



Ancient Ghazni

Street address: Ghazni, Ghazni Province, Afghanistan
Mailing address: Ghazni Provincial Department of Information and Culture, Ghazni Provincial Government, Ghazni, Ghazni Province, Afghanistan
Proprietor: [Ministry of Information and Culture](#) and [Ghazni Provincial Department of Information and Culture](#)
Contact: **Hazrat Gul** Director General
Additional contact: **Ghulam Naqshbandi** Director of Historic Monuments
Dates and duration: Open during daylight hours



Afghanistan's only remaining walled city lies beside the Ghazni River on a high plateau at an elevation of 2,225 metres. The city, named Ghazna in ancient times, was flourishing by the 7th century but reached its peak under the Turkish Ghaznavid dynasty (977-1186). Ghazni was burned and looted by the Ghorids in 1149 but later (1173) became their secondary capital. It was captured by the British in 1839 and 1842 during the Afghan Wars. The main city on the Kabul-Kandahar highway, it became a strategic military target during the Russian-Afghan War. Ghazni is dominated by a 45 metre-high citadel built in the 13th century. Around the nearby village of Rowzeh e Sultan, on the old road to Kabul, are the ruins of ancient Ghazna, including the tomb of Mahmud of Ghazna (971-1030), the most powerful emir (or sultan) of the Ghaznavid dynasty and two important minarets, built by Sultan Masoud III (1099-1114) and Bahram Shah (1118-1152). Now only a fraction of their original height, these two minarets served as models for the spectacular [Minaret of Jam](#), which in turn inspired the famous Qutob Minar in Delhi. The intricate decoration is in raised brick without colour and includes epigraphic friezes in square Kufic and Noshki script, in addition to panels of floral and geometric designs. That of Sultan Masoud is more elaborate than its neighbour.