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**Title** The three Mosques of Pakistan as an Islamic Heritage Architecture

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## The three Mosques of Pakistan as an Islamic Heritage Architecture

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### ABSTRACT

*Mosques are not only the religious places but also play their roles as the social, educational and political centers for the Muslim community. Congregational prayers are the sources of relations between the Muslims and contribute an awareness of the circumstances. The mosques have also been the safe places during the wars and other emergencies. This is not just for Muslims but also for non-Muslims such as the Paris Mosque was a haven for Jews during World War II. There were no minarets at the start and they were very simple, but soon became an integral part of minarets around mosques. Minaret of the mosque may look from afar. The British newspaper Telegraph has compiled a list of the world's most beautiful mosques, which may be considered as the model of Islamic architecture. For this purpose, he has compiled a photo gallery of the 25 mosques including the three mosques situated within Pakistan territory. One of those mosques is Badshahi Mosque, Lahore. It was built in the 17th century by Mughal emperor Aurangzeb Alamgir. The total area of this mosque is 279 thousand square feet. It is famous for its red stone and marble externally and internally architecture. The second one is Wazir Khan Mosque; it was built in the 17th century by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan and is included in the Tentative List of UNESCO World Heritage since 1993. For its carvings and colors, Wazir Khan Mosque has an international reputation. The third one is Faisal Mosque Islamabad. It is the fourth biggest mosque in the world. It is wonderful combination of Bedouin tents and square Kaaba.*

*In this paper these mosques are selected to discuss as a model of Islamic architecture in Pakistan and presented here for the information.*

*Keywords: Islamic architecture, Badshahi Mosque, Wazir Khan Mosque, Faisal Mosque, Masjid.*

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### **Badshahi Mosque:**

The Badshahi mosque was built in 1084 AH /1673 in compliance of the orders of the then Mughal Emperor Orangzeb Alamgir. Its construction was supervised by the Emperor's step brother Mr. Fidai Khan Koka, in the north-west side front of the Akbari gate of the Lahore Fort. At that time a huge amount of six lakh rupees was spent on its construction. This mosque, being a unique model of architecture in construction, has been considered as the world's largest mosque regarding the non-controversial number of prayers for more than three hundred years after its construction. (Figure: 1,2,3)

The mosque comprises a square area of 528-8 X 528-4. On Its four corners there are two hundred feet high minarets, which reflect the glory and greatness of Islam and Islamic architecture in the hearts of the viewers. The implications of these minarets are in the respective minarets of Jahangir tombs, which were built in 1637 having height of about 100 feet. The three floors of the mausoleum are ideal in their surface map and are crowned in the form of cyan-root. Out of the upper pavilion section, the remaining height is 176-4, in which the main portion of the round staircase is to the upper level. The ground floor cover of minar is 67 feet. There are four comparatively little minars built on the four corners of the covered area of the mosque, which have considerable resemblance with the large minarets<sup>1</sup>.

There is a small Islamic museum in the south-east alignment of the main entrance of the mosque. In addition to other Islamic antiques, there are 23 antiques attributed to the Holy Prophet (PBUH), his companions and other pious personalities of Islamic history. One of them is the green turban and cap, a green jubbah, 'white pajamah', 'Na'alain', step prints and white flag written on the verses of Quran attributed to the Prophet (PBUH). The hand written first para of the Qur'an and a turban with hat attributed to Hazrat Ali, a handkerchief attributed to Hazrat Fatima, prayer sheet, Brown turban, hat and a bloody handkerchief attributed to imam Hussain, a turban attributed to shaikh Abdul Qadir Jelani and some other similar antiques<sup>2</sup>.

The red stone used in the construction of mosque has also been the subject of discussion of historians. In this context, three different opinions of the historians are debatable. First, this stone was brought from Ajmer and Jaipur by the orders of Orangaib. Secondly, Dara Shikwa had ordered to bring this stone to build a dormitory building for his dear Murshid Hazrat Mian Mir. Third, Dara shikwa wanted to build a road from his palace to the dormitory of mian Mir in which the stone to be used or that road was built, and later this stone was used to build the mosque.

