

PONDICHERRY POST

HISTORY MEETING HARMONY: PONDICHERRY



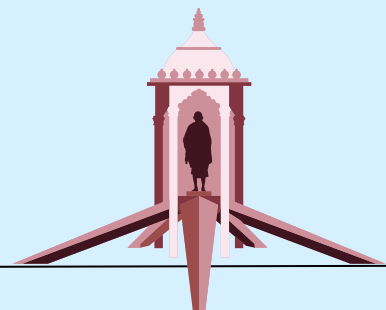
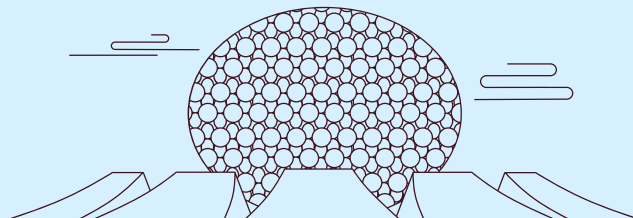
Puducherry in Ancient Period:

Pondicherry, now known as Puducherry, boasts a rich history that spans centuries. Its roots trace back to ancient times, with evidence of habitation during the Chola dynasty. However, Pondicherry's modern history began with European colonization, as the French East India Company established a trading center in 1674, leading to its emergence as a prominent French settlement.



Colonial Era to Now:

Throughout the colonial era, Pondicherry alternated between French and British control, witnessing periods of prosperity and turmoil. It remained under French rule until 1954 when it was incorporated into the Indian Union as a Union Territory. Today, Puducherry is celebrated for its blend of Indian and French cultures, evident in its architecture, cuisine, and way of life, making it a captivating destination for tourists and a unique part of India's cultural mosaic.



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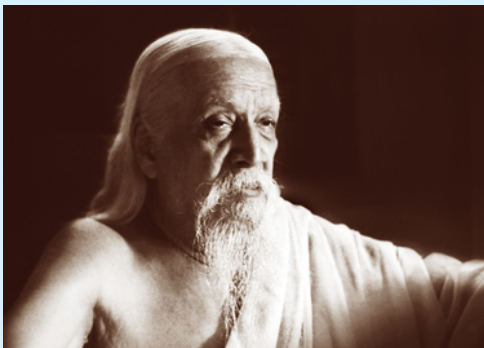
Sri Aurobindo Ashram: Pondicherry's Spiritual Oasis

The Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry stands as a testament to spiritualism and architectural beauty. Established in 1926 by Sri Aurobindo Ghose, a renowned philosopher, poet, and nationalist leader, along with his spiritual collaborator, The Mother (Mirra Alfassa), the ashram became a center for spiritual seekers worldwide. Set against the backdrop of Pondicherry's colonial past, the ashram's architecture reflects a blend of French and Indian influences, with serene courtyards, whitewashed buildings, and lush gardens creating an atmosphere of tranquility and contemplation. Over the years, the ashram has grown into a vibrant community dedicated to Sri Aurobindo's teachings of integral yoga and The Mother's vision of human unity, attracting visitors from all walks of life seeking inner transformation and peace.



Auroville: Pondicherry's Unity Beacon

Auroville, established in 1968 near Pondicherry, embodies the vision of human unity and peace, inspired by Sri Aurobindo and The Mother. This international township promotes integral yoga and spiritual evolution. Meanwhile, the Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry, founded in 1926, serves as a global spiritual center emphasizing inner transformation and collective harmony. While the ashram focuses on spiritual practices and community living, Auroville expands this vision to sustainable development and cross-cultural exchange. Both institutions attract visitors seeking solace, growth, and connection, contributing to Pondicherry's unique identity of spiritual exploration and cultural diversity.



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Architectural Heritage of the City

Pondicherry's rich architectural heritage reflects its diverse cultural influences, notably from its French colonial past. The town's European and Indian architectural fusion is evident in well-preserved heritage buildings, drawing visitors worldwide. The French Quarter boasts colonial-era mansions and colorful facades, housing landmarks like the French Consulate and Romain Rolland Library. In the Tamil Quarter, traditional South Indian architecture is showcased through ornate temples like Manakula Vinayagar and Varadaraja Perumal. These buildings not only marvel with their design but also enrich Pondicherry's cultural identity.



Heritage Activity: Explore Pondicherry's heritage buildings to create a descriptive brochure or pamphlet. Instruct students to select one or more heritage buildings in Pondicherry, and research their history, architectural style, significance, and any interesting anecdotes associated with them.



Heritage Activity: Sketch and paint this cathedral from Pondicherry and have an exhibition in your school. This is a group activity, all students must participate, there is no such thing as bad art

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Pondicherry Explorers



Map Exploration:
Provide students with maps of Pondicherry and its surroundings, and ask them to identify important landmarks, heritage buildings, and natural features. This activity helps students familiarize themselves with the geography of the region and understand its historical significance.

