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## 1. Geographical location

Pondicherry, now known as Puducherry is one of the seven Union Territories of India. It sits in the southern part of the Indian Peninsula. The territory is a formed out of four unconnected exclaves – namely Puducherry, Karaikal, Yanam (on the Bay of Bengal) and Mahe (on the Arabian Sea).

## 2. Neighbouring cities/countries

Puducherry Has Number Of Key Cities Of The South As Its Neighbors. Chennai Is The Closest Of Course. Travelers Need To Cover A Total Road Distance Of 162kms From Between Chennai To Puducherry. Whereas From Vellore, The Road To Puducherry Is 160kms. Tirupati And Madurai Are Also Fairly Close To Puducherry. If You're Coming From Bangalore To Visit, There Are A Number Buses Which Ply Back And Forth Between The Two Locations – Via Hosur And Uthangarai. From Hyderabad, The Distance To Puducherry Is Approx 790kms, Whereas From Cochin It Is About 560kms.

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## 3. Significance

An urban agglomeration with a distinct and unique colonial heritage, Pondicherry is a small and beautiful city renowned for its strong French presence found nowhere else in India. French and Indian cultures and lifestyles co-exist harmoniously in this capital city and attract thousands of visitors every day from all over the world. The city stands in stark contrast to the south Indian, especially Tamil, culture. The city has two faces – a subdued French personality and a loud and colorful Tamil spirit. The city is also famous because of the availability of tax-free alcohol and many other products. The presence of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram at Auroville adds to the diverse nature of the city.

## 4. History

Essentially a possession of the colonial French, the first mentions of Puducherry date back to the 2nd century CE. Interestingly, many historians reckon that 'Puducherry' exists in the 'Periplus of the Erythraean Sea'. In it there is a mention of a marketplace called Poduke, and historian G. W. B. Huntingford has opined that the location exists about 2 miles away from present-day Puducherry. Also, excavations staged on the site – between 1944 and 1949 – led to the discovery that the place was "a trading station to which goods of Roman manufacture were imported during the first half of the 1st century CE". In the colonial era, Pondicherry was predominantly occupied by the French and it was one of the favorite French colonies while the French were in India.

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## 5. Cultural identity

Puducherry's cultural fabric is a mix of various communities owing to its colorful history. Although a good number of its populace is Tamil, still, Puducherry is home to a people from different states and countries – especially Europe. Due to the French occupation of Pondicherry, their influences linger in Puducherry's culture as well. The local policemen adorn the red 'kepi'. Even after more than a century has passed since their departure, the Frenchness nicely exists in Puducherry's architecture too. Many Puducherry's locals possess French citizenship as they were born during the time of the French rule. Many of the foreigners that come to visit Puducherry have their ancestral roots here.

## 6. Natural resources

Particularly Fresh Sea Food is the wealth and treasure of Pondicherry. As the union territory does not receive the required rainfall and temperature so it has no forest cover and also no hills under the territory. The major and main soil types that are found in the territory are Red Ferallitic, Black Clay and that of Coastal alluvial. It has been a producer of toys made from Terracotta, Pappier-Mache and that of Plaster of Paris.

# 7. Key site seeing places (paid and free)

## 7.1. Paid

### 7.1.1. Pondicherry Museum

Address : No. 2, St Louis Street, Near Raj Nvas, White Town, Puducherry, 605001
Zipcode : 605001
Location : 11.9342565, 79.8348776
Contact : 0413 222 3950
Nearest Public Transport : Aurobindo Ashram Bus Stop
Entry Fee : INR 10
Open & Close Timing : Monday-Saturday 09:00hrs-17:00hrs; Sunday Closed
Time Required : 1
Expected Wait Time : 15 minutes
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.1.2. Botanical Garden

