

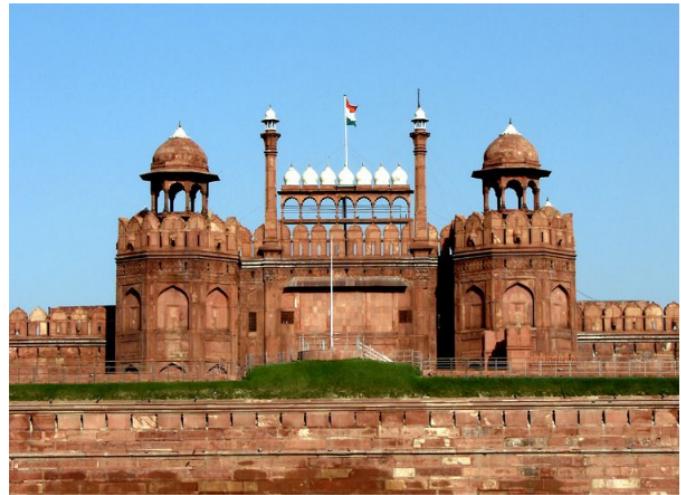
Red Fort, Delhi

Red Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is an outstanding combination of size and aesthetics. Construction took over a period of ten years, from 1698 to 1648. When the Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan, came to Delhi shifting his capital from Agra to Delhi, the fort was his idea of residence. It was then famous as the Qila-e-Mubarak. The octagonal fort, built in red sandstone, stands proudly amid the din and commotion of Old Delhi. It draws visitors in great numbers everyday.

Interesting Fact About Red Fort: The Red Fort was not actually red but whitelimestone. It was the British who painted it red when the limestone started cracking off.

Timings. 9:30 AM – 4:30 PM (closed on Mondays)

What you should see. One of the main attractions is the Palace of Colors or the Rang Mahal where the emperor's wives, mistresses and maids resided.



Khajuraho Temples, Madhya Pradesh

Khajuraho Temples, located in the town of **Khajuraho in Madhya Pradesh**, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and one of the unique structures you will come across. The temples display a very powerful emotion residing within human beings, that of eroticism and sensuality. Built by the Chandel rulers, this group of Hindu and Jain temples consist of exquisitely carved statues and sculptures that reflect the traditional Hindu values of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha.

Interesting Fact about Khajuraho Temples: Khajuraho derived its name from the fact that it was dotted with date palms and Khajura, which means date. In ancient times, the city was also known as Khajurpura.

Timings. 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM

What you should see. One of the major attractions in the Khajuraho Temples is the sound and light show that depicts the struggles of Chandela dynasty.

Taj Mahal, Agra

Taj Mahal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is one of the most famous historical places in **Agra city of Uttar Pradesh** and should be visited at least once in a lifetime. It represents the pinnacle of grand Mughal architecture and is built entirely of white marble. Shah Jahan built this magnificent monument for one of his favorite wife, Mumtaz Mahal. Visitors to this grand monument are left captivated by its grandeur and perfect aesthetical proportions. It took around 22 years to complete the construction of this splendid monument.

Interesting Fact About Taj Mahal Agra: There is a shopping complex and hotel being built in Dubai which is inspired by the Taj Mahal. It's estimated to be four times larger in size than the original Taj Mahal.

Timings. 6:00 AM – 6:30 PM (closed on Friday).

What you should see: The night time shows at the Taj Mahal are a hit among the visitors and let you see its beauty in an entirely different light.





Hampi, Karnataka

The ruins of Hampi, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, stand as a reminder of the glory that prevailed during the Vijayanagara Empire. A visit to Hampi brings you across some of the best examples of aesthetics and style in architecture. An example of that is the **Virupaksha Temple**, which consists of a Lord Shiva statue carved in stone. The other attractions are the Queen's Bath, Elephant Stables, **Vijay Vittala Temple** and Hampi Bazaar.

Interesting Fact: The first instance of human settlement dates back to 1 CE.

Timings: 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM (closed on Fridays).

What you should see. Check out some of the monuments with carvings from the 14th century.

Qutub Minar, Delhi

Qutub Minar is one of the must visit **historical places in Delhi** and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Built by Qutb-ud-din Aibak, it is testimony to the first Muslim kingdom in India. Touching the skies at a height of almost 240ft, it is one of the tallest ancient towers all over the world. One of the finest example of Indo-Muslim architecture, it consists of red sandstone stories which are adorned with verses from the Quran in Arabic.

