

## Reflections on a Wind-Catcher: Climate and Cultural Identity

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### THE WIND-CATCHER (PART 1)

The wind-catcher is part of a natural ventilation system found in certain hot dry climate zones. It is a raised building element either facing in all directions, or facing the prevailing wind, in order to 'catch' it, bring it down into the building, and cool it with moisture from fountains, pools and *salsabils* (carved stone surfaces over which water runs). Once re-warmed by people and their activities, the air rises through a central tower and is pulled out of the top of the building by the same breeze that drove it inside in the first place. If there is no breeze available, wetted hemp mats can be placed over the openings of the wind-catchers. This moistens and cools the air as it enters. The cooling makes the air drop downwards,



17.1 A typical traditional wind-catcher in Iran