Address : State Bank Of India, Anna Statue, Ambedkar Nagar, Puducherry, 605001
Zipcode : 605001
Location : 11.9285252, 79.8230209
Contact : 098408 32738
Nearest Public Transport : Bussy Street Bus Stop
Entry Fee : INR 10
Open & Close Timing : Daily 10:00hrs-12:45hrs; 14:00hrs-17:00hrs
Time Required : 3
Expected Wait Time : 20 minutes
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.1.3. Kargil War Memorial

Address : Goubert Avenue, Beach Road, Pondicherry 605001, India
Zipcode : 605001

Location : 11.9363851, 79.836480299
Nearest Public Transport : Aurobindo Ashram Bus Station
Time Required : 0.5
Buy Ticket : No

## 7.2. Free

### 7.2.1. Paradise Beach

Address : Cuddalore Road, Chunnambar, Puducherry, 605007
Zipcode : 605007
Location : 11.8756897, 79.8220458
Contact : 0413 260 0194
Nearest Public Transport : Pudukuppam Bus Station
Open & Close Timing : Open 24 hours
Time Required : 3
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.2. Pondicherry Promenade

Address : Beach Rd, Mandapathur, Puducherry 609307
Zipcode : 609307
Location : 11.9332583, 79.8356178
Nearest Public Transport : BCET Bus Station
Open & Close Timing : Open 24 hours
Time Required : 0.5
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.3. Arulmigu Manakula Vinayagar Temple

Address : Manakula Vinayagar Koil StreetOpp Governer Office, Puducherry, 605002
Zipcode : 605002
Location : 11.9358044, 79.8336715
Contact : 0413 233 6544
Website : http://www.manakulavinayagartemple.com/
Nearest Public Transport : Aurobindo Ashram Bus Station
Open & Close Timing : Daily 05:45hrs-12:30hrs; 16:00hrs-21:30hrs
Time Required : 2

Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.4. The Basilica Of The Sacred Heart of Jesus

Address : Cardinal De Beausset St, M.G. Road Area, Puducherry, 605001
Zipcode : 605001
Location : 33.7637629, -84.3856716
Contact : 910-4132334916
Nearest Public Transport : Puducherry Train Station
Time Required : 1
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.5. Eglise de Notre Dame des Anges

Address : White Town, Puducherry, 605001
Zipcode : 605001
Location : 11.9300791, 79.8343138
Nearest Public Transport : GH Bus Station
Open & Close Timing : Daily 07:00hrs-18:30hrs
Time Required : 2
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.6. Sri Varadaraja Perumal Temple

Address : Mahatma Gandhi Rd, Heritage Town, Puducherry, 605001
Zipcode : 605001
Location : 11.9409198, 79.829849299
Contact : 099486 44724
Nearest Public Transport : Tollgate Bus Stop
Open & Close Timing : Daily 06:00hrs-12:00hrs; 16:30hrs-21:00hrs
Time Required : 1.5
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.7. Bharathi Park

Address : Bharati Park, Puduchchery 641011
Zipcode : 641011
Location : 11.9330191, 79.834193799
Nearest Public Transport : GH Bus Station
Open & Close Timing : Daily 08:00hrs-20:00hrs
Time Required : 1.5
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.8. Sri Aurobindo Ashram

Address : No. 12, Marine Street, White Town, Near Junction of Manakula Vinayagar Kovil Street and Marine Street, White Town, Puducherry, 605002
Zipcode : 605002
Location : 11.936575, 79.834051999
Contact : 0413 223 3604
Website : http://www.sriaurobindoashram.org/
Nearest Public Transport : Aurobindo Ashram Bus Station
Open & Close Timing : Daily 08:00hrs-12:00hrs; 14:00hrs-18:00hrs
Time Required : 2
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.9. Auroville Road

Address : Auroville Beach, Bommayapalayam, Tamil Nadu 605101
Zipcode : 605101
Location : 12.0172621, 79.834804599
Nearest Public Transport : Auroville Beach Bus Stop
Open & Close Timing : Open 24 hours
Time Required : 2
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.10. Serenity Beach

