Walking on the sands of Silver Beach at night, with a flashlight in hand, creates a memorable experience, as the glowing particles of the sand shine beautifully in the light.

Best time to visit
The south of Iran, especially the Persian Gulf islands, experiences very hot and humid weather in the summer, leading to fewer tourists during this time. The best seasons to visit Hengam Island are autumn and early spring. Winter may not provide opportunities for travel to the islands due to turbulent seas, so it’s essential to check the weather conditions carefully before planning your trip.



Necessary equipment
For many, a trip to Hengam Island is a day trip that requires minimal special equipment. It is important to bring a camera, lightweight clothing, comfortable shoes, sunglasses, and a sun hat. Some travelers may wish to camp on the island to enjoy the breathtaking night sky and beaches filled with glowing phytoplankton. In this case,

they should bring camping gear such as a tent, sleeping bag, cooking supplies, and a flashlight. **Where to stay**
There are no hotels on Hengam Island; however, several eco-lodges offer reasonable amenities for travelers. Renting a suite in the new village of Hengam is another accommodation option. Camping is possible on

Hengam Island, and you can set up tents in various parts of the island. It’s advisable to inform the local police station about your camping location so they can check in on the area during nighttime patrols.

Watching dolphins
To see the lovable dolphins, venture out to Hengam Island early in the morning. Dolphins often breach the water during the cool early hours. Boating, watching the Persian Gulf fish approach the boat, and observing birds of prey dive to catch fish at the water’s surface will provide thrilling experiences.

Local market
The local market of Hengam is one of the most fascinating local markets in the country, constructed with materials that reflect the island’s traditional customs. Women in traditional clothing can be seen preparing various dishes, with the delicious

sambosas from this market being particularly famous. In the local market, the island’s residents sell many shell-based handicrafts, such as earrings, necklaces, and bracelets. If you intend to buy special spices for cooking shrimp and fish, this market is the best place to visit. Henna body art is another local specialty available in the market. Engaging in conversation with vendors dressed in their vibrant traditional attire adds to the unique charm of the experience. **Shipwrecked Portuguese vessel**
The Portuguese arrived at Hengam Island during the Safavid era and occupied it for a time. Today, only remnants of the shipwrecked Portuguese vessel can be found around the island. This historical site is located near a part of Hengam Island known as the natural aquarium.

Mystique, history of Haruniyeh Dome near Mashhad

The Haruniyeh Dome is located in Tus, approximately 25km northwest of Mashhad in the Khorasan Razavi Province. It is one of the few remaining structures from ancient Tus and is situated near the tomb of Abolqasem Ferdowsi, the renowned epic poet of Persian culture. This dome is recognized as the oldest surviving monument in Tus and

is believed to serve either as a tomb or a Khanqah (a gathering place for Sufis). Dating back to the 14th century, the dome is attributed to Imam Mohammad Ghazali, a Shafi’i Sunni Muslim scholar and polymath, with this association stemming from a dark stone near the structure that is inscribed in his memory. Built in an Azeri architectural

style, the exact function of Haruniyeh Dome remains uncertain, despite ongoing research. It was registered as a national heritage site on June 6, 1931, but after the Islamic Revolution, it was reclassified as the tomb of Ghazali, visitiran.ir wrote. Numerous tales surround the purpose of this building. One story suggests that it was used

by Harun Al-Rashid, the Abbasid Caliph, to imprison opponents. Others speculate that it may have served as a fire temple. The mystery of its function has even led to the creation of various religious narratives. There are also legends about the sound of Naqareh (drums) being played on the roof of the building. Architecturally, the dome features

a technique known as Panjereye Koor or Kur Dar, which translates to “blind window” or “blind door.” This technique enhances the tall walls of the structure and creates harmony with the hemispheric shape of the dome. The entrance height is notably tall, partially covering the dome, while the back of the building is shorter, producing a unique visual per-

spective for visitors. Inside, the dome mirrors the ethereal quality common to Persian domes, with magical sunlight streaming in through the windows set against a brick backdrop. Currently, the interior functions as a semi-museum. Its proximity to Ferdowsi’s tomb makes Haruniyeh Dome a site rich in tourism potential.

