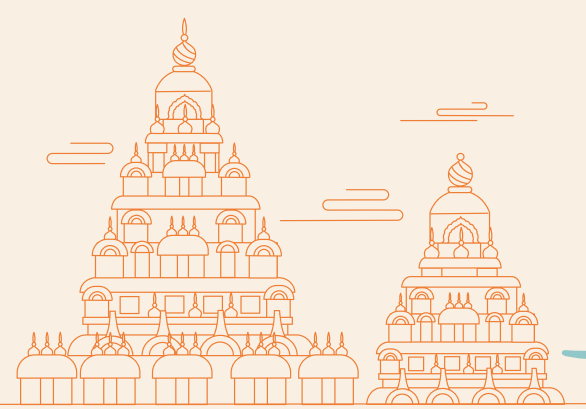


Mahabalipuram Memoirs

"Amidst the rhythmic waves, Mahabalipuram stands as a testament to the architectural poetry of the Pallavas."

Mahabalipuram, also known as Mamallapuram, is a historic town in the state of Tamil Nadu. Renowned for its UNESCO World Heritage-listed group of sanctuaries and rock-cut temples, Mahabalipuram is a testament to the rich cultural and artistic legacy of the Pallava dynasty, dating back to the 7th and 8th centuries.

The temples in Mahabalipuram, predominantly constructed during the reigns of Narasimhaverman and his successor Rajasimhaverman, mark a transition from rock-cut architecture to structural buildings. The Mandapa or Pavilions and the rathas or shrines resembling temple chariots are carved directly from the granite rock face. The renowned Shore Temple, constructed half a century later, features impressive bas-reliefs, including a 100-ft long and 45-ft high carving in granite. With the exception of one ratha, all structures from the initial Pallava architectural phase draw inspiration from Buddhist monasteries and Chaitya halls. These monuments showcase the early development of Dravidian architecture, where enduring traces of Buddhist design elements are evident.



Weather Report February



Why is it called Mamallapuram?

The term "Mamalla" is a title, meaning "great warrior" or "great wrestler." The town was named after a Pallava king who bore the title – Narasimhavarman I. He was also known as Mamalla (or Mahamalla), and he ruled the Pallava dynasty from 630 to 668 AD.

Is Mahabalipuram worth visiting?

The town has many popular attractions. The monuments are the oldest structural monuments in India, built before 1700 years ago, making it well worth a visit.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

SHORE TEMPLE

One of the most iconic landmarks in Mahabalipuram, the Shore Temple consisting of two graceful Siva temples – Kshatryasimhesvaram (east) and Rajasimhesvaram (west), is a structural temple built with blocks of granite. It stands on the shore of the Bay of Bengal, showcasing exquisite Dravidian architecture. Built between 700 and 728 CE during the reign of Narasimhavarman II, this is indeed a remnant of a larger complex of temples and civil structures much of which lie under the depth of the sea now.



PANCHA RATHAS

The Pancha Rathas, also known as the Five Rathas, are a set of monolithic rock-cut temples, each carved from a single granite boulder in various architectural styles. The Rathas are named after the Pandavas from the Indian epic Mahabharata. A beautifully carved monolithic airavata (elephant) and nandi (bull) decorate the premises.



NEWS

LIVE

Times of India/Mar 28, 2023/
MAMALLAPURAM SET TO HOST A REALLY BIG, FAT, INDIAN WEDDING FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED COUPLES

Chennai: Mamallapuram near Chennai is set to host a mass wedding with a difference. Unlike most mass weddings which are low-key affairs, this is going to be really big and fat. People from economically deprived backgrounds, disabled people and those from marginalised communities will have the weddings of their dreams as WV Connect is organising a destination beach wedding for 101 couples on April 5.



Explained: Going back 1300 years, the story of Mahabalipuram's China connection

October 11, 2019 2:21 pm

The name Mamallapuram derives from Mamallan, or "great warrior", a title by which the Pallava King Narasimhavarman I (630-668 AD) was known.



