

Brief doc, 2020

Design Brief

Light, Life, Power & Wealth

Matrimandir Gardens



Revised Design Brief

13th January 2020

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This document is supposed to be read in conjunction with other documents published for the Design Call:

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The Matrimandir



Matrimandir today

At the very center of Auroville (in Tamil Nadu, India), one finds the “soul of the city,” the Matrimandir. It is situated in a large open area called the “Peace Area”, from where the future township (which aims to host 50,000 inhabitants) will radiate outwards. The Matrimandir can be viewed as a large golden lotus, which is emerging out of the earth, symbolizing the birth of a new consciousness upon earth. The Mother gave clear instructions about the central meditation room called the ‘Inner Chamber’. The Matrimandir is composed of the Inner Chamber and 12 small meditation rooms called ‘Petals’ surrounding the center. The petals represent 12 qualities of the universal Mother: Sincerity, Humility, Gratitude, Perseverance, Aspiration, Receptivity, Progress, Courage, Goodness, Generosity, Equality, and Peace. The Matrimandir is further surrounded by the 12 Main Gardens and a lake will surround this in future.

The gardens of Matrimandir



The Mother named the 12 Main Gardens around the Matrimandir: Existence, Consciousness, Bliss, Light, Life, Power, Wealth, Utility, Progress, Youth, Harmony, and Perfection. Today Matrimandir is visited by more than 800,000 visitors (who visit the viewing point, out of which about 10% go to the inner chamber for meditation). At present, the permanent residents of Auroville come from 56 countries and the number and diversity will increase over time. Hence the gardens need to have a universal appeal, based on universal human sensitivity for peace, beauty and harmony.

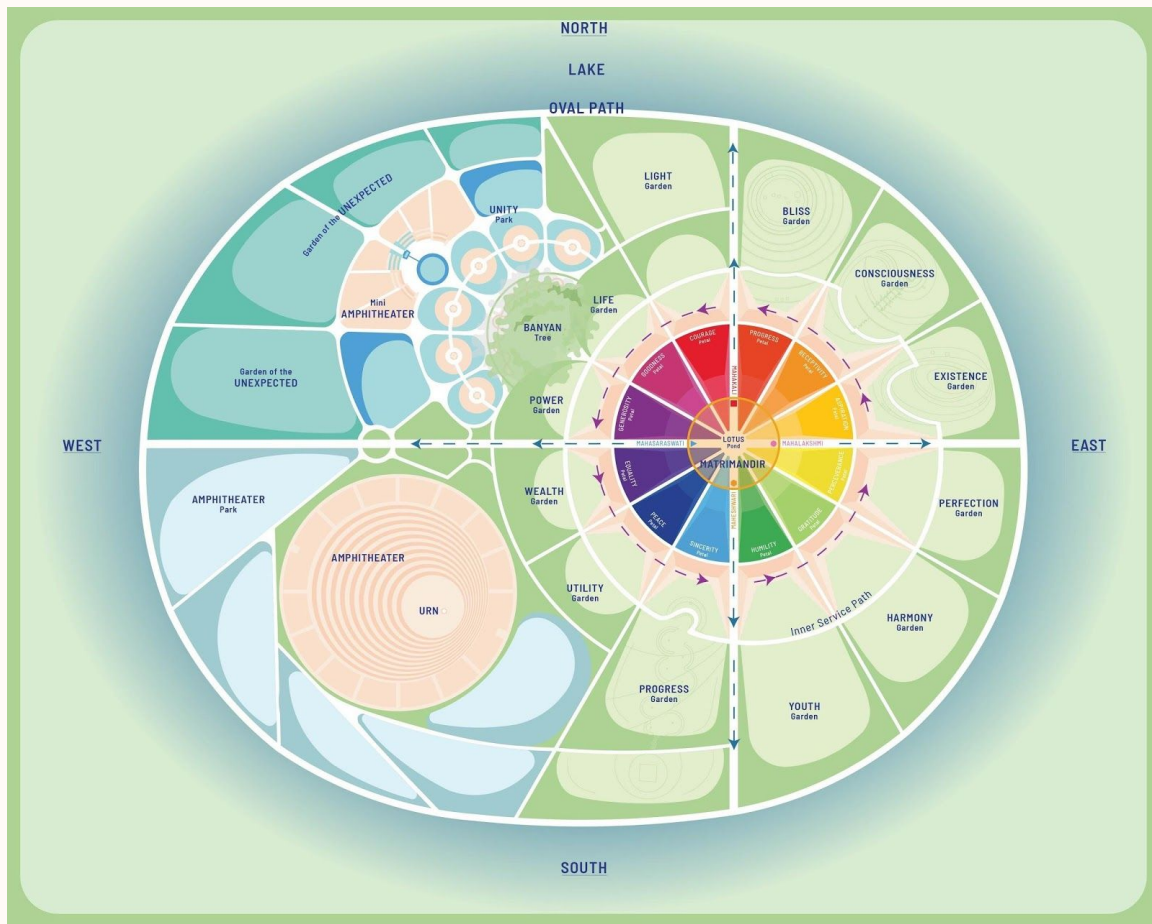
The Matrimandir gardens are meant to be a place where one can discover and explore the states of consciousness through a beautiful landscape that surrounds the Matrimandir. The visitor can experience the state of consciousness of that garden and move from one conscious experience to another as they move from one garden to another. These 12 powers of the gardens are necessary for the complete manifestation of the integral yogic consciousness in a person. The gardens are meant to be a place for inner concentration as much as the Inner Chamber.

