

Reflecting Pools

Central to the garden's axis are elongated rectangular pools, known as reflecting pools. They mirror the verdant surroundings and pavilions, creating an enchanting visual effect. The reflections of the pavilions and structures in the tranquil water enhance the garden's majestic appearance.



Aramgah or the Emperor's Resting Place

Located at the southern end of the central canal on the first terrace, the Aramgah features a marble dado. Its spacious central room houses a cup-shaped marble basin with a fountain. This room is accompanied by two smaller side chambers. The structure is fronted by an Aiwān, with arched openings facing north, east, and west.



In approximately 1850 AD, due to the realignment of the Grand Trunk Road, the Aramgah was transformed into the main entrance. During the Sikh era, its original marble was replaced with red sandstone/lime terracing. Consequently, in the 1970s, restoration efforts led to the entire floor being relaid in marble, reinstating the original design.

Terraced Pavilions and Gateways

Shalimar Bagh showcases a sequence of terraces, interlinked by ramps and stairs. Each terrace is adorned with pavilions, gateways, and edifices, enhancing the garden's visual and architectural charm. These structures exemplify Mughal architectural finesse, with their detailed craftsmanship, symmetry, and seamless blend with nature. Shalimar Bagh is a testament to the Mughal emperors' penchant for beauty, harmoniously fusing natural and architectural elements.

Dehli Darwaza

Located to the east of the Shalimar Garden at the Hayat Bakhsh level, this gate is known as the Dehli Darwaza. It is so named because it faces towards the city of Delhi.



Lahori Darwaza

On the opposite side of the garden from the Dehli Darwaza, there is another gate to the west called the Lahori Darwaza. This gate is named for its orientation towards the city of Lahore.



Lahori Darwaza

Naqqar Khana

The building situated on the upper terrace to the east, now referred to as Naqqar Khana, was previously known as Jharoka-e-Daulat Khana-e-Khas-o-Aam (the balcony for royal and public audiences). To the west of this was the residence of the Empress.



Khawabgah of Queen

At the highest terrace, to the east of Naqqar Khana, is the building known as the Queen's Khawabgah. This structure served as a resting place for the Queen or princesses of the Royal family, who visited to enjoy the picturesque beauty of Shalimar Garden.



Khawabgah of Queen

PWCHAA at the Shalimar Gardens

The government of Punjab, in 2023 June, handed over the Shalimar Gardens to the Punjab Walled Cities and Heritage Areas Authority. This Authority is now looking after all the administration and management of these Gardens.

Regular cultural events, exhibitions, and guided tours are available, providing insights into the rich history and heritage of the Mughal era.

Facilities at Shalimar Gardens:

1. Parking
2. Tourist Guides
3. Electric Golf Carts
4. Photography with instant printing
5. Canteen / Café area
6. Souvenir Shops
7. Washrooms



Electric Golf Carts



Plan your visit now!

Plan Your Visit Open throughout the year, the Shalimar Gardens invite you to experience the grandeur of Mughal legacy. Whether you're a history buff, nature lover, or simply in search of peace, these gardens offer something for everyone. Refreshments and souvenir shops are available on site to enhance your experience.

Join us in celebrating the enduring beauty and historical significance of Lahore's most treasured jewel – the Shalimar Gardens.

Nearby Attractions:

Gulabi Bagh Gateway, Budu Ka Awa, Tomb of Ali Mardan Khan & Tomb of Khan-e-Jahan Zafar Jang Kokaltash.

Punjab Walled Cities and Heritage Areas Authority Office, 54-Lawrence Road, Lahore

042-99204196

BOOK TOUR:

Punjabwalledcitiesandheritageareasauthority

www.walledcitylahore.gov.pk

Punjabwalledcitiesandheritageareasauthority



Shalimar Gardens

A masterpiece of Mughal Empire in Lahore

In the heart of Lahore, the Shalimar Gardens stand as a testament to the grandeur of Mughal architecture and the exquisite artistry of Islamic garden design.

Erected in 1641 under the patronage of Emperor Shah Jahan, these gardens embody the zenith of Mughal landscape aesthetics, offering a serene retreat from the contemporary world. This garden occupies some 80 acres of land and was completed at a cost of rupees six hundred thousand. Khalilullah Khan, Ali Mardan Khan and Mulla Alaul Maulk Tuni took charge of the project.

In 1981, the Shalimar Gardens were designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Inspiration Behind Shalimar Gardens

The Shalimar Gardens in Lahore were inspired by the Shalimar Gardens in Kashmir, which had been built by Jahangir, Shah Jahan's father, in 1620. Shah Jahan desired a similar garden that was to be used exclusively by his family and court men. The gardens were constructed in 1641 and are laid out in the form of a rectangle aligned along a north-south axis.