Know your monument: Religion and politics in Mahabalipuram's Shore Temple

August 14, 2020 12:52 pm

In the 14th edition of this series on Indian monuments by Sahapedia, we consider the ways in which the architecture of the Shore Temple in Mahabalipuram, Tamil Nadu, developed through the seventh and eighth centuries CE, and its relations with religion and politics.



World Surfing League event to be held in India for 1st time; UNESCO Heritage town Mamallapuram to host

Tamil Nadu, India • Written By: Sidharth MP • Updated: Apr 18, 2023, 08:29 PM IST



The upcoming event is titled 'International Surf Open - Tamil Nadu' and is expected to expose foreign surfers to the sport in Indian waters, popularise the niche sport in India and offer a huge platform for the country's emerging surfing talent. Photograph: (WGN Web Team)

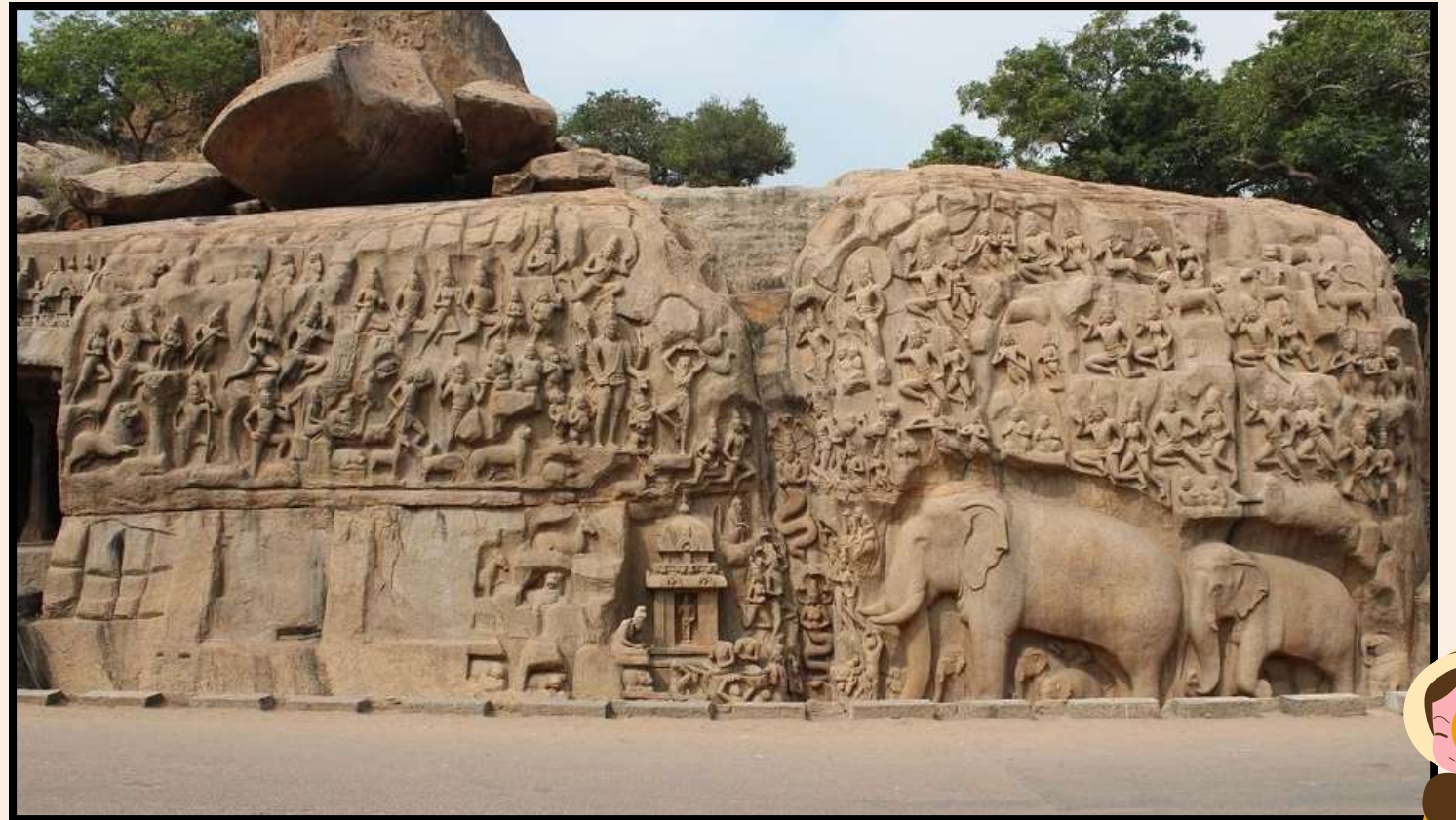
NEW • NEW • NEW • NEW • NEW



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Arjuna's Penance

Also known as the Descent of the Ganges, this massive rock relief is one of the largest open-air rock canvases in the world. The sculpture depicts various mythological and everyday scenes, including the penance of Arjuna.



Krishna's Butterball

Krishna's Butterball is a massive, natural rock boulder. This gigantic rock stands on a slope of a hill near the Ganesha Ratha in the historical complex of Mahabalipuram. The most intriguing aspect of the rock is its precarious-looking position. It is believed that Pallava kings attempted to move it, but all the kings and their elephants were not able to move the boulder even by an inch.

