

SHEIKH ZAYED GRAND MOSQUE

By: Hend Magdy



If there is one place every visitor must see, it's Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque, named after Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, the late President of the UAE, who is also buried next to the mosque (outer left side)

This beautiful mosque is also known as Abu Dhabi Grand Mosque, it is the largest mosque in the United Arab Emirates and the eighth largest mosque in the world, opened for worship in December 2007.

The landmark mosque accommodates more than 40,960 worshippers, and is completely clad in the finest white marble covering an area of more than 22,000 sq m and includes four 115 m-tall minarets and 80 domes.



FLOORING

The design of the Sheikh Zayed Mosque has been inspired by both Mughal and Moorish mosque architecture, particularly the Badshahi Mosque in Lahore and the Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca being direct influences.

The dome layout and floor plan of the mosque was inspired by the Badshahi Mosque and the architecture was inspired by both Mughal and Moorish design.

The design of the mosque can be best described as a fusion of Arab, Mughal and Moorish architecture.



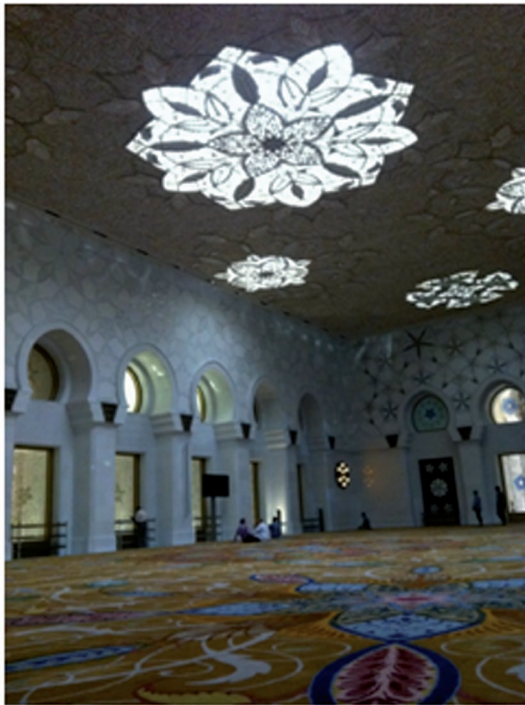
Colored floral marble and mosaics pave the 17,000 sq m courtyard.



CEILING

The Mosque features 80 domes all decorated with white marble.

The main dome's outer shell measures 32.7 meters in diameter and stands 70 meters high from the inside and 85 meters from the outside - the largest of its kind, accordingly to the Turkey Research Centre for Islamic History and Culture.



