

Chashme Shahi Mughal Garden: The Importance of Tourism, Economy, History and Environment

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ChashmeShahi Garden or ChashmaiShahi in Jammu and Kashmir state capital Srinagar is one of the most populated tourist spot which is also known as ChashmaShahi. As per the orders of the Emperor, Shah Jahan and as a gift for his elder son Prince Dara Shikoh; this garden was built around a spring by Ali Mardan Khan in 1632.^{1,2} The location of the garden is near the Raj Bhawan (Governor's house) in the Zabarwan Range and also an overlooking distance from the Dal Lake in Srinagar, Kashmir, India. ChashmeShahi mainly gets its name from the spring around which was discovered by a Kashmiri Pandit of the Sahib clan who was known as the great female saint of Kashmir, RupaBhawani. 'Sahib' was the family name of RupaBhawani and the name, 'ChashmeSahibi' was called for the spring. Over the years the name got corrupted and Today the place is known as ChashmeShahi (the Royal Spring) because of the corruption of the name for the long years.^{3,4} In 1632, the garden was built up around the spring by the Mughal Governor Ali Mardan Khan in 1632.¹ The Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan constructed it for his eldest son, Dara Sikoh. In the east end of the garden of ChashmaShahi, the *PariMahal* (Fairy Palace) is situated which is used by Prince Dara Sikoi to learn astrology and it is the same place where he was later assassinated by his younger brother Aurengzeb.⁵ The garden covers up an area of one acre of land along with the size of 108 m long and 38 m wide. Among the all three Mughal gardens of Srinagar which are sited on the left bank of Dal Lake close to Zabarwan hills, it is smallest garden; the Shalimar garden is the largest and the Nishatgarden is the second largest in the position for the terms of area.



Plate1: The beautiful picture of the garden ChashmeShahi from the entrance of it which shows the entire beauties of the garden.



Plate 2: The charming image of the Royal spring from where water of the spring is coming to the terrace.



Plate 3: The attractive picture of the ChashmeShahi garden's passages which leads to the main spring of the terraces with beauties of the inner garden to PariMohal.



Plate 4: The picture of barricaded terrace of the ChshmeShahi Mughal garden with different types of attractive flowers and lights.



Plate 5: The image of the outer part of the PariMohal with its different types attractions.

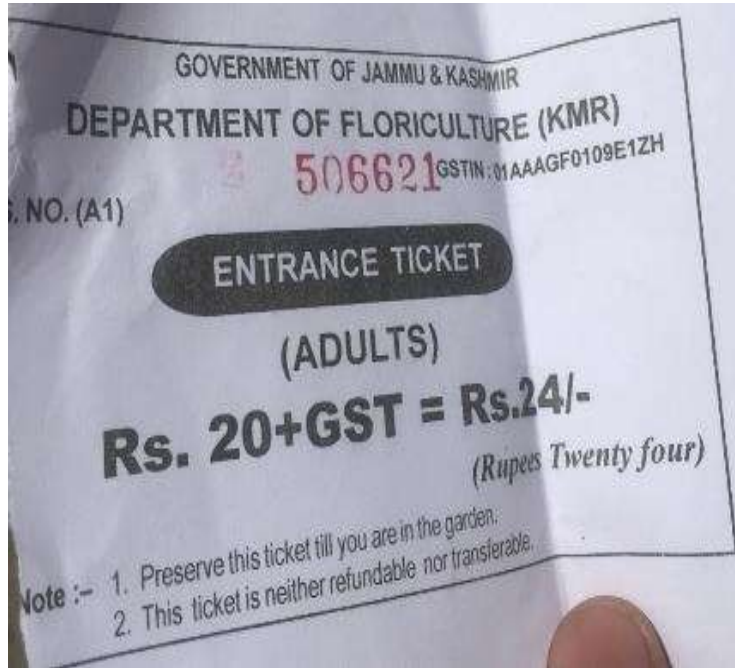


Plate 6: The picture of an entrance ticket of the ChashmeShahi garden which is provided by the Department of Floriculture of Jammu and Kashmir's Government.



Plate 7: The beautiful picture of an outer portion of the garden ChashmeShahi with the design of Mughal architecture and with the influence of Iranian culture.



