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# GANDHI MUSEUM

North of Madurai



Gandhi Memorial Museum, established in 1959, is a memorial museum for Mahatma Gandhi located in the city of Madurai in Tamil Nadu, India. Known as Gandhi Museum, it is now one of the five Gandhi Sanghralayas (Gandhi Museums) in the country. It includes a part of the blood-stained garment worn by Gandhi when he was assassinated by Nathuram Godse.

## HISTORY

Years after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, in 1948 an appeal was made to the citizens of India nationwide to build memorials for him. With the help of contributions from poor and rich citizens of India, a trust was established for this cause, the Mahatma Gandhi National Memorial Trust. This museum was inaugurated by the former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru on 15 April 1959. Gandhi Memorial Museum in Madurai comes under the Peace Museums Worldwide selected by the United Nations Organisation (UNO). The palace of Rani Mangammal was renovated and converted into the museum. It is near the Madurai Collector Office.

Collections in the Museum The museum has an original letter written personally by Gandhiji to Narayanan Satsangi of Devakottai. A congratulatory message sent by Gandhiji to freedom fighter and poet Subramania Bharati is also preserved in this museum. Another interesting letter is the one written by the Mahatma Gandhi to Adolf Hitler addressing him as "Dear Friend"

Visual Biography of Gandhiji Located in a quiet place, this memorial of Gandhi contains a "Visual Biography of Bapuji" containing photos, paintings, sculptures, manuscripts, quotations and selected copies of his letters and renderings. This section contains 124 rare photographs depicting various phases of Gandhi from his childhood days until being taken to the crematorium. The pictures displayed here are carefully selected making viewers remember the importance of a national leader, who lived his life as an example to all

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# THIRUMALAI NAYAKAR MAHAL

South of Madurai



Thirumalai Nayak Palace is a 17th-century palace erected in 1636 CE by King Tirumala Nayaka, a king of Madurai's Nayaka dynasty who ruled Madurai from 1623 to 1659, in the city of Madurai, India. The building, which can be seen today, was the main palace, in which the king lived. The original palace complex was four times bigger than the present structure. In its heyday, the palace was considered to be one of the wonders of the South. The palace is located two kilometres (1.2 mi) south east of the Meenakshi Amman Temple.

## HISTORY

The Nayaks of Madurai ruled this Kingdom from 1545 until the 1740s and Thirumalai Nayak (1623-1659) was one of their greatest kings notable for various buildings in and around Madurai. During the 17th centuries the Madurai Kingdom had Portuguese, Dutch and other Europeans as traders, missionaries and visiting travellers. Over a span of 400 years many parts of the buildings suffered the destructive effects of war; a few, however, are sufficiently in repair to be converted into use by the garrison, as granaries, store-houses, powder magazines during time of East India Company. King Thirumalai Nayak's grandson had demolished much of the fine structure and removed most of the jewels and woodcarvings in order to build his own palace in Tiruchirappalli. However Lord Napier, the Governor of Madras, had partially restored the palace from 1866 to 1872, and the subsequent restoration works carried out several years ago, today, we get to see the Entrance Gate, The Main Hall and the Dance Hall

Built in 1636, as a focal point of his capital at Madurai, Thirumalai Nayak intended the palace to be one of the grandest in South India. The Interior of the palace surpasses many of its Indian contemporaries in scale. The interior is richly decorated whilst the exterior is treated in a more austere style. The king hired an Italian architect to design the complex, and hence the Dravidian – Italian architecture. During this period Madurai was a thriving kingdom with Portuguese, Dutch and other Europeans as traders, missionaries and visiting travelers. This might have influenced the design inspirations of the palace [2] During the 18th century many structures that were part of this palace were pulled down or incorporated into buildings in the adjacent streets. What remains is the enclosed court known as the Svarga Vilasam and a few adjoining buildings. The audience chamber of the Svarga Vilasam is a vast hall with arcades about 12 m high. The courtyard of Svarga Vilasam measures 75 m (246 ft) by 50 m (160 ft).[3] The architecture is a blend of indigenous and Islamic forms. Thirumalai nayakar mahal is famous for its giant pillars. Pillar's height is 82 feet (25 m) and width is 19 feet (5.8 m). Historically, the palace measured 554,000 sq ft (51,500 m<sup>2</sup>) and was 900 ft (270 m) long by 660 ft (200 m) wide.