This is a great mosque among the historical mosques of Lahore. All of its buildings have a red stone and marble. All three dooms made of white marble are very high. The rest of the building is made of red stone. There is a small ground towards the western gate of fort Lahore (which is now called the Hazoori Garden) excluding stairs of the mosque begin and the wall of the mosque begins with a very high foundation. The door of this mosque is also very impressive with the red stone<sup>3</sup>.

With the fall of Mughal Empire, this great mosque is the witness of many ups and downs in the different important periods of history in this changing world. The mosque for which expenditure the entire district budget was dedicated, remained under carelessness and absurdity. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, in the widespread area of this mosque Make his soldier's horse bob. The *hujras* (cubicles) at the north and south

alignment of the mosque were to be used by Muslim students, Sikh soldiers used them for their accommodations. The beautiful floor of the mosque was ruined by the horses<sup>4</sup>.

At present, the mosque is standing with all its splendor. Its minarets are bright as they were, and all other buildings near the mosque which are the sign of the modern age are faded from its beauty. Due to the expansion of the road it has access to the Minto Park (Iqbal Park). Following is engraved on the east entrance of the mosque:

لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله  
 مسجد ابوالمظفر محى الدين محمد عالمكبر بادشاه غازی  
 زندبزار و ہشتا و چہار ہجری ا تمام یافت  
 بابہتام کمترین خانہ زادان فدائی خان کوکہ

This is the only piece of writing found in the entire mosque. At the Masjid courtyard, the pool also provides wudoo / ablution facilities for people today but there is no arrangement for its cleaning.

The stones in the courtyard of the mosque could necessarily be attempted to restore the ruined floor of a steep brick built in the early construction of the mosque if it was another country of the world. An extremely favorable movement from the mosque administration has been shown for the past few years. At evening, all the buildings of the mosque are lighting up, which makes the mosque appear from the far away and exemplify its enchanting beauty. However, much more steps could be taken for further improvement to secure the beauty of this heritage for the next generations.

### **Wazir Khan Mosque:**

The foundation of Masjid wazir Khan was laid by Shaikh Alam-ud-Din Ansari, who was widely known as Wazir Khan. Shaikh Alam-ud-Din Ansari was a professor of professional medicine in the city of Chiniot. In January 1621, in search of job he reached at Aagara, the capital city of Mughal government. These days Queen Noor Jahan was sick, Sheikh started her treatment and the Queen recovered her health. At the auspicious occasion Shaikh Alam-ud-Din Ansari was awarded the surname of "Wazir Khan". He donated all the royal financial rewards and compensations for expenditures of the mosque. He remained the Governor of Lahore from 1632 to 1639. Wazir Khan laid down the foundations of the mosque in 1635 and settled the market in Delhi gate during the period of Mughal Emperor King Shah Jahan. After a long period of seven years, the construction project of the mosque reached the completion on December 3, 1641.<sup>5</sup> After completing the construction, wazir Khan wrote down his will dated December 3, 1641, which was remained safe by his family, and that date is also the date of completion of the mosque<sup>6</sup>.

The mosque building has been constructed with bricks and red stone. There are two entrance gates in the mosque, one central door located in the east, the second door is situated in the direction of the north-east, which is used to open at the time of adornment of the central gate. The mosque's courtyard is wide which has a red brick floor. A pool is made to perform *wudoo* (ablution) in the center of the courtyards. There are 32 rooms in the east, south, and north of the mosque. (Figure: 4)

Masjid Wazir Khan is the grand and unique historical building of Lahore. It is an international fame building and is well known in the West and Europe for its splendid beauty and grace. Indeed, this magnificent bronze building is a rare and matchless piece of building around the globe. The historians quite rightly called it proud of

Lahore. Every corner of the building has been made in dignified style and with maximum perfection. The bronze carpentry on the walls of the mosque is a unique lesson for trend bronze carpenters and they take away copies of these texts. The Clear writing of the Arabic and Persian letters on boards is such surprising that many prominent artists remain stunned to see that splendid piece of art<sup>7</sup>. From the earliest British time, the students of the Mio School of Arts Lahore were brought here to teach them the renovation<sup>8</sup>. In 1890 Mr. John Lakowod Cupling, the principal of the Mio School of Arts Lahore, wrote in the official report:

This beautiful building is a reminder of self-renewal, but it has been minimizing its care year and year, and its design is getting worse due to non-meditation. In these situations it is very important to find out that their replicas or copies are carefully removed and stored in the museum and school. For our young painters, there is no better place of training centre other than this mosque<sup>9</sup>.