[Architecture of Matrimandir](#) , [Design references for the Gardens](#)

(Integral Yoga videos on [youtube](#) or download from [google drive](#))

Link to: [About Matrimandir in auroville.org](#) / [a short video on Matrimandir](#)

Link to : [Significance of flowers given by the Mother](#)



Matrimandir conceptual

The circular movement or connectedness in the gardens for the human consciousness starts with the involution of Existence-Consciousness-Bliss (Sat-Chit-Ananda) and progresses higher from Light-Life-Power towards the last garden, Perfection.

For the Petal chambers, the circular movement starts with the attitudes of Sincerity -Humility -Gratitude till Courage, all offered towards the divinity while Goodness -Generosity -Equality -Peace is directed towards humanity. The color and pattern inside a Petal could be associated with the adjacent garden.

There is also the radial movement outwards from the four aspects of the Mother represented by the four pillars of Matrimandir; Mahakali to the North, Maheshwari to the South, Mahalakshmi to the East and Mahasaraswati to the West. These encompass all the elements of the Peace area from the lake & oval path till the center of unity represented by a beam of light, Mahashakti. The gardens are shaped in an outward moving wave/ripple to represent this energy moving outward to humanity and the return of the united energy from the beam of light reflected from the sun by a heliostat on the roof of Matrimandir.

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Design Brief for gardens of

Light, Life, Power & Wealth

Context & Background

Matrimandir was completed in 2008. Since then work on the gardens started in earnest. Several designers and teams have aspired and attempted to manifest the consciousness indicated by the garden name into the garden design. The results are seen in the four built gardens which is left for the visitor to experience. The primary visitors, Aurovilians, have so far not had any significant realisations from these four gardens. This is not surprising as on a large scale it is difficult to bring down and hold such high levels of yogic consciousness. Therefore what becomes pragmatic and simpler to follow, is to have as the basis for design an “evolutive” simple and beautiful style which can evolve and change according to our growing consciousness. The present four built gardens do not have an easy way to evolve due to a lot of hardscaping and fixed geometric designs. We find now a significant challenge in this too. How do we keep the “connectedness” of all the gardens, Matrimandir and lake, collectively called the peace area, if designs keep changing? The present four hardscaped gardens are going through design changes too. Though the hardscaped patterns would remain, major elements could be changed. Hence, many Aurovilians now prefer to explore “the Japanese way” that the Mother had spoken to Narad about. This of course does not mean to imitate Japanese or for that matter European or any other form of garden design but it would mean a more open, natural yet ordered and intuitive approach to designing and gardening, keeping beauty as the template which evolves with the future designers.

According to the Mother,

It (the gardens) must be a thing of great beauty, of such beauty that when people come they will say
"Ah, this is it."

The Brief

We look for a comprehensive design with a philosophical framework, with a set of diverse experiential spaces accessed by well defined circulation patterns, punctuated by design elements and planting which are low on energy demands and high on sustainability.

