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Muslim civilization gave rise to many new architectural IDEAS AND STYLES.

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ENGINEERS in the Muslim world improved upon many architectural features used by earlier civilizations.

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The Muslim architecture of North Africa and Muslim-ruled Spain is often CALLED "MOORISH" architecture.

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Architectural advances spread from Muslim-ruled SPAIN AND SICILY to the rest of Europe a thousand years ago.

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Islamic features in the GREAT MOSQUE OF CÓRDOBA in Spain made it an inspiration for much of European architecture.

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TRAVELERS, SCHOLARS, and invaders who passed through Muslim lands helped spread Muslim innovations in architecture.

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Some even took MUSLIM ARCHITECTS AND CRAFTSMEN home with them.

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Muslim architecture was a symbolic expression of the power of God and the BEAUTY OF LIFE IN PARADISE.

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Domes, towers, and archways gave buildings A FEELING OF SPACE AND MAJESTY.

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ROSE WINDOWS in European churches may have been inspired by a circular window in an 8th-century Muslim palace.

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Mimar Sinan began as an ORDINARY CARPENTER and ended up designing 477 buildings for three Ottoman Sultans.

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Sinan's designs emphasized the importance of HARMONY between architecture and landscape.

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Suleymaniye Mosque, which crowns one of the SEVEN HILLS of Istanbul, Turkey, is one of Sinan's best-known works.

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Features in Suleymaniye Mosque show that Sinan may have been the FIRST "GREEN" ARCHITECT.

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Smoke from candles and lamps in the mosque was channeled into a filter room before escaping into the outside air.

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The soot was then used to make ink that also repelled BOOKWORMS AND BUGS.

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Sinan figured out a way to MAKE DOMES BIGGER AND HIGHER.

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Under the Ottomans, domes grew large enough to COVER ENTIRE SANCTUARIES.

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For Muslims the DOME SYMBOLIZED THE VAULT OF HEAVEN.

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THE MINARET, a tower used by muezzins to call people to prayer, is an essential feature of a mosque.

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"Minaret" comes from the Arabic word *manarah*, meaning "lighthouse," a reference to the LIGHT OF ISLAM.

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Sinan built the Selimiye Mosque in Edirne, Turkey, so well that it has withstood EARTHQUAKES since the 1570s!

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MATH SKILLS helped Muslims to create many new kinds of arches, including the horseshoe, pointed, and ogee.

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Architects use arches to SPAN LARGE OPENINGS and carry HEAVY LOADS.

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The respect Muslims held for the arch is reflected in an Arabic saying that means "THE ARCH NEVER SLEEPS."

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The HORSESHOE ARCH, which gave a greater feeling of openness, was created by expanding the top of a basic arch.

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This arch, known in Britain as the "MOORISH ARCH," was popular during Queen Victoria's reign (1837–1901).

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By tapering the top of an arch, Muslim architects created the POINTED ARCH, which reached Europe by way of Sicily in the early 11th century.

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The ogee arch, which originated in Muslim India, resembles TWO S-SHAPED CURVES facing each other.

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The ogee arch, which became known as the "GOTHIC ARCH" in Europe, can be seen in many churches in the West.

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Muslim architects figured out a way to make VAULTS—arched ceilings—bigger, higher, and fancier.

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A STALACTITE VAULT, or *muqarnas*, has a dome that looks like a honeycomb.

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Muslim architects imitated the graceful curve of PALM TREE branches in their designs.

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THE TAJ MAHAL, in India, is one of the world's most famous and widely visited examples of Islamic architecture.

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To see all of these architectural innovations under one roof, VISIT THE GREAT MOSQUE in Córdoba, Spain.

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FACTS TO BUILD ON WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT

ARCHITECTURE