Several times in its history (e.g., in 858, 1041, and 1721), Tabriz was devastated by earthquakes which wiped out most of the historic monuments. One important monument that has survived these earthquakes is the Tabriz Citadel (Ark-e Tabriz or Ark-e Alishah), a ruin of vertical book-shaped elements. Ark-e Tabriz in Persian (also called Masjid-e Alishah, Arg-e Alishah) is the impressive remainder of a great and imposing building in the town.
The Ark, a huge and crumbling brick citadel, is a notable landmark that was built in the early 14th century on the site of a massive mosque which collapsed over 500 years ago, and which must have been one of the largest ever constructed. Inside the Citadel there is nothing except two arches and an indication of the position of the mehrab; Ali Shah’s court has been covered with ignoble buildings, the sanctuary walls have been rebuilt and propped up, and it is hard to believe that any part of this place was ever a mosque.

The citadel, or Ark, is remarkable for its simplicity, its size, and the excellent condition of its brickwork. Also noteworthy are the remains of the 12-sided tomb of Mamd Ghzn, ruler of the Mongol dynasty in Iran.