The Taj Mahal was commissioned by [Shah Jahan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shah_Jahan) in 1631, to be built in the memory of his wife [Mumtaz Mahal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mumtaz_Mahal" \o "Mumtaz Mahal), who died on 17 June that year while giving birth to their 14th child, [Gauhara Begum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gauhara_Begum" \o "Gauhara Begum).[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taj_Mahal#cite_note-FOOTNOTEAsher1992210-10)[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taj_Mahal#cite_note-11) Construction started in 1632, and the mausoleum was completed in 1648, while the surrounding buildings and garden were finished five years later.[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taj_Mahal#cite_note-FOOTNOTESarkar191930,_31-12)[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taj_Mahal#cite_note-Creation_History-13)

The imperial court documenting Shah Jahan's grief after the death of Mumtaz Mahal illustrates the love story held as the inspiration for the Taj Mahal.[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taj_Mahal#cite_note-FOOTNOTEChaghtai193846-14) According to contemporary historians Muhammad Amin Qazvini, [Abdul Hamid Lahori](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abdul_Hamid_Lahori) and [Muhammad Saleh Kamboh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammad_Saleh_Kamboh), Shah Jahan did not show the same level of affection for others as he had shown Mumtaz while she was alive. After her death, he avoided royal affairs for a week due to his grief and gave up listening to music and lavish dressing for two years. Shah Jahan was enamored by the beauty of the land at the south side of [Agra](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agra) on which a mansion belonging to Raja [Jai Singh I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jai_Singh_I) stood. He chose the place for the construction of Mumtaz's tomb after which Jai Singh agreed to donate it to the emperor.

The Taj Mahal incorporates and expands on design traditions of [Indo-Islamic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indo-Islamic_architecture) and [Mughal architecture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mughal_architecture" \o "Mughal architecture).[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taj_Mahal#cite_note-Arch-16) Inspirations for the building came from [Timurid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timurid_dynasty" \o "Timurid dynasty) and [Mughal](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mughal_Empire" \o "Mughal Empire) buildings including the [Gur-e Amir](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gur-e_Amir" \o "Gur-e Amir) in [Samarkand](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samarkand) (the tomb of [Timur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timur" \o "Timur), progenitor of the Mughal dynasty) and [Humayun's Tomb](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Humayun%27s_Tomb" \o "Humayun's Tomb) in Delhi which inspired the [Charbagh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charbagh" \o "Charbagh) gardens and [hasht-behesht](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hasht-behesht_(architecture)" \o "Hasht-behesht (architecture)) plan of the site.[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taj_Mahal#cite_note-FOOTNOTEChaghtai1938146-17)[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taj_Mahal#cite_note-FOOTNOTEKoch200685-88-18) The building complex employs symmetrical constructions with the usage of various shapes and symbols.[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taj_Mahal#cite_note-Arch-16) While the mausoleum is constructed of white [marble](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marble) inlaid with [semi-precious stones](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Semi-precious_stones), red [sandstone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sandstone) was used for other buildings in the complex similar to the Mughal era buildings of the time.[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taj_Mahal#cite_note-FOOTNOTECopplestone1963166-19) The entire complex sits on platform measuring 300 metres (980 ft) in length and 8.7 metres (28.5 ft) in height on the banks of [Yamuna river](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yamuna_river). The platform is built with varying patterns of dark and light colored sandstone.