Interesting Fact About Qutub Minar: The Qutub Minar complex is home to an iron pillar which has not rusted even after 2000 years.

Timings: 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM

What you should see. One of the special attractions at the Qutub Minar is the Decorative Light Show held every evening and the Qutub Minar Festival held in October/November.



Fatehpur Sikri, Uttar Pradesh

Fatehpur Sikri, situated at a distance of almost 40km to the west of **Agra**, was the short-lived capital of the Mughal emperor Akbar. It served as a short lived capital of the Mughal Empire in the 16th century. However, it had to be abandoned because of problems with the water supply, among other things.

Taking a tour of this royal city brings you across courtyards, audience halls and pavilions that reflect the artistic excellence achieved during the heyday of the Mughal Empire.

Interesting Fact About Fatehpur Sikri: Did you know that many women who wanted a child would come to visit the tomb of Sufi saint Salim Chisti to pray here?

Timings: 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

What you should see. Two of the major attractions inside the Fatehpur Sikri are Diwan-i-Aam and the Diwan-i-Khas. These buildings are where the emperor would hold audiences with the common people and the royals.

Hawa Mahal, Jaipur

Your tour is incomplete unless you visit the **Hawa Mahal** in Jaipur. Hawa Mahal, or the Palace of Winds, was more of a gallery than a monument. It was designed by Lal Chand Ustad as a gallery from where ladies of the royal household could watch the everyday life in the street, since at other times, they had to observe



the purdah. Built in red and pink sandstone, it's shaped like a crown as the ruler of Jaipur during that time, Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh, was a big devotee of Lord Krishna.

Interesting Fact About Hawa Mahal, Jaipur: Hawa Mahal is the tallest building in the world without a proper foundation. It consists of 5 stories, but, without a proper foundation, leans at an angle of 87 degrees.

Timings. 9:30 AM – 4:30 PM

What you should see. Look out for the intricate lattice work displayed on the tiny windows.



Konark Sun Temple, Odisha

Konark Sun Temple in Odisha, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is an ode to the artistic brilliance achieved under the reign of King Narasimhadeva I, the glorious ruler of Ganga dynasty. Located on the coast of Bay of Bengal, it showcases exquisite ancient architecture. One particular attraction is the entrance to the temple which shows two lions crushing elephants and a human body lying at the foot of it. The Konark Sun Temple is also known as "Black Pagoda" by some scholars.

Interesting Fact About Konark Sun Temple: The 12 wheels that are located at the base of the temple are actually sundials with accurate time telling ability.

Timings. 10:00 AM – 5:00 PM (closed on Fridays).

What you should see. Spend some time observing the three statues of the sun gods upon whom the rays of the sun fall at dawn, noon and sunset.

Gateway of India, Mumbai

Gateway of India is one of the famous historical places in Mumbai. Dating back to 1924, it was an access point for entry and exit during the British period. The monument commemorates the visit of King George V and Queen Mary to the city in 1911. However, the structure wasn't complete until 1924. It also played a significant role in the history of India, since it was here that the British troops departed through in 1948 after India got her Independence.

Interesting Fact about Gateway of India: It was from the Gateway of India that the last British ships set sail for England in the 20th century.

Timings. 24 Hours Open

What you should see. There are steps behind the gateway which allow you to take trips to Elephanta Island.



Mahabodhi Temple, Bihar

Mahabodhi Temple is where Gautam Buddha is believed to have attained enlightenment while meditating under a fig tree. The Bodhi tree is the descendant of the Fig tree and lies in close proximity to the temple. The earliest temple, however, dates back to Asoka's rule in the 3rd century BC. It houses an enormous Buddha statue touching the earth with his right hand.

Interesting Fact About Mahabodhi Temple, Gya: Bodhimanda is the spot under the Bodhi tree where Gautam Buddha is believed to have achieved enlightenment. According to legends, this spot will be the last to disappear when the world ends and the first to reappear on the recreation of the world.

Timings. 5:00 AM – 9:00 PM



What you should see. The Jewel Walk is the crowd puller, because this is the same spot where the Lord Buddha is believed to have gone on a seven days walking meditation after he was enlightened.

Designed And Developed By Manimaran Bhuvaneshwaran.