



IMPERIAL ARCHIVE

Humayun's Tomb

UNESCO garden-tomb on the Nizamuddin funerary ridge

WESTERN GATE

ISA KHAN

BU HALIMA / ARAB SERAI

CHARBAGH AXES

PLINTH & INTERIOR

BARBER'S TOMB

SATELLITES AS SIGNED

DELHI TALES EDITORIAL TEAM · AUGUST 2026

A4 KEPSAKE · PRINT EDITION

A morning in the garden–tomb

Keep this PDF for the west → inward walk and the stories that stick. Live tickets, hours, Metro last-mile, and trap notes stay on the visit guide—rates change.

INSCRIBED

UNESCO 1993 · List 232 (criteria ii, iv)

BUILT

1560s–early 1570s (Akbar-era; soft-verify board)

ON SITE

~90–150 min · Isa Khan + axes + plinth

METRO

JLN Stadium or Jangpura · auto to Western Gate

Verify ASI board & portal the week you travel · Isa Khan is on the same ticket · Purana Qila and Sunder Nursery are separate · Full logistics: delhitaless.com/blog/humayuns-tomb. Designed for colour print; black-and-white remains readable. Author: **Delhi Tales Editorial Team**. Live logistics: delhitaless.com/blog/humayuns-tomb

WALK SEQUENCE

WESTERN GATE → ISA KHAN → BU HALIMA / ARAB SERAI → CHARBAGH AXES → PLINTH & INTERIOR → BARBER'S TOMB → SATELLITES AS SIGNED

Read the garden-tomb



SPECIALTY

UNESCO's Humayun's Tomb complex (1993, List 232) is a walled Persianate garden-tomb plus associated sixteenth-century tombs—Isa Khan, Bu Halima, Barber's Tomb (Nai-ka-Gumbad), and more—on about 27 ha in Nizamuddin East. The south ceremonial gate stays closed to ordinary visitors; you enter at the Western Gate on Mathura Road.

MEANING

Stand on an axis and read hierarchy: water channels and four parterres hold the eye before the red-sandstone-and-marble mausoleum. This is garden geometry first, then plinth climb—not a five-minute selfie stop in peak heat.

TALE

ASI's World Heritage page names "Hamida Banu Begam, also known as Haji Begam"—an identification most scholars reject. Prefer Bega/Haji + Akbar-era frame. Tickets, Metro, and fake Purana Qila / Sunder Nursery combos live on the visit guide.



01 · WORKING MATHURA ROAD ENTRY

Western Gate

Sandstone gateway that is today's working visitor door. Six-pointed star ornament belongs to the period's geometric vocabulary—not a Masonic subplot.

Threshold discipline: after tickets, decide Isa Khan (usually right) before you commit to the long charbagh axes. Drivers who say “main gate” usually mean this west approach, not the closed south ceremonial face.

Refuse unofficial tickets and “combo” packages for Purana Qila or Sunder Nursery. Those sites need their own access.



02 · AH 954 · SURI ENSEMBLE

Isa Khan's tomb & mosque

Octagonal Suri-period tomb with paired mosque, inscribed AH 954 / 1547–48 under Islam Shah Suri—earlier fabric inside the later Mughal enclosure, covered by the same complex ticket.

Chronological honesty: this is not “early Mughal warmup.” Isa Khan Niyazi's ensemble predates Humayun's mausoleum and keeps the Suri hinge visible on the walk.

Budget time here near entry. Skipping Isa Khan for a rush to the dome is the common failure mode of a heat-pressed morning.



04 • PERSIAN FOUR-PARTERRE

Charbagh & fountain axis

Four-fold garden with water channels and paved axes framing the mausoleum. Pause on the axis before you climb—geometry is the argument.

Persianate paradise-garden logic made imperial in Delhi sandstone. Not “the first garden-tomb on earth”; ASI still credits Sikandar Lodi with an earlier Indian garden-tomb type.

Midday heat on bare axes is real—carry water. Early morning light is when the channels and façade earn the ticket.



05 · DOUBLE DOME · NINEFOLD PLAN

Plinth, terrace & cenotaph

High terrace (about 7 m) over cells; red sandstone with marble; chhatris; high double dome (ASI height about 42.5 m). Interior: ninefold plan, jali screens, quiet cenotaph chamber—follow ASI/AKTC boards for photography and ropes.

Climb for massing; enter for etiquette. The cenotaph marks Humayun (d. 1556 at Sher Mandal in Purana Qila—death site ≠ this tomb). Many later Mughal graves densify the complex (“dormitory of the Mughals”)—do not invent a kin map without plaques.

Stay on paved paths; do not climb soft plinth edges. Interior flash and tripod rules change—obey the board that week, not a blog memory.



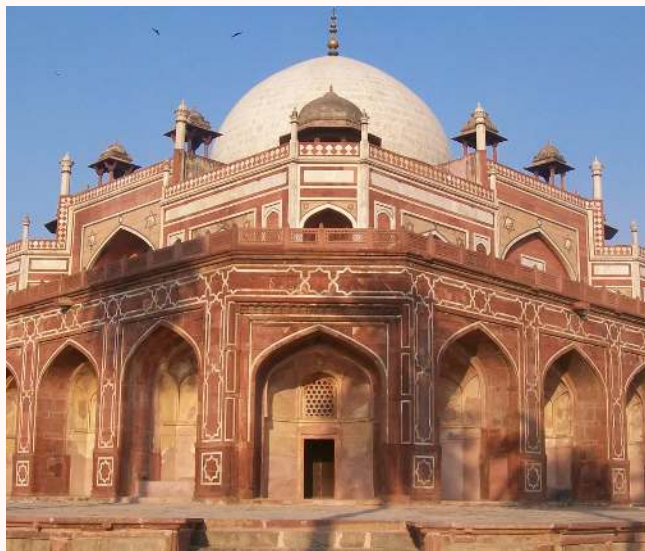
03

AS OPEN · SERVICE LANDSCAPE

Bu Halima & Arab Serai edges

Named UNESCO fabric at the western approach: Bu Halima's garden-tomb/gateway zone and the Arab Serai (artisans/service landscape; soft date often 1560s / 1566 in guides). Follow ropes—skip if closed.

If a lane is roped, do not invent a shortcut through nursery land toward Purana Qila. Separate tickets, separate doors.



06

NAI-KA-GUMBAD · AS SIGNED

Barber's Tomb & satellites

ASI name: Nai-ka-Gumbad (Barber's Tomb), southwest of the main mausoleum—square plan, double dome. Other satellites (Nila Gumbad and more) appear as signed or on the complex map; some sit outside easy rope lines.

If you are compressing the morning: Isa Khan + one axis + plinth exterior still beats a rushed selfie loop that skips the Suri tomb.

Method & attribution

Desk synthesis against ASI World Heritage Humayun's Tomb pages, UNESCO List 232 / OUV materials, Lowry's reading of Badauni on Mirak Mirza Ghiyas, and the AH 954 Isa Khan inscription tradition. Companion PDF (keepsake); cite and plan from delhitales.com/blog/humayuns-tomb.

Author: Delhi Tales Editorial Team · **Last verified:** August 2026 · Delhi Tales / Imperial Archive

IMAGE CREDITS

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READ THE GARDEN-TOMB

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WESTERN GATE

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ISA KHAN'S TOMB & MOSQUE

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BU HALIMA & ARAB SERAI EDGES

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CHARBAGH & FOUNTAIN AXIS

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PLINTH, TERRACE & CENOTAPH

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BARBER'S TOMB & SATELLITES

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