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## India's Most Popular Gardens

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Gardens have been in existence for a long time and evolved over time. The oldest types of gardens were probably the "forest garden" of the pre-historic period (Sharma et al. 2022). Over time the country's garden styles have evolved. Indian gardens are a combination of rich plant diversity along with cultural and historical influence. Taking a small journey through India's most beautiful gardens through formal and informal garden styles will be a great opportunity to experience different landscape designs. In India majority of the gardens are of formal styles, those styles that emphasise symmetry, geometrical shapes and structured orderly architecture. These types of gardens encourage Indian landscapes by maintaining the Mughal traditions. Unlike Formal gardens, Informal gardens are designed on irregular patterns, curved paths and provide a comfortable atmosphere. Although they are informal in nature they should possess the principles of landscaping.

### Formal Gardens

Formal gardens are a complete reflection of symmetry. Formal gardens tend to be organized with bilateral or radial symmetry, characterized by the use of elements exhibiting clear Euclidian geometry, such as straight lines, circles, arches, sharp angles, and axes (Twedt et al. 2016). The gardens are made completely based on the principles of landscaping especially balance of the design. Straight pathways, water features like fountains, canals etc with geometric shapes are the key features. It is important that whatever components are incorporated in the left side of the design should be given exactly the same on the right side too. Trees, Shrubs, Flowering plants should be planted based on the same symmetry and their geometric shapes should be properly made and maintained. India includes a wide range of formal gardens.

#### SHALIMAR BAGH, SRINAGAR

Shalimar Bhag garden is the Mughal garden of Jammu and Kashmir. The garden was made by the Mughal king Jahangir during the 17<sup>th</sup> century which is located near the Dal Lake. The garden is also known as Farah Baksh and Faiz Baksh. This garden is a best example for the combination of natural beauty with architectural designs.



#### TAJ MAHAL GARDENS, AGRA

The Taj Mahal Garden is the garden surrounding the great Taj Mahal. It is divided into 4 quarters with each having 16 sunken flowerbeds. More over the reflecting pool in the middle that acts as a mirror for the great marble structure and the pathways that divide the garden into 2 equal parts.



**BRINDAVAN GARDENS, KARNATAKA**

Brindavan Gardens is located near the Krishnaraja Sagar Dam and is one of the most unique and beautiful gardens which was built in 1932. The beautification of the dam complex was conceived by Sir Mirza Ismail, the Diwan Prime minister of Mysore (Sharma et al. 2022). One of the key features of the Brindavan Garden is the colourful musical shows done during the evening hours. The garden is one of the best terrace gardens and they are an inspiration from the Lal Bhag Garden.

**RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN GARDEN, DELHI**

One of the historic contributions by British India in gardening was the establishment of Rashtrapati Bhavan Garden (Mughal type garden) in New Delhi which was designed by Edwin Lutyens on the advice of Lady Hardinge in 1929 (Sharma et al. 2022). This is a most beautiful Mughal garden located at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. They are famous for their Mughal layouts, water channels, fountains, pathways, wide variety of flowering plants. They are open for the public during the specific period of a month.



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**NISHANT BAGH, SRINAGAR**

This is also a garden which was made by the Mughals during 1633 which is located on the banks of Dal Lake covering about 46 acres. It was built by Asif Khan, brother of queen Nur Jahan. He was also the father-in-law of emperor Shah Jahan. The garden is very much influenced by the Persian style of Gardens. The most important feature of this garden is the twelve terraces that represents twelve Zodiac signs.

**PINJORE GARDEN, HARYANA**

Pinjore Garden also known as Yadavindra Gardens are another Mughal style garden built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Historically Pinjore Garden was developed by Aurangzeb with the architectural landscaping done by Fidai Khan. The garden was under control of the British rule during 19<sup>th</sup> century and was regained by King Yadavindra Singh of Patiala. That's how the garden got renamed as Yadavindra Gardens. Like the other Mughal gardens this garden also consists of terraces with the Shih Mahal at the highest terrace, Rang Mahal on the second terrace and Jal Mahal on the third.

