

## **A Study of Archaeological and Monumental Heritage in the Mughal Period**

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### **Abstract**

A massive arched entrance, tall minarets, bulbous domes, vast halls are perhaps the things that come to mind when one thinks of Mughal architecture. The Mughal government gifted India with magnificent historical monuments consisting of mosques, mausoleums, forts and many more that attract not only Indian but also international tourists. From the perfect epitome of love, the Taj Mahal to the one grand mosque, Jama Masjid; From the fortified city of Fatehpur Sikri to Baby Taj/Itmad-ud-Daulah; Mughal architecture is something that will win your heart.<sup>4</sup> Mughal architecture refers to the Indo-Islamic architecture built by the Mughal emperors in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries in the Indian subcontinent as their empires grew and changed. It was derived from the architectural styles of the earlier Muslim rulers of India and the architectural heritage of Iran and Central Asia, especially Timurid architecture. During the reign of Akbar (1556-1605), he also adopted and synthesized ideas from wider Indian architecture. Large bulbous domes, slender minarets at the corners, grand halls, large arched doorways, and elaborate decoration are all hallmarks of Mughal architecture in present-day Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan.

*Keywords:* Massive arched entrance, Bulbous domes, Architecture, Monuments, Indo-Islamic architecture.

### **Introduction**

The Mughal Empire was born after Babur's victory at Panipat in 1526. During his five-year reign, Babur was a keen builder, but few of his buildings survive. His grandson Akbar built much and the style flourished during his reign. His achievements included Agra Fort, Fatehpur Sikri Fort City and Buland Darwaza. The Shalimar Gardens in Kashmir were commissioned by Akbar's son Jahangir. Mughal architecture reached its peak during the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan, who built the Taj Mahal, Jama Masjid, Shalimar Gardens, Wazir

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Khan Mosque and rebuilt the Lahore Fort in Lahore. Aurangzeb, the last of the great Mughal architects, designed the Badshahi Mosque, Bibi Ka Maqbara and Moti Masjid, among others. of.

### **Characteristics of Mughal Architecture**

- Mughal architecture combines Hindu, Persian and Islamic influences. Large bulbous domes, often flanked by four smaller domes, are characteristic features of many structures.
- White marble and red sandstone are used.
- Pachin Kari decorative work and jali lattice screens are examples of good decorative work.
- Beautiful buildings are surrounded by gardens on all four sides.
- Mosques with large courtyards are very popular.
- Persian and Arabic calligraphic inscriptions containing verses from the Koran.
- The main building is accessible through several large gates.
- Two or four pages have iwans.
- Ornamental chatris are used.
- Jalis and Jharokhas are used.
- Mughal architecture influenced later Indian architectural styles such as the Indo Saracenic style of the British Raj, the Rajput style and the Sikh style.<sup>5</sup>

### **Jama Masjid in Delhi: The Epitome of Mughal Architecture**

The Jama Masjid in Delhi is considered to be the best mosque built during the Mughal Empire. It is built of red sandstone and white marble in the Indo-Islamic architectural style and is approximately 261 feet long and 90 feet wide. The structure is decorated with three enormous arched gates, three marble domes, four towers and two towering minarets. It also has a large courtyard that can accommodate more than 25,000 people to pray at the same time.

The stairs on the eastern side of the three gates of the mosque have 35 steps. This gate is also known as the royal gateway as it was reserved for the use of the Mughal emperors. The north and south gates have 39 and 33 steps. Both minarets are five stories high with overhanging balconies and reach a height of 130 meters. Inside each minaret there are 130 steps to climb to the top. The mosque has an impressive black and white marble floor with 899 limited seats for worshippers. The interiors of this mosque are decorated with luxurious arches, floral patterns and fluorescent motifs. The word "Guide" is written on the archway leading to the center of the

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<sup>5</sup> Available at <https://byjus.com/free-ias-prep/mughal-architecture/>

prayer hall. Notable remains from the mosque include a copy of the Koran written on deer skin, red hair from the Prophet Muhammad's beard, a pair of shoes and footprints on a block of marble.

### **Taj Mahal in Agra: Universally Admired Masterpiece**

The Taj Mahal was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983 as "the jewel of Indian Islamic art and one of the most admired masterpieces of world heritage". Described by Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore as "a tear on the cheek of time", it is considered by many to be the finest example of Mughal architecture and a symbol of India's rich history. The Taj Mahal attracts 7-8 million visitors a year. In 2007, it was declared the winner of the 7 New Wonders of the World (2000-2007) initiative.

