

Exploring Top 10 Forts of Delhi



Delhi Heritage Top 10 Forts. Written by Vikramjit Singh Rooprai. New Delhi: Niyogi Books, 2024, ISBN: 9788119626755.

The book titled “Delhi Heritage Top 10 Forts”, written by Vikramjit Singh Rooprai, is an intriguing exploration of Delhi’s iconic forts, each steeped in the historical narrative of India’s capital. This book offers readers a nuanced view of Delhi’s architectural and historical landscape, highlighting the top ten forts that have played a defining role in the city’s evolution. While visually and informationally rich, the book falls into some predictable patterns common in heritage publications, yet it also manages to bring fresh insights that make it a commendable read for both history enthusiasts and casual readers.

The book is structured into eleven Chapters, namely, (1) Introduction, (2) Red Fort, (3) Purana Qila (4) Tughlaqabad, (5) Kotla-i-Ferozshahi, (6) Salimgarh, (7) Lal Kot & Qila-Rai Pithora, (8) Adilabad, (9) Siri Fort, (10) Najafgarh, and (11) Nai Ka Kot.

One of the most striking features of the book is its visual appeal. Published by Niyogi Books, known for high-quality heritage and art publications, the book boasts meticulous layouts, vibrant photography, and clear, engaging captions that breathe life into Delhi’s ancient structures. Photographs of each fort, whether of the imposing Red Fort’s ramparts or the lesser-known ruins of Siri Fort, are captured from dynamic angles, emphasizing both grandeur and decay. This attention to detail enables readers to grasp the forts’ architectural uniqueness and their weathered, enduring charm.

The book’s structure is logical and accessible, dedicating each chapter to a different fort, accompanied by historical context, architectural analysis, and cultural significance. This layout offers



DOI: 10.5530/jcitation.3.3.38

Copyright Information :

Copyright Author (s) 2024 Distributed under
Creative Commons CC-BY 4.0

Publishing Partner : Manuscript Technomedia. [www.mstechnomedia.com]

an organized reading experience, allowing readers to appreciate each fort independently or delve into the entire history of Delhi's fortifications. The organization and pacing are commendable, providing a clear narrative flow that keeps readers engaged without overwhelming them with historical detail.

In terms of content, Delhi Heritage provides a well-researched history for each fort, from the famed Red Fort and Purana Qila to the less-publicized structures like Najafgarh and Adilabad. The book captures the historical context behind each fort's construction, connecting it to the broader geopolitical events of its era. For instance, the chapter on Tughlaqabad Fort delves into Sultan Ghiasuddin Tughlaq's defensive priorities amid Mongol invasions, contrasting this with the more symbolic, ceremonial purposes of the Red Fort under Mughal rule.

Rooprai, the author, effectively juxtaposes the forts' aesthetic and architectural significance with their cultural context, thus enriching readers' understanding of Delhi's evolution. Yet, while the book gives ample attention to Mughal-era forts, it at times glosses over pre-Mughal contributions, such as the Rajput legacy in Lal Kot or Qila Rai Pithora, in comparison. This selective focus, though understandable given the dominance of Mughal heritage in Delhi's historical narrative, leaves some gaps in presenting a fully rounded picture of Delhi's architectural heritage.

The book, published under the Delhi Heritage series of Niyogi Books, caters well to a general audience, providing digestible information that avoids heavy academic jargon. This accessibility makes it a suitable choice for casual readers or tourists interested

in learning more about Delhi's forts without getting caught up in excessive detail. However, advanced readers or those looking for in-depth analysis may find the content somewhat inadequate. The book occasionally prioritizes descriptive content over critical insights or historiographical debates that could have added depth to its narrative.

Despite a few minor shortcomings, Delhi Heritage Top 10 Forts is a valuable addition to literature on Delhi's architectural legacy. Unlike more exhaustive texts that delve into Delhi's entire historical landscape, this book's specific focus on forts provides a concentrated view of an essential aspect of the city's heritage. The book's emphasis on Delhi's forts as more than mere defensive structures helps readers see them as cultural symbols that reflect shifts in power, social values, and urban development over centuries.

In the end, the Book is a commendable effort that successfully introduces readers to Delhi's fortified heritage, blending photography with narrative in a way that will likely inspire further exploration and appreciation of the city's monumental history. It stands as a testament to the need for accessible, visually engaging heritage literature that brings India's historical marvels to a wider audience.

This is an essential read for the budding heritage professionals, engaging tourists, and historical researchers, who will not only enrich their knowledge through this book, but also learn Delhi's comprehensive layered history.

Reviewed by

Dr. Anup Kumar Das

Centre for Studies in Science Policy,
Jawaharlal Nehru University,
New Delhi, INDIA.
Email: anup_csp@jnu.ac.in

Cite this article: Das AK. Exploring Top 10 Forts of Delhi. Journal of Data Science, Informetrics, and Citation Studies. 2024;3(3):368-9.