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# THE JOURNEY

# “Agra

The city that is home to one of the seven wonders of the world and three UNESCO world heritage sites, Agra is a treat for history and architecture lovers. The medieval city located on the banks of the river Yamuna, it is one of the most visited cities in the country.

Some of the must visit places in this city include Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, Akbar's Tomb, Mehtab Bagh, Chini Ka Rauza and Tomb of Mariam-uz-Zamani.



Strategically located at the heart of India in the alluvial plains between the Ganga and Yamuna, Agra had been a religious and commercial centre for centuries, but it matured and perfected itself only when the Mughals made it their home. Agra is not only famous for its Mughal art and culture but is also known for its food, chat, and the famous Panchi ka Petha. The city even after being one of the hottest cities of the country, is visited in high numbers every day. The nightlife might not be something worth mentioning but the beauty that this old city acquires at the night makes you love it and relish every bit of it. People's hearts here are as grand as the Buland Darwaza, the sight of Taj Mahal is as sweet as the Petha for the eyes, a shining symbol of India's rich architectural heritage and one of the seven wonders of the world, the Taj Mahal remains a timeless masterpiece. And shopping on the streets in the sunny afternoons is as chatpata as the famous Daal Moth. Come to the city for a weekend's exploration of architectural marvels such as

Fatehpur Sikri, the feel of an old city, and to near Sikandra) for chaats and pani puri. know for yourself what is this city described Also, there is another market named “Kinari Bazar”, where you can find plethora of local delectables. Don't forget to round off your meal with a pan, another local speciality of Agra.

How can the Bollywood leave out Taj Mahal when it comes to the depiction of romance? Taj Mahal in Agra has been a backdrop for many Bollywood movie sets and songs. The legendary movie Mughal-e-Azam's song 'Pyar Kiya To Darna Kya' has been shot at the Agra Fort. The famous song 'Suno na Sangemarmar' has been shot at the Taj Mahal. The movies Bunty aur Babli and Pardes also show the glimpses of the Taj Mahal and the Agra city. Even Hollywood couldn't stay away from shooting at this picturesque location.

Local food in Agra is a complete delight to savour. True, there are several upscale and urban restaurants in Agra that serve awesome Mughlai, Indian, Chinese and other specialities. However, if you want a real treat for your taste buds with local flavors, don't forget to indulge in Petha (a type of sweet candy) and Dal Moth (a spicy lentil mix). Agra is a heaven for Chat lovers as well as you will find chaat stalls at every nook and corner in the city. People love to throng places like Double Phatak (which is

## When To VISIT



<http://www.ixigo.com/weather-in-agra-lp-1199857>

### Jan

Very cold weather. Carry Heavy woollen.

Max:	Min:	Rain:
15.19999980	6.699999809	13.1999998092651
9265137°C	265137°C	37mm

### Feb

Cold weather. Carry Heavy woollen.

Max:	Min:	Rain:
17.79999923	9.199999809	17.6000003814697
7060547°C	265137°C	27mm

### Mar

Cold weather. Carry Heavy woollen.

Max:	Min:	Rain:
24.0°C	13.19999980	9.30000019073486
	9265137°C	3mm

### Apr

Pleasant weather. Carry Light woollen.

Max:	Min:	Rain:
30.39999961	18.70000076	6.30000019073486
8530273°C	2939453°C	3mm

### May

Pleasant weather. Carry Light woollen.



**Max:** 34.0°C **Min:** 23.29999923 **Rain:** 11.3000001907348  
7060547°C 63mm

## Jun

Pleasant weather. Carry Light woollen, umbrella.

**Max:** 34.59999847 **Min:** 25.29999923 **Rain:** 55.7000007629394  
4121094°C 7060547°C 5mm

## Jul

Pleasant weather. Carry Light woollen, umbrella.

**Max:** 31.0°C **Min:** 24.10000038 **Rain:** 203.300003051757  
1469727°C 8mm

## Aug

Pleasant weather. Carry Light woollen, umbrella.

**Max:** 29.79999923 **Min:** 23.20000076 **Rain:** 243.199996948242  
7060547°C 2939453°C 2mm

## Sep

Pleasant weather. Carry Light woollen, umbrella.

**Max:** 29.39999961 **Min:** 22.0°C **Rain:** 129.699996948242  
8530273°C 2mm

## Oct

Pleasant weather. Carry Light woollen.

**Max:** 27.10000038 **Min:** 16.39999961 **Rain:** 24.7999992370605  
1469727°C 8530273°C 47mm

## Nov

Cold weather. Carry Heavy woollen.

**Max:** 21.70000076 **Min:** 11.0°C **Rain:** 4.30000019073486  
2939453°C 3mm

## Dec

Cold weather. Carry Heavy woollen.

