

# Mughal Gardens

February 16, 2021

## About Mughal Gardens

- Spread over a vast expanse of 15 acres, Mughal Gardens has often been portrayed, and deservedly so, as the soul of the Presidential Palace.
- The Mughal Gardens draw its inspiration from the Mughal Gardens of Jammu and Kashmir, the gardens around the Taj Mahal and even miniature paintings of India and Persia.
- Sir Edwin Lutyens had finalized the designs of the Mughal Gardens as early as 1917, however, it was only during the year 1928-1929 that plantings were done. His collaborator for the gardens was Director of Horticulture, William Mustoe.
  - Like the building of Rashtrapati Bhavan have two different styles of architecture, Indian and western, similarly, Sir Lutyens brought together two different horticulture traditions together for the gardens, the Mughal style and the English flower garden. Mughal canals, terraces and flowering shrubs are beautifully blended with European flowerbeds, lawns and private hedges.
- In Christopher Hussey's *The Life of Sir Edwin Lutyens*, Sir Lutyens' wife has written that the garden was a "paradise."
- The Mughal Gardens had up till now been opened for the public only during the annual festival, Udyanotsav, held in the months of February-March but Mughal Gardens, which forms the third Circuit of Rashtrapati Bhavan tour, will now be open for the public from August till March.
- Rose remains a key feature of the Mughal Gardens even today.
  - The Mughal Gardens also include roses named after

people of national and international fame such as Mother Teresa, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Mr. Lincoln, John F. Kennedy, Jawahar, Queen Elizabeth, Christian Dior amongst others.

- Arjun and Bhim, from the Mahabharata, also find a place in the presidential palace.
- Apart from roses, tulips, Asiatic lilies, daffodils, hyacinth and other seasonal flowers beautify the gardens of Rashtrapati Bhavan.
  - There are more than seventy varieties of seasonal flowers including exotic bulbous and winter flowering plants.
  - Edging and flowering of flower beds is done with alyssum, daisy, pansy etc.
  - The grass that covers the garden is the doob grass, which was originally brought from Calcutta (now Kolkata) when the Mughal Gardens was being planted.
  - The Gardens has almost 50 varieties of trees, shrubs and vines including Moulisiri tree, Golden Rain tree, flower bearing Torch Tree and many more.
- The vast grounds of the President's Estate are not only used for leisure and recreation.
  - Its occupants have ensured that the open space of the Estate is utilized in an efficient manner.
  - Starting from C. Rajagopalachari, who was the first Indian resident of Rashtrapati Bhavan, each resident of the Rashtrapati Bhavan has contributed to the vast Estate in their own manner.
  - During the time of C. Rajagopalachari, a portion of the grounds was used to cultivate wheat, as a gesture to address the problem of shortage of food in the country.
  - President Kalam had contributed by making Herbal Gardens, Tactile Gardens for the visually handicapped, Musical gardens, Bio-Fuel Park,

Spiritual and Nutrition garden and more.

- The Bonsai Garden and nature trails in Rashtrapati Bhavan were President Pratibha Patil's contribution along with Project Roshini which aimed at making the President's House an environment friendly habitat by efficient use of resources and use of renewable energy sources.