

Lori dress; manifestation of ancient local civilization



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Iran, with its rich cultural diversity, is a mosaic of various ethnic groups, each contributing to the formation of the ancient civilization of this land. Among them, the Lori people, with a brilliant history, have a significant share in this history. One of the most prominent manifestations of this culture is the traditional Lori dress, which not only indicates a style of clothing but also reflects the beliefs, living conditions, geographical location, and social values of this people. The dress of the Lori people has taken shape over centuries and generations and has evolved to suit life in the mountainous regions of Zagros. The use of durable fabrics, designs suitable for mobility, and adaptation to cold and heat demonstrate the intelligence

of the Lori people in adapting to their natural environment. These garments are the result of long experiences of nomadic and rural life, and each component has a specific and meaningful function. On the other hand, Lori dress is not merely functional but also encompasses a specific aesthetic. The colors, patterns, and decorations used in women's and men's clothing express emotions, spirits, and social status. For example, the bright and diverse colors in Lori women's clothing are symbols of hope, life, and social vitality, while men's clothing, with its simplicity and sturdiness, is a sign of the strength, honor, and epic spirit of this people. Furthermore, Lori local clothing differs in various occasions such as celebrations, weddings, religious rituals, and tradition-

al ceremonies from everyday wear, indicating the deep connection between clothing and social customs. Every change in the type of clothing conveys a specific message and is a kind of silent language of Lori culture. Today, with the spread of modern life and changes in clothing styles, the risk of local garments being forgotten has increased. Therefore, understanding and introducing the dress of the Lori people is not only a cultural act but also an effective step in preserving Iran's intangible heritage. Examining this traditional dress helps us become familiar with the identity, history, and lifestyle of people who have preserved their authenticity amidst the changes of time. Negar Motlaq, a designer and tailor of local clothes, in an interview with Mehr News

Agency regarding the color and type of fabrics used in sewing local dress, said, "Local clothes have a direct relationship with the age of individuals. Elderly women often use fabrics with simple, mild, and sometimes dark patterns and colors and few decorations. In contrast, the clothing of girls and young women has a pleasant variety of bright colors and beautiful patterns, and usually more jewelry and decorations are used in them." She continued, "In newer designs and models, young girls welcome more patterned sleeves and prefer different types of headscarves known as Charqad." Regarding the components of local clothing, Motlaq explained, "Hat, vest, headscarf known as Charqad, skirt, and the coins they fasten on their

foreheads, the beautiful pins attached to the headscarf are parts of Lori dress. Married women often do not use hats and tie another scarf under the headscarf on their foreheads, or their scarves are usually white and floral." The designer and tailor of local clothes added, "Charqad is a square-shaped piece of fabric made of thread or silk that is folded diagonally and placed over the head. Usually, light-colored fabrics are chosen for the Charqad, and large flowers also form its beautiful patterns. In fact, the Charqad is the same as a headscarf. Tribal women usually use floral Charqad for their covering." She continued, "Local dress is not just fabric and sewing; each has a story and a spirit and is the product of the hands of artists who hold centuries of experience within them." Motlaq added, "The intricate embroidery patterns, needlework, stunning color combinations derived from nature and culture, are all unique patterns for creating new works. What holds special value in local clothes is their authenticity and handmade nature. In a world where everything has become mechanical and uniform, that warmth and precision in sewing, those delicate details created only with love and patience, are infinitely valuable." She emphasized, "Every local dress is a complete mirror of a people's identity. By looking at a dress, you can guess part of the history, lifestyle, beliefs, and even the geographical situation of those people. These clothes are our cultural identity cards, and this very diversity doubles the beauty of Iran."