**Max:** 16.60000038 **Min:** 7.300000190 **Rain:** 6.09999990463256  
1469727°C 734863°C 8mm

## What To

# SEE

5 Sights

<http://www.ixigo.com/places-to-visit-see-in-agra-lp-1199857>

## 1 Taj Mahal



Taj Road, Agra, Uttar Pradesh  
282001, India

The epitome of love and romance, Taj Mahal was built by the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan as a dedication to his beautiful wife Mumtaz Mahal (Arjumand Bano Begum). It is a mausoleum of the queen, splendidly created in her memory. The very sight of the Taj is a feast not only to the eyes but senses as well. It one of the Seven Wonders of the World, was built as a tomb by the grieving Emperor Shahjahan in memory of his third wife Begum Mumtaz Mahal who died in 1631.

Made from white marble in the typical Mughal style, Taj Mahal seamlessly blends elements from Persian, Islamic and Indian styles. The completion of this masterpiece took 17 years (1628 - 1658) and was carried under the supervision of the architect, Ustad Ahmad Lahauri. Thousands of artisans like masons, stonecutters, inlayers, carvers, painters, calligraphers and dome builders were hired from across the empire and other places including Central Asia and Iran. White marble used for the veneering was brought in from Makrana, Rajasthan. Semi-precious stones for inlay ornamentation were sourced from all over India, Ceylon, and Afghanistan. Red sandstone of different tints was quarried from Sikri and Dholpur.

the Mughals. Being located on the banks of the Yamuna adds to the splendor of this marvel. The complex is set in the middle of a large 300-metre (980 ft) square Charbagh or Mughal Garden. The garden has a raised pathway that divides each of the four quarters of the garden into 16 flower beds. The image of the mausoleum is reflected in the raised marble water tank at the center of the garden. The octagonal layout is accompanied by four minarets. The central onion-shaped dome soars above the tombs that are placed in an underground chamber.

The best time to visit Taj Mahal is from November to February. It is better to reach the place early, as the place gets crowded by noon. It can be viewed at night too. The exquisite view of the Taj under the full moon is absolutely spellbinding. One among the seven wonders of the world, this monument needs to be a part of your travel bucket-list.

When Shahjehan was imprisoned in the Agra Fort by his son Aurangzeb, he would look endlessly at the Taj across the river. Spreading across an area of 60 bighas, this majestic building was recognized as the UNESCO World Heritage Site in the year 1983. Taj Mahal was constructed in the 16th century and displays the artistic brilliance of

## 2 Agra Fort



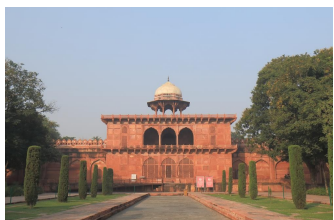




Rakabganj, Taj Road, Agra, Uttar Pradesh 282003, India

Built by Akbar between 1565 and 1573, Agra Fort is another UNESCO World Heritage Site of the city. This masterpiece built in red sandstone offers a panoramic view of the Taj Mahal on a clear day, which is settled around 3 km away on the right bank of river Yamuna. The fort's 2.5 km-long museum has three galleries, each displaying ramparts, which rise up to 21.4 m are cased with perfectly polished red sandstone. It is spread across an area of 94 acres. Home to more than two dozens of monuments with Mughal architecture and style of art, the fort makes for one of the most important and robustly built strongholds of the Mughals. This fort has been the site of various significant events in the Mughal Empire. While Babur sent his son Humayun to capture the fort, Humayun returned with a vast treasure, including the priceless "Koh-i-Noor" diamond. After this, Humayun was coronated here. Another interesting legend holds that a man named Nazam, a water-carrier who saved Humayun from being drowned, was crowned as the emperor for half-a-day for his allegiance to the empire.

### 3 Taj Museum



Archaeological Survey of India, Taj Mahal, Agra, Uttar Pradesh 282005, India

The fascinating Taj Museum is located inside the Taj Mahal complex and is ideal for a further exploration of the history that the place is steeped in. Established in 1982 by the Archaeological Survey of India, the museum has three galleries, each displaying a different aspect of what went into the making of the splendid monument.

One can also find some very well preserved gold and silver coins which belongs from the same period. It even has architectural drawings of the Taj and several nifty celadon plates which are believed to change colour or split into pieces if the food served on them contains poison.

