

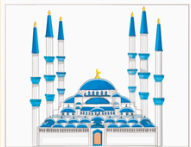
Great Masjid of Touba



Location: Touba, Senegal  
Date: Completed in 1963CE

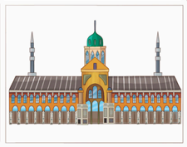
The Great Masjid of Touba stands as a beacon of spiritual devotion and architectural grandeur in the heart of Senegal. Founded by Amadou Bamba, a revered Sufi leader and founder of the Mouride Brotherhood, this masjid was envisioned in 1887 and completed in 1963. It is the largest masjid in the city and one of the largest in Africa, featuring five towering minarets, including the central minaret, Lamp Fall, which rises to 87m and is named in honour of Sheikh Ibrahim Fall, one of Bamba's most devoted disciples. With three grand domes, eleven smaller domes, and two ablution chambers, the masjid's impressive architecture is a blend of sacred symbolism and refined aesthetic. The Great Masjid holds historical significance not only as a place of worship but as a resting place for Amadou Bamba himself and his descendants, who serve as the spiritual leaders of the Mouride order.

Sultan Ahmed Masjid



Location: Istanbul, Turkey  
Date: Completed in 1616CE  
The Sultan Ahmed Masjid, or the Blue Mosque, is a landmark of Istanbul and a significant example of Ottoman architecture. Commissioned by Sultan Ahmed I, it was designed by architect Sedefkâr Mehmed Ağa, a student of the renowned Mimar Sinan. The masjid's design reflects a careful balance of Byzantine and Ottoman architectural styles, marking a shift in the evolution of masjid architecture during the Ottoman Empire. One of the most striking features of the Blue Mosque is its large central dome, which rises 43m high and is surrounded by eight smaller domes. This arrangement is reminiscent of the Hagia Sophia, located nearby, though the Blue Mosque incorporates unique Ottoman innovations. The masjid's prayer hall is illuminated by over 200 stained glass windows, filling the space with natural light and enhancing the intricate tilework that covers much of the interior. The masjid's exterior is marked by its six minarets, an unusual feature that led to some controversy at the time of its construction, as it was seen as an assertion of the mosque's importance. The minarets, along with the elegant courtyards, help create a monumental presence. The mosque's name, "Blue Mosque," comes from the blue and white tiles made in İznik, which decorate the interior walls and depict floral, geometric, and calligraphic designs, as well as verses from the Qur'an.

Umayyad Masjid



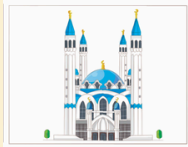
Location: Old City of Damascus, Syria  
Date: between 705 and 715CE  
The Umayyad Masjid, also known as the Great Mosque of Damascus, was originally established during the Umayyad Caliphate by Caliph al-Walid I, on the site of a Roman temple dedicated to Jupiter and later a Christian cathedral. Its construction was a massive undertaking, funded by war booty and taxes from Arab troops. The masjid is famous for its grand basilical design, featuring a large central nave and parallel aisles, along with intricate marble paneling and extensive gold mosaics, covering around 4,000 square metres—likely the largest mosaics in the world at the time. The masjid holds religious significance for both Muslims and Christians, as it is traditionally considered the burial place of John the Baptist's head. The structure's historical importance and architectural influence extend beyond the Umayyads, affecting subsequent Islamic architecture, including the Great Masjid of Cordoba and al-Azhar Masjid. The masjid complex features three minarets: The Minaret of Isa on the southeast corner, the Minaret of Qaytbay on the southwest corner, and the Minaret of the Bride located along the northern wall.

