

SALT OASIS RETREAT

A REGENERATIVE SANCTUARY
FROM SALT AND SILENCE



NEGIN ESMAILFARD

SALT OASIS RETREAT

Desert whispers, salt heals.

Inspired by salt caves, ancient healing rituals, and the surreal geology of desert landscapes, the “Salt Oasis Retreat” is a sanctuary where architecture merges with nature to restore mind, body, and soul.



Carved into salt-rich terrain, the structure mimics eroded surfaces shaped by wind and time. Smooth, flowing interiors reflect natural formations, while ambient lighting evokes the warm hues of sunset over salt cliffs—Spaces are designed as sensory experiences—steam baths, meditation chambers, and pools infused with mineral salts promote relaxation and rejuvenation.

This retreat is not just a building: it’s a return to the earth’s essence. A place to breathe, reflect, and reconnect.

Salt Oasis Retreat | AIPEX 2025 Submission

Project Description

Salt Oasis Retreat is a contextual, AI-aided architectural vision designed for the arid salt valleys of Garmsar, Iran. Inspired by the region's natural salt caves and emerald lakes, the project blends advanced AI tools with local materials - particularly natural salt rock. This sanctuary invites visitors into a multisensory retreat where architecture, nature, and wellness converge.

Concept

Formed as if sculpted by time, the retreat rises from the salt-rich earth, shaped by erosion-inspired generative processes. Its organic curves and openings echo the morphology of native salt caves, offering visitors a natural refuge of silence and regeneration.

Materiality

The project uses Garmsar's native salt rock, shaped through curved carving technologies. This material is not only aesthetic but also therapeutic - enhancing air quality and harmonizing with the healing atmosphere. Its construction merges ancient material knowledge with AI-enabled formal experimentation.

User Experience

A central salt lake, referencing Garmsar's real emerald cavern, allows for floating meditation and immersion. Light shafts filter through salt textures, crafting sacred moments of solitude. Each spatial transition is designed to soothe the senses and restore inner calm.