Address : Kottakuppam, Puducherry 605101
Zipcode : 605101
Location : 11.9689702, 79.8446149
Nearest Public Transport : Open 24 hours
Open & Close Timing : Open 24 hours
Time Required : 2
Buy Ticket : No

## 7.2.11. Immaculate Conception Cathedral

Address : 204, Mission Street, Near V.O.C School, Mission Street, Puducherry, 605001
Zipcode : 605001
Location : 11.9330953, 79.830111999999999
Contact : 910-4132332857
Nearest Public Transport : GH & MH Bus Station
Open & Close Timing : Daily 07:00hrs-18:30hrs
Time Required : 2
Buy Ticket : No

## 7.2.12. Nehru Street

Address : Senthamarai Nagar, Depasimpet Puducherry, 605012
Zipcode : 605012
Location : 11.9509087, 79.830400100000002
Time Required : 0
Buy Ticket : No

## 7.2.13. Mission Street

Address : Mission St MG Road Area Puducherry, 605001
Zipcode : 605001
Location : 11.9325649, 79.830624700000004
Time Required : 0

Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.14. Saram China Market

Zipcode : 0
Location : 13.0168831, 80.24719110000001
Time Required : 0
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.15. Beach Road

Zipcode : 0
Location : 11.9322522, 79.83577230000003
Time Required : 0
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.16. Mudaliarpet Market

Address : Bharathidasan Nagar, Mudaliarpet, Puducherry, 605004
Zipcode : 605004
Location : 11.9215605, 79.81478029999994
Time Required : 0
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.17. Goubert Market

Zipcode : 0
Location : 11.9360919, 79.82832489999998
Time Required : 0
Buy Ticket : No

### 7.2.18. Ariyankuppam Market

Zipcode : 0

Location : 11.8967427, 79.80462650000004
Time Required : 0
Buy Ticket : No

## 8. Key sites sports & adventure

Pondicherry is a great place for water sports. Surfing and scuba diving are very popular among the foreign visitors. Other exciting adventure sports in Pondicherry include boating, jet skiing, banana rides, canoeing, kayaking, backwater sailing, rock climbing, and beach camping. Horse riding is yet another thrilling outdoor activity in the city.

- **Boating at Ousteri LakeOsudu Lake -**

  Address : Osudu Lake, Puducherry 605502
  Location : 11.9577385,79.7455956
  Nearest Public Transport : Villianur Railway Station
  Entry Fees : The prices ranges from INR 40-INR 100
  Open / Close Time : Daily 09:00hrs-17:00hrs
  Time Required : 2.00

- **Scuba diving -**

  Address : 9, Archbishop Gandhi Street, Colas Nagar, 1st Road Opposite Indira Gandhi Stadium,, Puducherry, 605001
  Location : 11.9234606,79.82799849999992
  Contact No : 099402 19449
  Website : http://www.templeadventures.com/
  Entry Fees : Price ranges from INR 5500- INR 3000
  Open / Close Time : Daily 06:30hrs-18:30hrs
  Time Required : 3.00

## 9. Adventure sports, Local sports, stadiums

One of the popular local games is pétanque, a game played in France and Spain, and in Pondicherry, of course! It is a game of metal balls, a game that came to this Indian city through the French. Cricket is played widely and there are some cricket stadiums and academies in the city. Football, taekwondo, rugby, kabaddi, tennis, and basketball are also quite popular.

- **Rajiv Gandhi Cricket Stadium:**

  Address : Puducherry, 605014
  Location : 12.0252434,79.851591999999998

## 10. Spas and relaxation

- **Naturals:**

  Address : J-Plaza, Plot No. 83, 84, Sithanantha Nagar, Ellaipillai Chavadi, Near ICICI, Bank, Pondicherry, Puducherry 605005
  Location : 11.940043,79.83399789999999
  Contact No : 0413 220 6322
  Website : http://www.naturals.in/

- **Essensuals by Toni and Guy:**

  Address : No.317, 1st floor, Mission Street (above Subway), Pondicherry, Puducherry 605001
  Location : 11.929975,79.830236000000001
  Contact No : 0413 430 0053
  Website : http://essensuals.com/

