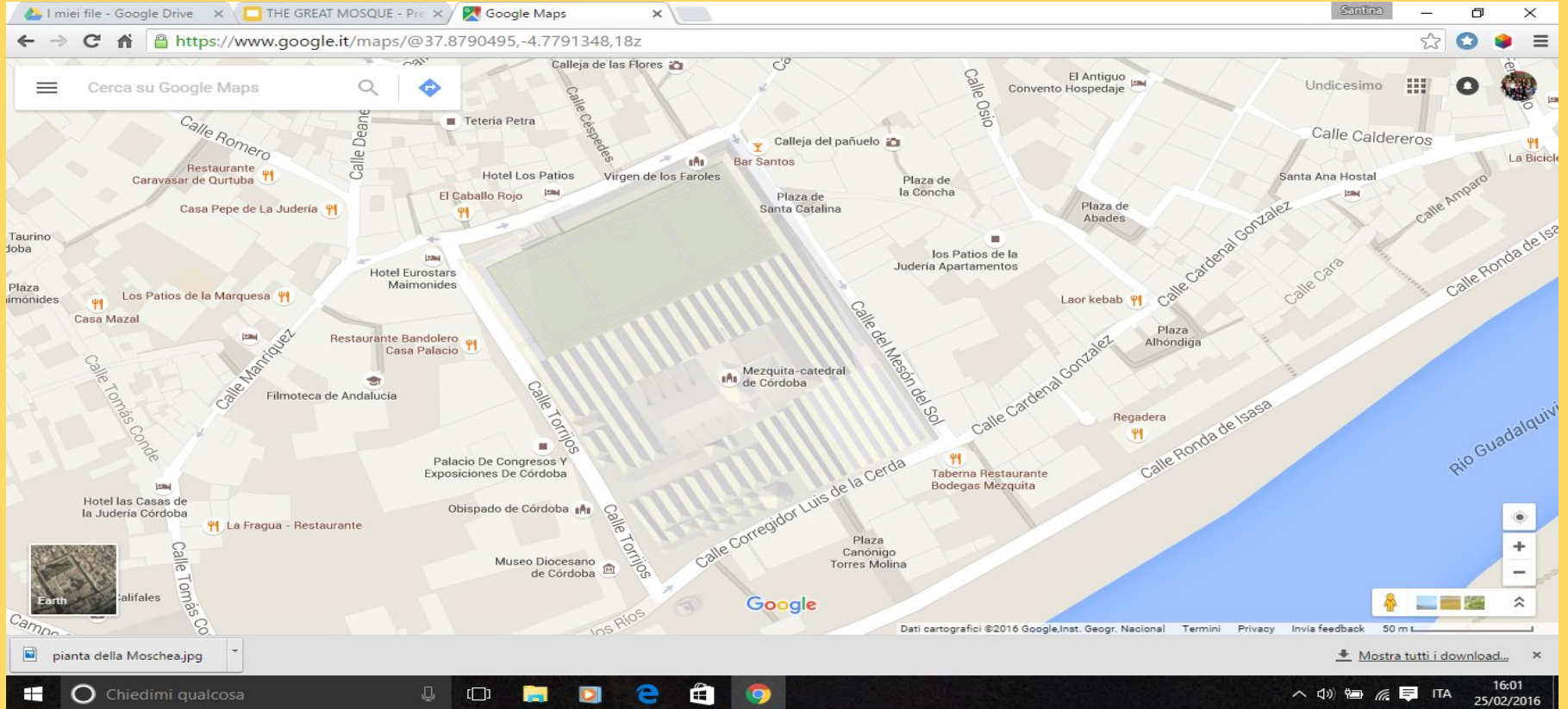


XI ISTITUTO COMPRENSIVO ARCHIA Cordoba Mosque

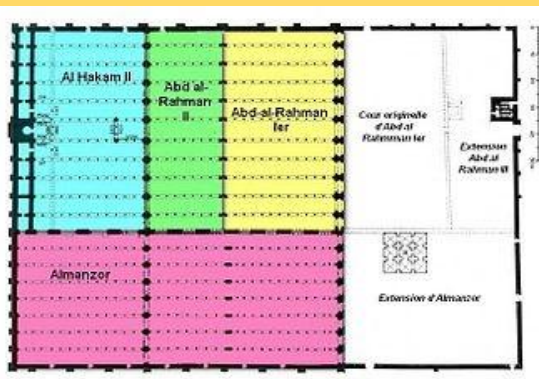


CORDOVA MOSQUE



DESCRIPTION:

