

#TRAVEL

JOURNEY INTO HISTORY: Asia's must-visit museums for an unforgettable experience

It does not matter whether you are a history buff, an art enthusiast, or a science aficionado — museums offer something for everyone. Asia boasts vast diversity in its landscapes, people and cultures, and for a curious traveller in the region, what better way to learn about it than to visit the nearest museum?

Albert Hall Museum, Jaipur, India
Situating in Jaipur, the Albert Hall Museum is one of the earliest museums in the region, inaugurated in 1887. Named after the contemporary Prince of Wales, the museum itself is a marvel in Indo-Gothic architecture, the coming together of Mughal and Hindu elements, complete with a European touch. Colourful lights illuminate the museum at night, making it a spectacle to behold. In the main chamber, murals of local rulers line the upper half of the walls. The doorways to the inner chambers lead to a number of galleries exhibiting a wide array of artefacts from Persian carpets and medieval European statues to ivory idols of Hindu deities, weaponry, coins, and musical

instruments from medieval India. The most surprising aspect of this museum though is its, wait for it... Egyptian mummy!

Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar
Designed by the renowned Chinese-American architect, I M Pei, this museum is an iconic work of modern architecture. The extensive promenade leading up to the entrance of the museum opens into a grand room with a sky-high ceiling and a spiral staircase with glass railings at the end. Here you can purchase a ticket for Tk 1,500 which will allow you access to the museum for the next three days.

The Museum of Islamic Art has a total of 18 galleries displaying thousands of artefacts, including, but not limited to, Arabic calligraphy and early books, jewellery, metalwork, pottery, woodwork, china, and colourful

textiles and rugs. If you follow the different trails in the museum guides, you will be able to view the displayed artefacts as part of a story that takes you back hundreds of years through the journey of Islamic civilisation.

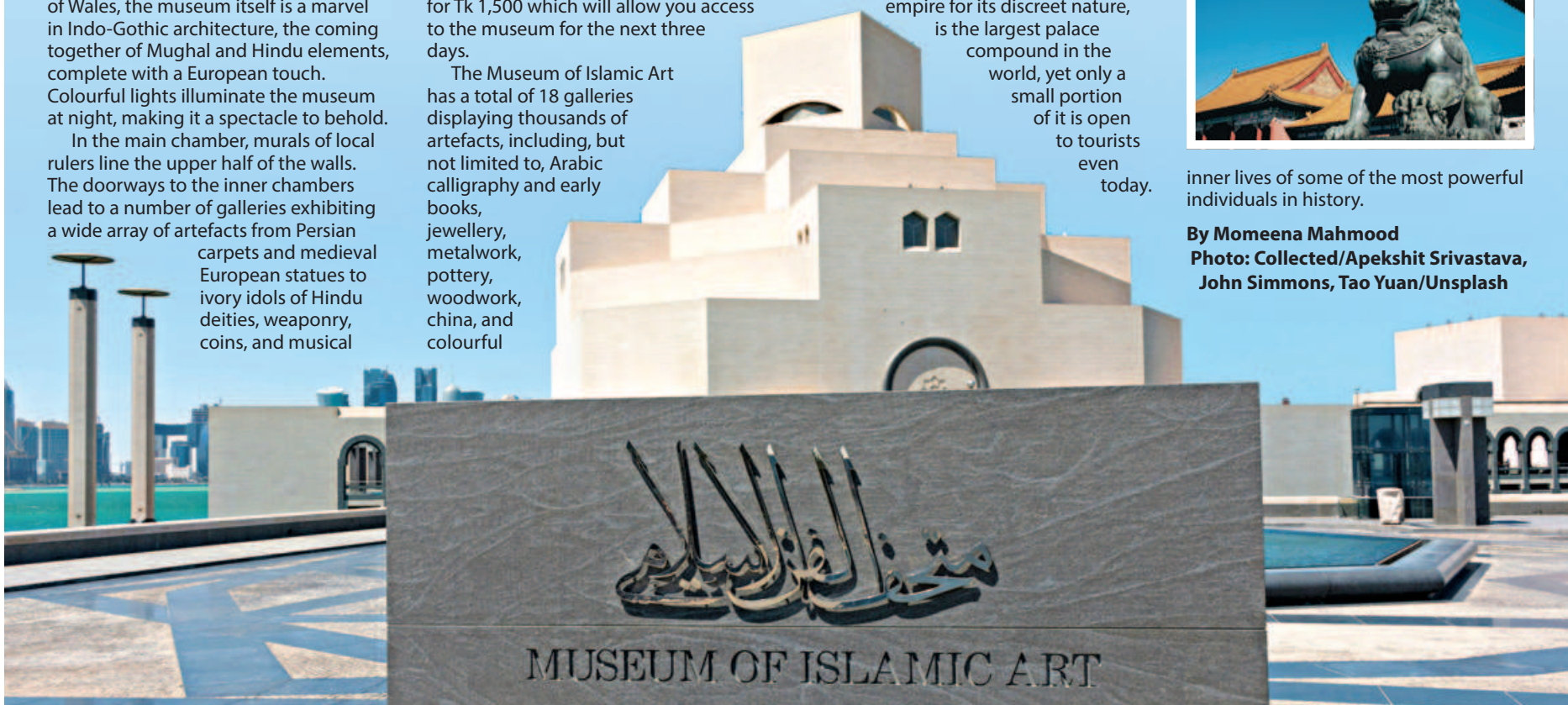
The Palace Museum, Beijing, China
The Palace Museum is located in the Forbidden City, the seat of the Ming and Qing dynasties in medieval China and the heart of one of the world's greatest civilisations. The Forbidden City, named aptly so by the subjects of the Chinese empire for its discreet nature, is the largest palace compound in the world, yet only a small portion of it is open to tourists even today.

The Chinese held their emperor and his family in great esteem, almost to the point of being regarded as sacred, and this is evident in the design of this museum. The main building of the museum has the statues of a lion and a lioness guarding its gates, symbolic of the power and authority of the emperor. Once inside, you will bear witness to the



inner lives of some of the most powerful individuals in history.

By Momeena Mahmood
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