Construction of the mausoleum was mostly finished in 1643, but work on other phases of the project continued for another 10 years. The Taj Mahal complex is believed to have been completed in its entirety in 1653 at an estimated cost of about 32 million rupees at the time, which would be about 52.8 billion rupees (\$827 million) in 2015. About 20,000 craftsmen worked on the construction project under the direction of an architectural commission led by the emperor's court architect Ustad Ahmad Lahauri.

### **Architecture**

The "Taj Mahal" is the best and most elaborate example of Mughal architecture. It is rooted in the changing conditions of his mandate and the history and culture of the rule of the Muslim Mughal Empire over a large part of India. An agitated Mughal emperor Shah Jahan built the mausoleum after the death of his favorite wife, Mumtaz Mahal. Today, it is one of the most famous and recognizable structures in the world, and while the huge chestnut-domed marble mausoleum visible is the most famous part of the monument, the Taj Mahal is a vast complex of buildings and gardens containing 22.44 hectares (55.5 acres), which include the daughter tombs, the waterworks infrastructure, the small town of Taj Ganji in the south and the "moonlight garden" in the north of the river. Construction began in 1632 AD. (1041 AH), on the south bank of the Yamuna River at Agra and largely completed by 1648 AD. (1058 AH). The plan was designed both as an earthly replica of Mumtaz's Paradise House and as a propaganda tool for the emperor.<sup>6</sup>

### **Red Fort in Delhi: The Zenith of Mughal Creativity**

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<sup>6</sup> Available at <https://www.adaagra.org.in/>

The Red Fort, one of the most magnificent and well-built monuments in the world. The Prime Minister of India hoists the national flag at the Red Fort and also delivered a speech on the railing. The popular destination of Delhi is also a well-known tourist spot in the state. The fortress has a charming magnetism. The historic fort in the Indian capital was once the residence of the Mughal emperors about 200 years ago until 1856. It is located in the center of Delhi. The Red Fort was built by the fifth Mughal king Shah Jahan as his furnished capital palace at Shahjahanabad.

The fort gets its name from its massive surrounding red sandstone walls adjacent to the ancient Salimgarh Fort built by Islam Shah Suri. This incredible fortress consists of a series of buildings connected by small water channels known as "Nahr-i-Bihisht" which means the Stream of Paradise. The fort is built on Islamic models, with each building presenting the essence of the Mughal touch. This building reflects Persian culture. In 1747, the artworks and jewels of the fort were looted when Nadir Shah conquered the Mughal Empire. As a result, the British destroyed much of the fort's fine marble construction, leading to the Rebellion of 1857, the fort's ramparts were virtually secure, and the fort was later used as a military base.

The fort was also where the British temporarily housed the former Mughal emperor before deporting him to Yangon in 1858.

### **Major Structures of Lal Quila (Red Fort Delhi)**

#### **Lahori Gate**

The Lahore Gate is the main gate of the Red Fort, named after its orientation towards the city of Lahore. In honor of Independence Day, the national flag fluttered and the Prime Minister of India made a speech from its ramparts.

#### **Delhi Gate**

The Delhi Gate is a southern public gate similar to the Lahore Gate.

#### **Chhatta Chowk**

The nearest market to Lahore Gate is Chhatta Chowk. During the Mughal era, household items, silk clothes and jewelery were sold. It is an open space market where North Street and South Street intersect.

#### **Diwan-i-Aam**

Diwan-i-Aam is an audience for the audience where the king heard the problems of the general public. It is surrounded by guarded galleries. The public hall is designed with white chunam plaster. The emperor stood up and listened to jharokha's concerns.

#### **Diwan-i-Khas**

A hall designed in white shiny marble and precious stones for private audiences. In the 17th century, Francois Bernier crowned it with a peacock throne. There is an inscription of the famous poet Amir Khusrow on the outer walls of the hall.

### **Important Facts about Lal Quila/ Red Fort-Delhi**

- The Red Fort was the residence of the Mughal emperors of India for almost 200 years
- It is located in the center of Delhi.
- The Red Fort was the ceremonial and political center of the Mughal government.
- It was built by Shah Jahan.
- Lal Quila Named after the massive walls of red sandstone.
- The Red Fort is considered the pinnacle of Mughal creativity during the reign of Shah Jahan.
- The fort was originally known as the "Blessed Fort", Quila-i-Mubarak.
- Emperor Shah Jahan ordered the construction of the Red Fort in 1638.
- It took ten years to complete the construction in 1648.
- The fort is located on the banks of the Yamuna river.
- Its main architect is Ustad Ahmad Lahauri, the same architect who built the Taj Mahal
- Construction began in the holy month of Muharram on May 13, 1638.
- Red Fort was originally white, the British painted it red. Every year on August 15 (Independence Day), the Prime Minister of India hoists the national flag here.
- Every year on January 26 (India's Republic Day), the President of India hoists the national flag here.
- The Red Fort is surrounded by a large wall to protect it from outside attacks.
- The fort has two entrances - Lahore Gate and Delhi Gate.
- This fort is octagonal in shape and covers 256 acres of land.
- In 2007, UNESCO declared the Red Fort a World Heritage Site.
- The famous Kohinoor diamond (one of the largest diamonds in the world) was part of the furniture of Emperor Shah Jahan and is now part of the Royal Crown Jewels collection of England.
- The British government sold the assets of the Red Fort after the end of Mughal rule (1858).
- In 1863, the British destroyed many buildings inside and outside the fortress and filled the gardens.<sup>7</sup>

