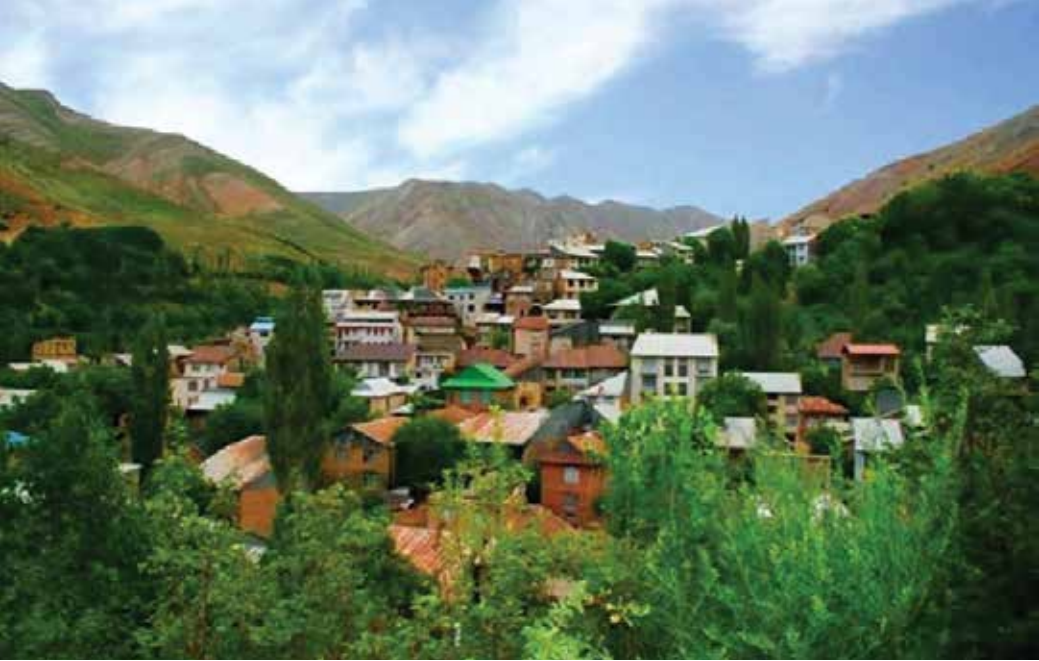


Rudbar-e Qasran; a jewel in Tehran’s northern slopes



Iranica Desk

Rudbar-e Qasran district in northern Tehran is a region with a rich historical and natural heritage that has played diverse and significant roles in the economic, industrial, and tourism sectors of the capital from ancient times up to the present day. The name Rudbar, which means riverbank, reflects its distinctive location alongside permanent rivers that traverse the area. Historically, Rudbar-e Qasran was vitally important for supplying fuel to trains and supporting the rail transport industry, owing to its strategic geographical position and abundant natural resources. With the establishment of the Trans-Iranian Railway, particularly during the 1940s and 1950s, the demand for coal as a primary locomotive fuel surged. Among the most important sources of this fuel were the coal mines of Rudbar-e Qasran. This area, rich with numerous mines including the notable Shemshak coal mine, served as one of the principal centers for sup-

plying fuel to locomotives during that era, chtn.ir wrote. Coal transport from these mines to various parts of the country relied on specially engineered routes. These routes were carefully designed using precise technical calculations and utilized specialized wagons and freight paths tailored to the terrain and logistical demands. The existence of numerous tunnels and bridges — several of which remain standing in parts of the region today — attests to the strategic significance of Rudbar-e Qasran during the first Pahlavi period. Over time, however, especially from the late 1950s through the 1960s, the advent of newer generations of locomotives powered by alternative fuels such as diesel and electricity drastically reduced the demand for coal. Consequently, Rudbar-e Qasran’s traditional role in coal supply diminished, and many of its mines gradually ceased operation. By the 1990s, remnants of mining activity were still observable,



