

## Iranica Desk

Behshahr, located in the eastern part of Mazandaran Province, owes its charm and allure to its exceptional natural landscapes. The city boasts an impressive array of natural attractions, including waterfalls, caves, beaches, lush forests, and protected areas, making it a prime destination for domestic and international tourists alike. In addition to its natural wonders, Behshahr is home to several significant historical landmarks, such as Safi Abad Palace, Cheshmeh Emarat Garden, and the Shahriari House, each reflecting the city's rich cultural heritage.

## Safi Abad Palace

Upon entering Behshahr, Safi Abad Palace immediately captures the attention of visitors and stands out as one of the city's most iconic attractions. Perched majestically atop a hill, the palace offers sweeping panoramic views of the city below, creating a breathtaking vantage point. This magnificent structure dates back to the glorious Safavid era and is officially listed among Iran's national heritage sites. While public access is currently restricted due to its location within a military zone, visitors can still admire the palace's grandeur from a distance, taking in its architectural splendor and historical significance.

## Abbas Abad Garden

Abbas Abad Garden is a renowned historical and natural attraction situated on the outskirts of Behshahr, accessible via a scenic forest road. Approximately thirty minutes from the city center, the garden was commissioned by Shah Abbas I and stands as a testament to Persian landscape design. At the heart of this serene complex lies a pic-

# Behshahr; jewel of eastern Mazandaran Province



Abbas Abad Garden  
wikipedia.org ning.org.uk

turesque lake, ideal for leisurely boating. Visitors can also explore a variety of amenities, including souvenir and handicraft shops, a restaurant, a children's playground, and restroom facilities, making the garden a complete recreational and cultural destination for families and tourists.

## Sefid Chah Cemetery

Sefid Chah Cemetery, also known as the "Sefid (white) Cemetery," holds the distinction of being Iran's first Muslim cemetery, with a history spanning over 1,200 years. Richly adorned with intricate carvings and symbolic

motifs, this cemetery transforms a traditional burial site into a remarkable historical and artistic treasure. Numerous vertical tombstones with unique and varied designs make it a compelling site to explore. According to local beliefs, the cemetery's lime-rich soil slows the decomposition process, preserving the remains longer than typical soils, further enhancing its historical mystique and cultural significance.

## Mellat Park

Mellat Park offers the perfect retreat from the hustle and bustle of urban life. Visitors can enjoy tranquil walking paths, ancient trees, and verdant green spaces while also encountering a his-



Sang-e No Waterfall  
kajachetor.com

toric building from the Safavid period. This building, which now serves as Behshahr's Municipality, is registered among Iran's national heritage sites, allowing guests to combine the pleasures of nature with a glimpse of the

city's architectural past.

## Cheshmeh Emarat Garden

Cheshmeh Emarat Garden, located just ten minutes from central Behshahr, is named after a natural spring that emerges from the

ground on the garden's ground floor. What sets this historical site apart is not merely its aesthetic charm or antiquity but its ingenious water system. The garden once transported spring water through channels to a small canal without the use of pumps, showcasing remarkable engineering for its time. Cheshmeh Emarat Garden is officially listed among Iran's national heritage sites, reflecting both its cultural and technical significance.

## Yaghout-e Sorkh Recreational Complex

Situated near Bandar Amirabad, the Yaghout-e Sorkh Recreational Complex is a popular destination for leisure and family activities. The complex features a designated swimming area marked with safety nets, lifeguards, recreational boats, inflatable castles, and play areas for children. Additional amenities include shops, pavilions, dense shaded trees, and ample parking. On busy days, visitors frequently take advantage of the natural shade provided by the trees if the pavilions are fully occupied, making it a versatile and family-friendly spot for outdoor enjoyment.

## Sang-e No Waterfall

Sang-e No Waterfall, located in southern Behshahr deep within the forest, remains relatively undiscovered despite its striking beauty and favorable climate. Visitors can park at a nearby lot and follow a forest trail to reach the waterfall. The trail requires crossing a riverbed covered with large and small rocks, making proper footwear essential due to the potential for slippery surfaces. The journey provides an adventurous and scenic experience for nature enthusiasts, offering both the tranquility of the forest and the visual splendor of cascading waters.