### **Pari Mahal in Srinagar: A Glimpse of Mughal Lifestyle and Their Love for Nature**

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<sup>7</sup>Available at <https://www.inditrip.in/>

The history of Pari Mahal dates back to the 17th century, during the reign of Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan. Built on the ruins of an ancient Buddhist monastery, the palace was the pleasure garden and residence of the Mughal nobility. It is said to have been commissioned by Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Emperor Shah Jahan, who was known for his love of art, literature and spirituality. For centuries, Pari Mahal has been a center of learning, meditation and cultural exchange, attracting scholars, poets and artists from far and wide.

#### **Architectural Wonder:**

The architectural beauty of the Pari Mahal is a testament to the love of the Mughals for symmetry, geometry and intricate decoration. The palace is decorated with delicate arches, intricate carvings and ornate frescoes that reflect a mix of Persian, Muslim and Kashmiri architectural styles. The terraced gardens surrounding the palace are carefully landscaped with cascading fountains, lush flower beds and fragrant fruit trees that add charm and elegance to the surroundings. Pari Mahal exudes luxury and sophistication from all sides and invites visitors to travel to the pages of history.<sup>8</sup>

#### **Agra Fort: A Peek at the Intricate Beauty With a Blend of Several Traditional**

The nomination of Agra Fort as a UNESCO World Heritage Site is mainly due to its exceptional cultural and historical importance and remarkable architectural features. UNESCO designated Agra Fort as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983 for the following reasons:

#### **Architectural Splendor:**

Agra Fort is an excellent example of Mughal architecture characterized by extensive use of red sandstone, intricate carving and elegant design. The fort shows the architectural grandeur of the Mughal Empire during the reign of Emperor Akbar and his successors.

#### **Historical Significance:**

The fort played a pivotal role in Indian history and was the primary residence of the Mughal emperors for generations. It witnessed important historical events including the rise and fall of Mughal rulers, battles and important political decisions. The history of the fort is deeply intertwined with the history of India.

#### **Cultural Heritage:**

Agra Fort has several fine structures and buildings like Diwan-i-Am (Public Audience), Diwan-i-Khas (Private Audience), Khas Mahal and Sheesh Mahal (Mirror). Palace). These structures

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<sup>8</sup> Available at <https://www.tripadvisor.in/>

exemplify the fusion of Persian, Islamic and Indian architectural styles and showcase the cultural diversity of the Mughal era.

**Symbol of Power:**

The extensive use of red sandstone in the construction of Agra Fort symbolizes the power and glory of the Mughal Empire. The fortress was not only a royal residence, but also a symbol of imperial power and authority.

**Association with Famous Historical Figures:**

Agra Fort is closely associated with legendary Mughal emperors such as Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb, each of whom contributed greatly to its architecture and history. The fort was the seat of government during their reign.

**Tourist attraction:**

Agra Fort is a major tourist attraction in India, attracting visitors from all over the world to admire its beauty, learn about its history and appreciate its cultural significance.

**Proximity to Taj Mahal:**

Agra Fort's proximity to the iconic Taj Mahal, another UNESCO World Heritage Site, adds to its appeal as a cultural destination. Together, these two historic sites create a rich cultural and historical experience for visitors.<sup>9</sup>

**Humayun's Tomb: A Splendid Testament to Signature Mughal Royal Mausoleums**

This magnificent tomb was built in memory of Emperor Humayun, the second Mughal ruler to ascend the throne. It is a great testimony to the style of Mughal royal mausoleums. The construction of the tomb was commissioned by Bega Begum, Humayun's Persian wife, nine years after the emperor's death.<sup>10</sup>