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## Azhagar Kovil

North of Madurai



Alagar Koyil is a village in Madurai district in the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu. The history and living of the village is centered around Kallalagar Temple. Constructed in the Dravidian style of architecture, the temple is glorified in the Nalayira Divya Prabandham, the early medieval Tamil canon of the Alvar saints from the 6th-9th centuries CE. It is one of the 108 Divya Desams dedicated to Vishnu, who is worshiped as Kallalagar and his consort Lakshmi as Thirumamagal.

### HISTORY

Chithirai festival of this temple celebrated for ten days is one of the declared festivals of Tamil Nadu government. This festival day is declared as a local holiday. In Chithirai (April-May), Lord Kallalagar starts from Alagar kovil in the form of Kallar [4] and reaches Madurai on Pournami (Full Moon day). Here he steps into river Vaigai in his Horse Vaganam. Lakhs of devotees flock to river Vaigai to see this event. "Ethir Sevai" festival is celebrated on the day before Alagar steps into river Vaigai. It is a tradition for the people of Madurai to welcome Alagar. As Alagar returns from Vandiyur Dhasavatharam, festival is celebrated throughout the night at Ramarayar Mandapam in the Northern part of river Vaigai. After this event, Alagar is taken to Mysore Veera Mandapam on decorated Anantharayar Palanquin. The next morning Alagar in the form of Kallar returns to Alagar kovil in 'Poo Pallakku' (Palanquin decorated with flowers). In the month of April and May, each year the great Chitra festival is celebrated on Pournami (full moon day). The Festival dramatically re-enacts the visitation of Kallalagar to Madurai from Alagar Koyil. Lakhs of devotees flock to river Vaigai to personally witness the event of lord Alagar stepping down into the river and to get his blessings. During the months of July and August the festival of Aadi Brahmamorchavam is being celebrated for 10 days. This festival occurs within the precincts of the shrine. Devotees from different parts of Tamilnadu throng to participate in this festival. The temple car 'Amaiththa Narayanan' is taken in procession during Pournami (Full-Moon day) of Aadi (Brahmotsavam).

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## TEPPAKULAM

East of Madurai



Vandiyur Marianman Teppakulam is a temple tank located near to Vandiyur Marianman Temple and situated at a distance of about 5 km from the Meenakshi Amman Temple. Literally, Teppakulam means temple pond mainly used for devotional festivals. The tank is connected to Vaigai River through an ingenious system of underground Channels. It has total of 12 long stairs (steps) made of granite on all four sides. The temple as well as the stairs was built by the King Thirumalai Nayak. In the centre of the tank there is a Madapam called Maiya Mandapam (Central Mandapam) with Vinayakar temple and garden.

### HISTORY

This is the location where the king Thirumalai Naicker excavated the soil to fabricate the bricks required for constructing his palace, Thirumalai Nayakkar Mahal. The pit that was thus formed is seen as tank now. It is approximately 305 m long and 290 m wide, nearly equal area to that of Meenakshi Amman Temple. Built in 1645 A.D., this is the biggest tank in Tamil Nadu [2]. 7 foot tall Mukuruni Vinayakar idol in Meenakshi Amman Temple is believed to be found during excavation process of this pond Marianman Teppakulam is famous for the celebrations of the Float festival, which is celebrated in the Tamil month of Thai (14 January to 15 February). The celebrations take place on a full moon night (Thaipusam) and the pristine water turns colourful as the temple is lit. The idols of Goddess Meenakshi and her consort Lord Sundareswarar, the deities of the Meenakshi Amman Temple come down to the tank in colorful floats, presenting a mesmerizing sight. Pilgrims across India come to Madurai to participate in the festival.