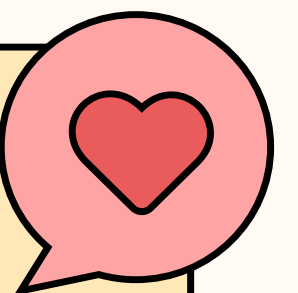


The town has a rich cultural heritage and is a hub for traditional art forms like stone carving and sculpture. Many local artisans continue to practice and preserve these ancient crafts.



Every year, the picturesque shore town of Mamallapuram hosts the "Indian Dance Festival" - A Festival of Our Culture and Tradition.

The venue for the Mamallapuram- Indian Dance Festival is the front lawn of the Shore Temple.



The cave temples in Mahabalipuram are a group of ancient rock-cut structures that form part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Mahabalipuram. These cave temples, carved out of large granite rocks, showcase remarkable Dravidian architecture and represent an important phase in the evolution of rock-cut architecture in South India. Here are some notable cave temples in Mahabalipuram:

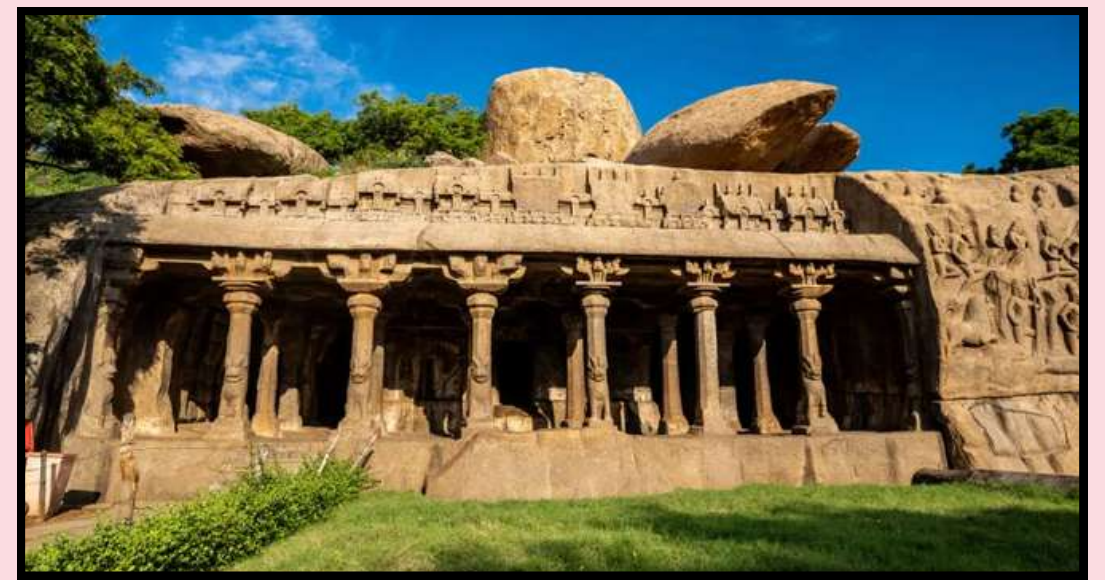


Varaha Cave Temple

The Varaha Cave Temple is one of the most significant and well-preserved rock-cut caves in Mahabalipuram. It dates back to the 7th century and is dedicated to Lord Vishnu in his Varaha (boar) incarnation. The temple features a mandapa (pillared hall) with beautifully carved columns and a sculpted panel depicting Varaha rescuing the Earth goddess.