**TULIP GARDEN, SRINAGAR**

Indira Gandhi memorial Tulip Garden is made with such beautiful coloured tulip flower plants spread across a vast area of 75 acres. The garden is located in Srinagar near to the Dal Lake. Beside Tulips, Hyacinth, Daffodil flowers are also a splendid part of the garden. This garden is named as the largest Garden in



Asia. The garden attracts thousands of tourists during the blooming season. It was established in 2007 to promote floriculture and tourism in Kashmir Valley (Sharma et al. 2022) and is the largest Tulip garden in Asia.

### **LAL BAGH, BENGALURU**

This garden is located in the southern part of Bengaluru with a vast green covering of 240 acres. King Hyder Ali established the Lal Bagh garden, Bengaluru in 1760 which was finished by his son Tipu Sultan (Sharma et al.2022). This garden is known for the rich collection of various ornamental plants along with the rare varieties. They are very famous due the flower shows that happen during the Republic Day and Independence Day of India. It is considered one of the most important gardens in India.

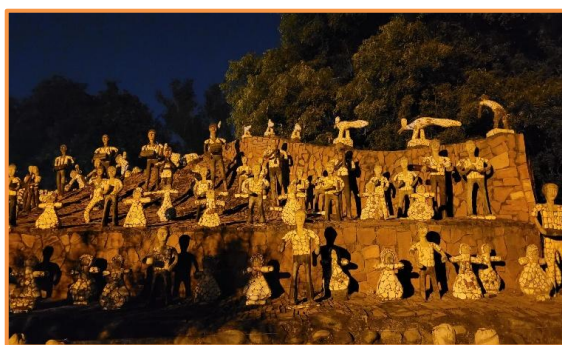


### **Informal Gardens**

Informal Gardens are more natural free style of garden landscaping. In an informal garden, the whole design looks informal, as the plans and the features are arranged in a natural way without following any hard and fast rules (Parmar, P. M. and Hathi, H. S. 2021). Unlike the strict rules of Formal Gardens like the symmetry, geometric shapes, equality etc, these gardens do not follow a regular pattern. They have irregular patterns, curved pathways and it is not important that whatever in the right should be there on left. The design completely depends upon the designer's wish yet it has to follow the principles of landscaping.

### **ROCK GARDEN, CHANDIGARH**

The Rock Garden of Chandigarh was made due to the intellect a very common government official named Nek Chand Saini. He started building the garden in 1950 with the waste materials and those taken from scrap like ceramics, glasses and stones. The major attractions of the garden are pathways, waterfalls, pavilions and small pools along with thousands of sculptures.



### **LADY HYDARI PARK, SHILLONG**

This is a Japanese style of garden located in the centre of the Shillong city. The garden is known for colourful and beautifully stretched flowerbeds, fountains, lawns, and plant species. It was named after Lady Hydari, the wife of the Governor of Assam. The garden also features a zoo, several ponds and is a great place for relaxation.



### **CUBBON PARK, BANGALURU**

This park is based on an informal style of garden which was built in 1870 by the British official Sir Mark Cubbon. The garden is also known as the Lungs of Bangalore. It is well spread over 360 acres of land with lawns, pathways, several buildings and is consisted of large variety of ornamental trees and flowering plants.



## Conclusion

Gardens in India always reflect the country's traditions, history and cultural diversity. They also play an important role in tourism and environmental conservation. From the symmetrical Formal Gardens to the nature inspired freely made Informal Gardens India has a vast range of unique garden landscapes. They are not only an area with natural beauty but also is the home for several ornamental trees and flowering plants. Overall gardens in India are always an inspiration for the landscapes in the whole world and they always help in maintaining the beautiful relationship with nature and people.

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