If we stand in front of wazir Khan square we can see the mosque's doorway (the eastern gate). This is the largest gate of the mosque, which is being used as entrance way. Outside the main entrance, two great minarets of the mosque can be seen at the south and north sides. The current main entrance is usually kept open, and at the time of repair and maintenance the main gate remain closed and the alternate gate is opened situated in the north-east side of the building. At the right side of the main gate, following stanzas have been written down on upper side of the window:

شاه جهان بادشاه غازی اتمام یافت در عهد ابوالمظفر صاحبقران ثانی  
مریدخاص الخاص قدیم الخدمت وزیرخان بانی بیت الله فدوی باخلاص

At the bottom of these lines there is a window decorated with paintings and flower work. Below this window, the following stanzas are engraved:

درد چون حریم کعبه سرور سرفیض این خانه که هست چون فلک مظہر فیض  
تاحشر کشادہ باد بمچو در فیض پر چہرہ ایل قبلہ این دربرمراذ

On the south side of the doorway, the sequence of stanzas is under:

از خر دجستم سجده گاہ ایل فضل سال تاریخ بنائ مسجد عالی مقام  
گفتا بگو کہ بانی مسجد وزیر خان تاریخ این بنائ چوپرسیدم از خرد

Above the middle mehrab / imam Chamber of the Head Gate, following hadith is engraved narrated/added:

افضل الذکر لا اله الا الله محمد الرسول الله

Under text of the hadith, the year of writing is mentioned as 1045 AH.

After entering through the main, gate there is another large gate in a long dive path/archway (North-South) through which only the entry into the courtyard of the mosque may become possible. There are high pitched doors on every side of this long dive path/archway and in the center; there stands a high dome having a beautiful lantern hanging with chains in its center. The main gate is five upstairs high from the ground. There are more three upstairs to enter into the courtyard and ultimately, the courtyard of the mosque has height of 08 upstairs from the ground. This is an octagonal threshold type building. There are 22 shops in this threshold like building adjacent to the portion of octagonal arches which are still a part of the mosque. (Fig: 5) Courtyard the mosque is a smooth floor made of small red bricks. The mosque's courtyard contains a pool used for the Islamic ritual washing, *wadu* (ablution) (Fig: 6) that measures 35.feet by 35 feet.<sup>10</sup>

There are four minarets of the mosque with height of 107 feet (32.6136 meters). All four minarets are octagonal shaped made of small red bricks. Two big minarets are seen from the Head gate (which is located in the east) and are standing on the north-

east and southwest corner. (Fig: 7) Two minarets are built in the five dome portion of the building. There is no piece of calligraphy on the Minarets, but paintings have been carved out, which is still clearly seen even after the long time. With the passage of time these paintings became fade which have been re-freshed and maintained. There are small cute round domes on the upper parts of the minarets, having pinnacles which give a bright luster look as the sunlight touches them.

The total area of the mosque is 279.5 feet wide (85.1916 meters) and 159 feet (48.4632 meters) in length. The courtyard is 148.5 feet 3 inches long and 117 feet wide. The length of the prayer courtyard is 131 feet 3 inches (40.005 meters) and width is 42 feet (12.8016 meters).

The pool located in the center of the courtyard of the mosque is 35 feet 3 inches in length and 35 feet 9 inches in width while the total area of the courtyard is 1260.1875 square feet (181467 square inches). There are 32 small chambers situated in all three sides of the mosque. All the four minarets have an equally height of 107 feet (32.6136 meters).

The total number of domes of the mosque is 6. One dome is situated on the threshold like building of the mosque, while 5 domes with two minarets on the building of special courtyard. All of the domes are 6,4008 meters (21 feet) high from the outer side and 9.7536 meters (32 feet) from the inside. The diameter of the each dome is 5.7912 meters (19 feet) from the outer side and 7.0104 meters (23 feet) from the inner side.

