

Nature, history, hospitality meet in Khoran village of Ilam Province



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Khoran village in Eyvan, Ilam Province, is one of the most attractive and popular tourist destinations in western Iran. Its natural beauty, pleasant climate, rich springs, orchards, agricultural fields, and tourism facilities have captivated travelers, according to the village's manager, Sa'adollah Lotfi. He added that Khoran village is located seven kilometers southwest of

Eyvan. Highlighting its attractions, he noted that this picturesque village, with its scenic landscapes, local products, convenient location, safety, and tranquility, along with easy accessibility throughout the year, welcomes both domestic and international tourists. Lotfi explained that promoting tourism in Khoran plays a vital role in creating rural employment opportunities and establishing recreational spaces for visitors from inside and outside the

province. In recent years, priority has been given to developing tourism infrastructure in Khoran village, particularly through private sector initiatives. He further mentioned the establishment of a student camp, barbecue and fish-grilling units, a restaurant, a ceremony hall, and accommodation facilities as part of the development efforts in the area. Hoda Azadi, the manager of the Bavan Tourism Center in Khoran, said, "This cen-

ter is one of the largest rural tourism infrastructures in Ilam Province, situated on a 12,500-square-meter plot of land with a stunning view on the edge of Mount Sharah Zul, overlooking the village's orchards, agricultural lands, and Eyvan plain. With good access and high-quality services, it has played a significant role in attracting both domestic and international tourists and in boosting tourism in Khoran over recent years." She further explained

that the first accommodation options in Eyvan include traditional tents, an equipped café-restaurant offering delicious and high-quality food, a beautiful ceremony hall, open pavilions, children's entertainment areas, and lush green spaces — all provided by the Bavan Tourist Center. Azadi added, "The population of Khoran was approximately 503 according to the 2016 census, but due to reverse migration and the number of people

accounted for by the mother-and-child health center exceeding 650, the current population is higher." She elaborated that, thanks to its historical significance and the presence of two natural springs, along with 500-year-old plane trees near these springs, the village and the city have a unique attraction and beauty. She noted that during Nowruz and spring, the village's floating population exceeds 3,000 people per

day. This underscores the urgent need for improved tourism infrastructure, and it is hoped that county and provincial authorities will give this matter the necessary attention. Some recreational and welfare facilities have been established by the private sector for tourists, creating limited employment opportunities. If the proper permits are made easily accessible, the private sector could develop more facilities and services.

Samimi Mansion; iconic Qajar monument in Khuzestan Province

Ramhormoz is a city in Khuzestan Province, approximately 100 kilometers from the provincial capital city of Ahvaz. It has a long history and was a prosperous city during the Sassanid era. Samimi Mansion in Ramhormoz is one of the remaining monuments of the Qajar period, featuring spectacular architecture. Samimi garden and mansion is located on Ommat Street, Kimeh district, and is also called Kimeh Mansion. It is about an hour and 20 minutes between Ahvaz and Ramhormoz. Inscribed on Iran's National Heritage List, this building is also best known as Amir Sepahdar Garden because its builder, Amir Hossein Khan Sepahdar, was a ruler during Mozaffar al-Din Shah Qajar. Although he died before living in this house, it later became famous as the mansion of Mohammad Samimi. The building covers an area of

16,500 square meters. Its architecture is inspired by Western garden designs, due to the owner's residency in Europe; however, Persian features have also been incorporated into this structure. After going up a few stairs, you will enter a porch supported by brick columns, except for the eastern side. The inner mansion was used as an office during the Qajar period, but during the Pahlavi era, the house was converted into a residence, and the owner of the garden lived in the central palace or inner mansion. The inner house is a two-storey structure, including a basement and a ground floor. On the ground floor are the hall, dining room, four rooms, and spaces for guards and attendants, all with a beautiful dome ceiling. A watchtower is visible in front of the mansion. The trees in the garden are younger than the mansion. Cov-

ering an area of 1,600 square meters, the garden has hosted various trees for over 200 years; these include bitter orange, sweet lemon, lemon, orange, palm, mulberry, olive, jujube, as well as pine and other species. The flowers give the garden a pleasant appearance, with roses, stocks, damask roses, and calla lilies decorating it in different colors. Currently, the mansion is owned by the Provincial Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts, and Tourism Organization, and it is open to the public during holidays. The proper history of Ramhormoz begins in the Sassanid era, although there have been Elamite remains found in and around the city as well. The tomb of the Sassanid founder of the city, Hormizd I, is commonly thought to be situated within the city. "With the gradual Muslim conquest of Khuzestan Province, Ramhormoz was the scene of a

peace agreement between the local Sassanid satrap, Hormozan, and the commander of the Muslim army." In the Islamic times, it was remarked by Muslim geographers that the city contained a library comparable only to the one in Basra in the wealth of its collection, and that silk was produced in the city and distributed to distant lands. The city enjoyed incredible opulence before entering a state of decline. The 14th century Muslim Moroccan Berber traveller and explorer, Ibn Battuta, visited the city during his travels and described the city as "a fine city with fruit-trees and rivers." From late Safavid times until the Qajar era, the allegiance of the city frequently shifted between Khuzestan and Fars provinces. In the 18th and 19th centuries, Lurs and Arabs started to settle within and around the city from nearby lands.



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