

## Shazdeh Garden: A Green Oasis Lying in the Heart of Desert

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The tomb of Shah Nouraddin Nematollah Vali, poet, sage, and founder of an order of dervishes, has twin minarets with turquoise tiles. The mausoleum was built by Ahmad Shah Kani. The rest of the building was constructed during the reigns of kings Shah Abbas I, Mohammad Shah and Nassereddin Shah. Shah Nematollah Vali spent many years wandering through Central Asia to perfect his spiritual gifts before settling in Mahan, where he spent the last 25 years of his life.

He died in 1431 CE after establishing a dervish order. The central domed burial vault at Mahan, completed in 1437, was erected by Ahmad Shah Bahmani, king of the Deccan, and one of Shah Nematollah's most devoted disciples.

Spread over 5.5 hectares, Shazdeh Garden is rectangular in shape. It has an entrance and a gate at the lower end and a two-floor residential structure at the upper end. The distance between these two is lined by water fountains.



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The dexterous use of natural aspects of the land can be seen here, which is the prominent aspect of every Persian garden.

The garden was originally built for Mohammad Hassan Khan Qajar Sardari Iravani in 1850. It was expanded in 1870 by Abdolhamid Mirza Naseroddoleh which continued during the 11 years of his governorship during the Qajar reign.

The pools around Shazdeh Garden were built in a terraced fashion. It is rumored that upon hearing the news of the governor's death, the masons immediately abandoned their work and as a result the main entrance still shows some unfinished areas. Its location was selected strategically as it was placed on the route between Bam Citadel and Kerman.

Other than the main residential building, the garden consists of a two-storied building for which the second floor was used as living quarters and for receiving guests. Other smaller utility rooms are situated along the sides of the garden.

The garden itself consists of a variety of pine, cedar, elm, buttonwood and fruit trees which benefit from the appropriate soil, subterranean water canal and suitable weather.



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