### **Faisal Mosque:**

The late Saudi ruler King Faisal bin Abdul Azizi motivated the Pak Government for construction of the Shah Faisal Mosque during his visit to Islamabad in 1966. An international competition was held in 1969, in which 43 prominent architectures of 17 countries presented their models. After a four-day discussion, the model presented by Turkish architect Vedat Dalokaywas was selected. At the first glance this model was criticized for being different from the traditional designs of the mosques necessarily including alcove and domes. But in the beautiful surrounding of Margalla hills, the graceful construction of the mosque made silent all its critics. (Fig:8)

Construction of the mosque was started in 1976 with the financial support of Saudi government amounting to 10,00,000 Saudi Riyal (US \$ 120,00,000). For his motivation, enthusiasm and major financial support regarding building expenditures, the mosque was nominated as the King Faisal Mosque and the busiest road of the city of Karachi as King Faisal Road after King Faisal's death in 1975. The construction work was completed in 1986.<sup>11</sup>

The mosque covers an area of 5000 square meters and after including its outer courtyard it gives enough space for 300,000 Muslims at a time to offer their prayer. It is one of the largest mosques in the world and the largest mosque in the subcontinent. The architecture is modern in style but also represents traditional Arabic architecture, which is a wonderful combination of Bedouin tents and four minarets. The mosque has no dome different from traditional crafted patterns, and like a tent, the main place of prayer has been supported with four minarets. The minarets reflect the Turkish architecture which are thinner than the traditional minarets. In center of the mosque, there is a huge electric lantern (fanoos) and the on the walls, the famous Pakistani

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artist Sadeqain has written the Qur'anic verses which is the great masterpiece of art. Mosaics start with the western wall where the kalmia (كلمة) is written in the Kofi letter.

The mosque is located at the end of Islamabad highway, which offers a beautiful glimpse in the lap of Margalla Hills and at the end of the city. It is a center for Islamabad and the best known identity of the city.

A large gallery has been reserved in the hall for women 'prayers. On gate of the gallery Qur'anic verses and a hadith "*Heaven lays under the feet of mother*" are written in Kufi manuscript. More than ten thousand in the hall, twenty-four thousand in verandahs and thousands of people on the grounds can offer pray at once. This mosque is unique in its space and vastness. There is a great arrangement of lighting in the mosque, from the distance, the mosque looks like a light source. In the hall, there is more than 6.5 tones heavy lantern and many other small lights have been installed. (Fig:9) Two smaller mini speakers are also installed along with each light for the better audio communication. A comparatively high platform has been made for the purpose of *Aazan* (call for the prayer) and delivering sermon. International competitions of Husan-e-Qira'at (reciting the holy Qur'an) have been arranged there regularly. Wooden and aluminum windows and doors of the hall reveal the great standards of craft and skill. To enhance the beauty, mosque is specially decorated with colored beam, graceful tiles and the finest glass work.

The mosque bears a resemblance to a Bedouin tent reminding the historical incident that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) offered his prayer in a tent in the very early days of Islam. High quality spout showers are installed for *wudoo* (ablution) and washroom purpose. Mosque has four high minarets of 285 feet rectify its beauty. In the minarets, at the height of 193 feet there are galleries for watching outside sceneries for which there is proper arrangement of elevator and upstairs as well. The golden crescents on top of the minarets increase their beauty. The special attention has been focused on the eminence and durability of the building along with its grace and beauty. Modern scientific principles and high-tech and research innovations have been followed to make it secure from the land changes, earthquakes, and other possible accidents.

### **Conclusion:**

In Pakistan, where the buildings of mosques like Darul-Uloom Karachi mosque, Data Ganj Bakhsh mosque, Bhong Mosque, Tooba mosque and many other mosques are worth seeing, these mosques have their own special prominence among them. Not only Pakistan but also the entire Muslim world is delighted proud of such inheritance which is blend of historical, antique and modern architecture.