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MEENAKSHI AMMAN TEMPLE

Center of Madurai




Anlinmigu Meenakshi Sundaraswarar Temple is a historic Hindu temple located on the southern bank of the Vaigai River[3] in the temple city[4] of Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India. It is dedicated to the goddess Meenakshi, a form of Shakti, and her consort, Sundareswarar, a form of Shiva.[5] The temple is at the center of the ancient temple city of Madurai mentioned in the Tamil Sangam literature, with the goddess temple mentioned in 6th-century-CE texts.[6] This temple is one of the Pandal Petra Sthalams, which are 275 temples of Shiva that are revered in the verses of Tamil Saiva Nayanars of 6th-9th century CE. The west tower (gopuram) of the temple is the model based on which the Tamil Nadu State Emblem is designed.

### HISTORY

Madurai Meenakshi Sundareswarar temple was built by Pandayan Emperor Sadayavarman Kulasekaran I (1190 CE–1205 CE). He built the main Portions of the three-storeyed Gopuram at the entrance of Sundareswarar Shrine and the central portion of the Goddess Meenakshi Shrine are some of the earliest surviving parts of the temple. The traditional texts call him a poet-saint king, additionally credit him with a poem called Ambikai Malai, as well as shrines (koti) each for Natarajar and Surya near the main temple, Ayyanar in the east, Vinayagar in the south, Karianalperumal in the west and Kali in the north. He also built a Mahamandapam. Kulasekara Pandya was also a poet and he composed a poem on Meenakshi named Ambikai Malai.[9] Maravarman Sundara Pandyan I built a gopuram in 1231, then called Avanivendaraman, later rebuilt, expanded and named as Sundara Pandya Thirukkopuram.[9] Chitra gopuram (W), also known as Muttalakkum Vayil, was built by Maravarman Sundara Pandyan II (1238-1251). This gopuram is named after the frescoes and reliefs that depict secular and religious themes of Hindu culture. Maravarman Sundara Pandyan II also added a pillared corridor to the Sundareswara shrine and the Sundara Pandyan Mandapam.[9] It was rebuilt after the 14th-century damage, its granite structure was renovated by Kumara Krishnappara after 1595.[10] Though the temple has historic roots, most of the present campus structure was rebuilt after the 14th century CE, further repaired, renovated and expanded in the 17th century by Tirumala Nayaka.[11][12] In the early 14th century, the armies of Delhi Sultanate led by Muslim Commander Malik Kafur plundered the temple, looted it of its valuables and destroyed the Madurai temple town along with many other temple towns of South India.[13][14][15] The contemporary temple is the result of rebuilding efforts started by the Vijayanagara Empire rulers who rebuilt the core and reopened the temple.[13][16] In the 16th century, the temple complex was further expanded and fortified by the Nayak ruler Vishwanatha Nayakar and later others. The restored complex now houses 14 gopurams (gateway towers), ranging from 45–50 m in height, with the southern gopura tallest at 51.9 metres (170 ft). The complex has numerous sculpted pillared halls such as Anyirunkaai (1000-pillared hall), Kilikoondum-mandapam, Golu-mandapam and Pudu-mandapam. Its shrines are dedicated to Hindu deities and Shaivism scholars, with the vimanas above the garbhagrihas (sanctums) of Meenakshi and Sundareswara gilded with gold.[16][17][18] The temple is a major pilgrimage destination within the Shaivism tradition, dedicated to Meenakshi Devi and Shiva. However, the temple includes Vishnu in many narratives, sculptures and rituals as he is considered to be Meenakshi's brother.[19] This has made this temple and Madurai as the "southern Mathura", one included in Vaishnava texts.[20][21] The Meenakshi temple also includes Lakshmi, flute playing Krishna, Rukmini, Brahma, Saraswati, other Vedic and Puranic deities, as well as artwork showing narratives from major Hindu texts. The large temple complex is the most prominent landmark in Madurai and attracts tens of thousands visitors a day.[22] The temple attracts over a million pilgrims and visitors during the annual 10-day Meenakshi Tirukalyanam festival, celebrated with much festivities and a ratha (chariot) procession during the Tamil month of Chittirai (overlaps with April–May in Georgian calendar, Chaitra in North India).[23] The Temple has been adjudged best 'Swachh Iconic Place' in India as on 1 October 2017 under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan

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