

11 facts about the Taj Mahal

Join us for a fact-filled guided tour of this iconic Indian monument, which is visited by millions of people every year.

1 The Taj Mahal might look like a palace, but it's actually a mausoleum — a type of monument built as a burial place for someone who has died. This beautiful building was commissioned by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his wife Mumtaz Mahal, who died in 1631. Let's explore this iconic monument.

2 Shah Jahan had seven wives, but Mumtaz Mahal was his favorite. They had 14 children together. Mumtaz Mahal died giving birth to the 14th child. Shah Jahan was overcome with grief when she died. It was said that Shah Jahan wanted to build a matching mausoleum for himself, in a similar style to the Taj Mahal but made of black marble. However, he was dethroned as emperor before it could be built.



The main mausoleum was finished in 1648.

The Taj Mahal, located in Agra, India, is now considered one of the "New Seven Wonders of the World."



is calligraphy of verses from the Quran written in Arabic.

10 The actual tombs of Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan are on the lower level of the building. Islamic tradition dictates that tombs should not be highly decorated, so these tombs are plainer than the fake tomb cenotaphs above.

11 The whole building is almost perfectly symmetrical, which means each side of the building mirrors the other.

2 The Taj Mahal attracts between 7 million and 8 million visitors each year.



weather is cooler. This timing also avoids India's rainy season!

4 The Taj Mahal appears to change color throughout the day. As the sun rises, the white marble looks yellow. When it is dark outside, the Taj Mahal appears to be blue.

3 More people visit the Taj Mahal between October and March, when the



5 More than 1,000 elephants helped to transport materials to build the Taj Mahal.

6 On the roof of the Taj Mahal there are four chhatris, which are a type of pavilion used in Islamic

and Hindu architecture. Chhatris were used as decorative canopies above the tombs of important people. The Taj Mahal's chhatris are arranged around the central dome.

7 A cenotaph is a monument that looks like a tomb but is not a place where someone is actually buried. In the Taj Mahal there are cenotaphs



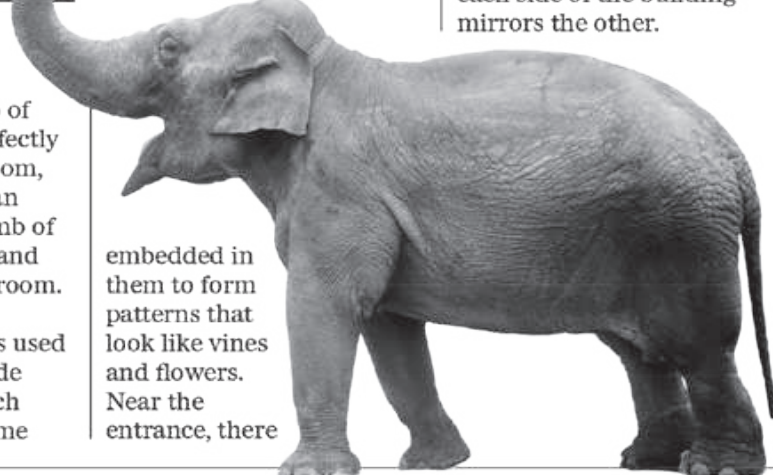
on the upper level. The real tombs are below. The false tomb of Mumtaz Mahal is perfectly in the center of the room, which is shaped like an octagon. The false tomb of Shah Jahan is bigger and sits to the side of the room.

8 Mud is sometimes used to clean the outside of the Taj Mahal, which becomes dirty over time

from pollution. This is very similar to the way some people use mud to purify their skin in beauty treatments!

9 The outside walls of the Taj Mahal are made of white marble and have gemstones

embedded in them to form patterns that look like vines and flowers. Near the entrance, there



TAKE A TOUR OF THE TAJ

Around 20,000 workers from different countries helped to build the Taj Mahal.

The whole complex (which includes a garden and other buildings) took 22 years to finish at a cost of 35 billion rupees in today's money, which is nearly \$400 million!

PAVILION
The pavilions align with the solstices.

MAIN ENTRANCE
The main entrance provides a beautiful view for photos.

MOSQUE
A mosque is where Muslims worship. It has a place to pray that faces Mecca, the holiest city in Islam.

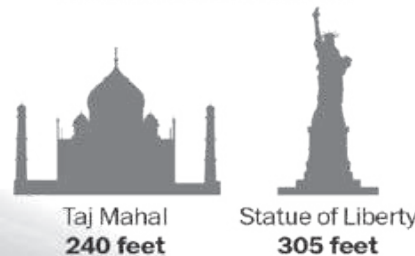
PARADISE GARDEN

CENTRAL POND

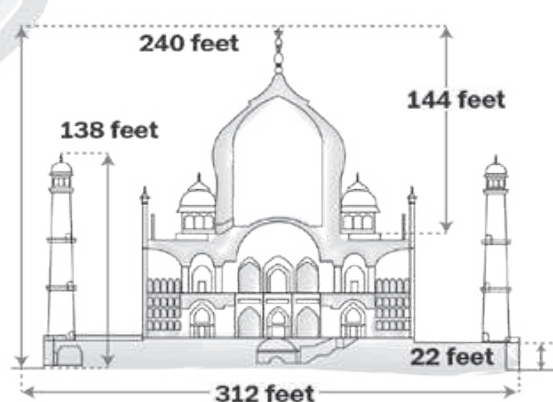
GUESTHOUSE
This building was built to mirror the mosque.

ROYAL TOMB
This is the spectacular main building.

HEIGHT COMPARISON



DIMENSIONS

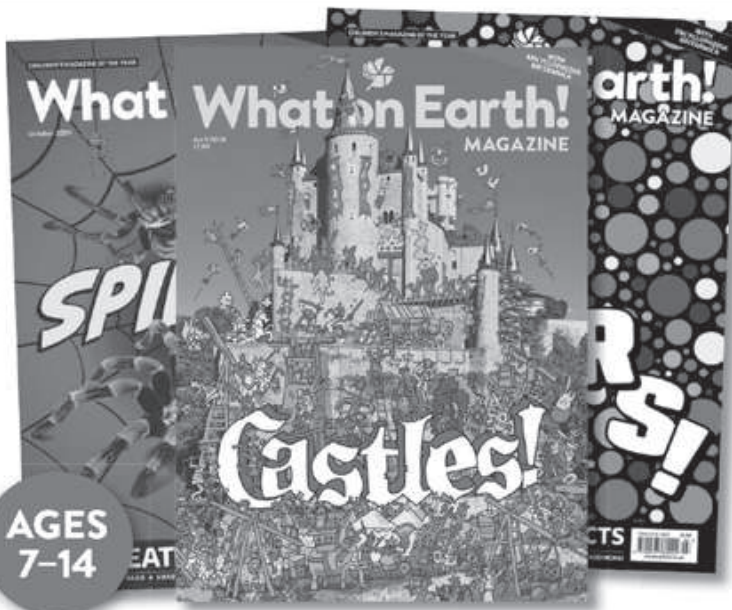


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