ARBiT it happens here...



Indulge in Sweetness: Celebrating National Sundae Day

National Sundae Day is celebrated annually on November 11, honouring one of the most indulgent and beloved desserts worldwide. This sweet treat, typically made with ice cream topped with sauces, nuts, fruits, whipped cream, and cherries, has delighted generations with its creamy, customizable goodness. From classic chocolate and caramel combinations to inventive flavours like salted caramel pretzel or mango passionfruit, sundaes offer a playful canvas for culinary creativity. The day encourages people to treat themselves, gather with friends or family, and celebrate the simple joy of dessert. It's a reminder that life is sweeter when shared.

राष्ट्रदूत
WEDNESDAY
11 November 2026
A-B

#SPLENDOUR

The Emerald of Jahangir

In the Mughal worldview, gemstones carried deeper meanings. Emeralds, with their rich green hue, were associated with paradise, renewal, and divine favour



In the opulent world of the Mughal court, where art, authority, and symbolism were inseparable, gemstones were more than adornments, they were declarations of power. Among the most extraordinary of these treasures is the famed Mughal emerald associated with Jahangir, a gemstone that embodies both imperial grandeur and unmatched craftsmanship.

Weighing an astonishing 500 carats, this emerald stands as one of the largest and most remarkable gemstones ever recorded from the 17th century. Its sheer size alone places it in a rare category, but what truly sets it apart is the way it reflects the Mughal empire's unique fusion of natural beauty and artistic mastery.

The Mughals had a deep appreciation for gemstones, particularly emeralds, which were often imported from South America and then intricately worked upon in India. Under Jahangir's reign, this fascination reached new heights. The emperor, known for his refined aesthetic sensibilities and keen interest in nature and art, saw gemstones not merely as wealth, but as canvases.

This emerald was not just cut and polished, it was transformed. Mughal artisans, renowned for their precision, would engrave such stones with delicate inscriptions, floral motifs, or even verses. These carvings elevated the gem from a raw natural wonder into a cultural artifact,



blending lapidary skill with imperial identity.

What makes this particular emerald especially significant is its singularity. Unlike collections of jewels or sets of regalia, a stone of this magnitude stood alone, both as a physical object and as a symbol. It represented concentrated power: rare, enduring, and unmistakably royal.

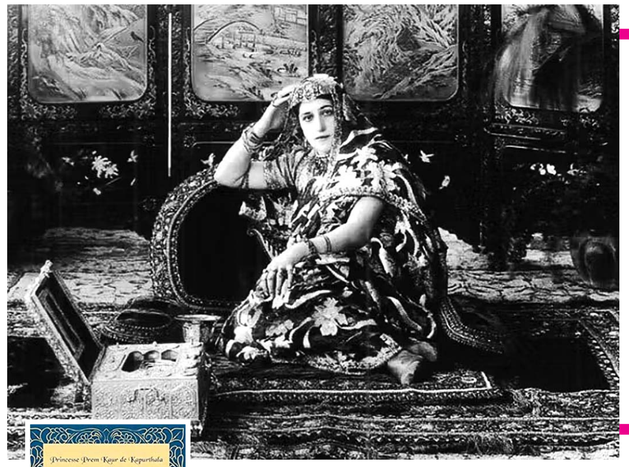
In the Mughal worldview, gemstones often carried deeper meanings. Emeralds, with their rich green hue, were associated with paradise, renewal, and divine favour. Owning and displaying such a gem was not just an act of luxury, but a statement of cosmic legitimacy, a way of aligning earthly rule with celestial order.

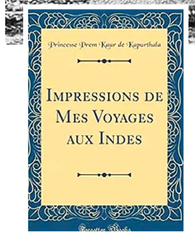
The legacy of Jahangir's emerald lies not only in its size or beauty, but in what it represents: a moment in history when art, nature, and empire converged seamlessly. It is a reminder of how the Mughal court transformed even the hardest stones into expressions of culture and authority. Centuries later, such treasures continue to captivate historians and collectors alike, not merely as relics of wealth, but as enduring symbols of a civilization that understood how to turn power into art.





The Esoteric Curiosa, flamenco dancer Anita.





Anita's book.

Anita spent a lot of her time at Mussoorie where the Maharaja of Kapurthala had a large palace called 'Chateau de Kapurthala.' Here, a number of Maharajas and their wives came to meet her. There is a well know story of how, during the visit to Hyderabad, the miserly Nizam Mir Osman Ali Khan fell in love with her. During a dinner, she found emerald jewels wrapped in her napkin, a gift from the Nizam, which were later found to be fake! It is during this visit that she was photographed by the famous photographer Raja Deen Dayal, in an Indian sari and dripping with jewels.