- **The Windflower Resort and Spa Pondicherry:**

  Address : Survey No.198/1,198/2, Manavely Revenue Village, Maraimalai Adigal Street, Chinnaveeram Pattinam, Ariyankuppam Post, Puducherry, 605007
  Location : 11.8819491,79.819800699999997
  Contact No : 099014 46666
  Website : http://www.thewindflower.com/

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## 11. Events calendar

| Month | Events |
| --- | --- |
| | **Pongal Festival @ Pondicherry**<br><br>**It is a Hindu festival observed in Tamil Nadu Pongal and celebrated for four days. Participants have different things to do according to the four days of festivities. The most important day is known as Thai Pongai and it is celebrated on the second day.**<br>**Masi Magam @ Pondicherry**<br><br>**Maasi Makam (Masi Magam), is a festival mainly celebrated by Tamil speaking people. It is celebrated on the Tamil month 'Masi'. The People believe that the believers who flock the procession and take a dip in the water body, their sins are forgiven.**<br>**Shiva Ratri@ Pondicherry**<br><br>**Shivarartri is a festival celebrated on both North and south India although in North india it is known as Maha Shivarati. Both Maha Shivarati and Shivaratri are celebrated on** |

the same day.
Tamil New Year @ Pondicherry

Tamil new year is celebrated by the Tamil people on the first day of Tamil month Chithchari.
Villianur Temple Car Festival @ Villianur Temple at Villianur, Pondicherry

It is also known as the Brahmotsavam festival. Villianuar Car Festival is an annual festival celebrated for 10 days. It is the most liked event by Union territory
Bastille Day @ Pondicherry

Pondicherry was colonized by the French 300 years ago, so part of the French culture still remains in Pondicherry. Bastille day is a French celebration that commemorates beginning of French revolution against the Bastille in 1789.
Fete De Pondicherry @ South Zone Cultural Centre

Fete De Pondicherry is cultural extravaganza held to celebrate all the freedom fighters. Well Known artist from various parts of India perform in this event.

**Sea Food Festival @ la Royal Park**

**La Royal park sea food festival features freshly prepared sea food.**

**Festival of Lights @ Pondicharry**

**An ancient Hindu festival celebrated on the month of October. Deepavali celebrates the victory of light against darkness.**

**Karthikeya Deepam @ Temples and Homsteads**

**Karthikya Deepam is a festival celebrated in Southern India mostly by the Tamali People. It features lighting of clay lamps and placing them on the entrance of homesteads.**

**Joyful Living: Making Ordinary Day Extraordinary @ Aurroville**

**Joyful Living is a life changing retreat that will make your time worthwhile.**

## 12. Key local guides and tours

Pondicherry offers a host of sights and activities that are best enjoyed by walking or on two-wheelers. Hire a cycle or bike or join a walking or cycling tour and wander through the streets and lanes for a more real experience of the local life and culture. Cycle tour through the French quarter and through the Tamil quarter is a unique experience. It is almost like a ride through two different parts of the world that differ culturally and ambience-wise. Bird watching tour on the Ousteri Lake will be a refreshing change from the busy city lanes. Watch migratory and residential birds and enjoy the great biodiversity of the lake and the marshes during sunrises and sunsets.

## 13. Transportation hubs

The nearest international airport is the Chennai International Airport which is around 150 km away from Pondicherry. Tourists can take bus, taxi, or train to reach the city from the airport. A taxi ride will cost about 2500-4000 rupees and takes 3 hours to reach. A train journey will take more time than travelling by road, 4-6 hours depending on the type of train. Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation runs air-conditioned Volvo buses from Chennai to Pondicherry. Private buses are also available and the fare is in the range of 260-1000 rupees. Pondicherry is connected to other major south Indian cities like Bangalore, Thiruvananthapuram, etc. by National Highways. The main bus station is the New Bus Stand which is followed by various other bus stands spread across the entire city of Pondicherry. The Puducherry Railway Station signifies itself as the main station from which various routes to other nearby cities and intercity are connected.