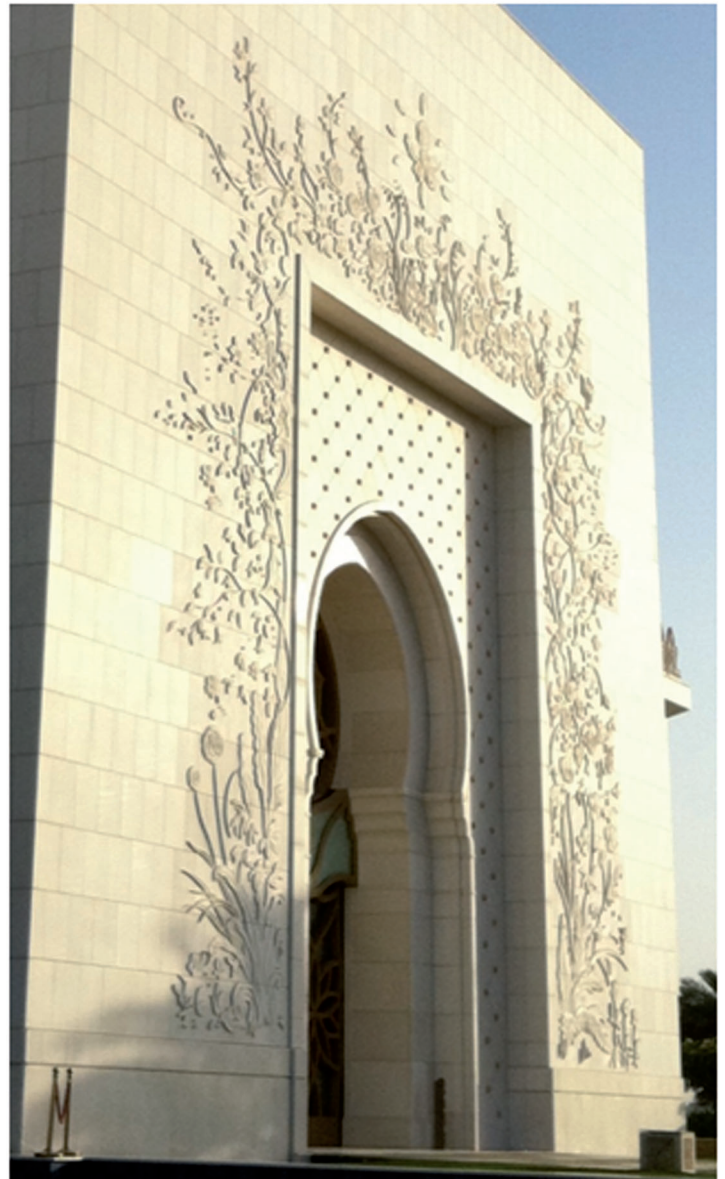
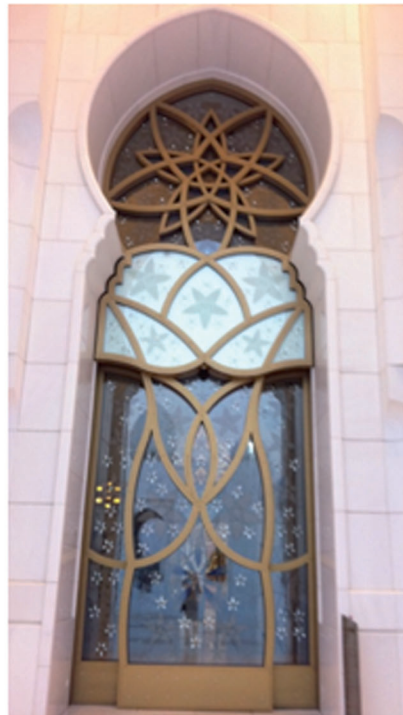
MARBLE WORKS

Elaborate, extensive floral designs decked with precious stones adorn the several walls, pillars and the 7,000 sq m courtyard of the mosque.

The natural materials used include white marble, gold, semi-precious stones and crystals



GLASS WORKS



WASHING AREA

The ablution room-where you clean your hands, face, head and feet three times before prayers.



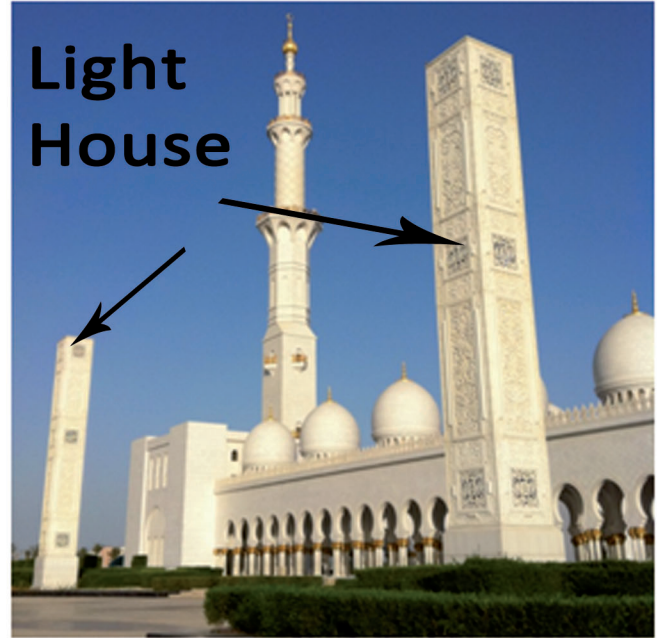
SIGNAGE





LIGHTING

Modern Fiber optic lighting is subtly used behind gold leaf walls with kofi calligraphy.