Krishna Mandapa

The Krishna Mandapa, also known as Krishna's Butterball Mandapa, is a rock-cut cave temple named after the nearby Krishna's Butterball. It features intricate carvings of Krishna and his consort, along with scenes from Krishna's life. The cave is known for its monolithic carvings and detailed reliefs, showcasing the skill of ancient artisans.



Mahishasuramardini Cave

This cave is dedicated to the goddess Durga in her Mahishasuramardini form, depicting her slaying the buffalo demon Mahishasura. The cave is adorned with impressive sculptures of goddess Durga, as well as other deities and mythical creatures.




Tiger Cave

The Tiger Cave is located a short distance from the main group of monuments in Mahabalipuram. It is a rock-cut cave temple with a mandapa and a Shiva shrine, and it gets its name from the tiger-like carvings on the facade.

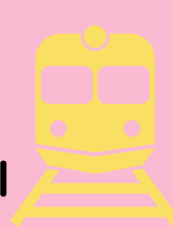


HOW TO REACH

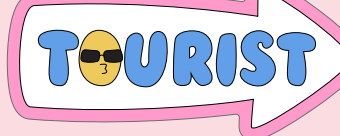
 Mamallapuram Town. Mamallapuram ECR. Frequent bus services available from Chennai, Pondicherry, Madurai and Coimbatore to Mahabalipuram every day.



Chennai International Airport, Meenambakkam, about 55 km away.



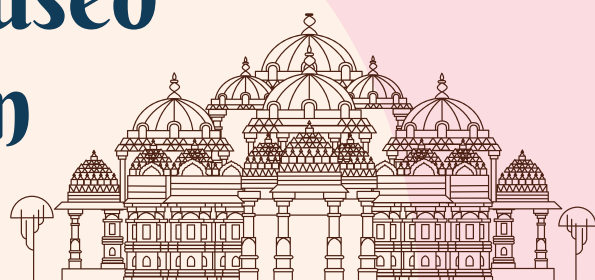
Chengalpeta Railway Station, about 23 km away, is the nearest one. The closest major railhead is Chennai, 57 km away, well-connected by train with the rest of the major cities in India.



The true beauty of Mahabalipuram is not just in its ancient monuments; it is also in the warmth and hospitality of its people.

FUN ZONE

Make a list of materials used in building monuments in India.