Malwiya Masjid



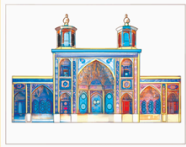
Location: Samarra, Iraq  
Built: 848–851CE  
The Great Masjid of Samarra, commissioned by Abbasid Caliph Al-Mutawakkil, was once the largest masjid in the world. Its iconic feature is the Malwiya Minaret, a 52m tall spiral tower, designed as both a visual landmark and a functional call to prayer tower. The masjid's architectural style blended Islamic, Mesopotamian, and Persian influences, with a large rectangular courtyard surrounded by covered aisles and decorated with blue and gold mosaics.  
Key Features:  
Malwiya Minaret: A unique spiral cone design inspired by Mesopotamian ziggurats, visible from great distances.  
Architectural Influence: The masjid's design influenced later structures, including the Masjid of Ibn Tulun in Cairo.  
Interesting Fact:  
The Malwiya Minaret inspired modern designs, including the Chapel of Thanksgiving in Texas.

Kul Sharif Masjid



Location: Kazan, Russia  
Built: Originally 16th century; Reconstructed in 2005CE  
The Kul Sharif Masjid, once one of the largest masjids in Russia and Europe outside Istanbul, was originally built in the 16th century in the Kazan Kremlin. Named after the religious scholar Kul Sharif, it was destroyed in 1552 by Ivan the Terrible's forces during the Siege of Kazan, where Kul Sharif and his students were martyred defending the city. The current masjid, completed in 2005, serves as a symbol of Tatar culture and Islam's enduring presence in the region.  
Key Features:  
Minarets: The original masjid featured unique minarets, likely in the shape of cupolas and tents.  
Architectural Influence: The modern masjid reflects traditional Tatar and Islamic architectural styles, designed to echo the grandeur of its predecessor.

Nasir al-Mulk Masjid



Location: Shiraz, Iran  
Built: 1876–1888CE  
The Nasir al-Mulk Masjid, or the Pink Mosque, is a stunning example of traditional Persian architecture. Located near the Shâh Chérâgh Masjid in Shiraz, this masjid is renowned for its vibrant stained glass windows and other traditional elements such as the Panj Kâse ("five concaved") design. Construction of the masjid began in 1876 under the order of Mirza Hassan Ali Nasir-al-Mulk, a nobleman of Shiraz, and was completed in 1888.  
Key Features:  
Stained Glass: The masjid is famous for its intricate stained glass, which is a distinctive feature of Orsi, a Persian technique combining wood and colorful glass, distinguishing them from Western stained glass.  
Panj Kâse Design: Traditional Persian design featuring concave shapes that add to the masjid's architectural beauty.

### Mashkhur Jusup Masjid



Location: Pavlodar, Kazakhstan  
Opened: 2001CE

Erected to honour the Kazakh scientist, poet, and saint Mashkhur Jusup Kopeyev (1858–1931), the Mashkhur Jusup Masjid is among Kazakhstan's largest religious buildings. Situated in the heart of Pavlodar, the masjid blends Islamic traditions with Kazakh motifs, notably its bright blue dome shaped like a shanyrak (the crown of a traditional yurt), contributing to the town's skyline.

#### Key Features:

**Architecture and Design:** The mosque's base is an octagonal star with a 48-meter diameter, symbolizing unity and the openness of the faith. The four minarets, standing at 63m, represent the age of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), while the main dome, inspired by the shanyrak, is 54m high. **Interior:** Adorned by the "Zumrad" crystal chandelier, made in Tashkent, with 434 lamps, the main prayer hall exudes an atmosphere of openness and goodwill.

### Shah Faisal Masjid



Location: Islamabad, Pakistan  
Opened: 1986CE

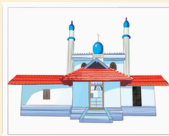
The Faisal Masjid, the national masjid of Pakistan, is an architectural landmark in Islamabad, situated at the base of the scenic Margalla Hills. Named in honour of Saudi King Faisal bin Abdul-Aziz, who supported its construction, this masjid is one of the largest in the world and a major symbol of modern Islamic architecture.

Designed by Turkish architect Vedat Dalokay, the masjid features a striking, tent-like design inspired by the Bedouin tent, surrounded by four towering Ottoman-inspired minarets.

#### Key Features:

**Architecture and Design:** Unlike traditional masjid with domes, Faisal Masjid's main hall has an eight-sided shell that resembles a Bedouin tent, with four minarets standing at 80 meters, the tallest in South Asia. The structure represents the Kaaba in an abstract form, symbolized by the layout and height of the minarets.

