

# 15 TERRIFIC FACTS

# ABOUT TOWNS

1 You might be surprised to learn that many of the **conveniences** and **comforts** that you enjoy today were part of the everyday lives of people living in Muslim civilization a thousand years ago.



2 Towns in Muslim **civilization** were highly advanced and organized for their time. The main features, like markets, homes, bathhouses, and parks, were neatly arranged around a mosque.

3 Most **homes** in Muslim civilization had built-in air-conditioning, inner courtyards, gardens, and terraces. By contrast, most people in medieval cities elsewhere lived in far less comfortable **dwelling**s.



4 Walls around houses had to be **taller** than the height of a **camel rider** to protect the privacy of the people inside.



5 To provide **relief** from the hot, desert climate, town planners created **shade** by designing narrow, covered streets, indoor and outdoor fountains, and courtyards with elaborate gardens.

6 People of different **faiths and ethnic backgrounds** lived near each other and worked together in towns under Muslim rule.



7 Shopping for food, spices, books, and other goods was done at an open-air market called a **souk**.

8 People still shop at **souks** in **Morocco, Turkey**, and other **Muslim countries**.

9 Homes in Muslim neighborhoods had to be built within earshot of the **muezzin's call** to prayer from the mosque.



10 Córdoba, in Muslim Spain, was the **New York City** of the 9th- and 10th-century world. It featured free schools, libraries, houses with running water, and much more.

11 The fountains of the **Alhambra Palace** in Granada, Spain, still use the 650-year-old water system designed during Muslim rule.

12 In contrast to Córdoba, London, England, and Paris, France, didn't have oil-burning **street-lights** and **paved roads** for another several hundred years.



13 In some more advanced towns, trash was collected regularly by a **donkey cart**, and streets were cleaned daily and drained by a system of sewers.



14 **Hammams**, or bathhouses, were an important part of towns in Muslim civilization.

15 Townspeople spent a part of certain days at the **hammam**, relaxing in its **steam room**, taking a hot bath, or plunging into a cold pool.



Kalyan Mosque, Bukhara, Uzbekistan