The design must integrate the new proposal with the existing natural character of the site (topography, vegetation and hydrology) with minimum disturbance while taking into account human use. The civil construction in the design must not exceed more than 15% so as to allow natural growth of plants, water percolation and drainage, encourage biodiversity and least hindrance in natural cycles.

The design could potentially address the region's water scarcity issues by imaginative ways. The design should also reflect and respond to the play of seasons, especially in the context of planting design - shade and breeze in summers with evergreens, sun exposure in winters with deciduous and variety of form, colour, texture and fragrance with ornamental and fragrant plants, all in the realm of mainly native or adaptive species.

Light garden

4th garden - corresponding to
Generosity Petal

*"Irresistibly simple in its power
solely consecrated to the Divine."*

[The Mother]

The garden must bring the descent of light of the higher consciousness through the head and heart into the whole being, occupying the very cells of the body. The garden must also evoke the perception of an ever present universal consciousness & a sense of peace and serenity



Central flower selected by the Mother: **Light of the Purified Power**
(Ref. No 606) [please see this link for botanical name and other references](#)



Other related flowers:

[Light](#), [Light without obscurity](#), [Integral opening to the light](#)

Exploring the meaning of Light - Relevant References:

Light is not knowledge but the illumination that comes from above and liberates the being from obscurity and darkness.

~ [The Life Divine]

For do not imagine that light is created by the Suns. The Suns are only physical concentrations of light, but the splendour they concentrate for us is self-born and everywhere.

~ [Essays Divine and Human]

Tejas proper, light, the energy which is at the source of all knowledge

~ Sri Aurobindo CWSA Vol.01, Early Cultural Writings, P: 373

Have you never watched a forest with all its countless trees and plants simply struggling to catch the light — twisting and trying in a hundred possible ways just to be in the sun? That is precisely the feeling of aspiration in the physical — the urge, the movement, the push towards the light. Plants have more of it in their physical being than men. Their whole life is a worship of light. Light is of course the material symbol of the Divine, and the sun represents, under material conditions, the Supreme Consciousness. The plants have felt it quite distinctly in their own simple, blind way. Their aspiration is intense, if you know how to become aware of it.*

~ The Mother CWM Vol.03, P: 132

Life garden

5th garden - corresponding to
Goodness Petal

*"All the powers of controlling and
dominating the lower movements
of inconscient nature."*

[The Mother]

The garden must bring in the power
to move beyond the lower vital
movements of life & evoke a psychic
change so that a complete devotion
can be the main motive of the heart
and the ruler of thought, life and
action in constant union with the
universal consciousness.



Central flower selected by the Mother:.

Power of Consciousness ([Ref. No 592](#))



Other related flowers:

[Life energy](#), [Quiet strength in the vital](#), [Spiritual awakening of the vital](#), [Perfect planning of work](#),
[Transformed sex center](#)

Exploring the meaning of Life - Relevant References:

Life is movement, it is effort, it is a march forward, the scaling of a mountain, the climb towards
new revelations, towards future realisations.

~ The Mother CWM Vol.09, P: 66

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[Life energy], life-force is not physical in itself; it is not material energy, but rather a different principle supporting Matter and involved in it. It supports and occupies all forms and without it no physical form could have come into being or could remaining being. It acts in all material forces such as electricity and is nearest to self-manifestation in those that are nearest to pure force; no material force could exist or act without it, for from it they derive their energy and movement and they are its vehicles.

~ [Kena and Other Upanishads. Pt.1]

Power garden

6th garden - corresponding to
Courage Petal

"Beauty is a great power."

[The Mother]

The garden must invoke a sense of power through surrender and through self consecration create an experience for the visitor to emerge in a powerful & aesthetic elegance.



Central flower selected by the Mother:

Aesthetic Power ([Ref. No 609](#))



Other related flowers:

[Power of expression](#), [Power aspiring to become an instrument for the Divine's work](#), [Beauty arising from consecration](#)

Exploring the meaning of Power - Relevant References:

Power means strength and force, Shakti, which enables one to face all that can happen and to stand and overcome, also to carry out what the Divine Will proposes. It can include many things, power over men, events, circumstances, means, etc. But all this not of the mental or vital

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kind, but by an action through unity of consciousness with the Divine and with all things and all beings. It is not an individual strength depending on certain personal capacities, but the Divine Power using the individual as an instrument.

