

## Art & Architecture of Delhi Sultanate

Architecture during Delhi Sultanate amalgamated the Indian Civilization with the Islamic Civilization & integrated the Indian Sub-continent Culturally.

The Delhi Sultanate includes the following dynasties:

1. Slave Dynasty
2. Khilji Dynasty
3. Tughlaq Dynasty
4. Sayyid Dynasty
5. Lodi Dynasty

The era marked the evolution and development of a new type of Hindu-Muslim architecture in which decorative exuberance of Hindu architecture was toned down and new elements such as the use of geometric shapes, calligraphy, inscriptional art etc. took their place.

The Delhi Sultanate architecture comprises structures and monuments of Slave, Khilji, Tughlaq, Sayyid and Lodi dynasties constructed 320-year-old in Delhi and its surroundings.

The aspects of Hindu architecture, however, were still the foundation for a fresh architectural style. This was primarily due to three reasons.

- Earliest mosques were constructed with the demolition of the temples,
- Muslim leaders used the same material as the Hindu Temples to make their mosques and graves.
- Muslim leaders had to hire Indian architects and masons.

Instead of constructing new memorials from scratch, the early Muslim rulers resorted by creating few alternations here and there to turn the Hindu and Jain temples into mosques.

From the era of the Delhi sultanate, we see the beginning of the use of the false arches and false domes (e.g. the Quwat-ul-Islam mosque) to true arch and domes (beginning at Alay Darwaja).

Although many square mausoleums are constructed in Delhi, from the final phase of Sayyid through the Lodi rule, the new octagonal plan form with its surrounding

colonnade has been created. The tomb of Shah (1443) and the tomb of Sikandar Lodi (1517/8) in Lodi Gardens were best depicted.

## Double Dome

The first instance with a double dome was Sikandar Lodi's grave. In East Asia, the technique of creating a double dome was used before it was imported into India.

A two-layered dome aimed at raising the monument's height and keeping its appeal intact. The single dome issue was that it left a profound vacuum inside the construction when it was built extremely high. The monumental impact of the construction was diminished if it was kept low.

The double dome was designed to shoot the two birds with one arrow. The dome was comprised of two distinct shells rather than one thickness of masonry with plenty of room between the inside and outside.

The inner layer offers the interior of the house with a roof, while the external layer crowns the houses. The use of two domes makes it possible to reduce the ceiling inside and to cover the interior. The proportions and effects of elevation of the exterior are not affected.

Trials towards the Double Dome began with the Taj Khan tomb (1501) and Sikandar Lodi tomb (1518), both of which were held in Delhi. But, in India for the first time in Humayun tomb, we can see the fully mature shape of the double dome.

Qutub Complex in Mehrauli, New Delhi, has been the starting point for the growth of Delhi Sultanate architecture. There are some 27 Temples of Hindu and Jain constructed during the times of Tomars and Chauhans. The new mosques and minars were constructed with the same material in haste. The arches and the dome structural methods have not been used due to the hasty process of creating them.

## Tughlaqabad

- Tughlaq Dynasty built Tughlaqabad with beautiful stone walls.
- The significant edifice is the grave of Sultan Ghiyasuddin who, despite his little size, is a cubic structure of red sandstone, and is covered with a dome in white marble.
- Firozabad, wherein only the ruins of Fort Firoz Shah Kotla remains and a portion of Friday Mosque was built by Tughlaqs.

## Alai Minar

- Alauddin wanted to construct a minar twice the height of Qutub Minar. But the sultan died even after the first floor was not full, this dream was never realized!
- In the earliest courtyard, there is a 7.5 m long iron pillar, which Chandragupta II supposedly manufactured in the 4th century.
- It was Stambha, as inscribed, and was apparently carried here before the Islamic conquer. It was devoted to the Vishnu Temple.
- This iron worked column is so extremely advanced and has a Gupta-style capital at the top, that it has not been rusty for 1600 years despite its exposure to the elements.

## Alai Darwaja

- The Mamluk dynasty did not use true Islamic styles and fake domes and arches. Alai Darwaja in the Qutub Complex is the first instance of the real arch and real dome. It was constructed in 1311 AD by Ala-ud-din Khilji.

## Quwwat-al-Islam

- It was the first mosque constructed in Delhi after the conquest of Indian Islam and the oldest remaining example of Indian subcontinent Ghurid architecture. It was primarily constructed on the rubbles of the 27 temples of the Hindu and Jain.

## Qutub Minar

- The minar was influenced by Afghan architecture at first. This was constructed to celebrate Mohammed Ghori's victory as a Victory Tower. As we all understand, Qutub-ud-din began its construction, Iltutmish completed the building and Firoz Shah Tughlaq built the last two storeys. Sikandar Lodi later repaired the minor. The Qutb Minar was made of material from Hindu structures and temples.
- The Hindu artisans were employed to decorate it and they used the same style of inlaying in the temples. The floral designs, cloches and chains were designed to decorate the mineral from the remains of the temples.