

Crossing the Border

November 2015: Yesterday morning I started what was reported to be a three-and-a-half-hour drive from Baku to the Iranian border. After 8 hours and some major automobile repairs I made it to the Astara border crossing just 45 minutes before it closed.

The first gate was locked and there were about 100 people milling around looking to pass. I wandered through the crowd when suddenly a gate about 30 feet in front of me opened. Everyone started shoving and pushing as I went through while border agents were attempting to close the gate. Two hours later after questioning by multiple Azerbaijani and Iranian border agents I was allowed entry to Iran. Everyone was very nice to me. I don't believe they see many Americans crossing this border.

My English-speaking driver was waiting for me. We had dinner in a local Cafe and proceeded to take another four-hour drive into the mountains to Masuleh, a picturesque town of about 600 citizens.



Inside Azerbaijan Gate



No Man's Land



Inside Iran



Masuleh Night Arrival



Masuleh, Gilan, Iran