The Cathedral of Córdoba, also known as the Great Mosque of Córdoba is the Catholic cathedral of the Diocese of Córdoba dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and is located in the Spanish region of Andalusia. The structure is regarded as one of the most accomplished monuments of Moorish architecture. The site was originally built by the Visigoths as the Catholic Basilica of Saint Vincent of Lérins. When Muslims conquered Spain in 711, the church was first divided into Muslim and Christian halves. This sharing arrangement of the site lasted until 784, when the Christian half was purchased by the Emir 'Abd al-Rahman I, who then proceeded to demolish the entire structure and build the grand mosque of Cordoba on its ground. Córdoba returned to Christian rule in 1236 during the Reconquista, and the building was converted to a Roman Catholic church, culminating in the insertion of a Renaissance cathedral nave in the 16th century. Since the early 2000s, Spanish Muslims have lobbied the Roman Catholic Church to allow them to pray in the cathedral.



In planning the mosque, the architects incorporated a number of Roman columns with choice capitals. Some of the columns were already in the Gothic structure; others were sent from various regions of Iberia as presents from the governors of provinces. Ivory, jasper, porphyry, gold, silver, copper, and brass were used in the decorations. Marvellous mosaics and azulejos were designed. Panels of scented woods were fastened with nails of pure gold, and the red marble columns were said to be the work of God. The primitive part of the building, erected under the direction of Abd al-Rahman I., was that bordering the Court of Oranges. Later, the immense temple embodied all the styles of Morisco architecture into one composition. In Córdoba, the capital, the Mosque was seen as the heart and central focus of the city. The main hall of the mosque was used for a variety of purposes. It served as a central Prayer hall for personal devotion, the five daily Muslim prayers and the special Friday prayers. The Great Mosque of Córdoba exhibited features, and an architectural appearance, similar to the Great Mosque of Damascus, therefore it is evident that it was used as a model by Abd al-Rahman for the creation of the Great Mosque in Córdoba.



DESIGN



HISTORY

The primitive part of the building, erected under the direction of Abd al-Rahman I., later, the immense temple embodied all the styles of Morisco architecture into one composition. Muhammad Iqbal described its hypostyle hall as having "countless pillars like rows of palm trees in the oases of Syria". "The main hall of the mosque was used for a variety of purposes. It served as a central Prayer hall for personal devotion, the five daily Muslim prayers and the special Friday prayers. It also would have served as a hall for teaching and for Sharia Law cases during the rule of Abd al-Rahman I., was that bordering the Court of Oranges. Later, the immense temple embodied all the styles of Morisco architecture into one composition. The Great Mosque of Córdoba held a place of importance amongst the Islamic community of al-Andalus for three centuries. In Córdoba, the Mosque was seen as the heart and central focus of the city. The main hall of the mosque was used for a variety of purposes. It served as a central Prayer hall for personal devotion, the five daily Muslim prayers and the special Friday prayers. It also would have served as a hall for teaching and for Sharia Law cases during the rule of Abd al-Rahman & his successors.

FEATURES

The building is most notable for its arcaded hypostyle hall, with 856 columns of jasper, onyx, marble, and granite. These were made from pieces of the Roman temple which had occupied the site previously, as well as other destroyed Roman buildings, such as the Mérida amphitheatre. The double arches were a new introduction to architecture, permitting higher ceilings than would otherwise be possible with relatively low columns. The double arches consist of a lower horseshoe arch and an upper semi-circular arch. The famous alternating red and white voussoirs of the arches were inspired by those in the Dome of the Rock and also resemble those of the Aachen Cathedral, which were built almost at the same time. Horseshoe arches were known in the Iberian Peninsula since late Antiquity, as can be seen on the 3rd-century "Estela de los Flavios", now in the archaeological museum of León. A centrally located honey-combed dome has blue tiles decorated with stars. The edifice also has a richly gilded prayer niche or mihrab. The mihrab is a masterpiece of architectural art, with geometric and flowing designs of plants.. The walls of the mosque had Quranic inscriptions written on them. Arrazi, an Arab writer, speaks of the valuable wine-coloured marble, obtained from the mountains of the district, which was much used in embellishing the naves of the mosque.

