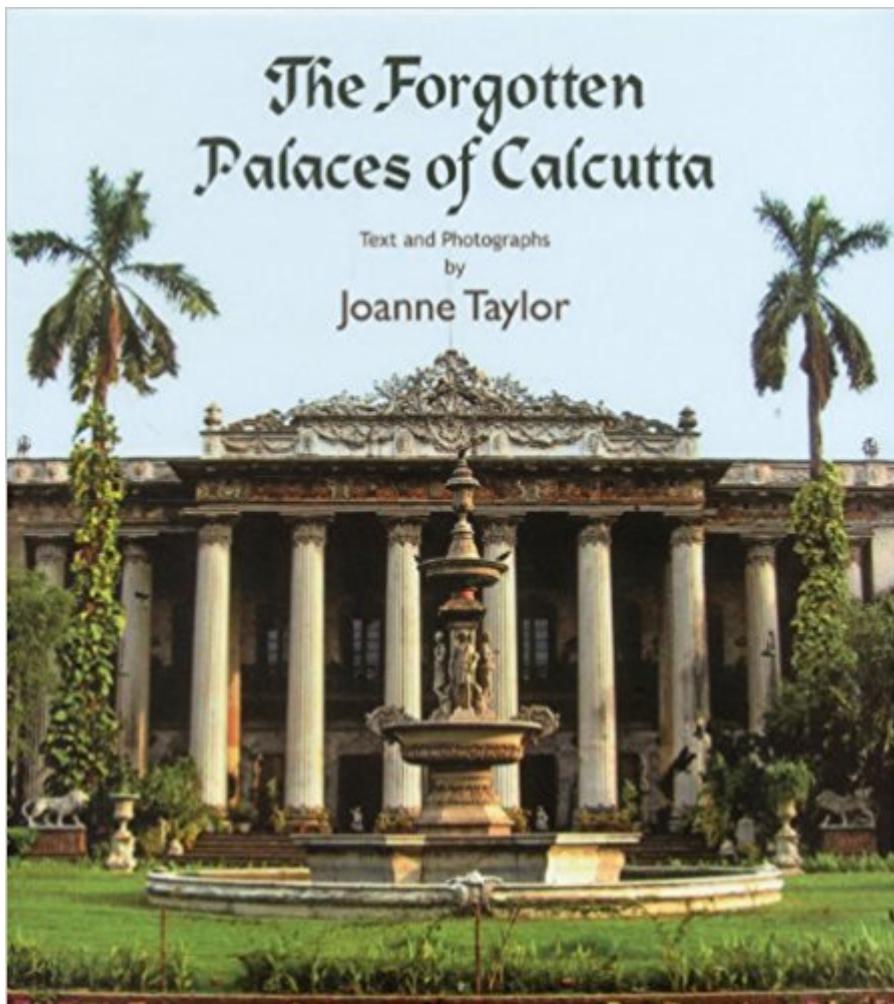


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The Forgotten Palaces Of Calcutta



Synopsis

The only documentation on the Raybari's during British Raj The Forgotten Palaces of Calcutta reveals the old buildings of the city, where heritage houses and history fill every crowded lane and secret courtyard. The great houses of Bengal's merchant princes have been largely forgotten and rarely photographed. The great families experienced enormous changes in fortune over the centuries, from great wealth and power during colonial times to dramatic economic and social upheaval after India's independence. For the remaining occupants, their ancestral homes are bitter-sweet symbols of family pride, difficult to restore, or sometimes even to maintain. By focusing on Calcutta's heritage mansions and palaces, many of whose interiors have remained the same for over 200 years, The Forgotten Palaces of Calcutta makes an important contribution to the architectural history of both Calcutta and India.

Contents: Preface; Introduction; Culture Dictates Form; Crowded Lanes and Secret Courtyards, Style and Construction; A New Urban Culture; Wealth and Competition, Urban Rajahs Set the Standard; The Spirit of a Great House; The Home of the Tagores; Maintaining the Past; Marble, Mirrors and a Rubens; The Palace of the Mullick Family; Tradition and Identity; Splendid Ruins, Architectural Expression and Independence; European Style in Calcutta; The Maharajah of Burdwan's City Palace; East and West, Old and New; Thanthania, the Great House of the Laha Family; The Power of the Image; The Deity at Home, Religion and Everyday Life; Rural Splendour; Ruined and Forgotten, the Andul Raj Bati; Quiet Contemplation; Country Life in Rural Bengal; End Note.

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Customer Reviews

Good book - would have enjoyed a few more pictures but worth the price.

In the forgotten palaces Calcutta , author Joanne Taylor achieves her aim of showing another side of Calcutta ; a city she feels , leaves a lasting impression on all who embrace it. While much has been written and photographed on the city's British architect and lifestyle very little has been written on the indigenous equivalent. The author has successfully highlighted the hybrid architectural style of the "Great Houses" and their condition today striving to exist in a city that seems unaware to their fate. There are many brilliant photographs and vibrant description of the house of Tagore, Rajah Nabakrishna Deb's palace, the palace of the Mullick family, the Maharajah of Burdwan's city palace and the grand house of the Laha family. The book certainly does not contain deep reflection but when one finishes reading it the painful question lingers: what is Calcutta to do with its "Great Houses" and can they survive in the twenty first century despite their complex problems.

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