

The Moti Masjid

It was called as Moti Masjid because of its white pearl like hue and small size. Its white marble originated from Makrana, Rajasthan while was also used in the building of Taj Mahal. The arches have delicate petra dura work on them, a delicate insertion of precious stones inlay. Many of the stones were removed during the Sikh period. The ceiling is decorated with arches and horizontal beams. There are three domes of its visible for a distance. The middle one is prominently larger in size. There are double domes devised to enhance the sound. (Ebba 1982)

Moti Masjid (Pearl Mosque) situated beyond the Throne-room, was built in Jahangir period. The Mosque was used as the Government Treasury in British Period, Its majestic structure is chaste and simple, and the finely swelling domes, of pure white marble.

“The Moti Masjid at Lahore is significance for marking the first time in the history of mosque architecture in Lahore that marble was used extensively. The serene bulbous domes with pronounced cavettos and well-proportioned multi foiled arches embellished subtly with inlay, render this enchanting edifice in class by itself” (Rehmani 2016)

Worshippers' court (Jaya e Namaz) measures 50 feet, from north to south, and 33 feet from east to west. The following Persian inscription is recorded over the arched entrance leading to the outer court.

“In the twelfth year of the fortunate reign of His Imperial Majesty the shadow of God, like Solomon in dignity, Kyamurs in pomp, victorious in arms like Alexander, the Defender of the Faith, Shah Nur-ud-din Jahangir, son of Jalal-ud-din Akbar, the King, conqueror of the infidels, this noble edifice was completed in 1007 A. H. (1598 A.D.) by the efforts of the humblest of disciples and the least of slaves, his devoted servant, Ma'amur Khan.”

Ranjit Singh changed the name of Moti Masjid to Moti Mandir, and, as in the British period, used it as the State Treasury. The floor of the mosque is of pure marble. The pinnacles and turrets were divested of their costly inlaid stones by the Sikhs. However, in 1903-04 Lord Curzon ordered to remove unsightly excrescences to restored Moti Masjid to its original form.

Having been used as temple by Sikhs and Treasury by the British rulers, the building was restored to its original status of mosque by the orders of Lord Curzon, the Viceroy in 1899. The luxurious is divided into five chabers. The central one is slightly extended into the country and the arrangement is similar to that seen in other mosques of the Mughal era, masjid Wazir Khan and Masjid Maryam Zamani (Qureshi 2018)

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