## Yazd's Grand Mosque is timeless Iranian treasure



## Iranica Desk

The Grand Mosque of Yazd (Jaame Mosque of Yazd), a priceless religious and historical monument dating back to the 6th century AH (12th century CE), continues to host travelers and tourists throughout the year, especially on weekly holidays. The main structure of the mosque was originally built during the reign of the Kayyids dynasty. The current mosque, however, dates back to the Al-e Mozaffar era of the 8th and 9th centuries AH (14th-15th centuries CE), IRNA wrote. Following the construction of a shrine, square, reservoir, and clock, Seyyed Rohn al-Din undertook the repair and partial reconstruction of the mosque. He was succeeded by Sharaf al-Din Ali Yazdi, who continued the work and added minarets on either side of the dome. In 778 AH (1376 CE), Afif al-Din built the mosque's corridor, while the portico to the left of the dome was

constructed by Shah Yahya. During the era of Mirza Shahrukh Timur, the mosque — then coated in white plaster — was adorned with exquisite tilework, and a calligraphic inscription of Surah al-Fath, penned by Baha al-Din Hezar Asb, was installed inside. The mosque's mihrab (prayer niche) is carved from a single piece of marble. Above the mosque rises a double-shelled, square-shaped dome with a ribbed outer surface. One of the two minarets at the main entrance features two independent spiral staircases. Beneath the mosque's courtyard lies a Payab (a subterranean cooling chamber) adorned with bricks and tiles. Two entrances on the northern and western sides provide access to this chamber. In 862 AH (1458 CE), by order of Nizam al-Din Jahanshah, tiles of Mirza Jahanshahi were engraved on tiles and installed above the mosque's entrance. During the rule of Amir Chakhmaq, the mosque's courtyard was paved with

marble, two marble columns were installed on either side of the portico adjacent to the mosque, and an intricately decorated pulpit replaced the old wooden one. Meanwhile, another old and renowned mosque in Yazd Province, known as "Dar al-Ebadeh" (the Abode of Worship), is the Molla Esmail Mosque, which hosts the weekly Friday prayers in Yazd. This striking religious structure was built by Molla Esmail Aqdaei, a famous scholar of the 13th century AH (19th century CE). The mosque features a vast ivan (portico) with a span of 15.75 meters, a Shabestan (prayer hall) supported by 31 columns, a magnificent dome,

brick facades with inscriptions, and a combination of tile and stonework. Above the entrance portal are writings in the Nasta'liq script and various stone tablets. The Yazd Grand Mosque is situated in one of the city's oldest neighborhoods, allowing visitors to plan tours of several other nearby historical sites. Yazd is a treasure trove of Iranian art, culture, and civilization, boasting numerous religious monuments, shrines, mosques, Hosseiniehs, Zoroastrian pilgrimage sites, historic houses, reservoirs, gardens, windcatchers, and bazaars. Yazd Province has a population of 1.5 million people.



IRNA

## Boosting tourism investment along Sassanid Axis

## Iranica Desk

The Director General of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts of Fars Province has announced a series of strategic decisions aimed at stimulating investment and restoring globally significant sites along the Sassanid Archaeological Landscape. These developments followed an official visit to Firuzabad, where the Behzad Moridi conducted a comprehensive inspection of the region's landmark monuments, as reported by a cultural heritage correspondent. During the site visit, Moridi emphasized the profound scientific and historical significance of the Palace of Ardashir Babakan. "Archaeological excavation operations at this prestigious World Heritage Site commenced last February, yielding valuable insights and artifacts. While these efforts were temporarily suspended due to the region's specific circumstances, meticulous planning is now in place to ensure these excavations resume shortly," he stated, according to chtn.ir. Moridi also confirmed the restart of restoration projects focusing on the palace's iconic ivan (portico). "We are diligently pursuing the structural restoration of this magnificent edifice as a core part of our institutional and social responsibilities, utilizing the specifically allocated fiscal resources," he further explained. In reference to the ancient city of Gur, Moridi highlighted, "Our immediate priority is the facilitation of tourist access and the enhancement of the visitor experience. Of the four original entrances to this historic city, the 'Ardashir Entrance' is currently undergoing improvement and graveling to streamline visitor



chn.ir

movement." Furthermore, he outlined upcoming plans to issue a formal call for land acquisition within the designated boundaries of three primary monuments located within the ancient city's perimeter. A pivotal segment of the visit involved evaluating the natural tourism capacities of Firuzabad, with a specific focus on Hayghar Canyon. Following an extensive field survey of the landscape, Moridi characterized the canyon as one of the most breathtaking and unique natural formations in the country. "Hayghar Canyon possesses immense potential for designation as a UNESCO World Heritage site. In our strategic planning, we must approach its preservation and promotion through a global lens," he asserted. Moridi also conducted visits to local eco-lodges and engaged in discussions with those who are active in the sector to address existing challenges. He identified nomadic eco-lodges as a vital complementary attraction to the Sassanid Axis and announced the department's full support for upgrading the infrastructure of these specialized accommodation units.