Maharaja Jagatjit Singh.

From A Nightclub To The Palace Of Kapurthala

#ANITA DELGADO



Prince Ajit Singh.



Anita as Maharani Prem Kaur.



Anita with her son Ajit.

Anjali Sharma
Senior Journalist & Wildlife Enthusiast

A Spanish flamenco dancer, an Indian Maharaja and a romance that crossed continents, the story of Anita Delgado and Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala reads like a fairy tale. Many Indian Maharajas married European women, and among the many European women, who married Indian Maharajas, the most famous was undoubtedly Anita Delgado (1890-1962), the Spanish flamenco dancer who went on to become the Maharani of Kapurthala. Hers is the proverbial 'Rags to Riches' tale, with even a wealthy prince thrown in. Such is the pull of her enigmatic story, especially in her native Spain, that around half a dozen books have been written on her. Few years back, there was even talk of a Hollywood movie being made on her life, with Penelope Cruz playing the lead.

It was destiny, which took this young girl from small town Spain, to the riches of Kapurthala, halfway across the globe.

Anita Delgado Briones was born in 1890, in the small town of Malaga in southern Spain. Her parents ran a small café - La Castana, which also doubled up as a gambling den. However, when the Spanish government banned gambling, Anita and her parents were forced to migrate to Madrid, in search of a livelihood. Her father failed to find work and the family's financial situation went from bad to worse. It was during this time that Anita and her sister Victoria began to take dance lessons, from a neighbour, who taught for free. Despite their father's disapproval, the sisters began dancing on stage to support the family.

It was in May, 1906, when Anita and her sister performed a curtain raiser act at the Kursaal Fronton, a modern nightclub in Madrid, that things took a turn. The nightclub was extremely popular with the city's well-heeled and international visitors as well.

That year, there was an even more august gathering, those visiting Madrid to attend the wedding of King Alfonso XIII of Spain. Among them was Maharaja Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala, who was completely enraptured by the 16 year old Anita's beauty.

One can only imagine the look on Anita's face, when on the morning after her performance, a large silver carriage stopped by her house and a bejewelled man in turban stepped out, to confess his love for her! Within a week, the Maharaja's secretary came with the formal proposal for marriage. Anita's conservative Christian parents were aghast, but the offer from the Maharaja of one lakh pounds for 'acceptance' overruled their prejudices.

Like Eliza Doolittle from *My Fair Lady*, Anita too was packed off to Paris for training and grooming, so, she could wear a crown. The Maharaja maintained a large palace in Paris, famous then as the 'Pavillon de Kapurthala.' In her memoirs, Anita writes how she had to learn etiquette, several languages, geography, music, dancing, skating, tennis and even how to drive an automobile. Finally, after months of training and ready to be a Queen, Anita travelled to India in 1907. Landing in Bombay, a special Kapurthala rail saloon was waiting to take them to Kapurthala, where on 28th January 1908, they married as per Sikh rites. From then on, Anita was addressed as Maharani 'Prem Kaur' of Kapurthala.

In Kapurthala, Anita was not far away from European luxury, for Kapurthala was known as the 'Paris of Punjab.' Jagatjit Singh of Kapurthala was a francophile, who had modeled his state along French lines. He had built a large palace inspired by the French royal palace of Fontainebleau, and employed the best French cooks trained at the Hotel Ritz in Paris. Not only that, the royal family only drank the French Evian water, which was specially shipped from France to Kapurthala!

This was Anita's honeymoon period. Anita writes how her husband, showing her the newly built French style palace, said to her, "I never imagined that a woman so beautiful would be the first to live here, but now I know it was destined to be you."

Soon after, Anita gave birth to a son named Ajit Singh. She even published her account of extensive travels in a book called 'Impresiones de mis viajes a las Indias' ('The impressions of my trip to the Indies). In India too, Anita created a sensation. The British officialdom looked down upon her and refused to entertain her at functions. But at the same time, there was widespread curiosity about the 'exotic' Maharani. During her trips to Europe, photographers would follow her everywhere.

But the reality of royal life was more complicated than the romance that had brought her there. Anita discovered that she was not the Maharaja's first wife, but his fifth. The customs of the royal household, the expectations placed upon her and her position within a complex family structure presented challenges that no amount of preparation in Paris could fully anticipate.

Anita spent a lot of her time at Mussoorie where the Maharaja of Kapurthala had a large palace called 'Chateau de Kapurthala.' Here, a number of Maharajas and their wives came to meet her. There is a well know story of how, during the visit to Hyderabad, the miserly Nizam Mir Osman Ali Khan fell in love with her. During a dinner, she found emerald jewels wrapped in her napkin, a gift from the Nizam, which were later found to be fake! It is during this visit that she was photographed by the famous photographer Raja Deen Dayal, in an Indian sari and dripping with jewels.

