

FAQs

1. What is Indo Islamic architecture?

During the spread of Islamic architecture in India, over the years a certain symbiosis did come into being between Muslim designers and master-builders and the Hindu craftsmen who carried out their bidding. Both benefited from the other's knowledge and what slowly evolved was a distinct new style of architecture - Persian in inspiration but very Indian in execution. The architecture that thus evolved is known as the Indo Islamic architecture.

2. Compare the characteristic features of Hindu and Islamic architecture

Hindu arch	Islam arch
Hindu arch – mostly religious	Islam arch – civic buildings for public use, palaces, fortresses, royal complexes, pavillions,gardens & so on
Temple orientation – faces east	Mosque orientation – faces mecca, west of India
Mystery	Clarity
Dark and introverted	Open to light and air
Sculptures of human figures,animals,etc	Sculptures prohibited, decorative lettering and inlay work
Pyramidical spires	Domes & minarets
Main shrine – garbagiraha – small & narrow	Mihrab is surrounded by large enclosure for congregational prayers
Hindus believed in cremation	Concept of tombs evolved

3. What are the five dynasties that ruled the Delhi Sultanate?

Five dynasties ruled over Delhi Sultanate sequentially, the first four of which were of Turkic origin and the fifth, Afghan:

- Slave (1191-1246)
- Khilji (1290 -1340)
- Tughlaq (1320-1413)
- Sayyid (1414 – 1444)
- Lodi (1451 – 1557)

4. Briefly trace the architectural evolution in the Delhi Sultanate with any one example

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The Islamic architecture evolved and flourished gradually during the reign of these dynasties and had their own architectural characteristics. There were tombs, fortified cities, mosques, being built all over the region. The tomb of Ghiyas – ud –din Tughlaq stands as a fine example of the architecture that flourished during the imperial period.

- Square in plan, its battered walls are massive: 550' in square and a 75 degree slope.
- Placed diagonally within the court, the tomb itself is constructed of rubble masonry, unadorned on its exterior and faced with red sandstone and a white marble decorative course on the interior.
- Its pointed dome, which rests on a transition of corner squinches, has an interior diameter of 10.41 meters and an exterior diameter of 13.41 meters.
- Crowned with a vase and melon (*kalash* and *amala*) finial, the dome follows the typology of Hindu temples in the Delhi region.
- Three sides (north, south, and east) of the tomb have horseshoe-arched doorway openings and are flanked by a niche on either side.
- A marble band begins at the base of these horseshoe arches, running across the architrave. The western wall of the tomb accommodates the mihrab.
- The interior of the tomb is faced in red sandstone up to the base of the dome, above which it is clad in white marble. Three tombstones are housed within the tomb structure itself.

- With the exception of the marble-clad mihrab, the interiors are unplastered and undecorated. In addition to the grave of Ghiyath al-Din, the tomb also contains the graves of his wife Makhdima-Jehan, and his son Sultan Muhammad Adil Tughlaq Shah.