

# Object Summary



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## Fountain

Hawai'i

Stone, plaster, pigment

23 x 148 3/4 in. (58.4 x 377.8 cm)

This star-shaped pool occupies the center of Shangri La's courtyard, with its fountain bubbling peacefully. Courtyard gardens, both humble and magnificent, are found throughout the Islamic world, from palaces to private residences. They serve several purposes, as gathering spaces, private resting places, and sources of fresh air cooled by the water.

Innovations in hydraulic engineering were widespread in the Islamic world, with scientists and engineers adapting methods employed by the ancient Persians, Greeks, and Romans as well as developing their own technologies. Pools were typically supplied with water from open channels above ground, or pipes beneath the ground. Fountains were connected to cisterns situated at an elevated point, which created the pressure to maintain the flow of water. Today, although many historic pools survive throughout the Islamic world, most of the early hydraulic systems have been replaced by modern technology. This fountain was custom-made for Shangri La. Its shape, the eight-pointed star, is a common characteristic of the Islamic garden fountain design. The eight points are said to represent eternal life, an appropriate sentiment for a source of life-giving water.