

V.I.P. ARTICLE SUBMITTED BY:

Ayesha Khan

Fulbright Masters Student in Bioengineering

Rice University

The Gorgeous Lahore

By: Ayesha Khan

When I think of vacation, I don't necessarily think of fancy beaches or national parks. Being used to a quiet life, the excitement that comes with the idea of spending a few days in a big city somehow becomes more attractive to me when choosing a vacation spot--- I like cities that speak 'life' to me in big bold letters. Therefore, I'd probably choose to spend a weekend in NYC over a weekend somewhere in Vermont anyway.

That invariably brings me to my description of my favorite vacation spot in my homeland, Pakistan. Although I haven't visited Lahore in a long time, every time I have been there, the city has welcomed me with open arms. The moment I step on the streets of Lahore, I feel more *alive*. In Pakistan, there is a popular saying that goes like "jinnay lahore nai vekhya o jamya ee na" (if you haven't seen Lahore, you haven't lived your life yet).



Located along the Ravi river, Lahore is the second largest city of Pakistan and the capital of Punjab province. It is a historic city that has been a center of cultural heritage for thousands of years. The city is the epicenter of national landmarks like Minar-e-Pakistan. A city with a population of about 10 million very lively people, Lahore has something to offer to everyone. If you are the kind of person that loves looking at old architecture, Lahore offers amazing architectural wonders from the Mughal rulers era like the Badshahi mosque, the Lahore fort, mausolea of Prince Jehangir and Princess Nur Jehan which are all popular tourist attractions for the city. It is also home to the world's third largest zoo!



My favorite thing about the city is that it is up all night! Even if you go out at three in the morning, you will see great activity. The people of Lahore, generally referred to as Lahoris, love

to eat. Hence the city offers some of the finest cuisines in the world. Walk down the popular food street and you will be amazed at the great variety of food all in one place.



And of course, a girl can't like the city just for those things unless there is some great shopping available. Lahore, I would say is one of the finest cities to shop in South-east Asia. From the famous Liberty Mall to Anarkali Bazaar to the Fortress, Lahore has the best mix of traditional to modern variety. It's also a shopping paradise for brides to be! They come from all over the country just to shop for their 'big day'.



If you are ever lucky enough to get a chance to visit my beautiful country, don't miss Lahore! As they say *jinnay lahore nai vekhya o jamya ee na*