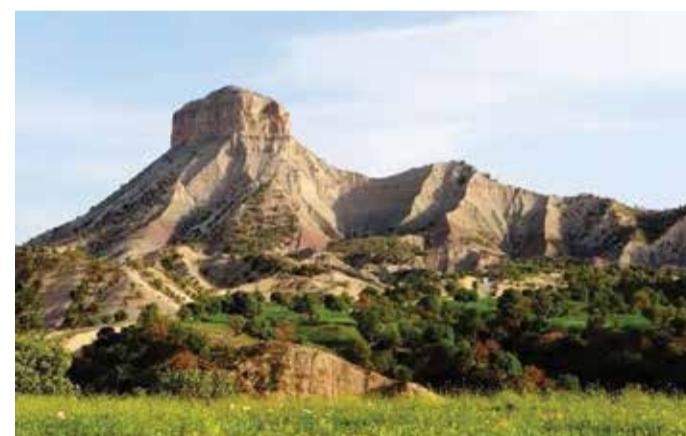
Witness beauty from Qal'eh Qiran's historic summit in Ilam

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Mount Qal'eh Qiran is a symbol of Ilam and one of the city's most important tourist attractions. The area around the mountain is covered with ancient oaks, and in spring the adjacent plains are filled with grasses and wild, beautiful flowers that attract every observer. This major tourism attraction, which was registered as a national heritage site in 2003, is also used as a symbol in the Ilam taxi company's logo and in the state network of Ilam.

Mount Qal'eh Qiran is located about 5 kilometers west of the provincial capital of Ilam, near the Shashdar recreation area. Because of its close proximity to the Shashdar Forest, it has a special geographical position. This unique location, along with its rich history and the beautiful sedimentary rocks of the mountain, have made Qal'eh Qiran — also nationally registered in 2003 — a notable landmark. The summit of Qal'eh Qiran rises to a height of 2,152 meters, where traces of a very ancient fortress remain.

According to historical documents, the fortress's antiquity — one of the oldest structures in Iran — dates back to the



Parthian era and was probably used for guard purposes at that time. But this is not the only historical significance that makes the area unique. The region also features distinctive natural characteristics: a dense forest of ancient trees on the mountain slope, springtime flowering plains nearby, and a pleasant climate in the first half of the year, all of which attract tourists to Ilam.

The mountain's very steep slope makes reaching the summit challenging, but visiting the area in the early seasons of the year and enjoying its natural beauty is very rewarding. The sedimentary structure of Qal'eh

Qiran has formed naturally over time. The plains, forests, and green areas of the region owe their existence to abundant water resources, such as the Surtāf Waterfall. Farzad Sharifi, Director General of the Ilam Province Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts Organization, told ISNA that the mountainous areas of Ilam Province and the Qal'eh Qiran area, due to their location on the slopes of the Zagros Mountains, have very rich and unique flora and fauna. To date, 32 mammal species and 183 bird species have been identified in these areas, most of which live in



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the region's restricted hunting zones or migrate seasonally to this area. Sharifi explained that the vegetation of this region is also very special, and in spring and summer the plains are full of beautiful wildflowers and colorful poppies, creating an extraordinarily scenic landscape. There are also diverse plant species and some medicinal plants among the characteristic flora around Qal'eh Qiran. He elaborated that Qal'eh Qiran and the surrounding areas are located in the Zagros Mountain region, and for this reason they have a cool, mountainous climate. Winters on

this mountain are very cold, with temperatures dropping to as low as -15 to -20 degrees Celsius, and annual precipitation exceeding 600 millimeters. However, its weather in spring and summer is pleasant and enjoyable. In these seasons, the surrounding plains offer an extraordinary view of wildflowers. Mount Qal'eh Qiran has a very steep slope, and there is no suitable path for traversing and ascending to its summit; moreover, there are no special welfare facilities in the area, which is why access to it is mostly feasible for climbers and professional rock climbers.

Due to the mountainous climate in this region, the best time to visit Qal'eh Qiran is spring and summer, when the climate is pleasant, temperate, and cool, and the breathtaking, flower-filled plains around are visually striking and dreamy.

The province of Ilam itself is a hidden gem of western Iran, where the rugged folds of the Zagros Mountains cradle ecosystems of astounding diversity. Beyond the mountain's ancient oaks and spring blooms, Ilam's nature is a tapestry of dense forests, roaring and deep valleys that serve as sanctuaries for wildlife. This is a land where the call of rare birds echoes through oak woodlands, and the hillsides in spring are painted with vibrant carpets of wildflowers, including scarlet poppies. The climate, with its sharp seasonal contrasts — from snowy, brittle winters to lush, mild spring — sculpts a dynamic and resilient landscape. Visiting Qal'eh Qiran offers more than a historical journey; it is an immersion into the very heart of Ilam's pristine and powerful natural identity, a reminder of the enduring beauty preserved within Iran's wild western highlands.