Islamic Architecture

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MCA – Muslim Community Association, Santa Clara, California
Overview

What is Architecture?

What is Islamic Architecture?

What is the difference?

Styles

Elements

Influences of Islamic Architecture

Architectural Masterpieces
What is Architecture?

Space, Shelter, Sanctuary

• Rudimentary at first
• More elaborate with time
• To show power, money, importance

DEFINITION:
The art and science of designing and building structures
What is Islamic Architecture?

Islamic Buildings?
Buildings in Muslim countries?
Architecture by Muslims?

DEFINITION:
Encompasses both secular & religious buildings from the beginning of Islam to present day, influencing the design & construction of structures within the sphere of Islamic Culture.
Basic Principals

Concept of Space
Sacred vs. Profane
Permanent vs. Temporal

Concept of Man on Earth
Life Cycle of a Grave

Geometric Drivers
Patterns in Nature
Sufi Elements on Design

Environmental Constraints
Form addresses climate
Forms follow Function or visa versa?
Elements

Courtyard – Sehan

Garden
Water
Char Bagh

Technology
Dome
Arch

Bara Dari
Awan
Mashabia
Chadar
China Kari
Ahead of Modern Influences

Sustainable Development

Green / Environmental Design

Passive Environmental Control

Accessible or ADA Design
Mushrain & Mughibrain

Lord of the two easts and the two wests

*Al-Rahmaan 55: 17*
Mushrain & Mughrribain
Styles

Persian Moorish

Turkistan (Timurid)

Ottoman Turkish

Fatimid

Mamluk

Indo-Islamic (Mughal)

Sino-Islamic

Afro-Islamic
Early Islamic architects borrowed and adopted the traditions and ways of the fallen Persian empire.

Islamic architecture borrows heavily from Persian architecture.

Characteristics:
- Tapered brick pillars
- Large arcades
Moorish - Alhambra

Great Mosque, Cordoba (785 AD)

Peak of design: Alhambra, Granada (Palace/Fortress)

Lasting impact on modern Spanish architecture.

Characteristics:
- Foliage Motifs
- Arches
- Glazed Tile work
- Central Fountain
Turkistan - Samarkand

Erected by Timur

Samarkand, Herat, Meshed, Kazakhstan

Derived from Persian influence

Gave rise to Mughal design

Characteristics:
- Axial Symmetry
- Double Domes
- Brilliant colors on the outside
Ottoman - Istanbul

Byzantine, Persian and Syrian influence

Vast inner spaces covered by seemingly weightless but massive domes

Vaults, domes, semi-domes, columns

Great architect – Sinan

Note worthy architecture Suleiman Mosque
Fatimid & Mamluk - Cairo

FATAMID
High influence - Turkistan
Al-Azhar Mosque - 1st example

Famous buildings
Al Azhar University
Al Hakim Mosque
Al Jame-al-Aqmer

MAMLUK
Patrons of arts
Art & Architecture at peak
Indo – Islamic (Moghal)

Fusion: Persian, Arabic, Hindu

Use marble & precious/semi-precious stone

Showed power & influence over region

Famous buildings:

Shalimar Gardens
Delhi Fort
Badshahi Masjid
Taj Mahal
1st Mosque in China: Grand Mosque of Xi’an

Follow traditional Chinese form

Buildings highly symmetrical but gardens highly asymmetrical

Predominantly wooden construction – but some use of red or gray blocks
Afro Islamic

Famous Structures in Africa:

- Grand Mosque of Djenne’
- Cairo Citadel
- Sankore Mosque in Timbuktu

Style highly influenced by Muslim traders to the region
Masterpieces

Taj Mahal
Agra, India

Isfahan Bazaar
Isfahan, Iran

Alhambra
Cordoba, Spain
Taj Mahal - India

Shah Jehan for Mumtaz Mahal

Build in 1648

Architect: Ustad Ahmad Lahauri
Isfahan Bazaar - Iran

17th Century

“World’s first shopping mall”

Miles of streets covered for pedestrian friendly climate control
Alhambra - Spain

Means - Red Fort

Mixes natural & man-made elements
Modern Architecture

Burj Al-Arab
Dubai, UAE

Petronas Towers,
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The Burj
Dubai, UAE
Burj Al-Arab
Tallest Hotel – 1,053’ (1994)
Petronas Towers

2 rotated squares
The Burj

Abstracted desert flower pattern
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