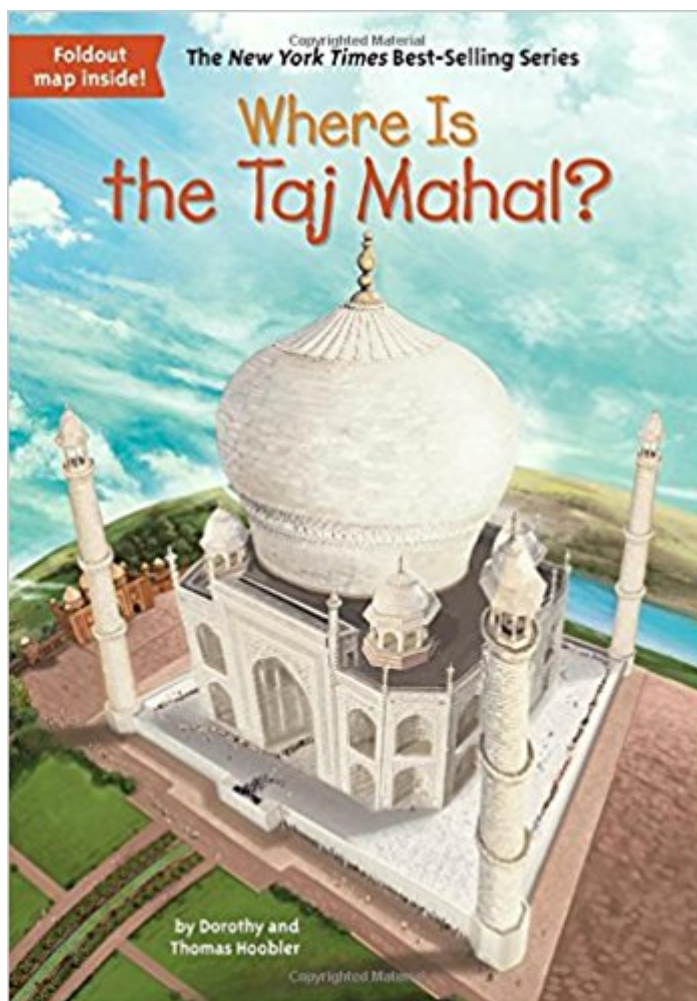


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# Where Is The Taj Mahal?



## Synopsis

Learn about the love story behind the creation of the Taj Mahal, one of the most beautiful and famous buildings in the world. The Taj Mahal may look like a palace, but it's actually a tomb and a lasting testament to one of the world's great love stories. In 1612, Mogul emperor Shah Jahan married Mumtaz Mahal. It had been love at first sight and for nineteen years they were so inseparable that Mumtaz even accompanied Shah Jahan to battlefields. When she died suddenly giving birth to their fourteenth child, the emperor set about building a magnificent memorial to his wife. Everything about the Taj was perfectly planned, from the white marble walls that shimmer in the sunlight and sparkle by moonlight, to the countless decorative flowers made from precious gems that still astound visitors today. Recent discoveries at the site make this a timely account of a timeless monument.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Dorothy and Thomas Hoobler have written many books for children and young adults, including *Where Are the Great Pyramids?* Their YA mystery, *In Darkness*, won the Edgar Award.

*Where Is the Taj Mahal?* Each year more than two million visitors arrive in the city of Agra, India. Some have traveled from the other side of the world. They have come to see one of the

world's most famous buildings. The Taj Mahal. Its white marble dome shimmers in sunlight and sparkles when the moon shines. Many believe it is the most beautiful building in the world. The Taj does not stand alone. It is part of a group of buildings and gardens that occupies forty-two acres. It stands on the banks of the Yamuna River, a major river of northern India. People who don't know anything about the Taj Mahal may think it is a palace. But it was not built for people to live in. The Taj is a tomb. It contains the bodies of a ruler named Shah Jahan and his wife Mumtaz Mahal. The name Taj Mahal is a shortened form of her name. Shah Jahan adored his wife. When she died giving birth to their fourteenth child, Shah Jahan vowed to build a magnificent tomb that would show his undying love for her . . . and he did.

Chapter 1: A Joyous Childhood

The ruler later known as Shah Jahan was the fifth emperor of the Mogul dynasty, which ruled much of what is present-day India from 1526 to 1858. At its height of power, the Mogul Empire included parts of Pakistan and Afghanistan. The first six rulers of the Mogul Empire were probably the richest in the world at that time. European travelers spread the stories of the Moguls' fabulous wealth and power. The rulers of Europe admired the splendor and luxury of the Moguls. In the 1600s and 1700s the term "Great Mogul" meant the kind of powerful ruler that European monarchs wanted to be as well. The Moguls' reputation for wealth made the name mogul a synonym for a wealthy person as it still is today. Those who reach great success in business, and particularly the movie industry, are called moguls. As for Shah Jahan, everything about his birth in 1592 seemed lucky. The year was 1000 in the Islamic calendar, and the month was the same month as Muhammad's birthday. (Muhammad was the prophet who began the religion of Islam.) At his birth, the future emperor was given the name Khurram. It meant "joyous." Just before he was born, a fortune-teller made a prediction to his grandfather's first wife, Ruqaiya. He said that this child would have a great future and be "more resplendent than the sun." Ruqaiya had no children of her own. She wanted to raise a future emperor. So when Khurram was six days old, he was taken from his mother and given to Ruqaiya. The mother was paid with rubies and pearls for her loss. From then on Ruqaiya was in charge of the child's upbringing. Like all the children and grandchildren of the Mogul ruler, Khurram grew up in the palace harem. (The word harem comes from an Arabic word meaning "sacred" or "forbidden.") This was where the women and children of the household stayed, apart from men. The emperor's wives lived there, along with his mother, aunts, nieces, and young children. Female servants lived there, too. Even the harem guards were women who were trained to use a bow and arrow. The only

grown man to enter was the emperor himself. He slept there. It was also where he kept his most important papers. Khurram's education began when he was four years, four months, and four days old. (Four was considered a lucky number.) He went to school in a mosque (an Islamic house of worship). He studied religion, arts, literature, and history. He learned all about his family and Mogul ancestors. From a young age, Khurram loved beautiful things. He liked to drench himself and his clothes with perfume and play with precious gems. But he also learned how to be a warrior. Hunting and fighting were part of his life as well. Khurram was always close to his grandfather Akbar, the emperor. Akbar took him to battles to improve his skills with a bow and to learn to ride a horse. At the age of nine, the boy was allowed to join the war council. When Akbar lay dying, Khurram refused to leave his bedside. Nine days after Akbar's death, Khurram's father was proclaimed emperor in the Red Fort at Agra. He took the name Jahangir, which means "Seizer of the World." Khurram continued with his education and training. He showed great talent in the skills of war, the arts, and architecture. But when he was fifteen, his life changed. What happened? He met a girl and fell in love.

Grand kids love this series!!!

My son (7 years old) has read the entire Who Was series. He clearly knows more than I do about all sorts of facts. I believe these books have created an amazing curiosity for my son. He digs into all facts, everything about history and loves reading. I think it's all thanks to the Who Was series.

good book.

Great historic read for young people

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