However, not all stories have a happy ending. Maharaja Jagatjit Singh was notorious for having a roving eye. And as Maharani, Anita was expected to remain chaste while the Maharaja moved on to younger women and mistresses. It was in 1925, at the Hotel Savoy in London, that the Maharaja and Anita had a big, very public fight. The Maharaja accused her of infidelity and threatened to divorce her. Anita threw herself on the floor crying. There was such a scene created at the hotel, that of all people, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, a common friend of Anita and the Maharaja, who was staying at the same hotel, had to intercede on Anita's behalf.

After 18 years of marriage, Anita and the Maharaja divorced soon after. Jinnah ensured that Anita got a generous financial settlement, and she returned to Europe.In Kapurthala, Anita's place as the 'White Maharani' was taken by another lady. In 1942, Maharaja Jagatjit Singh married a Czech named Eugenie Grosupova, who was an illegitimate daughter of a Czech count. She was given the name 'Tara Devi.' However, shy and unwilling to mix with Indians, she was very different from Anita. Over time, the Maharaja's interest in her waned too and this marriage ended tragically. On 9th December 1946, Tara Devi (taking her two dogs with her) went to Qutub Minar in Delhi and jumped from the 5th storey. Her body, and those of her two dogs, were found dangling from ledge of the 3rd storey of Qutub Minar. She was buried at the St. James' Church in Delhi.

It is said that Maharaja Jagatjit Singh never recovered from the shock, and passed away at the Taj Mahal Hotel in Bombay in 1949.

Meanwhile after her divorce, Anita lived a luxurious life with homes in Paris, Switzerland, Madrid and Malaga. It is said that she continued to wear her fabulous jewels and even eat with cutlery made of sold gold. She also spent time writing her memoirs, as she felt her story needed to be told. She passed away in 1962 at the age of 72. She left her jewels to her son Prince Ajit, and her other possessions to her nieces.

However, Anita's strange story does not end with her death. Her son, Prince Ajit Singh, served as an Indian diplomat in Buenos Aires and in London and died unmarried in New Delhi in 1984. Anita's family had ended, or so it was believed until 2009, when a Lebanese-American Journalist Maha Akhtar published her bestselling book 'The Maharani's Hidden Granddaughter,' in which she revealed how her search for her birth certificate had revealed that she was Prince Ajit's biological daughter, out of wedlock. A fact which she claimed was corroborated by her mother, on her deathbed. Maha even owns an amethyst ring which once belonged to Anita. With so many twists and turns, it is no wonder that Anita's life continues to inspire writers and filmmakers, after all, no piece of fiction could ever beat this tale!

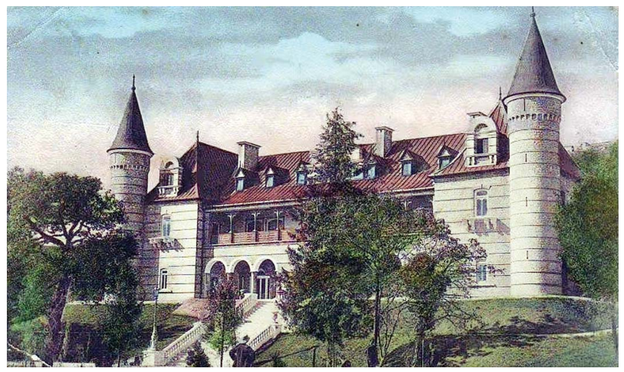
A Woman Between Two Worlds

Anita Delgado's journey had taken her from a modest Spanish family to the court of an Indian Maharaja, across two cultures and into a chapter of history where romance, royalty and personal independence collided.

Anita crossed continents, learned new languages, entered a royal household and became part of India's princely history. Yet, she ultimately spent her later years away from the throne that had once defined her identity.

Between Madrid and Kapurthala, she belonged to two extraordinary worlds, and never entirely to either.

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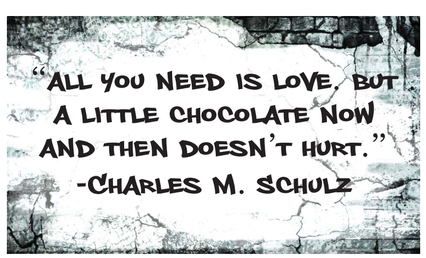


Chateau de Kapurthala at Mussoorie.



Palace of Kapurthala.

THE WALL



BABY BLUES

By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



ZITS

By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman

