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HISTORY

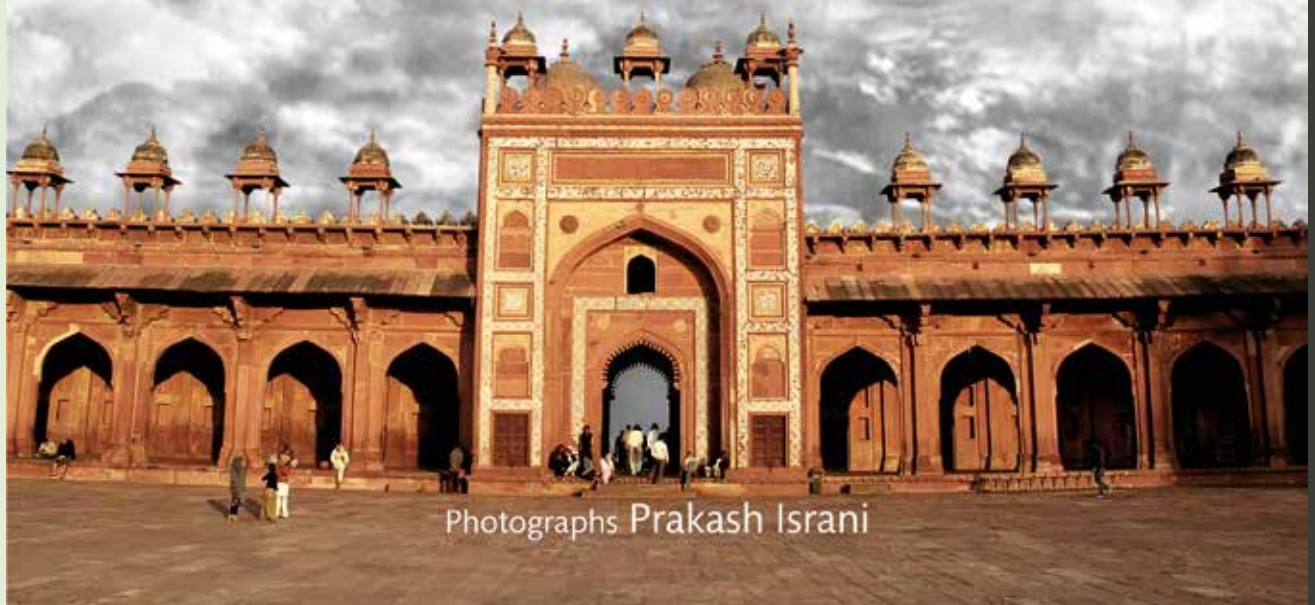
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A World Heritage Site

Fatehpur Sikri

Akbar's Magnificent
City on a Hill

Subhadra Sen Gupta



Photographs Prakash Israni

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Fatehpur Sikri

Akbar's Magnificent
City on a Hill

Subhadra Sen Gupta

Akbar drew strength and inspiration from the land and the people he ruled. In Fatehpur Sikri what Akbar achieved was an architectural style that was not Persian, Central Asian, Islamic, Buddhist or Hindu. It was Mughal.

Four centuries ago, a magnificent king built his city of dreams on a hill. And then after a few years he walked away from it, never to return. The reason why Jalaluddin Akbar abandoned the city of Fatehpur Sikri remains a mystery.

It is a city, of legends, frozen in time, of a grateful king's act of gratitude to a Sufi saint, and of a warrior who raised a giant gateway as an arrogant symbol of his power. The city saw the most gorgeous gatherings in Akbar's court—the poets Faizi and Abdur Rahim, the historian Abul Fazl, the singers Tansen and Baz Bahadur and courtiers like Man Singh, Birbal and Todar Mal.

Few cities reflect the character of its builder like Fatehpur Sikri does; that of a hard-headed imperialist who was also genuinely humane and tolerant and embarked on an unusual spiritual quest.

To understand Jalaluddin Akbar you have to seek him in the red sandstone shadows of Fatehpur Sikri.

Contents: *Introduction* • Beginning of the empire • The jewel of the empire • The imperial centre • A matter of faith • A courtly city for a king • *Index* • *Getting There*

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Author:

Subhadra Sen Gupta likes to explore the various aspects of Indian history and culture through her fiction and travel writing. Her books try to capture the fascinating, vibrant and many-hued aspects of the people, places and history of India. She also enjoys writing historical fiction for children and scripting comic books.

Photographer:

Prakash Israni, a product of Sir J.J. Institute of Applied Art, is a well-known name in the photography world—covering Bollywood to advertising, travel photography to travel writing. His first picture was published way back in 1972 in a local catholic newsletter in Mumbai, and since then there has been no looking back.

