

# Mosques of the Islamic Empire

The main holy city of Islam is Mecca, in Saudi Arabia. With the spread of Islam came cultural diffusion. There is no better way to show the changes that took place than looking at the mosques that have been built throughout the vast regions of the Muslim Empire. The following are just some of the many different architectural styles that can be seen around the Muslim world today.

## A typical mosque today in the Middle East



This is another mosque, in Oman in the Middle east.  
Note the architectural designs on the domes



This mosque can be found in Baghdad, Iraq



Perhaps the greatest cultural diffusion was seen in Spain where the Moors of North Africa took over the Iberian peninsula and created a unique style of architecture that is now seen in many cities around the world. This photograph is the Al Hambrain in Granada, Spain

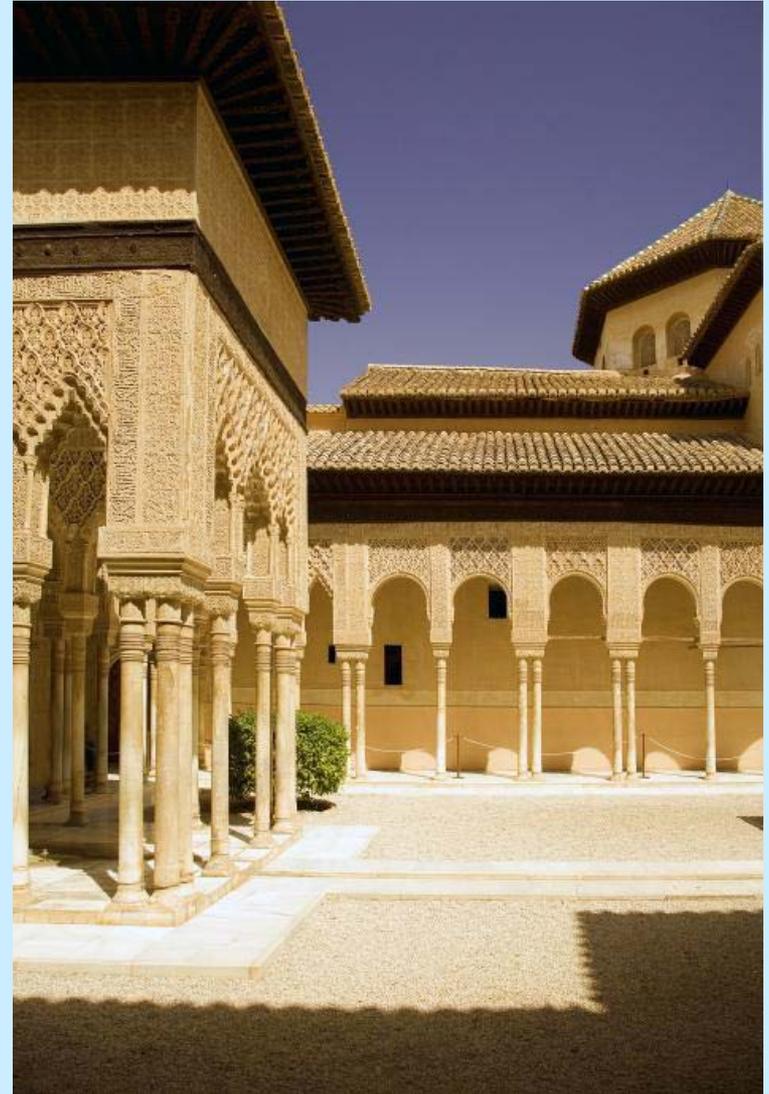


## A mixture of architectural cultures

This is another uniquely styled building in Granada, Spain. In its history it has been used as both a mosque and a Roman Catholic Church.



The Moors were experts in designing covered walkways such as these in Southern Spain



