

## **Heritage Walks and Trails: The Monumental Mystique through the lanes of Delhi**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Heritage is rooted in the language, customs and practices brought over from their respective countries of origin. To an extent one may agree with this as in spite of agreements amongst scholars on the definition of heritage, its diversities that could be natural, local or regional, along with the attitudes of the locals, socio-economic and political conditions and the heritage policies of the government cannot lead towards one operational model and nor should aspire for that except for certain basic norms like showcasing and interpretation. However, these also are influenced by the conditions referred to above. We have to take into account here that the showcasing and interpretation of heritage is now a part of the heritage product that is experienced and marketed also for revenue generation being the pull factor for tourism as a visitor attraction. We have to take into account here that the showcasing and interpretation of heritage is now a part of the heritage product that is experienced and marketed also for revenue generation being the pull factor for tourism as a visitor attraction.

Today, we showcase monuments, festivals, arts, crafts, cultures, by developing them as tourism products wherein interpretation and live re-enactment are often used. In the selection process, the idea of heritage is concerned. The term 'heritage' is also similar to architecture in the sense that it associates with power-who defines what is heritage. Heritage as collective inheritance is a symbol of a community civilization and culture. Political power, particularly nation state takes a dominant role in defining what national heritage is.

Nowadays, heritage walks has become a full fledged business catering to the needs of such visitors who not only want to see the monument but know more about its surroundings along with the cultural heritage to the specific area. For example, for such visitors it is not just the Qutub Minar that is an attraction but also the nearby monuments and surroundings with their history and the living cultures that still carries on. Travelling through the old Mohallas and Gullies of Chandni Chowk and Old Delhi reenacts the time and the cultures which have thrived, survived and continuing to live in harmony. Walk through the passages and halls of these buildings, and quietly unfold the unknown tales of the rulers who made them. These walks and drives are an insight of the historic era and heritage structures which still stay to say the story of Civilizations in Delhi. Personalize, educative and imaginative, the walking tours highlight the vast range of architectural styles, planning elements and ornamental details, tracing the social and cultural history of the city. The Delhi will be best showcased through the series of walks and will eventually become a regular feature for the entire tourist traffic both domestic and international. These walks also foresee to be a medium to conserve the heritage structures falling on the route of the heritage walks which in turn would help restoring the historicity for the posterity.

*Keywords: Heritage trails, showcase, re-enactment.*