Plate 8: The images of beautiful pictures of the ChashmeShahi Mughal garden with purple colour.

The garden shows the qualities of Mughal architecture which is used for the construction of the different Mughal gardens. The Iranian influences are captured artistically in its art and architecture and it's based on the different types of design of Persian gardens. RupaBhawani technically built the garden on the central terrace, which flows water through its centre. The construction of the garden carries the topography and the steepness of the land. The main attraction of the garden is the spring which carries the flow of water and falls down in terraces. It was divided into three sections like an aqueduct, waterfall, and fountains. The origin of the spring is a two-storied Kashmiri hut stands at the first terrace. The second terrace gets its water from a water ramp (chadar) which provides as a water pool and its centre has a large fountain. The flow of water again falls down through a passing water ramp into the third terrace, which is a square five-fountain pool. At the entrance of the garden there is a lowest pool which is known as the third terrace. Through a flight of stairs provides the visitors on both sides of the terraces for leading up to the origin of the spring.^{2,6,7,8} The garden becomes also famous by the writing of the English writer and traveler, Amit Kumar as "the little ChashmaShahi is architecturally the most charming of the gardens near Srinagar".⁹

It has been believed that the water of the spring have some medicinal properties. The water of the spring was used to bring it to Delhi by the former Premier of India, PanditJawaharLal Nehru.¹⁰ The location of the ChashmeShahi is situated within the jurisdiction of Srinagar city, 14 kilometres (9 mi) in the northeast from the Srinagar Airport. It is also adjacent to the building of theRajbhawan (Governor's house). The garden is connected by the Boulevard Roadwhich passes along the banks of the Dal Lake. The Brein Market bus stoppage is also close in position at 3.2 km away from theChashmaShahi: from where anyone can be reached within a 5 minutes by using a taxi or a rickshaw.Sri Nagar Railway Station is also located at a distance of 17.6 km from the garden and can be reached to the garden within 23 to 25 minutesby using any local convenience services from the station. At a distance of 20 km away from the garden, there is also present Srinagar International Airport and visitors can be completed the entire distance within 30 to 35 minutes by using a taxi. The presence of many hotels and restaurants and their service qualities make the visitors suitable for boardingandlodging near the gardenChashmaShahi. The tourists can visit the garden from the month of March to November. It has been said that the best time period to visit the garden specially from the month of April to October when the flowers in ChashmeShahi are at full bloom.^{11,12}

The garden remains open from 9.30 am to till 5.30 pm for the visitors and they are charged rupees 10 for adult and 5 for children for the visiting of the garden.The garden ChashmeShahi is located nearer the Governor Residence: so, the visitors have to inform the local police station to seek the permission for their own security. The tourists also have to complete the formalities by filling up the details like name, age, vehicle used, details of the driver for visiting the Shahi garden.

People are attracted to the ChasgmeShahi garden for its different types of charming characteristics. The garden is situated on a perfect square pictorial shaped around the spring.Very few rare variety of flower like purple cloured rose, poppy, Gardenia, Dog flower and Poplin are also the specialties of the garden for attraction of tourists. Though the visitorsarestrictlyadvisednottopluckortouchtheflowersofthe garden. On some occasion, different types of lights and dance are arranged here within the premises of the garden which is become very populous to the visitors of it. The qualities of the rocks, green lawns and different types of flowers catch the eyes of the tourists who come to visit the sport.

ChashmeShahi has become now the famous tourist spot of Kashmir which is related to the Mughal Gardens of India. The garden which is situated at the foothill of Zabarwan range close to the Rajbhawan of Srinagar of Kashmir as a historical elite of the Mughal emperor's

taste. The beautiful garden provides an evidence of the charm of Srinagar. The different sights of fresh flowers, spectacular PariMahal and tastefully laid of garden exhilarates the visitors and the local people. The garden is settled against a nice background of magnificent mountains and the beauties of the Dal Lakes. It has become as a favorite tourist spot of Srinagar for its surrounding environments, creative Mughal architecture and unblemished lap of nature earn the ChashmeShahi honor of being attractive tourist spot of Jammu and Kashmir.

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