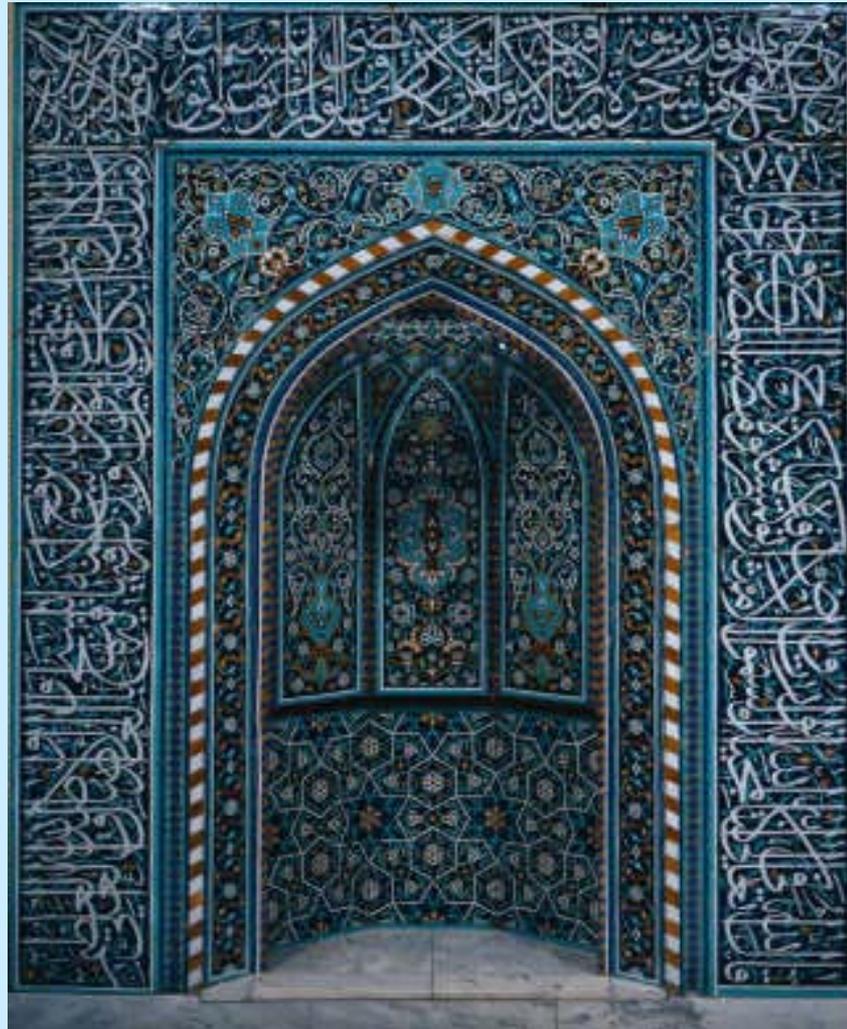
When the Muslims conquered Constantinople, they converted many people to Islam in Eastern Europe. This mosque is in the city of Sarajevo which is in Bosnia



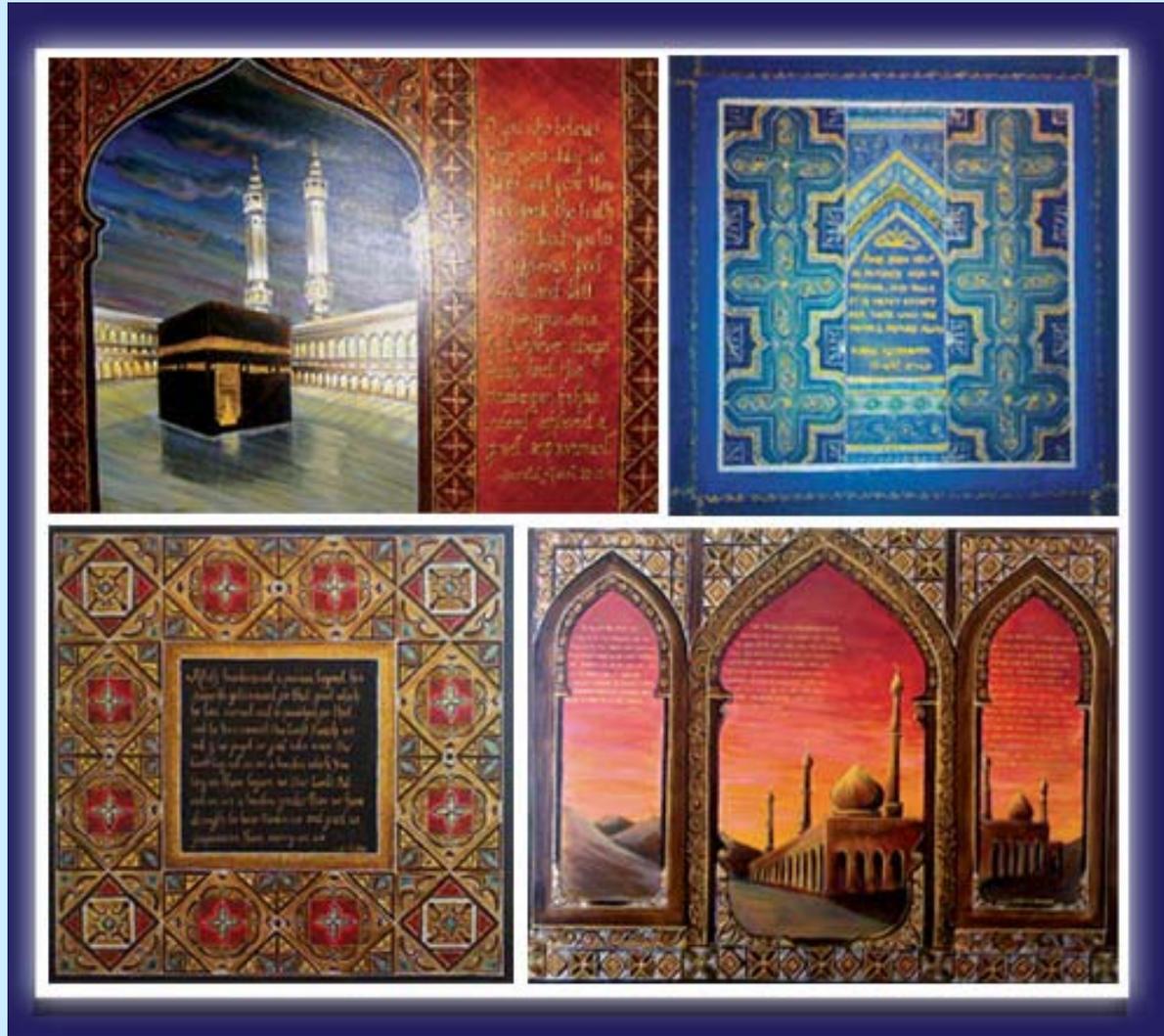
As the Muslim empire began to move eastward, so did its architecture. This mosque is in Afghanistan