Figure No1. Badshahi mosque Lahore



Figure No2. Badshahi Mosque is renowned for the carved marble and elaborate plasterwork that are used throughout the mosque's interior.

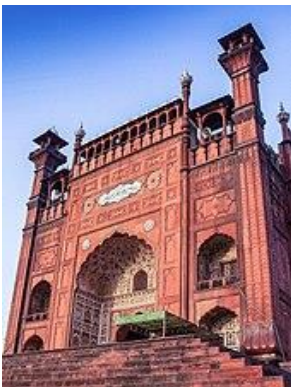


Figure No3. The Badshahi Mosque features a monumental gateway that faces the Hazuri Bagh quadrangle and Lahore Fort.





Figure No4. Panorama of the mosque's courtyard facing towards the mosque's prayer hall.



Figure No5. The mosque houses several shops in what is known as the "Calligrapher's Bazaar."

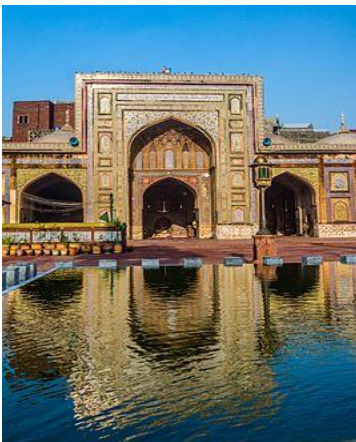


Figure No6. The pool situated in the courtyard of the mosque and the lobby of the prayers of the mosque in which there are pulpit and Alcove.

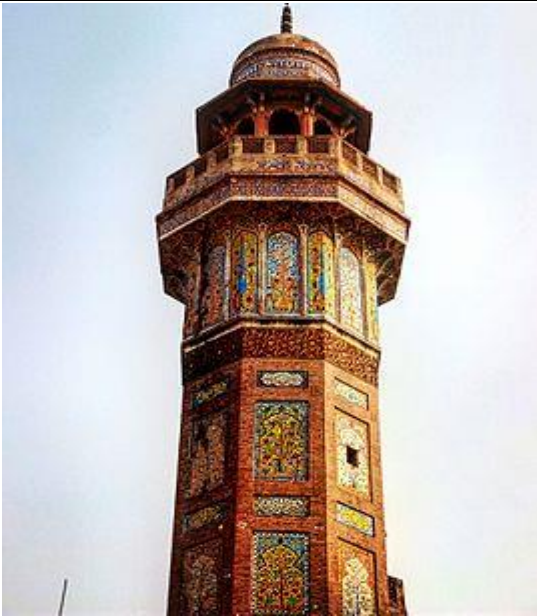


Figure No7. The north-east minar of the mosque

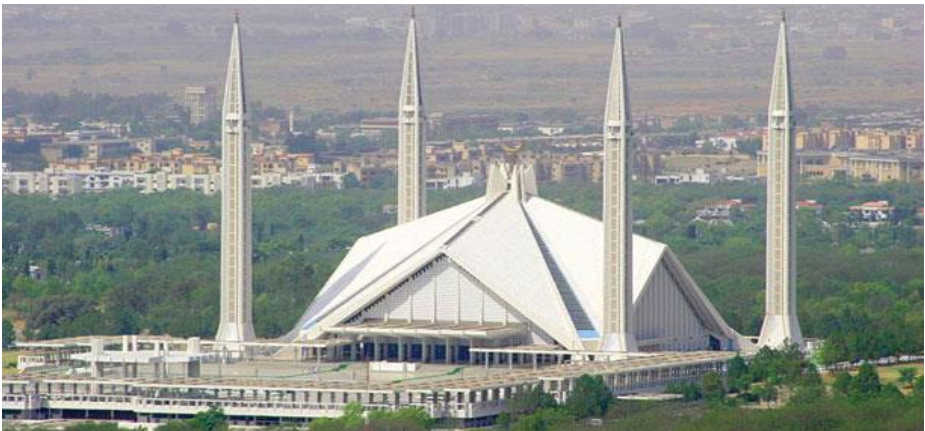


Figure No8. Faisal Mosque Islamabad



Figur No9. Inside Faisal Mosque

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