

Visit mysterious Mamraz Lake in Nowshahr



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Iranica Desk

Mamraz Lake in Nowshahr, also called the Lake of Ghosts, is one of the most stunning and enigmatic scenic spots in Mazandaran Province. The lake is situated in the forested highlands between the city of Noor and Nowshahr, offering a captivating natural landscape. Surrounding the lake are beech and European hornbeam trees, known in Persian as Mamraz, which may be the origin of the lake's name. The area's unique setting has contributed to its reputation as a place of both beauty and mystery. Renowned for its exceptional location, Mamraz Lake has gained recognition as one of the most enigmatic natural sights in northern Iran. The combination of broken trees, pervasive fog, and swampy waters creates an eerie, almost otherworldly atmosphere that intrigues visitors and invites exploration. Because of these features, it is regarded as one of the most mysterious and atmospheric scenic spots in the region, IRNA wrote. Over the years, the hornbeam trees in Mamraz have decayed due to their proximity to water, which accelerates their rotting process. This natural decay causes the trees' trunks to break, leaving remnants along the shoreline. In many places, you can see broken trees with their roots protruding from the ground, creating ghostly silhouettes against the mist. Historically, this region was a vast plain covered with hornbeam and beech trees. Over time, with the flow of water and natural changes, the landscape gradually transformed into a swamp,

where trees now emerge from the water in a haunting display. Mamraz Lake and its surrounding forested areas are designated as protected zones in northern Iran. These regions are among the most pristine, untouched parts of Mazandaran Province, attracting increasing numbers of ecotourists and nature lovers in recent years. The lake and its environs serve as safe habitats for a wide variety of wildlife, helping preserve the area's rich biodiversity. Although the Lake of Ghosts, or Mamraz, is often described as frightening, eerie, and mysterious, it is undeniably one of the most breathtaking natural attractions in Mazandaran Province. When the fog rises to its peak, awe-inspiring and surreal vistas unfold across the lake, offering extraordinary visual scenes that enchant visitors. The lake has been officially registered as a national heritage site in Iran, recognizing its cultural and natural significance. The area surrounding Mamraz Lake teems with life; a chorus of birdsong and animal sounds fill the tranquil environment. The forests around the lake are some of the most pristine parts of the Hyrcanian forests in northern Iran, with wildlife activity pervasive and ever-present. As you walk near the lake, you may hear the rustling of leaves and the movement of wild animals and birds, adding to the area's mystique and natural allure. Thanks to its lush, untouched environment, Mamraz Lake serves as a sanctuary for many wild animals. It has preserved a pristine ecosystem, home to various aquatic species such as fish and

amphibians like frogs and snakes. During the colder months, many wild animals seek refuge in the vicinity of the lake. If you explore around Mamraz Lake, there's a possibility of encountering animals such as wild dogs, foxes, or boars. Therefore, it is advisable not to walk alone or venture too far on your own, for safety reasons. One of the most enjoyable activities around Nowshahr's Lake of Ghosts is wandering through and exploring the surrounding forests, which remain pristine and unspoiled. Walking amidst towering trees provides an opportunity to appreciate untouched nature and capture unforgettable photographs. The nearby forests feature dirt roads and winding trails, making them ideal for off-road driving with suitable vehicles. Photographing the various landscapes around the Lake of Ghosts is another popular activity for travelers. During foggy days and periods of low water levels, decayed trees emerge from the lake, creating fascinating and ghostly scenes that seem almost surreal. Such images offer a unique and haunting perspective of this natural wonder. For adventure enthusiasts, the area offers excellent opportunities for picnicking and camping in the wild. Setting up a tent in the surrounding forests allows visitors to enjoy a memorable night immersed in raw nature. However, before camping, it's essential to check the local weather forecast and bring all necessary supplies, as there are no facilities or amenities available in this remote region. The name "Lake of Ghosts" is attributed to the unique visual

phenomena and the special natural environment of the lake. The broken trunks of Mamraz trees emerging from the water, set against thick fog and marshy surroundings, resemble scenes from horror movies, creating an unsettling and ghostly atmosphere. Visiting early in the morning, especially during early spring, offers the best chance to experience this mysterious and eerie ambiance. As the day advances toward midday, the fog tends to lift and disperse; however, during colder seasons and on overcast days, dense fog can persist over the lake throughout the entire day, intensifying its haunting appearance. The Lake of Ghosts remains captivating in every season, and viewing its changing scenery throughout the year can be a truly memorable experience. Nevertheless, access to the lake can become muddy and slippery during snowfall, heavy rain, or wet conditions. If you plan to visit during the colder months, it is advisable to wear suitable clothing and tall boots to navigate the terrain comfortably. Driving along the road to the Lake of Ghosts can also be difficult during periods of heavy rain, and reaching it may require capable, well-equipped vehicles. The best time to visit Mamraz Lake is during the first six months of the year, particularly in spring and early summer. If you intend to visit at the start of the year, it's wise to check the weather conditions beforehand, as they can significantly affect your travel experience. Conditions are generally suitable for visiting until mid-autumn; however, as winter approaches, travel becomes