[Letters on Yoga]

Wealth garden

7th garden - Corresponding to
Progress Petal

*“True wealth is that which one
offers to the Divine.”*

[The Mother]

The garden must invoke the sense of abundance through offering one's wealth. The wealth not being limited to financial wealth but, invite the visitor to explore their inner wealth of emotion & richness of feeling, generosity, vitality, mental wealth, and offer it to the divine.



Central flowers selected by the Mother: **Wealth** ([ref. No 548](#)).





Other related flowers:

[Emotional wealth](#), [Generous wealth](#), [Integral Wealth of Mahalakshmi](#), [Wealth in the most material vital](#), [Supramentalised wealth](#), [Wealth in the vital](#), [Wealth in the Mind of Light](#), [Wealth under the psychic influence](#), [Riches](#), [Richness of feelings](#), [Supramental riches](#)

Exploring the meaning of Wealth - Relevant References:

Wealth is a force of Nature; and it should be a means of circulation, a power in movement, as flowing water is a power in movement. It is something which can serve to produce, to organise.

~ The Mother CWM Vol.07, P: 55

All wealth belongs to the Divine and those who hold it are trustees, not possessors. It is with them today, tomorrow it may be elsewhere. All depends on the way they discharge their trust while it is with them, in what spirit, with what consciousness in their use of it, to what purpose.

[The Mother]

Summary of the

Community garden Review

Review of the Built Gardens by residents of Auroville - May 2019

(Important Note: Roger Anger, chief architect appointed by the Mother, has repeatedly mentioned that the gardens will grow with the growing consciousness of Aurovilians. Below comments from Aurovilians needs to be taken seriously as guidelines for garden design)

The most expressed comments were that there should be **more shade** and less watering in the gardens. People are generally happy with the water bodies; on the other hand, people are against high water usage for watering the plants.

People have largely **objected to the high usage of concrete or over- use of geometric forms**. Many have expressed the need to not only have the main flower of each garden but also its associated **flowers arranged in a concentrated natural way and not spread all over in patterns** under the full hot sun. Many have expressed more of a liking for the portions with trees and **shade** where they can sit facing Matrimandir.

There is a general lack of seating arrangement: proper benches under the shade. People have very diverse opinions about seating arrangements. But a general need of **comfortable seating** has been expressed. People repeatedly ask for the gardens to be made in **Japanese way** as Mother has mentioned. People wish to **feel harmony, silence and peace** in the gardens.

Most people expressed that the **ecology is very important** in garden creation. There were suggestions that the designers **keep in mind the local climate**, while designing the gardens, to be ecologically sound.

Main guidelines

for the garden designs

The layout of the 12 radial pathways from the Matrimandir up to the Oval road cannot be modified. The width of the paths (4.1 meters or 2 meters) cannot be modified.

In each Garden, there is an area “Petal” (towards the Matrimandir) and an area “Garden”(towards the oval road). Both areas must remain distinct and must be also linked. They must not become one Area. The line between its area “Petal” and its area “Garden” should not disappear.

The outer slope of each of the 12 Gardens will be covered by grass and is not open for major landscaping.

Technical & Climatic design guidelines

1. The design, technology and other requirements for implementation must be simple and easy to maintain in the long run.
2. The design should be adapted to the tropical semi-arid climate of Tamil Nadu, especially in the context of the current water crisis which necessitates low water consumption plants and low water usage in general.
3. In order to reduce water usage and create shaded seating places, climatologically responsive tree planting could be accepted. The choice of trees has to be done consciously. They should not be so tall as to cover the view of Matrimandir. The existing topography of the gardens is an integral part of the Matrimandir design and the choice of plants should not disturb this flow.
4. As the gardens are evolutive, their components must be flexible, it is recommended to minimize the use of hard materials like cement, concrete, etc. to around 15%

5. The concept must take into account that on one side there is a large Petal and the Matrimandir sphere; on the other side there is a future lake.
6. If sculptural elements are used they should be rather evocative than descriptive.

