

► TRAVEL TO INDIA :- Puducherry

If peace and a break is the most sought after, then Puducherry is surely one of the choicest holiday destinations in South India. The town offers a unique experience with its mix of modern heritage and spiritual culture. With a predominantly historical background, Puducherry takes one centuries back in time.



Adventure Sports

Puducherry offers tourists a host of recreational sports to partake of. The best known of these is the Chunnambar Water Sports Complex. On offer are pedal boats, kayaks, speed boat rides and the newly introduced banana rides. It is an ideal destination for all kinds of thrill seekers. Conditions are ideal for surfers of all skill-levels and the prices are unbeatable. Divers can explore marine life underwater and see stunning corals, fishes and sea plants. Lucky ones may spot turtles and whale sharks too. Horse riding is yet another way to get the adrenaline flowing for first timers as well as more committed riders. Very few places in the country offer you the chance to ride a thorough-bred or an Arabian stallion.



Culture Arts and Crafts

Puducherry's culture, arts and crafts reflect its traditional Tamil heritage, French influences, a fusion of the two, as well as connections with nearby Auroville. Bharatnatyam and Carnatic music are as prominent as modern performing arts. Customary Tamil festivals such as Masimagam are celebrated with fanfare just as Bastille Day is. The city holds several music, dance and theatre festivals every year, in addition to regular performances. Film screenings and festivals are also gaining popularity. Painting, photography and sculpture exhibitions take place at galleries and other venues. Some boutiques, cafes and restaurants showcase the works of local artists, such as drawings or pictures of scenes from local life.



Eco Tourism

The township of Auroville stands as a successful demonstration of long-term afforestation efforts. What was parched, barren land in the late sixties has since been transformed into a green zone with millions of trees. Today, Auroville has several communities and projects focussed on reforestation, water conservation and sustainable living, some of which have training programmes, workshops and volunteering opportunities in place. One of the best known of these is Sadhana Forest India, which works to reforest 70 acres of degraded land with indigenous Tropical Dry Evergreen Forest. Travellers can also visit the Botanical Gardens in Puducherry and the many nurseries spread across the city.



Faith Based

Puducherry has several sites of religious and spiritual interest. Visitors interested in religious sites in southern India will find Puducherry to be an ideal base, as the city has excellent road connectivity as well as ample facilities for tourists. Most of Puducherry's temples, such as the famous Manukula Vinayagar Temple, are built in the traditional Tamil style, while some such as the Kanniga Parameswari Temple, also incorporate elements of colonial influence. The Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, The Church of Our Lady of Angels, the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception are some of the prominent churches of the city. Many travellers also visit the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and the international township of Auroville.



Heritage Walks

Feel the essence of the colonial town as you explore French and Tamil parts of Puducherry.

- 1. ASHRAM WALK:** Starting Point: Ashram Office (beach), Walk ends at: Ashram Dining Room, Distance covered: 1 km, Approximate time taken: 30 to 45 minutes.
- 2. WALK ON FRENCH HERITAGE:** Starting Point: Puducherry Tourist Information Centre, Walk ends at: Puducherry Tourist Information Centre, Distance covered: Approx. 2 kms, Approximate time taken: 1 hr to 1.30 hrs.
- 3. WALK ON TAMIL QUARTER:** Starting Point: Easwaran Koil (Temple), Walk ends at: VOC School, Distance covered: Approx. 2 kms, Approximate time taken: 1 hr



M.I.C.E

Puducherry is a budding destination for corporate and other meetings and events. Quality facilities are available at competitive prices, and the options are growing. Many hotels offer venues such as conference halls, boardrooms, lawns and banquet halls, as well as other necessary infrastructure such as wireless internet, audio-visual and video conferencing equipment etc. Spaces and amenities to organise round-tables and other conferences are also available at several clubs. For weddings, ceremonies and special parties, one can choose from a range of banquet halls. For pre- and post-conference tours, there are opportunities to do everything from heritage walks to shopping to adventure sports.



Puducherry Science Centre and Planetarium

Puducherry Science Centre & Planetarium (also known as Puducherry Science Park) is located in Lawspet is sprawled over 3 acres with a built-up area of 1500 sq.mtrs. It has 6 areas of focus at the moment with ample provision for expansion. The Science Demonstration Corner will conduct live demonstration and experiments to groups of visitors and students to showcase why science is fun. The "Children's Corner" engages kids with simple experiments, a variety of puzzles and science kits. The Digital Planetarium provides unique opportunity for Science Centres to inform and educate the visitors on various aspects of astronomy by simulating a dynamic sky.



Rural Tourism

Travellers who wish to go beyond sightseeing and get a taste of rural life can choose from a variety of programmes at Mohanam, a non-profit organisation working to preserve local traditions and to act as a bridge between visitors and villages. On offer are home-stays with native families, tours to sites of historical or cultural significance in the area and opportunities to learn more about village life and customs. For example, travellers can learn the art of Kolam and understand the meaning behind the ritual as well. Visitors can take classes in local cooking, music, dance and martial arts, or even volunteer at bamboo farms. Some cultural centres organise activities to experience regional arts, cuisine and other traditions.



Shopping

Visitors can choose their mementoes from Puducherry's many specialities - ceramic tableware and ornaments, terracotta toys and trinkets, incense and scented candles, handmade paper lampshades and stationery, Buddha and Ganesh figures carved out of stone, brass statues and lamps, colourful hammocks, crocheted hats and dream catchers, papier-mache vases and idols, handmade dolls, bamboo knick-knacks, and of course, antique furniture and curios. Auroville boutiques present a contrasting experience, with their selective merchandise and calm ambience. A trip to Goubert Market and the Sunday market will give the traveller an authentic bazaar experience and a peek at local life.

Health and Wellness



Puducherry boasts a good number of general as well as speciality hospitals, testing facilities and labs, as well as many pharmacies across the city. Treatments cost a fraction of what they would in many parts of the Western world. A well-established tourist destination, the city offers many options for restful recuperation to patients. One of the country's best known eye hospitals has a branch in the city. High quality dental care is another prominent speciality. Indian therapies such as Ayurveda, Siddha, Marma and several variants of Yoga can be tried out. Workshops for various types of meditative practices, including the well-known Vipassana and Art of Living, can be found here.

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