increasingly difficult. On days of heavy rainfall or adverse weather, park rangers in the region prohibit tourists from visiting Mamraz Lake for safety reasons. Facilities around Nowshahr's Lake of Ghosts are limited, given its location within pristine forests that rank among the most untouched and preserved in Iran. The natural state of this environment has led to the presence of various wild animals in and around the lake. Consequently, visitors should exercise caution while exploring this area and the surrounding forests to ensure safety. There are no amenities or services near Mamraz Lake or its surrounding forests. If you plan to stay overnight or have a picnic near the lake, be sure to bring all necessary supplies, food, and equipment with you. Given the stunning and untouched nature of the region, and the enclosed environment of the lake, it is essential to be mindful of your ecological impact. Please remember not to leave any trash behind, as pollution can cause irreversible damage to this fragile ecosystem. Refrain from littering, and do not harm the trees or the natural environment, helping to preserve this extraordinary natural wonder for future visitors.

Nearby attractions

Sisangan Forest Park: Surrounding Nowshahr's Lake of Ghosts are numerous natural attractions that visitors can enjoy alongside the lake during their trip to Mazandaran Province. Nestled in northern Iran amid lush, thriving forests, this area is home to many charming villages. Exploring these scenic villages

can add a memorable touch to your journey. Sisangan Forest Park is situated approximately 15 kilometers northwest of Mamraz Lake. The park boasts stunning and unique nature, complemented by suitable recreational facilities. It has direct access to the sea, offering a range of water sports and activities such as jet skiing and boating along its coastline. For enthusiasts, the park also features a go-kart track and a beach volleyball court. This protected area provides camping options and outdoor accommodations for those seeking to immerse themselves in nature. **Avidar Dam Lake:** Located near Sisangan Forest and about 15 kilometers northwest of Lake of Ghosts, Avidar Dam Lake — also known locally as Salahuddin Kola Lake — is one of Nowshahr's most beautiful natural attractions. Its scenic surroundings, combined with well-developed facilities and accommodations, attract many eco-tourists eager to experience its tranquility and natural beauty. **Chalandar Waterfall:** Another captivating attraction near Lake of Ghosts is Chalandar Waterfall, situated close to the village of the same name, approximately 30 kilometers northwest of Mamraz Lake. This waterfall stands out as one of Nowshahr's most stunning sights, nestled within scenic forests. To reach the waterfall, visitors typically enjoy a 15 to 20-minute walk through verdant woodland. The pools at the base of the falls are perfect for summer swimming, with the waterfall's height varying from half a meter to four meters.

Iran prepares 50 heritage files for potential UNESCO World Heritage listing

Iran has placed 50 historical, natural and cultural sites on UNESCO's tentative list that will gradually be submitted for final World Heritage inscription once "infrastructure, protective criteria and research standards" are in place, a senior official told IRNA. Farhad Azizi, director general of Iran's National and World Heritage Bases at the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, said the dossiers were being prepared according to UNESCO benchmarks, unique site features and specialized infrastructure needs. "Besides cultural and historical indicators, proper management of the sites — including research, protection, support facilities and conditions for visitors — is an essential prerequisite for global registration," Azizi said. He added that among the pending

files were the Alamut Castle in northern Iran and a collection of Iranian mosques, with whichever dossier was completed first to be put forward to UNESCO. Azizi noted that under UNESCO's value-based management system, "public support and participation is the most important factor for success, since people as the real owners of the heritage must play an effective role in decision-making and planning." Local communities, he added, should safeguard the treasures while creating the conditions for sustainable tourism, including attracting investors both from inside and outside the provinces and paving the way for private sector involvement. Iran, he pointed out, had "unique heritage and tourism capacities" and, with

proper infrastructure and services, could turn into a key global destination. In western Ilam province, meetings have already been held to identify the most likely candidate for global inscription. Azizi said a final file for Ilam was expected to be chosen within two months with input from experts, academics and consultations with UNESCO. Ilam is considered one of the country's richest archaeological zones thanks to its unique geography and deep civilizational roots. Discoveries in recent years across Dehloran, Dareh Shahr and Ilam city include pottery jars, caves, ancient cemeteries and valuable artefacts dating from prehistory through the Islamic era, underscoring the region's role in the rise of early civilizations on the Iranian plateau.



● A general view of Alamut Castle in Qazvin, northern Iran
● IRNA