## 14. Transportation cost

Puducherry is a small-sized location. There are multiple ways to get around and visit the locales across. Ideally, you could walk around the place at first, in order to acquaint yourself with the air vibe of the city and town. The main sights and attraction in Pondicherry lie in areas that can be reached by foot. There is the option to rent a bike or bicycle to explore the city. Rental charges for cycles are 35-40 rupees per day. Other two-wheeler rentals come in the range of 100-700 rupees per day. Auto-rickshaws are plenty and the minimum charge is 30 rupees for 6 km. A one way ticket by bus charges around 5 rupees whereas a monthly pass is around 500 rupees. Taxi cabs can also be hired for your travel. The rates start from 1200 rupees for a 4 hour travel within the city and may go up to 3000 rupees based on the type of car. For 8 hours the starting fare is 1600 rupees. For trips outside the city, the rate per kilometer starts from 9.50 rupees. There is also an extra driver charge in the range of 200-500 rupees.

## 15. Baggage allowance

If you are not planning to stay at Pondicherry for more than a day, you can keep your luggage at the railway station cloakroom for hourly or daily fees. Some hotels also offer to keep luggage of their guests while they go sightseeing. Travelling with heavy luggage does not pose much problem if you opt for taxi. The luggage area can accommodate 5-6 bags. Anything that does not fit in the luggage compartment will be charged extra. Auto-rickshaws are very small and cannot carry too much luggage. If you have number of bags or very heavy or huge luggage, drivers will try to charge extra for the luggage. It is always advisable to fix a rate before you begin the ride.

## 16. Restaurant & Nightlife

Most of the restaurants are located in and around White Town.

## Food -

Most of the restaurants are located in and around White Town.

- **Kasha Ki Aasha:**

  Address : No : 23 ,Surcouf St, White Town, MG Road Area, Puducherry, 605001
  Location : 11.93033,79.831377999
  Contact No : 0413 222 2963
  Website : https://kkapondy.com/
  Open / Close Time : Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 10:00hrs-19:00hrs; Friday & Saturday 07:00hrs-22:00hrs; Sunday 10:00hrs-17:00hrs; Wednesday Closed

- **Le Dupleix:**

  Address : 5, Rue De La Caserne, White Town, Puducherry 605001
  Location : 11.9309756,79.833696499
  Contact No : 0413 2226002
  Open / Close Time : Daily 12:00hrs-15:00hrs; 19:00hrs-22:30hrs

- **Carte Blanche Restaurant:**

  Address : No 17 Romain, White Town, Lalbahadur Sastry Street, Pondicherry 605001
  Location : 11.9279687,79.833532600

Contact No : 0413 2343067
Open / Close Time : Daily 07:30hrs-10:30hrs; 12:00hrs-15:00hrs; 19:00hrs-21:30hrs

- **Satsanga:**

Address : 54, La Bourdonnais Street, Near PWD New Head Office, Puducherry, 605001
Location : 11.9255514,79.831758600
Contact No : 0413 222 5867
Website : http://www.satsanga.co.in/
Open / Close Time : Daily 12:00hrs-15:00hrs; 19:00hrs-23:00hrs

- **The Indian Kaffe Express:**

Address : 3, Rue Dumas Street, Near IG Office, White Town, Puducherry, 605001
Location : 11.93034,79.834818000
Contact No : 0413 233 9945
Open / Close Time : Daily 08:30hrs-22:30hrs

- **La Villa Shanti:**

Address : 14, Suffren Street, Puducherry, 605001
Location : 11.9297282,79.833131999
Contact No : 0413 420 0028
Website : http://www.lavillashanti.com/
Open / Close Time : Daily 10:00hrs-23:00hrs

- **LB 2 Lounge:**

Address : No. 2, La Bourdonnais St, Puducherry, 605001
Location : 11.9284511,79.832298600
Contact No : 097896 65670
Open / Close Time : Daily 10:30hrs-00:00hrs