Emotive Design Guidelines

7. Mother & Roger's guidelines (refer to "Garden quotes.pdf") are of primary importance for the garden creation, nevertheless an integration of the community's review has to be thoroughly considered.
8. The sequence in which the Garden names are listed is important because, in Sanskrit, the first three names are *Sat-Chit-Ananda*, which is the essence of the Divine. *Perfection* being the ultimate aim of evolution comes last in the list. The gardens rotate counter-clockwise and the first and last gardens are on either side of the East radial pathway.
9. For 10 of the 12 gardens hibiscus species is the main flower while the other 2 have different main flowers as well as related flowers. The flowers have received their spiritual names from the Mother according to the vibration and the inner truth that she has perceived. For the details, it is recommended to peruse a list of some 900 flowers which are found in two books: ***Flowers and Their Messages*** and ***The Spiritual Significance of Flowers***. <http://www.blossomlikeaflower.com/> can also be visited for reference.
10. BUDGET : Average cost of construction needs to be maintained at Rs. 1990/ sq.meter

Submission Format

For those submitting **all four** Garden designs

The Deliverables for Submission 2 are:

- optimised pdf file in A3 landscape with detail design (max. 30 pages)
- Exhibition Panel A1 size
- Video (max 3 min)

A3 PDF

(printable format. If size is more than 10Mb it can be split into 10Mb portions with clear numbered labels. Maximum of 30Mb)

Below, the mentioned order needs to be maintained:

1. Front cover with title design Main Gardens of Matrimandir (Page number starts here) (max. 1 page)
2. Inside cover to include narrative response to the brief - inspirations, ideas, concepts that are the basis of the design (limit: 300 words) (max. 4 pages)
3. A site study including analysis of the microclimate, geographical features, drainage pattern, etc. (max. 2 pages)
4. Relationship with the surrounding gardens or environment of Matrimandir/Auroville. Explanation can be on the psychological aspect too. Microclimate area to include the matrimandir campus and immediate surroundings (max. 2 pages)
5. Top view CAD/illustrator/landscape software drawings (to scale) of the garden design along with a table indicating use of flora, fauna, and materials (max. 8 sheets)
6. At least one perspective drawings of each garden in form of hand drawing or 3D drawing or photo collage. (Photographs of particular angles and portions of the garden are [attached here](#). Please consider these angles in the perspective drawings.) (4 pages max)
7. Axonometric drawings of each garden to scale. (4 max)
8. General Sections of Pathways and indicative references of minerals, flora & fauna (max 4 pages)

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9. Project completion timeline. (max 1 page)

Exhibition panel

Size: A1 panel designed. To include views : Top views, axonometric views to scale, perspective (to scale), must have the design code on the bottom right corner size: 70 pt.

Video

mp4 format, should not be more than 3 mins. Resolution 1280x756

For those submitting one, two or three Garden designs

The Deliverables for Submission 2 are:

- optimised pdf file in A3 landscape with detail design (max. 8 pages per design)
- Exhibition Panel A3 size per design
- Video (max 3 min)

A3 PDF

(printable format. If size is more than 10Mb it can be split into 10Mb portions with clear numbered labels. Maximum of 30Mb)

Below, the mentioned order needs to be maintained:

1. Front cover with title design Main Gardens of Matrimandir (Page number starts here) (max. 1 page)
2. Inside cover to include narrative response to the brief - inspirations, ideas, concepts that are the basis of the design (limit: 300 words) (max. 2 pages)
3. A site study including analysis of the microclimate, geographical features, drainage pattern, etc. (max. 2 pages)
4. Relationship with the surrounding gardens or environment of Matrimandir/Auroville. Explanation can be on the psychological aspect too. Scale, microclimate area to include (max. 2 pages)
5. Top view CAD/illustrator/landscape software drawings (to scale) of the garden design along with a table indicating use of flora, fauna, and materials (max.1 sheets per design)

6. At least two perspective drawings in form of hand drawing or 3D drawing or photo collage. (Photographs of particular angles and portions of the garden are [attached here](#). Please consider these angles in the perspective drawings.) (1 pages max. per design)

7. Axonometric drawings of each garden to scale. (2 max. per design)

8. General Sections of Pathways and indicative references of minerals, flora & fauna (max 1 page per design)

9. Project completion timeline. (max. 1 page)

Exhibition panel

Size: A3 panel per design. To include views: Top view, axonometric view to scale, perspective (to scale), must have the design code on the bottom right corner size: 36 pt.

Video

mp4 format, should not be more than 3 mins. Resolution 1280x756

Look forward to your emerging designs