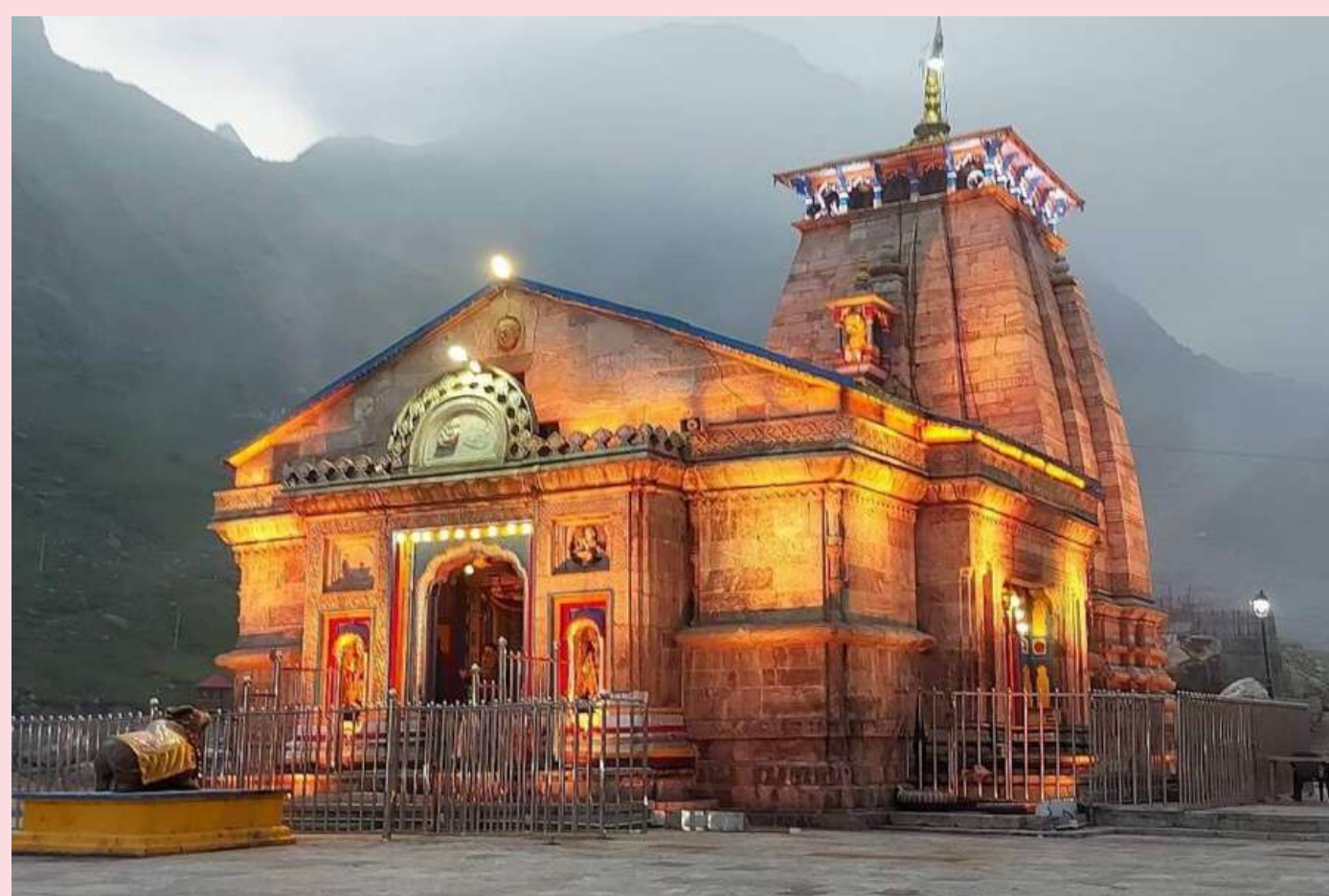
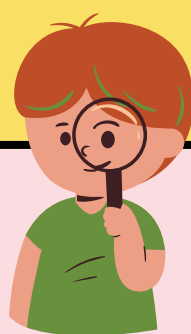
SEASHORE AND BEACHES

Mahabalipuram's location on the coast provides beautiful views of the Bay of Bengal. The beaches attract tourists and locals alike, offering a serene setting to relax.

Organise a beach clean up or city clean up activity in your city. Also design a poster for the activity



Identify these iconic temples of India



THE TRUE BEAUTY OF MAHABALIPURAM IS NOT JUST IN ITS ANCIENT MONUMENTS; IT IS ALSO IN THE WARMTH AND HOSPITALITY OF ITS PEOPLE.

MAHABALIPURAM COMES UNDER UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE. CAN YOU NAME FIVE MORE UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES IN INDIA?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



MAHABALIPURAM IS NOW OPEN FROM 6 A.M. TO 6 P.M.
ENTRANCE FEE:
CITIZENS OF INDIA – RS. 40 PER HEAD.
OTHERS: RS. 600/- PER HEAD
(CHILDREN UP TO 15 YEARS FREE)

Identify the style of architecture



Reference

- <https://www.tamilnadutourism.tn.gov.in/destinations/mahabalipuram>
- <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/249/>
- <https://www.mahabalipuram.co.in/>
- <https://www.worldhistory.org/Mahabalipuram/>