- **HOT & COLD BAR AND RESTAURANT:**

Address : Anna Salai, Thirumudi Nagar 2nd Cross, Ilango Nagar, Puducherry, 605001
Location : 11.941617,79.828142999
Contact No : 086789 74666
Open / Close Time : Daily 11:00hrs-23:00hrs

## 17. Average meal cost

A normal meal at an inexpensive restaurant cost 100 rupees and that of a three-course meal for two people at a mid range restaurant is available at 400 rupees. A combo meal at McDonald's can be purchased at 200 rupees. You can have a fresh cappuccino at 82.50 rupees. 11.2 oz small bottle of water can be purchased at 21.00 rupees. You can have 11.2 oz small bottle of Coke and Pepsi at 23.33 rupees. 1 pint draught of domestic beer is available at 75 rupees and that of 11.2 oz small bottle of imported beer is available at 100 rupees.

## 18. Shopping

Shopping in Puducherry is a delight, thanks to the affordably-priced goods. You can expect to see a well-spread collection of handicrafts, textiles and leather goods – all of them are fairly cheap. You should definitely make a beeline to Nehru Road and Mission Road for your shopping rendezvous. They are great places where you can totally expect to see very good items worth shopping. If you like Chinese-made goods, the Saram China Market is a must-go place! Don't forget to visit the slew of shops on the Beach Road in Puducherry. Other prominent markets are the Mudaliarpet Market to enjoy the sea of restaurants and supermarkets, Goubert Market for fabrics, fish, fruits & vegetables and a variety of different things, and Ariyankuppam Market which serves as an ultimate area for meat, groceries and vegetables.

## 19. Tourist benefits

India has not implemented tax refund schemes for international tourists for their purchases within the country. However, visitors can avail shopping discounts offered by individual shops and companies. These discounts and deals are mostly available during festival seasons. Regional and national festivals are the time when most products come with a lower rate. The local markets usually have some kind of deal all the time. There is also the opportunity to bargain for the best prices. Pondicherry offers products at subsidized and tax-free rates. Duty free shops in international airports also offer various items without any tax.

## 20. Essential local apps

The Zomato app is ideal for users to use if they want to know which are the best hotels and restaurants in Puducherry. The KPN Travels App is well-wired with the best features for booking a bus ticket to travel to and fro Puducherry.

## 21. Driving

If you're a wheels-friendly individual, you could opt for renting a bike or two from the local stores. Be sure to display your Driver's License beforehand. The one-day rent of a bike may cost you up to INR 450 (depending on the brand.) If you're looking for a more affordable option, rent a MOPED. It is a user-friendly scooter. It can easily be seen and rented on Mission Street. The dealers will ask for your identity proof, and a security amount. The one-day rent of a MOPED is INR 250.

## 22. Travel essentials

Pondicherry is connected to a standard electric current of 230 volts and a frequency of 50 Hz. This standard voltage is compatible with countries that are connected to an electric current of 220 to 240 volts. North American countries are connected to a voltage of between 110-120t volts. Visitors from these countries should buy a transformer. Although some electrical appliances like laptops chargers and phone chargers do not require a transformer it is advisable to take precautions in order to avoid future inconveniences. India uses Type D sockets which are characterized by three round prongs. Type D sockets are exclusive to India and Nepal. Visitors from any other countries should buy a compatible Type D plug. Some hotels in Pondicherry provide these plugs for free.

## 23. Essential clothes

Pondicherry is connected to a standard electric current of 230 volts and a frequency of 50 Hz. This standard voltage is compatible with countries that are connected to an electric current of 220 to 240 volts. North American countries are connected to a voltage of between 110-120t volts. Visitors from these countries should buy a transformer. Although some electrical appliances like laptops chargers and phone chargers do not require a transformer it is advisable to take precautions in order to avoid future inconveniences. India uses Type D sockets which are characterized by three round prongs. Type D sockets are exclusive to India and Nepal. Visitors from any other countries should buy a compatible Type D plug. Some hotels in Pondicherry provide these plugs for free.