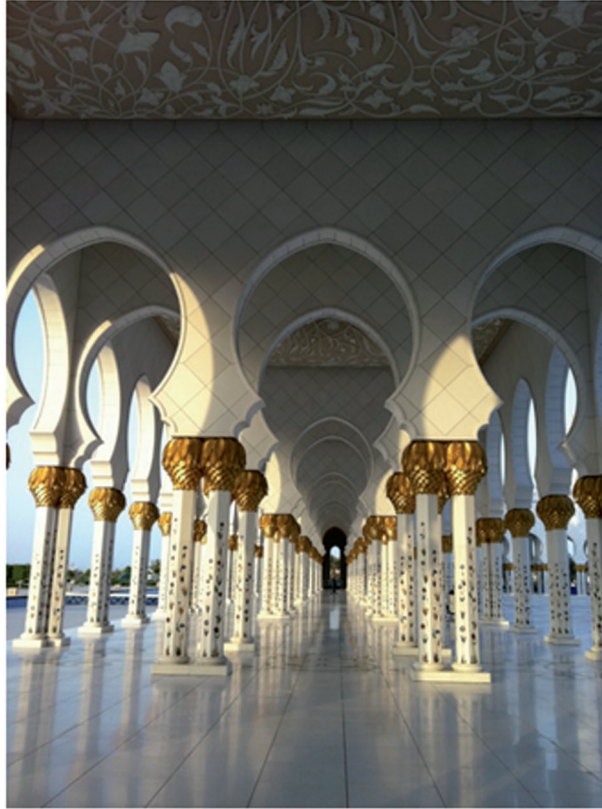
As an image of paradise in the desert, 7,874 m² of pools surround the site.

So far it has cost \$3.2 Billion and they haven't even finished working on the grounds which will have lush gardens, fountains and streams.



COLUMNS

The Mosque has 1,096 columns in its exterior and 96 columns in the main prayer hall which are embedded with more than 20,000 handmade marble panels encrusted with semi-precious stones, including lapis lazuli, red agate, amethyst, abalone shell and mother of pearl.



The Mosque has 80 Iznikpanels - highly decorated ceramic tiles popular in the 16th century - which feature distinctly in Istanbul's imperial and religious buildings. Traditionally hand-crafted, each tile was designed by Turkish calligrapher Othman Agha. Three calligraphy styles - Nashki, Tuloth and Kufi - are used throughout the mosque and were drafted by Mohamed Mendi (UAE), Farouk Haddad (Syria) and Mohamed Allam (Jordan)



The Mosque can accommodate up to 40,960 worshippers from its prayer halls and courtyard.



INTERIOR

An equally impressive interior design complements the Mosque's awesome exterior. Italian white marble and inlaid floral designs adorn the prayer halls and the Mosque's interior walls have decorative 24 carat gold-glass mosaic features. The main prayer hall also features the world's largest hand-woven Persian carpet (7,119 square meters)



The main prayer hall also features the world's largest chandelier, at 15m tall and largest hand-woven Persian carpet.

The world's biggest Swarovski crystal bejeweled gold-plated chandelier from Germany measuring 10m in diameter and 15m tall is housed in the main prayer hall.



In addition, the mosque's grand carpet from Iran, which measures 7,119 sq m and weighs 47 tons is the largest carpet in the world. The carpet was hand-made by 1,200 weavers who used 2,268,000 knots in its creation.

The men's prayer hall can hold 10,000 people

