

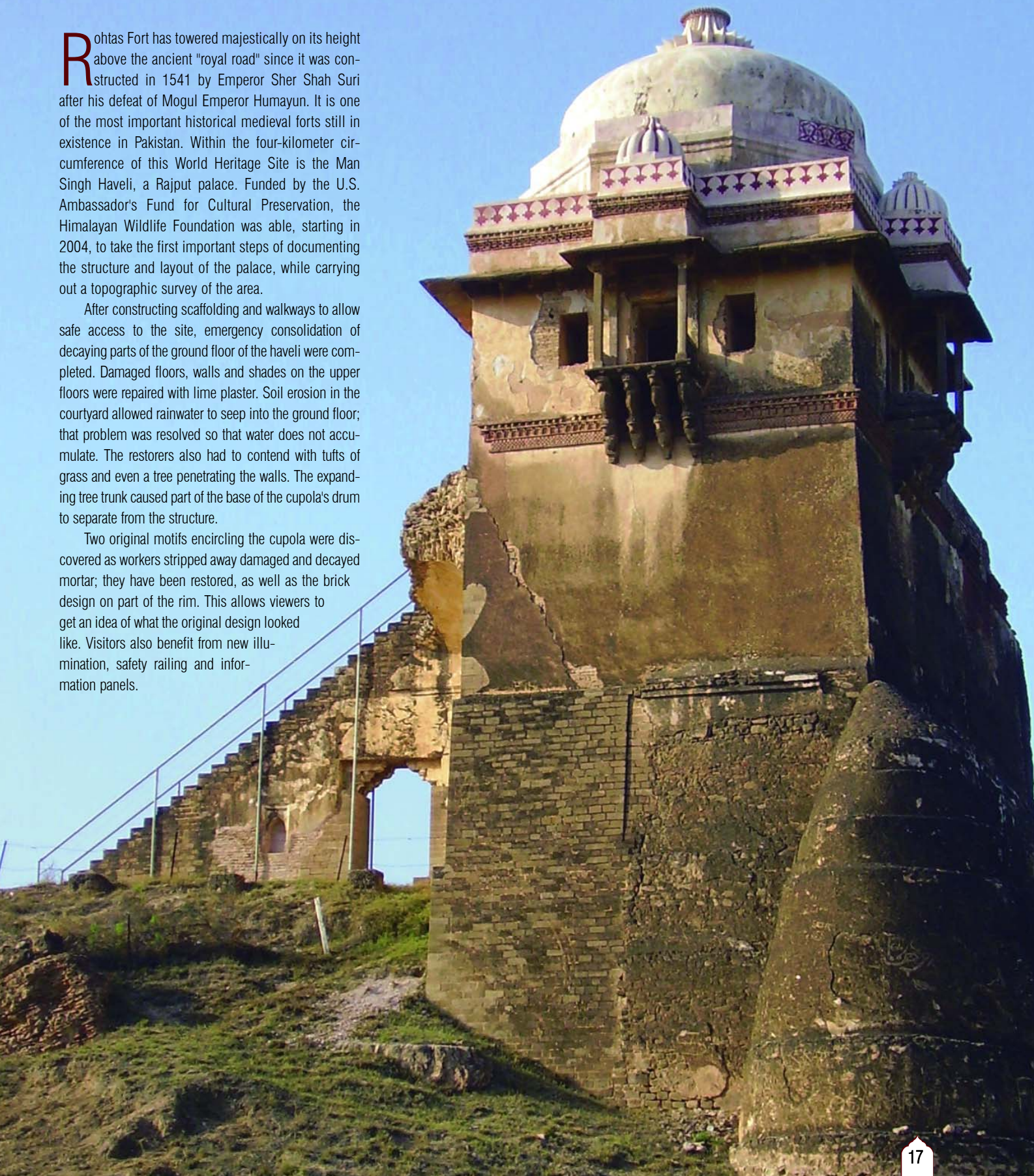
Restoring Man Singh Haveli, the defining symbol of Rohtas Fort

Rohtas Fort has towered majestically on its height above the ancient "royal road" since it was constructed in 1541 by Emperor Sher Shah Suri after his defeat of Mogul Emperor Humayun. It is one of the most important historical medieval forts still in existence in Pakistan. Within the four-kilometer circumference of this World Heritage Site is the Man Singh Haveli, a Rajput palace. Funded by the U.S. Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation, the Himalayan Wildlife Foundation was able, starting in 2004, to take the first important steps of documenting the structure and layout of the palace, while carrying out a topographic survey of the area.

