

# Summer

## The TJCAA Quarterly

# 2024

[www.tjcaa.com](http://www.tjcaa.com)

### Alina's Odyssey: Food, Family, and Fun on a Trip to Pakistan

#### Alina's Odyssey: Food, Family, and Fun on a Trip to Pakistan

If Pakistan *hasn't* been on your list of "go to" travel destinations, maybe TJCAA's structural designer Alina Zaki can change your mind.

*"Pakistan has something for all travelers," declares Alina. "If you're an adventure seeker, Northern Pakistan has lakes and mountains and looks a lot like Switzerland. In the North, you can find the Karakoram, Hindu Kush, and Pamir mountain ranges, which attract hundreds of mountain climbers every year. For historians, Lahore, in the Punjab province, is the heart of the formal Mughal empire—which ruled Pakistan from 1526 to 1857. And for me, Karachi is where my family lives and where I like to eat, shop, renew old friendships, and make new ones."*

While Islamabad is the nation's capital, Karachi is Pakistan's largest city. Karachi is in southern Pakistan on the coast of the Arabian Sea and is the 12<sup>th</sup> largest city in the world, boasting a population of more than 20 million. With such nicknames as the "Paris of the East" and "Bride of the Cities," Karachi is known for its nightlife, fashion, and diverse selection of cultures, languages, and foods.

During Alina's month-long visit to her homeland, she had time to see her immediate family and a host of other

relatives who live in the city. She also experienced an authentic Pakistani "supper club," hosted by a good friend who organizes supper club nights all over the world—presenting attendees with local cuisine and special regional dishes.



*The Pakistani supper club menu included local cuisine and special regional dishes.*

The supper club seating encourages conversation and socialization, as attendees sit on a long bench and eat "family style."

Another night found Alina at a Karachi comedy club to see Junaid Akram, known also as "ganjiswag," one of Pakistan's most famous entertainers and social commentators.



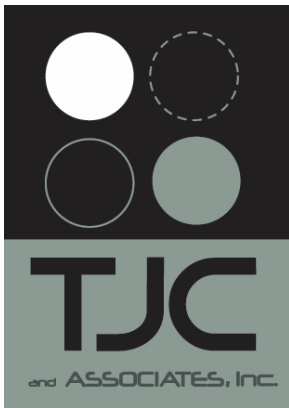
*Junaid Akram (ganjiswag) is one of Pakistan's top podcasters, content developers, and entertainers.*

#### TJCAA's Business Certifications

- Alameda County Small, Local Emerging Business
- Bay Area Green Business Program
- California DGS SBE
- City of Colton SBE
- City of Los Angeles SBE
- City of Oakland LBE
- CPUC Women Owned Enterprise
- Eastern Municipal Water District SBE
- Inland Empire Utilities Agency SBE
- Metropolitan Water District of Southern California SBE
- San Diego County Water Authority SBE
- Port of Long Beach SBE
- Port of Oakland LIABE/SBE/VSBE
- PWC Registration—Dept of Industrial Relations (DIR)
- West Basin Municipal Water District SBE

Copyright 2024 TJC and Associates, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Structural Engineering • SCADA • Electrical Engineering  
Instrumentation and Controls • Control Systems Programming



# Summer

## The TJCAA Quarterly

2024  
[www.tjcaa.com](http://www.tjcaa.com)

### Alina's Odyssey: Food, Family, and Fun on a Trip to Pakistan

However, ask Alina about her favorite activities while she was there, and she'll probably tell you they were eating and shopping.

*"I love Chicken Biryani, Chicken Karahi, Nihari, and Haleem"* says Alina. *"You can get good food anywhere in Pakistan, but Karachi is where they make it the best."*



*Nihari is a traditional stew consisting of slow-cooked meat flavored with spices.*

For those new to Pakistani cuisine, some explanation may be needed. Biryani is a savory rice dish, made with chicken, beef or mutton (goat) and spices. Chicken Karahi is a spicy dish prepared in a karahi, or deep circular cooking pot, similar to a wok. Nihari and Haleem are both types of stews, though Nihari's origins can be traced to the 18<sup>th</sup> century city of Lucknow, part of the former Mughal Empire.

*"Pakistani food is usually spicy and tangy,"* says Alina. *"These dishes differ a bit from region to region, but usually include the same kinds of ingredients. In Karachi you can spend the entire day eating from street food vendors—often for less than \$1 a meal. Your money definitely goes farther in Pakistan."*

One place Alina found to stretch her budget was the local bazaar, where, in addition to other wares, shoppers can create customized outfits. Alina's preferred clothing in Karachi is the *shalwar kameez*, which is the national dress of Pakistan. A *shalwar kameez* typically consists of loose trousers paired with a long shirt or tunic and often accessorized with a scarf.



*Alina models the shalwar kameez—the traditional dress of Pakistan. Tennis shoes are optional.*

*"Here's how it works,"* explains Alina. *"You visit a fabric vendor who has a stall with different fabrics on display." You choose a piece you like and purchase that, then you can visit*

**FLICK**  
 STRATEGY GROUP  
 STAND OUT FROM THE CROWD

The Flick Strategy Group provides business development, marketing, and technical writing services to engineers, scientists, and contractors.

See how we can help you at [FlickStrategyGroup.com](http://FlickStrategyGroup.com) or call 949-370-1265.

Copyright 2024 TJC and Associates, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Structural Engineering • SCADA • Electrical Engineering  
 Instrumentation and Controls • Control Systems Programming



**TJC**  
and ASSOCIATES, Inc.

Alina's Odyssey:  
Food, Family, and  
Fun on a Trip to  
Pakistan

p: 925.357.2676

[www.tjcaa.com](http://www.tjcaa.com)

# Summer

## The TJCAA Quarterly

# 2024

[www.tjcaa.com](http://www.tjcaa.com)

*another fabric vendor to find a different fabric to go with the first piece. Maybe one vendor sells fabric for the shalwar (trousers) and another will have patterned fabric for the kameez (tunic). Once you have selected your fabric, you visit a tailor at another stall, who takes your measurements and sews your outfit. Overall, it's much cheaper to put together a shalwar kameez this way than to purchase one that's already made."*



*While the inventory system is a bit mysterious, chances are you can find a fabric you like.*

If you're already packing your bags and summoning an Uber ride, Alina has a piece of advice for travelers to Pakistan. "Talk to someone who has been there or lived there first," she says. While tourism in Karachi is growing, there often isn't a lot of travel information available, so do your research and hopefully, find someone who has been there and can make your trip a little simpler, safer, and more enjoyable.

*"Also remember that it's hot there—90 to 100 degrees most of the year, but the winter can be chilly—around 80 degrees," she laughs.*

*"One final thing to remember," says Alina. "It's not easy to get to Pakistan—especially from California. Be prepared for a long trip—something like 28-30 hours, with about 20 hours of that being flight time." In other words, Pakistan maybe a great travel destination full of adventure, history, and good food, but it might not be the best choice for that quick weekend getaway.*

Copyright 2024 TJC and Associates, Inc. All Rights Reserved

Structural Engineering • SCADA • Electrical Engineering  
Instrumentation and Controls • Control Systems Programming