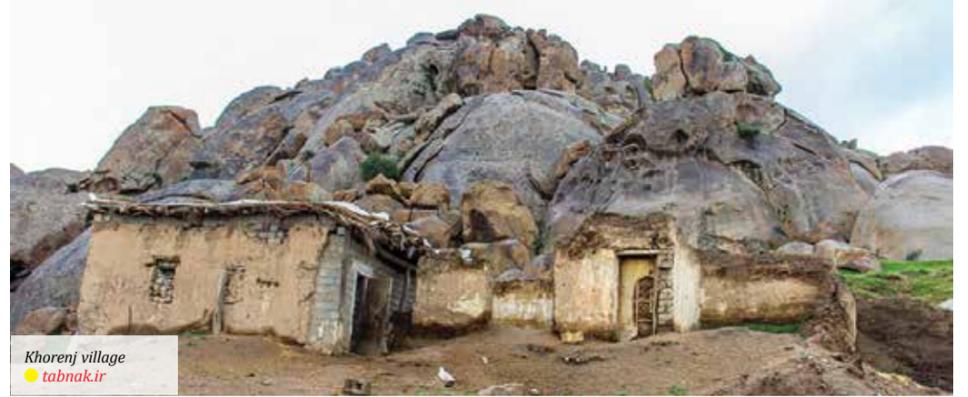


Discover history, nature of West Azarbaijan Province



Baqcheh Jooq Palace
● IRNA



Khorenj village
● tabnak.ir

Iranica Desk

West Azarbaijan, a gem in north-western Iran, with its remarkable natural, historical and cultural diversity, has long attracted explorers and admirers of pristine landscapes and ancient heritage. Amid soaring peaks, vast plains and turquoise lakes, the province's villages stand like hidden jewels, safeguarding age-old secrets and opening a window onto authentic Iranian life and the region's rich cultural legacy.

Preserving traditional customs, vernacular architecture and unspoiled natural settings, these villages offer visitors a distinctive and immersive tourism experience. This report takes readers on a journey to several standout villages, each telling a compelling story of the history, culture and nature of West Azarbaijan Province, according to chtn.ir.

Hasanlu Hill

The first stop is the historic village of Hasanlu in Naqadeh. More than merely a village, Hasanlu is a familiar name to archaeologists and history enthusiasts alike. The ancient Hasanlu Hill, one of

Iran's most significant archaeological sites, bears witness to the region's millennia-old past. Dating back to the eras of the Uartian civilization and the Medes, the site gained global recognition following the discovery of the Golden Bowl of Hasanlu. A visit offers a journey deep into history, where the remains of ancient settlements evoke the grandeur of long-lost civilizations. The surrounding natural scenery, including the Hasanlu Wetland, further enhances the site's appeal, while the village's rural identity reflects the simple, traditional lifestyle of its residents. Hasanlu was also among eight villages shortlisted for global registration last year.

Baqcheh Jooq

At Iran's northwesternmost edge, in Maku, the Baqcheh Jooq village captivates visitors with its magnificent historic mansion. Built during the Qajar era by a local ruler, the Baqcheh Jooq Palace stands as a masterpiece of Iranian architecture.

Featuring intricate stucco work, elegant wall paintings and finely crafted wooden sash windows,



Golmarz village
● delgarm.com

the historic structure leaves a lasting impression on visitors. The surrounding gardens, designed in the style of traditional Persian gardens and adorned with fruit trees and flowing streams, create a tranquil and inviting setting for leisure and reflection. In short, Baqcheh Jooq offers an unforgettable blend of art, history and nature.

Band

Near the city of Urmia, Band village has emerged as a popular

destination thanks to its pleasant natural environment and distinctive geographical setting. Nestled beside a river and surrounded by green hillsides, the village presents picturesque and soothing landscapes. Band is a haven for those seeking tranquility, fresh air and an escape from urban bustle. Nature trails, family picnic areas and traditional restaurants serving local cuisine are among its attractions. In spring and summer, the village's lush greenery becomes

especially vibrant, making it an ideal retreat for relaxation and outdoor enjoyment.

Khorenj

In the heart of the mountainous Piranshahr region, Khorenj village stands out for its pristine nature and breathtaking scenery. Set in a scenic valley, it boasts majestic mountain views, fast-flowing rivers and verdant pastures, making it an ideal destination for mountaineers, nature lovers and those seeking an authentic taste of rural life in highland areas.

Village homes, built from stone and wood in harmony with the land's natural slope, blend seamlessly with their surroundings. Khorenj also lies near an area marked by massive, unusually stacked boulders, along with several pre-Islamic archaeological mounds, an ancient inscription and the remains of a mountain fortress—evidence of the region's long and eventful history.