After constructing scaffolding and walkways to allow safe access to the site, emergency consolidation of decaying parts of the ground floor of the haveli were completed. Damaged floors, walls and shades on the upper floors were repaired with lime plaster. Soil erosion in the courtyard allowed rainwater to seep into the ground floor; that problem was resolved so that water does not accumulate. The restorers also had to contend with tufts of grass and even a tree penetrating the walls. The expanding tree trunk caused part of the base of the cupola's drum to separate from the structure.

Two original motifs encircling the cupola were discovered as workers stripped away damaged and decayed mortar; they have been restored, as well as the brick design on part of the rim. This allows viewers to get an idea of what the original design looked like. Visitors also benefit from new illumination, safety railing and information panels.

PAKISTAN



Restoration of arcades adjoining the Wazir Khan Mosque

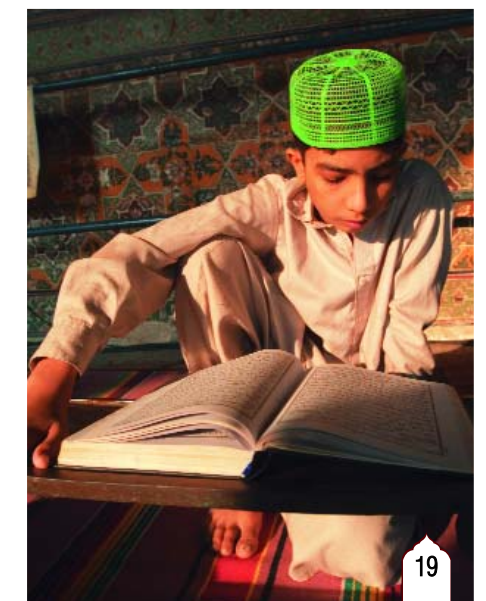
The Wazir Khan Mosque is an architectural gem hidden amid the chaos of Lahore's old city. The mosque was built by its namesake, the governor of Lahore, during the reign of the Emperor Shah Jehan in 1634-45.

"The Wazir Khan Mosque is unique in the sense that all the embellishments that were used in various Mogul monuments were employed at this one place," says Shahbaz Khan, director of the Punjab State Archaeological Department. These decorative devices include frescoes, stonework, tile mosaics and patterned brick paving. The floor of the courtyard uses 25 different brick patterns, while the walls are decorated with brilliant floral frescoes and verses of the Quran rendered in mosaic. The fine brickwork on the walls interspersed with geometric patterns in yellow, blue and green make the building appear lively and inviting.

Arcades on either side of the main gate are another unusual feature of the mosque. Originally, these were vaulted shops built in a courtyard at the entrance and rented to traders to fund maintenance of the mosque. While the main building and prayer plaza await major renovation work, the arcades have been completely restored with two grants, one in 2003 and the other in 2004, from the U.S. Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation. Brick and plasterwork have been restored and repainted in the original colors, and decorative flourishes have been returned to their original condition.

The arcades serve as a pleasant entrance to one of the most exceptional monuments in Lahore and as a meeting place for regular visitors. When major renovations to the mosque are complete, the Punjab government plans to rent the stalls to traders once again.

"We want to revive the old custom," says Khan, whose department oversaw the restoration. "We want to establish a bazaar featuring Lahore's traditional crafts. Craftsmen would sit here and demonstrate their work, such as bookbinding, woodwork, metalwork and jewelry making. They could make decorative tiles like those used in the mosque, and fresco style paintings for sale."