## 24. Local currency

The local currency of Pondicherry is Indian Rupee. It is denoted as INR. 1 USD = INR 66.91.

## 25. Change vendor's commission, ATM charges

Currency exchange services are available at the Chennai airport which is the nearest international airport. Banks and other currency exchange agencies have counters at the airport although the rates are much lower at these counters than in the city. In Pondicherry, foreign tourists can find many banks, exchange agencies, and top-end hotels that provide the exchange services. Banks offer the best rate at about 1% commission. Other agencies charge a higher commission and hotels mostly offer lower exchange rates. ATMs are the best option to withdraw Indian rupees using your foreign cash card. ATMs of almost all major banks accept international cards with specific withdrawal limits. The card issuing bank may charge for each transaction.

## 26. Staying connected

Once in Puducherry, it is quite easy and simple for visitors to get hold of landline phones. If you're reliant on your mobile phone for communication, you can go into any of the many telecom stores and purchase a local SIM which will enable you to stay connected via mobile phone. The SIM cards are quite inexpensive. You need to make sure that you're carrying your ID documents as most SIM card dealers and sellers will issue a SIM only after checking your documents to verify your identity. Wi-Fi connectivity is well-spread across Puducherry, if you're lucky, you will find it even on beaches! The major telecom players in the city which have spread its network through the entire town are Idea, Vodafone, BSNL, Airtel and Reliance.

## 27. Time Zone

Pondicherry follows Indian Standard Time (IST) + UTC + 05:30 hours.

## 28. Languages

Tamil is the main language here with Malayalam and Telugu as following languages.

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## 29. Political Scenario

The Chief Minster and his Cabinet of ministers work continuously towards uplifting all sectors responsible for the growth of Puducherry. At the heart, the political scenario which is prevalent in the Union territory of Puducherry is largely influenced by the presence of the national parties, the Bharatiya Janta Party and the Congress Party. Both the parties are focused on building Puducherry's image and status as one of the country's prominent socio-economic zones. In its State Legislature, Puducherry has 30 members on the roll-call, who work towards the improvement of all government segments.

## 30. Economic Scenario

Sitting on the Coromandel Coast, 150 kilometers off the city of Chennai, Puducherry's economy has thrived, thanks to the consistent output generated by businesses belonging in the sectors of engineering, food processing, chemicals, metals, tourism, textiles, and information technology. Of course, agriculture and tourism continue be the pillars of the Puducherry economy. At present, the healthy industrial sector boasts of 5,500 small scale industries, 23 large scale and 80 medium scale industries. Put together, these support nearly 50,000 people. Seeing the steady stream of public and investment pouring in, the government has also played its part by upping the subsidies.

## 31. Religious belief

Hinduism is the major Religious group constituting 87% of the entire population. Pondicherry is the only region with a larger number of Christians (6.2%) including Protestants, Catholics and orthodox. This is because of the French influence. Muslims have 6% following. Other notable religious groups in Pondicherry include; Sikh, Buddhist and Jains. This is according to 2011 census done nationwide.

## 32. Visa requirements

In order for tourists to travel to Puducherry, they must possess a valid passport and valid Indian visa with them. You're required to file your visa applications at the Indian Visa Application Center (IVAC). A date of interview is scheduled wherein visa seekers are required to come along with the required set of support documents. Regardless of the visa validity, tourists can stay in India for 6 months (180 days) maximum. Alternatively you can visit https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/index.html to know the guidelines and procedure.

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## 33. Essential vaccination

All visitors should be vaccinated against yellow fever, Typhoid, Hepatitis E, Hepatitis A, Rabies, Malaria and Chikungunya. If you are under any medication remember to carry the medicines or carry the prescription. Also remember to carry the vaccination certificate.

