

## Mt. Damavand, Iran

Contributed by Akbar Nemati

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Persepolis is the magnificent remainder of ancient Iran. Imam Reza's shrine is the pride of Islamic Iran. But the ever graceful Mount Damavand is the only Iranian symbol free from the constraints of history and ideology. It is not surprising that such a famous mountain should figure in the national epic of Iran. Empires, governments and tribes have come and gone. Religions have fallen in and out of favor. And in the middle all this social instability, Damavand, has been a tower of stability and constancy; our only true, reliable friend and the symbol of power and peace in Iran. Written around 1000AD, the great Iranian poet, Ferdowsi Tousi, relates in his epic "Shahnama" how the tyrant Zohak is overthrown by the young Feridun and imprisoned in chains to die in a cavern on the inclines of Damavand. Local legend asserts that his groans may still be heard on this inclines.

Damavand is a towering volcano just 45 miles northeast of Teheran, near the Southern coast of the Caspian Sea. It is surrounded by the smaller and comparatively rugged peaks of the Elburz range, but its great height and classic volcanic shape, unique to the region, grant it dominance and isolation.

The 5671-m-high stratovolcano is an inactive volcano, which is the highest peak in Middle East and West Asia and was constructed above the southern rim of a 9-km-wide caldera. Inactive volcano with a narrow summit. Location Alborz Mountains, Iran. Height 5671. First climbed W.T Thomson, 1837. The seasoned traveler in Iran is so used to seeing gaunt, rugged precipice, jagged peaks and bare deserts, that the sight of Damavand is a relief and surprise to the eye. Visible from many kilometers away, thought it is surrounded on every side by the peaks and ridges of the Albroz, its superior height and singular outline compel attention. It is not surprising that such a famous mountain should figure in the national epic of Iran.

### Mt. Damavand Properties:

Other names/spellings : Demavend, K̄h-e Dam"vand, Dem"vend Kuh , Mount Demavend, Mount Damavand, Donbavand

Location: 35.951°N , 52.109°E

Altitude : 18,602 feet (5671m)

Adjacent peak(s) : Vararoo , Sesang , Golezard , Mianrood

Range/Region: Middle Alborz

Province : Mazandaran

Nearest major town: Larijan

Distance from Tehran: 66(km)

Best Climbing Months: July, August, September

Year First Climbed : 1837

First Climber(s) : W.T. Thomson Volcanic Status : Active

Most Recent Eruption : None on record