### Cheraman Juma Masjid



Location: Kodungallur, India\*  
Established: 629CE

The masjid's design reflects traditional Kerala architecture, featuring wooden structures and hanging lamps that resemble Hindu temples more than typical Islamic architecture. This unique design incorporates influences from various cultures, blending Islamic elements with local styles, with its resemblance to a pagoda hinting at Chinese influence, since Kerala was a critical stop on the maritime Silk Road, serving as a midpoint for ships traveling between Arabia and China.

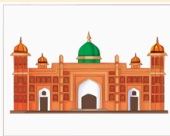
The masjid lacks standard Islamic architectural features like domes and minarets, which were later introduced by Central Asian rulers to North India. Legend has it that the Chera king Cheraman Perumal, witnessing the Islamic miracle of the "splitting of the moon," sought out Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), ultimately converting to Islam.

Cheraman Perumal is believed to have made arrangements for the masjid's construction before passing away in Arabia.

The Cheraman Juma Masjid is emblematic of Kerala's historical confluence of religions and cultures, intertwining Hindu, Islamic, and Chinese influences, making it an enduring symbol of India's rich and diverse heritage.

\*this is where Zayd lives!

### Lalbagh Fort Masjid



Location: Dhaka, Bangladesh  
Construction Started: 1678CE

Lalbagh Fort, originally Fort Aurangabad, is a historic Mughal fort in Dhaka, deriving its name from its surrounding area "Lalbagh," (lit. "Red Garden") due to the reddish-pink architecture typical of the Mughal period. The fort was initiated by Prince Muhammad Azam Shah, son of Emperor Aurangzeb. After the prince left, Shaista Khan took over its construction but left it incomplete following the death of his daughter, Pari Bibi, believing it to be a bad omen.

#### Key Features:

**Architecture and Layout:** Modeled after grand Mughal forts like the Red Fort and Fatehpur Sikri, Lalbagh Fort includes a governor's residence, a mosque, and Pari Bibi's tomb—surrounded by lush gardens, fountains, and water channels. The main structures—Diwan-i-Aam, the masjid, and Pari Bibi's tomb—are connected by water channels, adding symmetry and elegance to the layout. **Fortification Walls:** The southern wall features bastions at intervals and a massive bastion at the southwestern corner, with a tunnel system for defense. The western wall includes two bastions and a large southern gate.

### Huaisheng Masjid



Location: Guangzhou, China  
Original Construction Date:

Traditionally 627CE

The Huaisheng Masjid, also known as the Lighthouse Mosque or Great Mosque of Canton, is one of the world's oldest masjids, believed to be over 1,300 years old. Tradition credits its founding to Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, a Companion of the Prophet (peace be upon him), though historical evidence of his visit to China is uncertain.

#### Key Features:

**Architecture and Minaret:** The Guangta Minaret is unique in China with its minimalist, pointed structure, resembling certain masjids outside of China. Historically, it served multiple functions as a lighthouse, wind vane, and control tower. The minaret was the tallest structure in Guangzhou until the 20th century.

### Malacca Straits Masjid



Location: Malacca City, Malaysia  
Opened: 2006CE

The Malacca Straits Masjid, also known as the Malacca Floating Mosque, is an architectural marvel situated on the man-made Malacca Island. Officially inaugurated by Malaysia's Supreme Ruler Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamalullail, the masjid's modern Islamic design incorporates a blend of Middle Eastern and Malay architectural elements. At high tide, it appears to float, creating a breathtaking effect over the Malacca Strait.

#### Key Features:

**Floating Design:** Built on stilts over the sea, the masjid gives the illusion of floating when the tide is high. **Architecture and Style:** The masjid's structure includes a blend of Middle Eastern and Malay design. The gold-domed roof contrasts with the traditional Malay-style turrets at the corners, while the main entrance features two intersecting archways adorned with stained glass, casting colorful reflections throughout the interior. **Minaret Lighthouse:** The 30m-tall minaret serves as both a minaret and a lighthouse.