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## 34. Theft and Safety

It is not so safe and not so unsafe. Petite thefts of wallets and ornaments are a common crime here. Violent cases such as assault and armed robbery is seldom recorded. The property crimes such as vandalism and theft are also recoded. Problem such as corruption and bribery is at its peak.

## 35. Embassy/Consulate

There is only one consulate of French but no foreign embassy in Pondicherry. It is located at 2 rue de la Marine, Pondicherry 605 001. You can have more information at http://embassy.goabroad.com/embassies-in/india.

## 36. Accessibility

Pondicherry local government, national government and some non-profitable organization have tried to make Pondicherry wheelchair accessible. The city is fairly accessible as some of the buildings have parking spaces for people with a disability. There are quite a number of hotels that have fully built facilities for the disabled.

## 37. Emergencies

You can contact the Pondicherry police department if you are in any situation that requires Police attention through (0413) 133 7243-47.or 100, the phone number for ambulance services is 102 or 0413) 233 6050, while for firemen is 101 lastly for any other emergency you can call 108. Jimper Medical hospital is one of the hospitals that accept insured patients.

## 38. Do’s and Don’ts

Do’s - • Look out for stray dogs and wild monkeys . • Stay indoors at night not unless it is absolute necessary to go out at night. • Mind the food you buy from street vendors. Eat in hotels where there is a crowd. • It is advisable to carry a certified doctor’s prescription along with the medicines to ensure hassle free import clearance. • There is always room for bargaining before you buy things from the street vendors. Don’ts - • Do not drive if you are under certain medications or you are under the influence of alcohol. • Avoid water that might be contaminated. Always drink bottled water. • It is advisable that do not carry unsealed/ unbranded food articles as the same may be banned for import. • Do not smoke in public.

## 39.Tipping basics

In tourist hotels and restaurants, tipping is charged (10%) in bill as service charge. In other places tipping is optional and it is given in cash not percentage of the service or goods bought .You can tip in Indian Rupees. Bell boys, tour guides, tour operators, taxi drivers, and housekeepers are some of the people you should tip if they serve you well.

## 40.Pet info

You can take your pet to Pondicherry without any hesitation. However, it is necessary to have all his required documents that shall show his latest vaccinations and the blood test made in not less than 10 days before the travel. It is also necessary that the pets are clean and they do not have any injury over the body that can create harm to other animals after landing or spread infection. You need to have an NOC which is a No Objection Certificate while bringing any pets to the country of India. It is a temporary permit for pets. Microchip your pet as it shall be necessary to maintain its record in the vaccination certificate. Also, it is the only way used to identify dogs here. Vet Health Certificate that is filled only by any of your pets' USDA accredited Veterinarian is mandatory.

## Conclusion – Why to select this destination

*Why choose Pondicherry ? Pondicherry is not just a beautiful city for tourists to visit. It has a rich colonial history that dates back to 1674 and the influence of the French who had made the city what it is today still lingers strongly in its people, language, culture, streets, buildings, beaches, shops, and many other spheres of life. The colonial culture and the south Indian character go hand in hand. Though the two worlds are total extremes, it complements each other beautifully. Visit Pondicherry to travel to the French era so far away from the land of the French. Experience French architecture, cuisine, and culture in the cobbled streets, brightly colored facades, and pretty gardens that hang from the balconies. And if that is not enough, head to the many churches built in the colonial architectural and design style with stained glasses and intricate paintings. The city has several mesmerizing beaches with water sports facilities, sun bathing spots, and entertainment areas. Take a dip in the beautiful Bay of Bengal or stroll through the beachside promenades to take in the visual extravaganzas during sunset. Food in Pondicherry is an adventure in itself. Just like the people, the cuisine is also a happy mix of French and Tamil traditions. If at one place you relish the dosas, idlis, sambar, chutneys, and filter coffee, at the other end is the baguettes, jams, pastries, cakes, cookies, and chocolates. Take a trip to Auroville and be one with nature in meditation at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. Or, engage in some cultural activities or learn something from the numerous workshops in the city.*

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