

# Noghlehbar Forest inviting travelers to hike, camp, relax

Iranica Desk

Noghlehbar Forest in Rudbar, Gilan Province, with its pristine landscapes, rich history, and diverse tourist attractions, stands out as an extraordinary destination for those seeking tranquility and a deeper connection with nature. As autumn approaches, the forest transforms into a vibrant tapestry of warm fall colors, complemented by a mild and inviting climate, making this season the most ideal time to explore its wonders.

Noghlehbar Forest is one of the lesser-known natural treasures of Gilan Province, nestled in the heart of Rudbar on the southern slopes of the Alborz Mountains. As an integral part of the valuable Hyrcanian ecosystem, the forest — rich with dense vegetation, cool climate, and untouched scenery — offers a paradise for nature enthusiasts, photographers, and anyone longing for peace and relaxation. During autumn, the forest becomes particularly enchanting, with the leaves turning brilliant shades of orange and yellow, providing a unique visual spectacle for visitors. This article delves into the forest's natural features, history, tourist attractions, and practical travel advice for planning a visit, IRNA wrote.

Geographically, Noghlehbar Forest lies approximately 30 kilometers from the center of Rudbar (around a 50-minute drive) and 45 kilometers from Rasht, while it is about 280 kilometers from Tehran, reachable by car in roughly four to five hours. Because of the steep and uneven terrain, it is highly recommended to travel with SUVs or four-wheel-drive vehicles. The forest's elevation, ranging between 1,000 and 1,500 meters above sea level, distinguishes it from the surrounding plains and contributes to its cooler climate.

Noghlehbar Forest forms part of the ancient Hyrcanian forests, which have endured for over 40 million years and are recognized as one of the most valuable ecosystems in the world, earning a



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place on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The forest is adorned with trees such as beech, alder, hornbeam, and maple, which, in autumn, create a magical mosaic of orange, yellow, and red hues. The forest floor, blanketed with mosses and ferns, adds a mysterious and soothing charm to the landscape, enhancing the immersive experience for visitors. In terms of wildlife, this area hosts a variety of birds such as sparrows and owls, and occasionally mammals like foxes, rabbits, and squirrels. However, due to the forest's pristine and largely untouched nature, observing wildlife requires patience and careful attention. In early autumn, temperatures in the forest typically range between 10°C and 20°C, creating perfect conditions for hiking and

photography. Among the forest's most striking natural features is the view of Mount Dorfak, which soars to an elevation of 2,606 meters and lies near the forest. Its snow-covered peak in winter is visible from the higher sections of Noghlehbar, creating an awe-inspiring backdrop. The region's high humidity supports the growth of evergreen plants and mosses, keeping the forest lush and vibrant throughout the year.

The Hyrcanian forests as a whole have survived since the Tertiary geological period, representing remnants of ancient Ice Age forests that have been remarkably preserved in Iran. The nearby villagers, especially those in Pirsara, are warm and traditional people whose lives are deeply connected to nature. Many locals

assist tourists as guides or sell local products such as honey, tea, and pickles, enriching the visitor experience and offering a chance to learn about local culture and traditions.

Because of its tranquility and distance from urban hustle, Noghlehbar is perfect for those looking to escape the stresses of modern life. In autumn, the vivid leaf colors and golden morning light create exceptional conditions for photography. The gentle walking trails are ideal for light hiking and family-friendly nature walks. Camping under the forest's towering trees is an unforgettable experience, especially when accompanied by the soft sound of small streams that flow through various parts of the forest.

For adventure enthusiasts, light

trekking toward nearby highlands and summiting Mount Dorfak adds excitement, though these activities require physical preparedness and proper equipment. Watching the sunset in this region, with sunlight reflecting off colorful leaves, creates a breathtaking and truly memorable view.

**Practical tips**

**Essential Items:** Hiking shoes, warm clothing (especially for mornings and evenings), drinking water, food, a tent (for camping), a flashlight, and a map or GPS.

**Timing:** The best periods to visit are autumn or spring. Begin your journey early in the morning to avoid northern road traffic and daytime heat.

**Safety:** Forest trails can be slippery or uneven, so proceed with

caution. Traveling with someone familiar with the area or hiring a local guide is recommended.

**Environment:** Always carry your trash back to preserve the forest's pristine condition. Lighting fires in the forest is strictly prohibited, particularly during the dry autumn months.

Noghlehbar Forest, with its pristine nature, rich history, and captivating attractions, is not only a remarkable destination for reconnecting with nature but also a living heritage of Earth's history. With careful planning, respect for safety guidelines, and an appreciation for its natural beauty, visitors can enjoy an unforgettable journey. Preserving this forest is a responsibility we all share, ensuring that future generations can continue to experience its serenity and wonder.

## Experience echoes of history at Naseri Castle in Iranshahr

Naser ol-Dowleh Farmanfarma, one of the rulers of Kerman and Baluchestan during the Qajar dynasty, ordered the construction of a military castle in the city of Iranshahr, Sistan and Baluchestan Province, named it after himself. Following the approval of Naser al-Din Shah, Ostad

Hossein Memarbashi was summoned from Kerman to Iranshahr in 1885 to begin the construction of the castle. It took seven years to complete Naseri Castle, after which it was converted into the governmental headquarters of Baluchestan. During the later years of the

Qajar period, Naseri Castle became known as the Dost Mohammad Khan Castle and was once again used as a government office, visitation. Under the Pahlavi dynasty, the castle continued to serve as a military base before later being repurposed as a school. In the

years that followed, the castle remained abandoned and gradually fell into ruin. Unfortunately, by 1982, much of the structure had been destroyed, leaving only the gateway and the adjacent fence intact. Although little of the interior remains today, the decorative brickwork

of the entrance portal and the twin towers on either side are still standing. Ostad Hossein Memarbashi used cob bricks, clay, and fired bricks in the construction of the castle. The site covered an area of approximately 7,500 square meters and included more than 150 rooms, such as

stables, a Howz Khaneh (pool house), storage rooms, a bathhouse, barracks, and administrative offices. The upper parts of the structure were adorned with geometric and diamond-shaped designs, and the portal of the main tower featured exquisite brickwork. Altogether, Naseri Castle evoked the

grandeur of Arg-e Bam — the largest adobe structure in the world. After Bampur Castle, Naseri Castle is considered the most significant citadel in the region. Today, it stands as a historical site welcoming visitors who travel to Iranshahr in Sistan and Baluchestan Province.



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