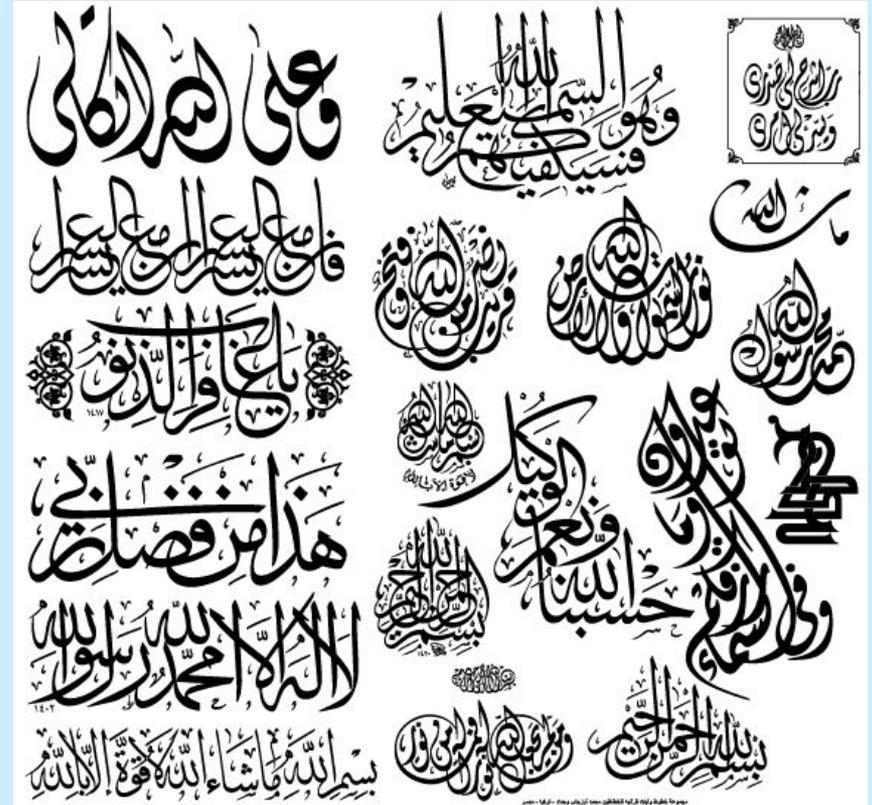
This is one of the doors to the mosque. As you can see it is beautifully decorated in Islamic art that features tiles, mosaics, designs and calligraphy that create a unique finished product.



The early period of Islamic art was mostly of religious building but over time the trend shifted to non-religious people and daily life within the empire. Below are four examples of such artwork



Show below are pictures of Muslim calligraphy and ceramic design that when combined create a striking art form



This mosque was built in the city of Samarkand which is in the nation of Uzbekistan. It has a distinctly unique design which is derived from the culture of the country.



The nation of Pakistan is devoutly Muslim and it is evidenced by having many mosques similar in design to this one



When the Islamic faith reached the Far-East the mosques became smaller in size but still kept the same design concepts as those found in the Middle-East. This mosque is in Manila in the Philippine Islands.



The largest number of Muslims today do not live in the Middle East but in Indonesia in South East Asia. They have created their own design for a mosque, an excellent example of cultural diffusion between the Middle-East, and the Asian continent



The most unique style of mosques is definitely found in Western Africa. The early traders that crossed the Sahara desert in search of gold and salt converted the interior West Africa nations into Muslim centers for religion, art and education. The local rocks and terrain gave way to this design. This is the Djenna mosque in the city of Timbuktu