A Harmonious Symphony of Nature & Design

As you step into the Shalimar Gardens, prepare to be enchanted by the symmetrical precision of its layout – a stunning display of the Mughal love for harmony and order. Spanning over forty acres of land, the gardens are divided into three descending terraces, each symbolising a different aspect of the cosmic world.

The Upper Terrace: 'Farah Baksh' (Bestower of Pleasure) Behold the top level, originally reserved for the royal family. Here, the grand marble pavilion offers a panoramic view of the entire garden, perfectly capturing the essence of regal leisure.



The Middle Terrace: 'Faiz Baksh' (Bestower of Goodness) Experience the heart of the garden, adorned with a splendid array of fountains and centrally located water pools that reflect the azure Lahore sky, creating a mesmerising effect.



The Lower Terrace: 'Hayat Baksh' (Bestower of Life) Immerse yourself in the bustling energy of the lower terrace, where once flowed water cascades and life thrived in its most exuberant forms. This area resonates with the vibrancy of nature and life.



Concept of Paradise

The garden's layout is a manifestation of the Mughal concept of paradise gardens, symbolizing the idea of an earthly representation of heaven. It was designed with meticulous attention to detail and the use of natural elements such as water and greenery to create a serene and picturesque environment.

A Fusion of Flora and Architectural Marvels

The Shalimar Gardens are not just about meticulous landscaping but also about the intricate balance of flora and architectural marvels. Lined with a variety of fruit-bearing trees and flowers, the gardens are a haven for botany enthusiasts and a sanctuary for those seeking tranquillity. There are numerous trees like almond, apple, cherry, gokcha, mango, mulberry, peach, plum, quince (seedless) in the Shalimar Gardens.



UNESCO World Heritage Site

Shalimar Bagh is designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is considered a prime example of Mughal garden design and architecture. It has historical and cultural significance, attracting tourists and visitors from around the world who come to admire its beauty and learn about the history of the Mughal Empire in the Indian subcontinent.

Significant Features and Elements of Shalimar Gardens

The Shalimar Gardens boast a collection of impressive structures and elements, each contributing to its historical and architectural importance. Key features and aspects within Shalimar Bagh include:

Sawan Bhadoun

The Sawan Bhadoun pavilion is a renowned feature of the Faiz Baksh terrace, which is the middle terrace of Shalimar Gardens. Created as a place of royal repose, these gardens functioned as the Emperor's abode during his visits to Lahore. Here, intricately designed alcoves were fashioned for the placement of oil lamps. These lamps, set before flowing fountain waters, create a captivating spectacle.



Sawan Bhadoun

Hamam (Royal Bath)

The royal bath, integral to the garden's layout, showcases a traditional Mughal bathhouse situated on the second terrace. It comprises multiple rooms, each with bathing pools and fountains, epitomising the lavish living standards of the Mughal rulers.



Baradari (Twelve-Door Pavilion)

One of the standout features of Shalimar Bagh is the Baradari, an airy pavilion with twelve doors, situated on the central terrace. Encircled by a pool and fountains, it enhances the garden's visual charm.

Aiwan (Hall)

The Aiwan, an arcade-style building, is centrally positioned on the northern edge of the first terrace. It overlooks the grand marble cascades and the two lower terraces. This hall features three cusped arched openings on its longer sides and two on the other sides. Its lower sections are adorned with marble, while the original walls were embellished with paneling and fresco work. The current ceiling dates back to the Sikh era, around 1838 AD.

The Aiwan served as a venue for royal events and ceremonies and continues to be used for state receptions. Kanahaya Lal, in his book, notes that Ranjit Singh removed its marble slabs, including the marble screens (jali), and transported them to the Golden Temple in Amritsar for repurposing.



Water Channels and Fountains

A hallmark of Shalimar Gardens is its elaborate water network. The layout centers around a main axis, with terraces cascading down. Water channels meander across these levels, producing calming sounds and bringing a refreshing ambiance. These channels, often marble-lined, feature fountains that augment the gardens' aesthetic allure.

A canal named Shah Nahar, also known as Hansti canal, was constructed from a distant location to irrigate the Shalimar Gardens.

As many as 410 fountains rise from this basin and the canal. The upper-level terrace contains 105 fountains, the middle level terrace has 152 fountains, while the lower level terrace includes 153 fountains.



Water Channels and Fountains

Flower Beds

The garden's design incorporates meticulously arranged terraced levels, each boasting flower beds filled with an array of vibrant flowers. These terraces offer a visually pleasing experience and add significantly to the garden's overall beauty.

