

MEHRCHAL (3866 meter)

September, 26-27, 2003

Every summer when my friend Majid S. better known in Park City, USA as “Magic” comes to Iran to visit family and friends and also train the Iranian junior ski team we try to hike together a few times. So far this season, due to both of us being too busy with work, travel and other activities, we only managed one mountaineering trip.

Kavous E. a good friend who has a very nice small country house in the area of Amameh¹, suggested Mehrchal and so it was.

The vertical drop between the peak and our starting point is about 1626 meters. That, plus the long distance to the mountain itself, there being a nice area to camp in with a fresh water spring nearby and most important the availability of a mule to carry our equipment to the camp site all combined to make us decide to do the climb in 2 days.

At about 2:30 pm after coffee at Farzin A's² new country house in Amameh, we had the mule loaded with our 2 tents and other equipment and started from Bagh - Tang³ towards Lalak (3351 meter) where our camp site would be.

It took us about 4 hours to reach it.

The way up is straightforward; one follows the path and the stream that one has to cross a few times, indicates the obvious course.

As usual in the central Alborz range, the scenery is beautiful and in this case, the presence of the stream and of at least one spring on the way, are additional elements that make the hike more pleasant. Not to mention the cooling effect of the stream on the summer heat that is still very much present in early fall.



The next day we it took us exactly one hour to climb the remaining 515 meters remaining to the peak.



The way back was actually, as it often is, the most tiring part. It took us about 6 hours back to Amameh and I at least arrived totally exhausted because of the long way and the heat.

Mehrchal is one of the many medium difficulty and pleasant possible hikes close to Tehran.

My thanks go to Mr. Zabi-Allah D., Kavous' gardener who kindly carried all our equipment on his mule.

Sincerely,

J-M Houtcieff

¹ Large Village North of Tehran. One of the favorite weekend retreats of Tehranis since at least the Qajar period. It is about an hours drive from Tehran on the Tehran - Shemshak road.

² A common friend and occasional hiking partner. He is famous for his Bar-B-Q kababs!

³ Literally “tight garden” in Farsi, it is a picnic area in Amameh and the start of the hike towards Mehrchal.