Sustainability

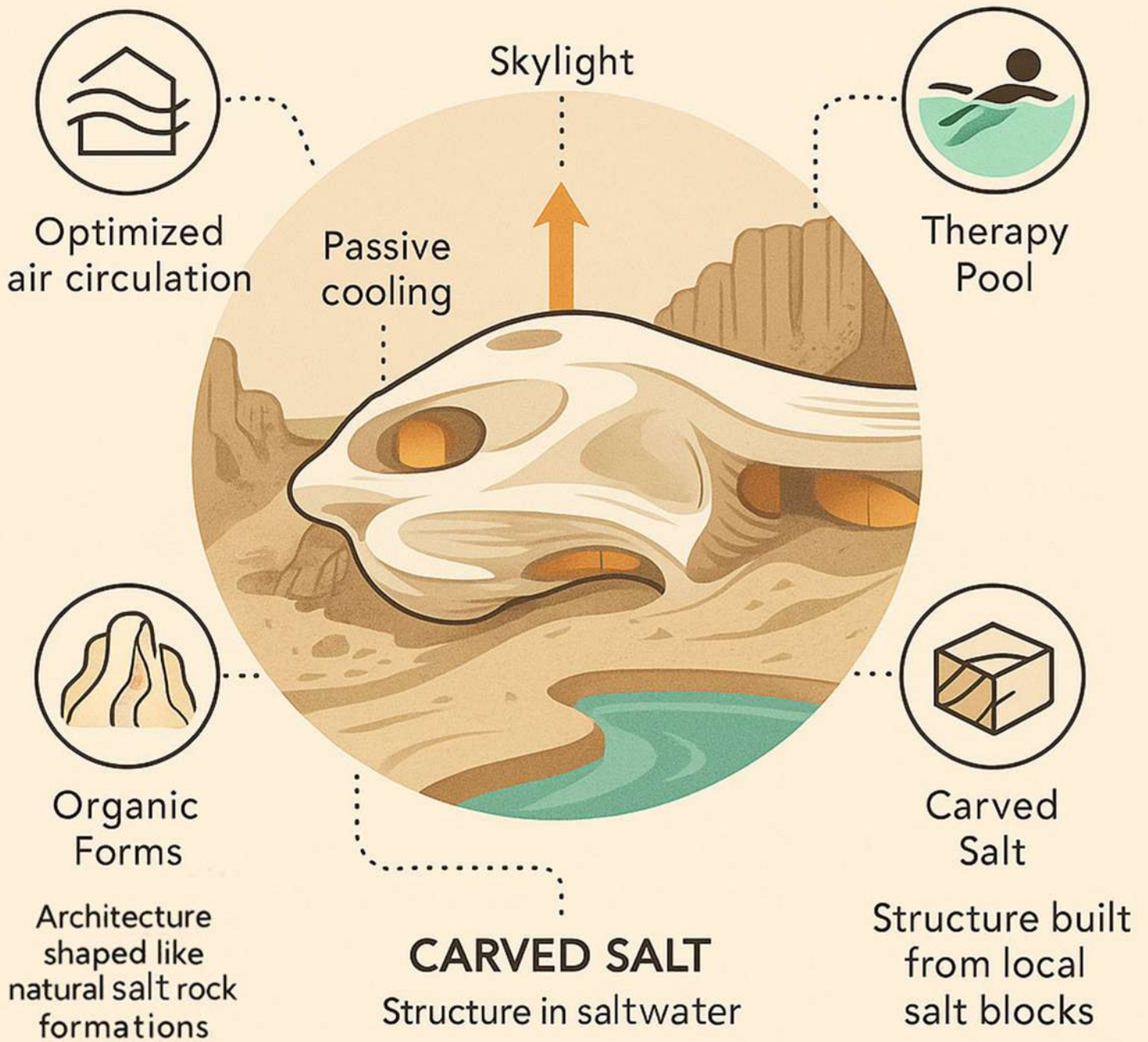
Using local materials, passive cooling via cavity spaces, and natural daylighting, the retreat minimizes environmental impact. Its biomorphic integration with the landscape fosters both thermal and spiritual comfort.

Design Philosophy

Unlike speculative or purely futuristic designs, Salt Oasis Retreat is rooted in a tangible reality. It reimagines the future through the lens of place, material, and atmosphere - drawing directly from the salt caves and mineral waters of Garmsar, Iran. The architecture speaks softly, shaped not by fantasy, but by erosion, silence, and the healing essence of salt. Rather than reaching outward into the abstract, it reaches inward - toward grounding, wellness, and reconnection with the earth. It offers a believable vision of tomorrow that is both poetic and possible.