Humayun's Tomb represents the sophisticated aesthetics of Persian-inspired Mughal architecture. Set amidst lush gardens that create serenity, the tomb's brilliant red sandstone structure, adorned with intricate white marble decorations, epitomizes elegance and verisimilitude. Commissioned by Empress Bega Begum, this architectural marvel is the forerunner of the famous Taj Mahal and is the final resting place of the second Mughal emperor, Humayun, adding deep historical and cultural significance to its already alluring allure.<sup>11</sup>

**Fatehpur Sikri in Agra: A Fortified City Reflecting Mughal Architectural Grandeur**

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<sup>9</sup> Available at <https://www.encounterstravel.com/>

<sup>10</sup> Available at <https://www.tripoto.com/>

<sup>11</sup> Available at <https://www.clubmahindra.com/>



Fatehpur Sikri is an ancient city steeped in history and architectural grandeur. It is an entire complex of historic Mughal monuments sitting majestically on a rocky ridge. And the most popular places to visit in Fatehpur Sikri have several wonders to discover. Emperor Akbar built the village as an imperial capital. And much of this forgotten kingdom survives, as if untouched by time.

You can explore many places in Fatehpur Sikri like Jodha Bai Palace, Panch Mahal and Tomb of Salim Chishti. The city has an extraordinary blend of Islamic, Hindu and Persian architectural styles. Each destination has its own charm and meaning. The awe-inspiring grandeur of Fatehpur Sikri can be seen from the Buland Darwaza itself. It is a 54 meter high gate that forms the main entrance to the palace. Agra Fatehpur Sikri is a symphony of history, culture and architecture. And as you walk through the corridors, you will surely be captivated by its majestic monuments and fascinating stories of the past. They attract many tourists from all over the world.<sup>12</sup>

#### **Akbar's Tomb in Agra: The Resting Place of Mughal Emperor Akbar**

Akbar's Tomb in Agra is an important architectural masterpiece of the Mughal era. This is the final resting place of the emperor. Akbar chose this place as his tomb and supervised the construction until his death. A majestic gate welcomes you to explore the impressive tomb. It is a five-story structure built entirely of red sandstone and white marble. And unlike many other Mughal tombs facing Mecca, Akbar's tomb faces the rising sun in Agra. This magnificent mausoleum symbolizes the sophisticated architectural taste of Akbar. The mausoleum is surrounded by a large garden.<sup>13</sup>

#### **Conclusion**

The Mughal emperors liked to build buildings. Until the time of Shahjahan such structures were made, which are still regarded as excellent examples of architectural skill. The art known as Mughal architecture is a combined form of Central Asian and Indian Hindu art.

Akbar participated in the creation of this art. Akbar's outlook was national in the political field, similarly his outlook was national in the field of architecture and according to his desire and ability he used Hindu arts and artists to construct buildings. Before him, under the Sultans of Delhi, Islamic art influenced Hindu art. Akbar's generosity increased it. Most Hindu artists and the construction of buildings according to the Indian climate also reached the origins of Islamic and Hindu art.

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<sup>12</sup> <https://agratourism.in/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://agratourism.in/>



So from the reign of Akbar, art developed from a combination of Hindu and Islamic art can be accepted as national architectural art. In this art of architecture, round domes, towers, arch, roofs, columns and pointed arches taken from Islamic art. At first they used red stone and they tried to build the building very big and strong, but later they used white marble in the buildings and they tried to beautify them by carving, using gold. . - Silver water and colorful patterns. When all these Mughal Architectural skills were added, it became the best and most beautiful building of the period..

A building built during the reign of Akbar is the Humayun ka Makabara in Delhi. It was done by Akbar's stepmother after obtaining the services of the Persian artist Meeran Mirza Gias. It has an influence of Persian art.

The art of this long-necked mausoleum is comparable to Timur and Bibi Khanam ka Makbara in Samarkand. There is no doubt that the buildings completed at Fatehpur Sikri are considered to be the best of the Mughal era buildings. Historian Smith wrote, "Like Fatehpur Sikri, nothing can be done before and nothing can be done after it. It is a romance set in stone." Akbar also built a number of forts, tombs and fountains etc. at Atrak, Medta and Ajmer etc. and elsewhere. Charbagh is built around the tomb. Creating beautiful buildings along with creating gardens is the main specialty of Mughal architectural skills. This specialty was also used in this tomb. Drains are made from the main room of the buildings to drain the water. Between it is a series of fountains. Entry and exit routes are made to the tomb. Among the buildings originally built by the Mughals, Humayun's Tomb is the most beautiful. This is also very strong, so it is now fully protected. Mughal architecture is a unique Indo-Islamic architectural style that flourished in northern and central India during the 16th and 18th centuries under the patronage of the Mughal monarchs. It is a strikingly symmetrical and ornate blend of Persian, Turkish and Indian architecture.

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