Restoration of the Alamgiri Gate, Lahore Fort



Built by the Emperor Akbar on ancient fortifications whose origins are unknown, Lahore Fort is one of the great Mogul structures, along with the Red Forts of Delhi and Agra in India. The massive Alamgiri Gate, which Emperor Aurangzeb added to the western side in 1673, is one of the Lahore Fort's outstanding features. It faces the Badshahi Masjid, reputed to have once been the biggest mosque in the world, and also built by Aurangzeb.

The fort, containing royal apartments, fountains, marble pavilions and a mosque, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and has recently been restored with funds from Pakistani and international donors. A 2006 grant from the U.S. Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation helped with the restoration of the Alamgiri Gate, a familiar site to every Pakistani because it appears on the reverse side of Pakistan's 50-rupee currency note.

The central arch of the gate is large enough

for the emperor to enter the stronghold mounted on an elephant and is flanked by two enormous fluted bastions decorated with lotus devices and topped by domed pavilions.

"It's important because it's the main entry for all tourists. It symbolizes Lahore itself. It's on the cover of every book published about Lahore," says Shahbaz Khan, director of the Punjab State Archaeological Department, which directed the restoration.

The archeologists repaired damaged brickwork at the rear of the gate and restored stone carvings. But the most visible part of the project is the restoration of the original plasterwork, which was done with lime, then polished with semi-precious stones. Khan says this assures the façade of the gate will remain protected and virtually maintenance free, as the annual monsoon rains will wash off the dirt, just as the original builders had planned it.

Finding and conserving Buddhist murals at Taxila

Taxila, an important city on the Indus River that served as the crossroads for three major trade routes, was a cradle of Mahayana Buddhism and was a Hindu and Buddhist religious center from the 6th to the 5th centuries BCE. Alexander the Great passed through in 326 BCE, collecting from Taxila's king a supply of war elephants for the planned conquest of India. From the second century BCE, Greek religion, Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism were practiced in Taxila. It is now a multiple-location UNESCO World Heritage Site northwest of Islamabad.

Excavations near Taxila, at the site of a 5th century BCE monastery called Jinan Wali Dheri, took on exciting new importance when archeologists discovered rare Buddhist wall murals, the only such

Buddhist era paintings ever discovered in Pakistan.

With assistance provided by a grant from the U.S. Ambassador's Cultural Preservation Fund, conservationists working with Pakistan's Department of Archeology and Museums took measures to protect the monastery from illegal excavation, fortify structural remains, and protect moveable antiquities from further destruction, manhandling and displacement. The Fund also helped with erection of appropriate access facilities and an effective drainage system to prevent decay caused by heavy rainfall.

The project offers a valuable opportunity for researchers, archeologists and experts to engage with each other and learn preservation techniques. An additional goal of the project is to help



local communities assume stewardship of their heritage resources.

The project has preserved an important aspect of Buddhist history in a region where the rich cultural diversity of Greek, Indian and Central Asian influences merged to produce unique art forms.

Conservation of ramparts defending Sirkap's ancient stupas

Sirkap has a rich, cosmopolitan history. It was built by the Bactrian King Demetrius after he invaded India about 180 years before the current era. Later it became a seat of Buddhist learning and is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, situated opposite Taxila.

In 2001, one of the first grants under the U.S. Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation was

provided to conserve and restore exposed stone walls around two major Buddhist stupas among the ruins of Sirkap. Stupas are funeral mounds, usually associated with the death and nirvana of Buddha. Many of those at Sirkap show Greek artistic influences.

Sirkap and Taxila illustrate different stages in the development of a civilization on the Indus River

that was influenced by Persian, Greek and Central Asian cultures. Because Demetrius considered himself a Greek, he laid out Sirkap according to the grid plan characteristic of Greek cities. The ruins are similar to those of Olynthus in Macedonia and Halos in Thessaly. They are organized around one main avenue and 15 perpendicular streets. The surrounding wall is nearly five kilometers long.