Qinarjeh

Near the historic city of Takab and close to the UNESCO-listed Takht-e Soleyman, lies the village of Qinarjeh. Known for its scenic waterfall, natural hot springs and

untouched environment, Qinarjeh attracts travelers from neighboring cities and beyond.

Nearby attractions include the Qinarjeh Waterfall, the Takht-e Soleyman complex, the Azargoshasb Fire Temple, Ahmadabad hot springs, Sardar Afshar Castle, Kahriz Cave and the Takab Grand Mosque. Set amid serene mountain slopes, the village offers a peaceful rural lifestyle and an opportunity to experience local culture firsthand, particularly appealing to hiking and nature enthusiasts during favorable seasons.

Golmarz

Close to Urmia, the Golmarz village is well known among regional tourist destinations for its unique natural beauty. Located beside a wetland, it offers striking landscapes, fresh air and a calm atmosphere, making it ideal for day trips and family picnics. Local agricultural produce and fresh dairy products further enrich the visitor experience. Golmarz stands as a symbol of the harmonious blend between authentic rural life and the stunning natural scenery of West Azarbaijan Province.

Hirmandi women weave hope, preserve culture

Iranica Desk

In a remote part of Iran, where scorching heat and harsh natural conditions make life especially challenging, the skilled hands and creative minds of women in Hirmand, a city in Sistan and Baluchestan Province, have emerged as a beacon of hope and a source of extraordinary craftsmanship. These artisans are not only the guardians of ancient cultural heritage but, through their traditional arts, play a vital role in supporting their families' livelihoods and promoting sustainable regional development.

Baluchi embroidery, regarded as the cultural hallmark of the region, is the most prominent art form practiced by Hirmandi women. Intricate geometric patterns, vivid and radiant colors—particularly red, orange, green, and black—and delicate stitching captivate every observer. This art comes alive on women's and men's clothing, bedspreads, tablecloths, and bags, with designs deeply rooted in the myths, stories, and beliefs of the Baluch people, according to chtn.ir.

Another refined craft, Khameh-Duzi (thread embroidery), employs colored threads to adorn fabric. The women, with astonishing skill, stitch traditional patterns onto local textiles or velvet, producing works suitable for both



● fararu.com



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home decoration and unique clothing. Although leatherwork has traditionally been dominated by men, the female artists have also excelled in this craft. Using natural leather, they produce functional and aesthetically pleasing items such as bags, shoes, belts, and accessories. By combining leatherwork with intricate embroidery, they create truly distinctive and original products.

Siah-Duzi, the art of stitching bright designs onto dark fabrics, is another specialty. The striking color contrasts serve as a symbol of resilience in the face of hardship and reflect the delicate yet determined spirit of the female artists. These works are often used to adorn ceremonial clothing and wedding cloths.

Despite their immense talent, Hirmandi women face challenges



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such as limited access to broader markets, fluctuating prices for raw materials, and a lack of modern packaging and marketing facilities. Nevertheless, the establishment of women's cooperatives, workshops organized by NGOs and government bodies, and the rise of online sales and social media have opened new

opportunities for these artisans. The handicrafts of the artisans are far more than mere products; they tell stories of life, resilience, and hope. Supporting these artists means preserving a national treasure while empowering a community that creates beauty and sustains its livelihoods. Every purchase of their work is an

investment in the culture, identity, and sustainable future of the hardworking people of Sistan and Baluchestan.

Fatemeh Shahbakhsh, 42, a needlework and thread embroidery artist, said, "I have been practicing Baluchi embroidery and Khameh-Duzi for nearly 25 years. I learned this art from my mother, and now I teach local girls and women. I used to create only for dowries and personal use, but through the Hirmand Women's Cooperative, my works now reach major cities and even abroad."

She added, "This work is the main pillar of our family economy. Its income is sometimes higher than that of some government jobs, especially when we take special orders for ceremonies. With this income, I support the education of my three children. This craft not only provides a living but also

gives us dignity." Shahbakhsh continued, "I tell all the girls and women in the region: don't underestimate your handicrafts. Even the Baluchi embroidery you think is old-fashioned can transform your life. I started a small workshop at home with just a needle and thread. There is no need to migrate; wealth lies in the patterns our ancestors left us."

Zahra Mir, 35, a leatherworker, said, "I use natural leather combined with Siah-Duzi designs. I make bags, shoes, and belts, stitching traditional Baluchi patterns with white and silver threads onto the leather. This combination attracts customers even from northern cities."

She added, "I used to work in a simple workshop, but now I have my own Instagram page and sell directly from Hirmand. My income has tripled compared to five years ago. More importantly, I have financial independence. I make my own decisions, work, and earn."

Mir continued, "Don't be afraid to innovate. We must adapt our art to modern tastes. I combined a traditionally male craft, leatherwork, with women's Siah-Duzi embroidery—and succeeded. If we work together to produce diverse, high-quality products, we can establish the Hirmand brand nationwide."