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but over time, the traces of this once vital industry slowly vanished from the landscape. In contemporary times, Rudbar-e Qasran is renowned more for its pristine natural environment, abundant tourist attractions, and rich cultural heritage than for its historical coal mines. Nestled on the northern slopes of the central Alborz Mountains, this region boasts diverse vegetation, roaring rivers, and a

mild climate, establishing it as a favored destination for nature tourism and mountaineering enthusiasts alike. The villages scattered throughout the region, including Ahar, Shemshak, Dizin, Ruteh, and Shemiranat, are known for their traditional architectural fabric, historic old houses, an array of hiking trails, and the warm hospitality of the local residents. These villages attract thousands

of domestic and international visitors each year and are notable not only for their natural beauty but also their historical significance. A prime example is the Shemiranat Palace, constructed during the reign of Naser al-Din Shah Qajar, which, together with nearby hiking trails weaving through forests and mountains, has become a central hub for mountaineers. Beyond its physical and natural attributes, Rudbar-e

Qasran holds deep cultural significance. The continuity of multi-generational families rooted in the region and the ongoing transmission of local culture, customs, and indigenous arts have transformed Rudbar-e Qasran from merely a recreational site into a vital space for exploring and appreciating a part of Tehran’s cultural identity. Moreover, the region’s potential in environmental education, sustainable tourism, and the preservation of natural resources deserves special recognition. An area with such a storied history, remarkable nature, and cultural importance demands intelligent and thoughtful management. Visitors to Rudbar-e Qasran should approach their experience with an awareness and respect for its natural and historical values. The protection of the environment, strict avoidance of littering, and adherence to responsible nature tourism principles are essential responsibilities shared by both tourists and local authorities. In recent decades, the rap-

id population growth and northward urban expansion of Tehran have posed threats to parts of Rudbar-e Qasran due to unchecked construction activities. This phenomenon serves as a stark warning regarding the potential loss of the area’s invaluable natural resources and historic character. Thus, safeguarding Rudbar-e Qasran necessitates meticulous planning and the implementation of stringent regulations aimed at preserving its ecological integrity and historical fabric. Rudbar-e Qasran’s significance extends beyond its former industrial role as a vital supplier of locomotive fuel; today, it stands as one of the natural gems surrounding Tehran, holding a cherished place in the hearts of mountain climbers and forest lovers. From the villages of Ahar and Ruteh to Shemshak, every corner of this region tells a story — a story that begins with coal and locomotives and concludes with the serene embrace of forests and the gentle sounds of birdsong.

Natural wonders surrounding Harzevil Cypress in Gilan Province

Iranica Desk

One of the tourist attractions of Iran is the so old cypress, one of which is the Harzevil cypress. They estimate the age of this tree to be 1000 to 3000 years. This magnificent cypress tree has long been popular among the people of this village. Nasir Khusraw’s logbook mentions the name of this cypress tree, which indicates the tree’s great age. It is said that the age of this tree is between 1000 and 3000 years. Harzevil Cypress is a tall tree with a height of about 30 meters. Also, the trunk diameter of this valuable Iranian treasure is about four meters. You should know that this cypress is called Harzevil since

it is located in the village of the same name. According to the people of Harzevil, this is a sacred ancient cypress tree. It was registered as a national natural heritage, visitiran.ir wrote. Harzevil village is located in the city of Manjil, Gilan Province. This village is situated on the outskirts of Manjil. The closest major tourist town to this village is Rasht, which offers many accommodations ranging from multi-star hotels to private villas. The best time to visit this village is in spring and late summer. Usually, the climate in villages and towns of northern Iran is sultry during the summer. Therefore, if you want to travel to this village in the best months, it is

suggested you go in June. Manjil itself is known for its distinctive windy climate, which has made it an important site for wind turbines that add an attractive scene to the city. The area around Manjil, including Harzevil, has a rich history and natural beauty, marked by features such as the Sefid Rud Dam. Notably, Manjil was affected by the devastating 1990 earthquake that struck northern Iran, causing major damage and shaping the region’s modern history. Visitors to Manjil can enjoy unique local products, such as olives from the nearby town of Rudbar, and take in scenic views and cultural experiences representative of northern Iran.



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