



FATEHPURI MANDI

Set in 17th century Shahjahanabad / Old Delhi, adjacent to Fatehpuri mosque and the spice market of Khari Baoli; the early morning Fatehpuri mandi is the master supplier of genda phool in its loose form, supplying genda, ashok patti, and setki / markit / bijli phool to other mandis, retail florists and garland makers all over the city. Said to be about 70-80 years old in its current form.



Mohit Gupta



Rahul Kumar



Rahul Kumar



Rahul Kumar





C.P MANDI

Located opposite Hanuman Mandir in the heart of the city; Connaught Place mandi, which is more than 20 years old, brings to us cut flowers from all over the country and the world, every morning before the city awakens. Some suggest that this is Asia's largest flower market and definitely the most beautiful place for an early morning meditation. It's a flash in the pan - business worth lacs of rupees is transacted before the space and the flower traders get ready for another life that starts later in the day. The energy is tremendous!



Saurabh Mehta



Tarun Garg



Saurabh Mehta



Karan & Mehar





MEHRAULI MANDI

Mehrauli mandi again largely specialises in Genda Phool (in loose and garland form) but also some cut flowers. This Mandi is open all day, unlike the other two which are early morning markets.

It is located next to the Qutab Minar and the Archaeological Park in Mehrauli, a historic core of Delhi, inhabited continuously at least for a thousand years.



Saurabh Mehta



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Sandesh Kumar



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FARMERS

The mandis are the lifeline of the farmers, who come from neighbouring areas to sell their produce in the city (seen here are farmers at Fatehpuri, who arrive at the nearby Sadar Bazar railway station). In our cities, agricultural lands are constantly shrinking, but the mandis are truly beautiful farmer’s markets. While the state claims to promote the cause of agriculture, and aims to lessen intermediaries between the farmer and the consumer; in actuality the centralisation of these mandis and the so called formal organisation of the flower trade truly robs the farmer of his right to sell in the city.



Mohit Gupta



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Saurabh Mehta



Mohit Gupta





FLOWER SELLERS

Besides the farmers, a wide range of people are involved in the business - masakhors (who buy from farmers and sell at a premium), commission agents, shop owners, and working staff. They belong to varied social, economic & religious backgrounds, making our mandis places which belong to everyone. Where have all these people gone?



Adil Hasan



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Saptorishi Majumdar



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MAALIN

The maalin - literally one who makes a garland, balanced the energy of the mandi, brining to it feminine agency. These maalins don't just string together flowers, but our very lives, as we partake of their delightful handmade creations at almost every important step in our lives: birth, marriage or death. Maalins from all over the city converge at Fatehpuri every morning to buy flowers for the day, while at Mehrauli they work for shop-owners, sometimes including entire families.



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THE FLORAL UNIVERSE

The mandis are repositories of floral biodiversity, as they bring us an extraordinarily wide range of flowers from home, and abroad. Every time you visit the mandi, you see a new flower, signalling an endless romance with floral species. From apparently insignificant foliage to rare flowers that cost the earth, the mandis are home to the floral universe. Pictured here is Calcutta genda, the pride of the Connaught Place mandi; cut-flowers from around Bangalore and lotuses from Chennai.



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CONSUMERS

Like the diverse composition of flower traders; the flower consumers also are like a bursting efflorescence. Buy genda worth 5 rupees or 5 lacs. Hotels, banquets, event managers, wedding planners, the common man, home-makers, the mandis belong to all.



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KHANA PEENA / FOOD

A cup of tea, fresh strawberries, chana-jor-garam, and more. A parallel army of food sellers feed the flower sellers and us every morning. The world of food and flowers can never be separated.



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Madhur Sondhi





ETC. ETC.

Besides fresh flowers which dominate the markets, you can fulfill your other needs at the mandis too. Dried flowers, tent decorations, sui-dhaaga, baskets, vases, floral foam, and other miscellaneous floral decoration equipments make the mandis a one stop shop for all things floral. These parallel landscapes and economies also blossom at the mandis and it is impossible to imagine the mandi without these.



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TRANSPORT

Continue to see how the mandis truly had a 360 degree relationship with the city, and supported as well as depended on many more people than just phoolwalas. Transport in the city celebrates our floral heritage - planes flying down flowers from Holland, trains from near and far, trucks, tempos, cars, auto-rickshaws, two-wheelers, hand pulled carts, cycles & cycle rickshaws, all shaandar sawaris.



Mohit Gupta



Saurabh Mehta



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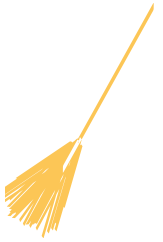
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THE SEAMIER SIDE

It is not all beautiful in the conventional sense of the word. The mandis are real places - not a floral idealism this. We end with showing you their seamier side. Sweepers, refuse & filth, drug-doused scavengers - we celebrate all this too in the world of our beloved markets.



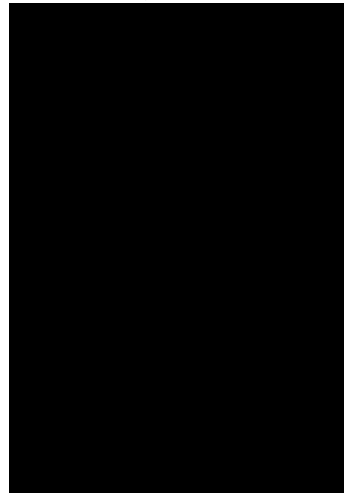
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