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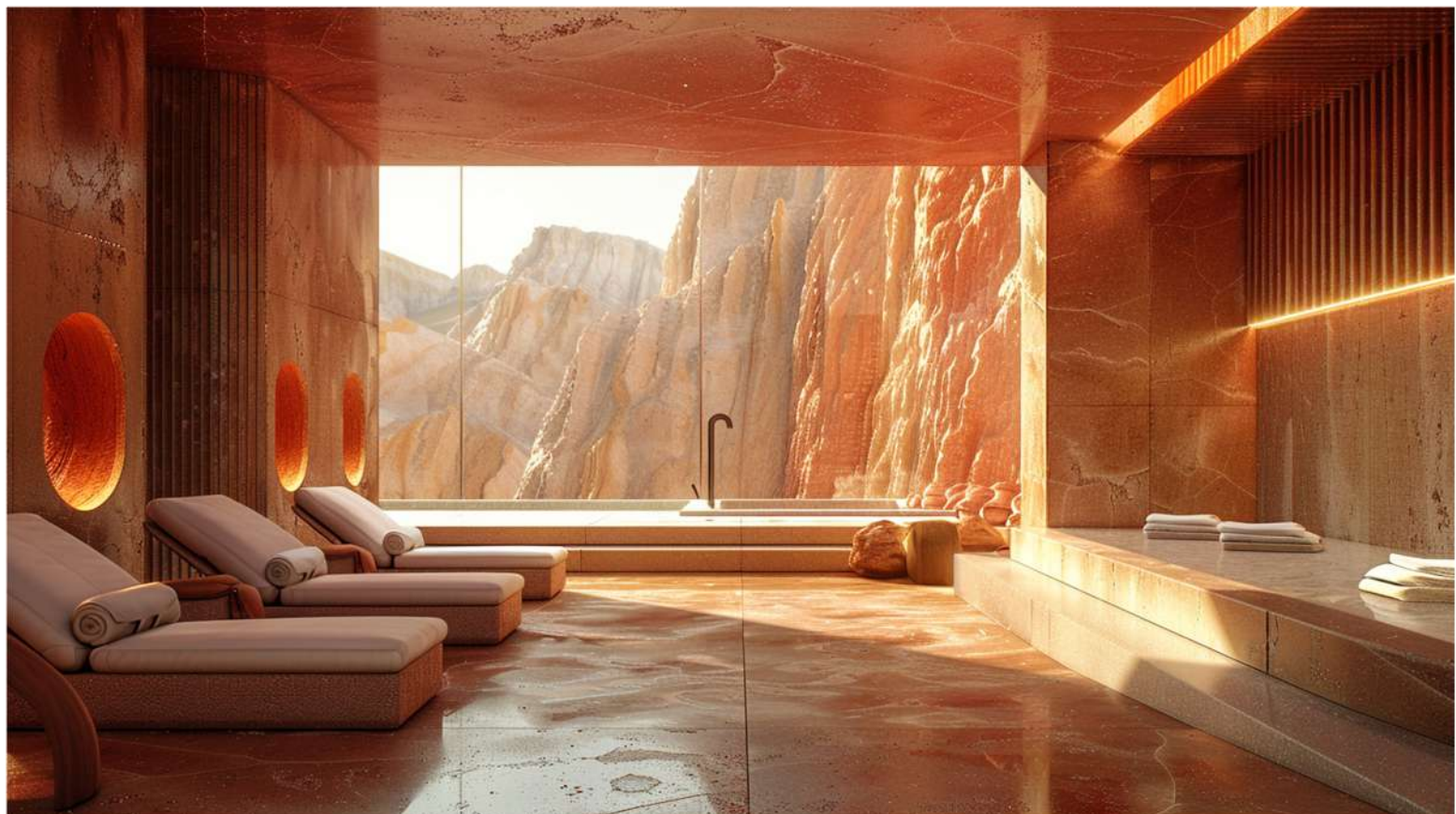
DIAGRAM



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Reference image



FARHIKHTEGAN
seyyed vahid hosseini

"Salt cave and emerald pool in Garmsar, Iran - the natural inspiration behind the retreat's spatial and material concept."

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INTRODUCTION

- A salt-formed sanctuary located in the arid valleys of Garmsar, Iran.
- Inspired by the region's natural salt caves, emerald lakes, and mineral-rich terrain.
- Designed as a holistic retreat that blends architecture with the landscape.
- Built using locally sourced salt rock to enhance sustainability and healing atmosphere.
- A space that invites stillness, silence, and reconnection with the earth.

CONCEPT

- Form inspired by natural erosion, wind-sculpted textures, and salt crystal formations.
- Architecture as landscape: the structure appears carved directly from the terrain.
- Spatial sequence follows a meditative narrative—from exposure to enclosure, light to shadow.
- Blurs the boundary between natural formation and human creation.
- Architecture as a vessel for introspection, rest, and inner clarity.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

- Create a therapeutic space that engages all senses.
- Use local materials to minimize environmental footprint and celebrate regional identity.
- Integrate natural ventilation and passive cooling for energy efficiency.
- Design spaces that encourage reflection, healing, and stillness.
- Achieve a balance between futuristic aesthetics