### 4 Fatehpur Sikri



Agra, Uttar Pradesh 283110, India

Fatehpur Sikri was founded by the Mughal Emperor Akbar in the year 1569. Located at a distance of around 35 km from Agra, Fatehpur Sikri holds high historic importance. As per the legend attached with this city, Saint Salim told Mughal emperor Akbar that his son is going to be a great ruler. In the year 1569, when Akbar's second son was born, he moved his capital to Fatehpur Sikri and named his son Salim. Salim Chishti's grave, in an exquisite marble tomb near the Jama Masjid, is still a revered spot. Akbar chose red sandstone to minimize the stylistic clashes that could result from the mixing of elements of Timurid, Persian and Indian styles. An astonishing city took shape: pavilions and courtyards, domes, balconies, terraces, gardens, elegant cupolas, tanks, pools and baths. The architecture sheltered the imperial household from the harsh North Indian sun, but it also allowed for the play of filtered or refracted light and air through latticed windows and doors. Fatehpur Sikri is playful and full of surprises: turn a corner and find an enchanted walled garden, or climb out of an apartment and find a tree perfectly framed in a window. Fourteen years after its construction, Akbar and his court left Fatehpur Sikri forever, moving the capital to Lahore. Lack of water is usually posited as the reason for

abandoning the city. You can still follow the spirits of Akbar, his wives, his Nine Jewels, ladies of the harem... through Buland Darwaza—the highest gate in India, Jodha Bai's Palace, Maryam's House, Birbal's House, Daulat Khana, Diwan-Khana-i- Khas, Diwan-i-Am and Pachisi.

### 5 Samadhi Swamiji Maharaj Bagh (Dayal Bagh)



Dayalbagh, Agra, Uttar Pradesh, 282005, India

Built in the memory of Huzur Swamiji Maharaj (or Shiv Dayal Singh Seth), this complex is a living tribute to his dedication towards founding and carrying forward the Radhasoami Satsang movement. The garden houses the 'samadhi' spot, or the mausoleum of Swamiji, who founded the Radhasoami Satsang in 1861, based on an amalgamation of the principles of Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism, and Sikhism.

The complex is renowned for being a work-

in-progress for the past 80 years or so, where devotees undertake the final dream of creating the complex with a gold-latticed dome. The architecture here follows the same principle of co-habiting different religious sects, with various styles of architecture coming together to create a unique experience. The garden complex also has a 'Bhajan Ghar' (or prayer house), which almost always is hosting some event of the 'Radhasoami Satsang'.

+91-562-2463535

The favourite snack-time and meal option of the entire country, South Indian food is a hit with locals and tourists, no matter what part of the country you're travelling to. Dasaprakash Vegetarian Restaurant brings this legacy to Agra, in all its glory and popularity.

You'll love the lively feel of this restaurant, with the bustling crowds that throng here during mealtimes in particular. Try their hot steaming rice and rawa idlis, the fresh-from-the-pan dosas (in different flavours too) and a whole host of other snacks. For a more substantial meal, give their thali a spin, complete with different vegetable preparations served with rice and hot pooris. Top it off with the rich rawa kesari for dessert and you're all set for reaching nirvana, metaphorically!

## 2 Esphehan, The Oberoi Amarvilas



The Oberoi Amarvilas, Taj East Gate Road, Fatehabad Road, Tajganj, Agra, Uttar Pradesh 282001, India

+91-562-2231515

While you soak in the royal magnificence of the Taj Mahal and other Mughal architecture, there's an equally royal treat waiting for you at Esphehan, The Oberoi Amarvilas. Their fine dining restaurant serves some of the finest traditional Indian dishes in an ambience that will at once make you feel like royalty themselves.

Enjoy an elegant, quiet meal with the perfect Oberoi brand of hospitality to pamper you thoroughly. With serene views of the Taj in the distance, this meal will perhaps be one of your most unforgettable experience of Agra. The exclusive restaurant is open for dinner, and only for two sitting at 7 and 9:30pm, adding to the aura of an absolutely niche dining experience.

## 3 Panchhi Petha Store



Main Market, Sadar Bazaar, Inside Pawan Hotel, Agra Cantt, Idgah Colony, Agra, Uttar Pradesh 282004, India

+91-70555-00774

For anyone who knows a little about Agra, the sweet flavour of Petha is almost synonymous with the city. Other than the inlay work, petha is one of the most popular souvenirs that people often carry back from Agra. And for this, Panchhi Petha is the one-stop-shop for one of the best pethas in Agra.

Petha is a mithai (or sweet) made of white pumpkin, available either with the sugar syrup or in a dry version. Panchhi Petha and their series of stores have made their mark for selling consistently delicious and hygienic pethas for over 70 years now.

If you're worried about the sugar syrup leaking on your way home, you can be rest assured about the packaging that is both neat and air tight. Not only the petha, but the savory Dal Moth is very popular here, a perfect snack to go with your evening tea. Head here to take home a lip-smacking piece of Agra with you, without shelling too much money.

## 4 Pinch of Spice Restaurant



## 1 Dasaprakash Vegetarian Restaurant



Meher Cinema Complex, Baluganj, Rakabganj, Agra, Uttar Pradesh 282001, India

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# WORLD

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