

Kolm village in Ilam Province showcasing mountain life, history



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Kolm village in Badreh, Ilam Province, is situated in a mountainous region, characterized by a linear settlement pattern that follows the main access road to the village. The village pathways are narrow, and most residential units are single-story structures featuring wooden roofs and small doors and windows. Where the Kabirkuh Mountain stands like tall green walls framing the sky, a peaceful and charming village named “Kolm” has nestled comfortably. In the older sections of the village, building materials such as stone, adobe, clay, and wood — readily available locally — have been traditionally used. In contrast, the newer houses, government buildings, and workshops incorporate materials like plaster, iron, cement, and brick, according to ISNA. This village, divided into two

parts — Kolm-e Bala and Kolm-Paeen — is located approximately 30 kilometers from the city of Badreh and 120 kilometers from the center of Ilam Province. It is recognized as one of the tourism gems of western Iran. Omid Esmaili, a technical expert at the General Governorate of Ilam Province, told ISNA, “Kolm is nestled within a lush valley at an average altitude of 1,100 meters above sea level. Its climate is temperate and mountainous; it enjoys cool and pleasant springs and summers that attract thousands of tourists from across the country each year. Winters are cold and sometimes snow-covered, yet even in the depth of winter, the village’s beauty remains undiminished.” He further noted that a plentiful river originates from the slopes of Kabirkuh and flows through the heart of the village, while dense orchards and



the surrounding scenery create captivating and charming landscapes. Fruit trees, diverse plant species, and the songs of birds create a dreamy atmosphere for nature enthusiasts. In spring, blossoms spread over the ground like colorful carpets, and the fresh mountain air gently soothes the soul. Esmaili emphasized that Kolm is not just nature; it embodies rich ancient history. The study of remnants such as

castles and fire temples indicates that human settlement in the area dates back to the Median era. These historical sites serve not only as markers of the village’s longevity but also as evidence of its strategic and cultural significance through the ages. He added that near the village lie the shrine of Jaber Ansari and the historic building named Seyyed Tajoddin; these historical sites welcome pil-

grims and heritage enthusiasts annually. Their traditional architectural styles and unique spiritual atmospheres significantly enhance Kolm’s cultural appeal. Esmaili beautifully described that in spring, Kolm transforms into a vibrant tableau of color and light. The orchards surrounding the river, adorned with white and pink flowers, offer a cozy and peaceful setting for visitors. Families gather by the riverbanks, children play among the trees, and photographers seek moments of pristine beauty, directing their camera lenses to the enchanting natural surroundings. Considering Kolm’s natural, historical, and cultural potential, the village holds promise to become one of the sustainable tourism hubs in western Iran. The development of appropriate infrastructure, environmental preservation, and enhanced national promotion

could foster economic and cultural growth for the local community. Kolm is a unique village where nature and history intertwine to create profound tranquility and unforgettable experiences for every traveler. Most residents derive their income from agriculture, animal husbandry, gardening, fish farming, as well as various service and handicraft industries. The village lands are cultivated through both irrigated and dry farming methods, with rice and wheat being the main crops. The abundant river running through Kolm has greatly facilitated the breeding of various cold-water fish species, positively influencing the village’s economic prosperity. Craftsmanship in weaving diverse types of carpets, kilims, jajims, and woodcarving also plays a significant role in directly enhancing the villagers’ economic well-being.

Mend village preserves pottery traditions in eastern Iran

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Mend village, located three kilometers north of Gonabad in Khorasan Razavi Province, is the only pottery-making center in eastern Iran, with a population of approximately 1,000. Alongside agriculture, the villagers are engaged in brick, pottery, and tile production. The history of pottery in Mend dates back to the 3rd millennium BCE, though it remained unnamed until the early 12th century. Since then, a new type of pottery known as faience pottery has emerged in the region. Mend potteries closely resemble those from Meybod in terms of motifs, and their composition is almost identical to Shahreza pottery, making them difficult to distinguish from one another. Pottery making in this area is practiced in two distinct methods: traditional pottery using red clay and faience ceramics, which differ both in their materials and in the preparation processes. Faience is a type of ceramic made from white clay, with key raw materials including silica or flint, bentonite, and kaolin. Bentonite and kaolin are sourced from nearby mines.

After the flint is extracted, it is hammered into small pieces. The red clay pottery, a newer variant compared to the faience works, is also produced here. Mend’s pottery is created either entirely by hand or using a potter’s wheel. The handmade pottery, with a long heritage, includes items shaped like birds, animals, and other objects, often molded into forms such as vases and thermoses, featuring relief motifs on their surfaces. However, most of Mend’s pottery is wheel-made; these pieces are simpler to produce and enjoy widespread popularity due to their practical use. Underglaze painting is also common in this village. Many motifs on Mend pottery have symbolic and ritual significance, originating from local beliefs. The main motifs found on these potteries are human, animal, plant, and geometric designs. The human motif is typically represented as a sun face surrounded by radiating lines and often occupies the central position on the objects. Animal motifs include chickens, fish, butterflies, and others, generally painted in yellow and red.



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