

Castle of Alamut



[Alamut Gorge](#)



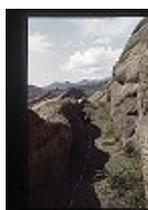
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The Alamut valley lies in the Alburz mountain range, in the north of modern-day Iran, half way between Tehran and the Caspian Sea. The castle is built on a narrow ridge on top of a high rock in the heart of the mountains and dominating an enclosed valley, about 25 kilometres in length. More than 6,000 feet above sea level, the castle lies several hundred feet above the base of the rock, and could only be reached by a narrow, steep and winding path. The approach to the rock was through the narrow gorge of the Alamut river, between perpendicular and sometimes overhanging cliffs.

Timeline

- Legend associates the original building of the castle of Alamut with one of the kings of [Daylam](#)  [2].

- In 246 / 860, the castle was rebuilt by a local 'Alid ruler and by the time it was captured by Hasan Sabbah (d. 518 / 1124) in 483 / 1090, it was still in the possession of local 'Alids [3].
- After its capture, Hasan Sabbah largely rebuilt Alamut in the years shortly after 483 / 1090.
- Alamut surrenders to the Mongol armies at the end of Dhu'l-Qa'da [4] 654 / December 1256. Soon after its capture, the Mongol armies attempt to dismantle the once impregnable fortress.
- Small groups of Ismailis who had survived the Mongol invasions attempted to recapture Alamut in 1275 and again in 1389, but their attempts are shortlived.
- During medieval times, local feudal lords took possession of the parts of the valley of Alamut and some of the castles were rebuilt.
- In the seventeenth century, the castle of Alamut was used as a state prison.

Alamut Gorge



Hasan-i- Sabbah deliberately chose the Alamut Valley as his headquarters because of its remoteness and inaccessibility. The western entrance shown in this slide is often flooded by the waters of the Alamut Rud joining the Taliqan Rud which runs at the foot of the high mountains separating the Alamut and Taliqan valleys.

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Alamut Gorge



The steep defile at the western entrance to the valley is also defended by two forts constructed on each side of the 350 metres high cliffs. The eastern end of the valley is completely blocked by the Alamkum/Takht-e-Suleyman mountain knot. To the north and south are mountain ranges up to 3,500 metres.

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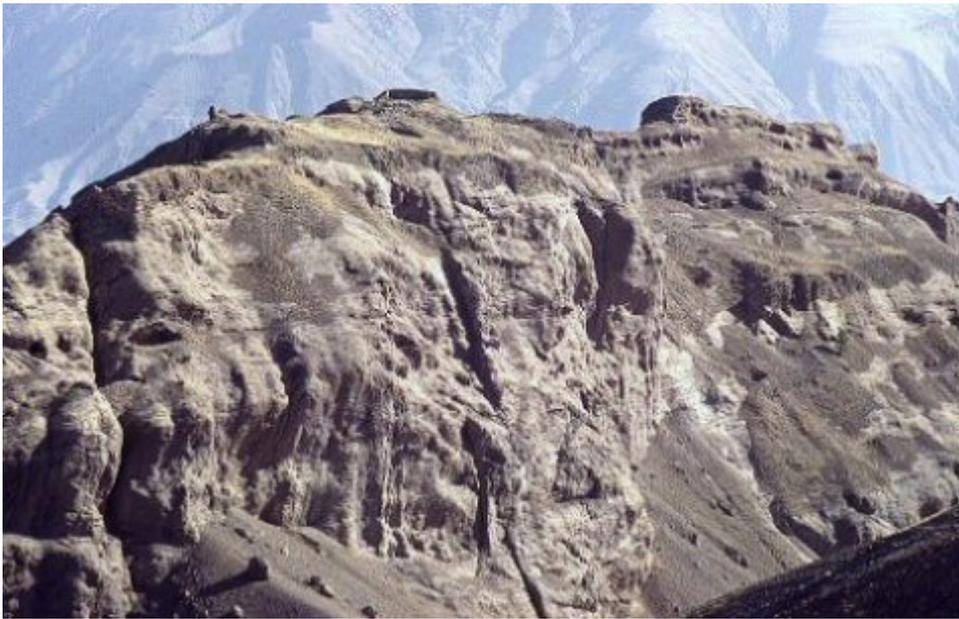


The double water cistern of Alamut cuts across the whole of the southern face.

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Castle of Alamut



The back of the fortress of Alamut which provided the only entrance to the castle. Hasan Sabbah constructed huge underground storage chambers to keep the garrison in food water during times of siege. Ruins of the castle can also be seen.

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Castle of Alamut



A view of the double water cistern of Alamut which cuts across the whole of the southern face.

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Pottery kilns



The pottery kilns in the valley of Andij in the Alamut valley. Some 15 kilns were discovered including good examples of contemporary ceramics.

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