The Architectural Splendor of the Matrimandir

The Matrimandir in Auroville, India, conceived in 1971 by Mirra Alfassa and designed by French architect Roger Anger, is a remarkable architectural marvel blending modernist principles with spiritual symbolism. Featuring a central golden sphere encircled by twelve gardens representing aspects of the Divine Mother, the structure is adorned with intricate geometric patterns. Within the Inner Chamber lies a crystal globe reflecting divine light, symbolizing inner illumination. Serving as a sanctuary for silent contemplation and collective meditation, the Matrimandir embodies humanity's aspiration for unity and inner transformation, reflecting Auroville's ethos of peace and harmony.



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Exploring India's first modernist structure, Golconde in Pondicherry

Golconde, completed in 1945, stands as a testament to modernist architecture in Pondicherry. Designed by American architect Antonin Raymond and later completed by George Nakashima, this dormitory for the Sri Aurobindo Ashram is a pioneering example of reinforced concrete construction in India. Nestled discreetly behind a lotus-engraved wooden door, Golconde emanates an aura of tranquility within its grey-and-white walls. The building's facade, adorned with hundreds of concrete louvres, catches the fading light of the setting sun, creating a mesmerizing sight. Nakashima, who oversaw the construction, adopted the Sanskrit name Sundarananda and immersed himself in the ashram community. With meticulous attention to detail, Golconde stands as a blend of innovative design and functional beauty, reflecting the vision and dedication of its creators.



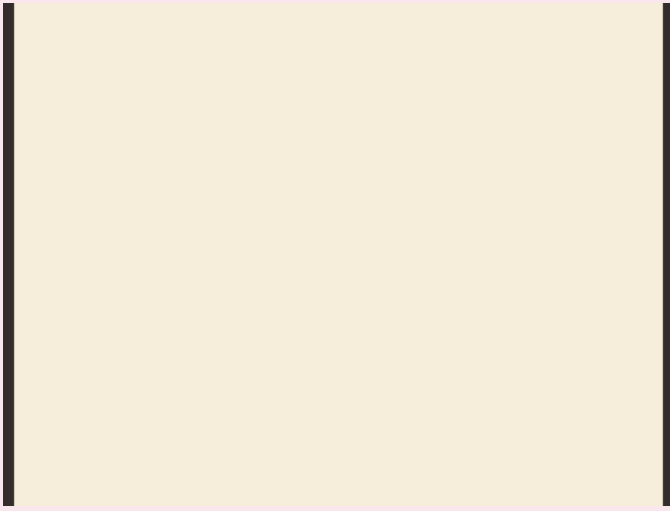
INTACH is ready with its proposal to add Puducherry in the UNESCO list

INTACH's Puducherry chapter, under Co-convenor Ashok Panda, has proposed Puducherry for UNESCO World Heritage City status. The city reached three milestones: regulations to protect heritage sites, forming a State Level Heritage Conservation Committee, and proposing 118 private and 13 religious buildings for heritage designation. Public feedback on the list is open until August 31, 2023, via the Puducherry Planning Authority.



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DESIGN AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR CLAY MODELLING AND POTTERY MAKING AND POST BELOW:



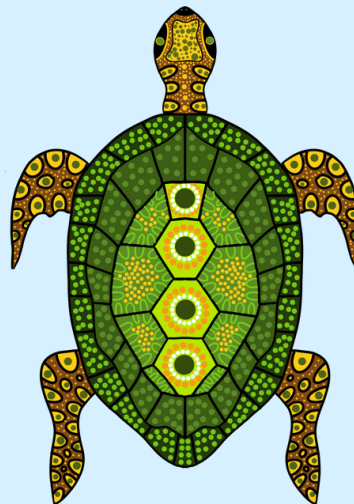
PRACTICE CLAY MODELLING AND TERRACOTTA ART AT GOLDEN BRIDGE POTTERY STUDIO



Puducherry's Coastal Ecology: Ecosystems and Sea Turtle Nesting

Puducherry's 36km coastline boasts diverse ecosystems, from estuaries and mangroves to sandy beaches. With a semi-arid climate and mean annual temperature of 30°C, the region receives around 1200mm of rainfall yearly. Coastal vegetation like coconut and whistling pine trees, along with species like morning glory and *Cyperus arenarius*, stabilize the sandy shores. During the northeast monsoon, storms from the South Bay of Bengal bring heavy rain and gusty winds, occasionally causing tidal waves that flood low-lying coastal areas. Sea turtle nesting primarily occurs from November to April, with major nesting sites in villages like Narambai, Nallavadu, and Moorthikuppam, where 30-40 nests are recorded annually, peaking from January to March.

Cuisine of Pondi: Find out the unique cuisines of Pondicherry and write down the ingredients of one dish with your own twist below:



Sketch the Sea Turtle: See and Sketch the Sea Turtle and have an exhibition in your classroom, also discuss the importance of conserving these sea creatures

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Silken Artistry: The Legacy of the Marbling Group at Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry

Established as a standout department, the Marbling Group has been a prominent producer of silk saris, scarves, stoles, ties, hankies, dress material, and dupattas both locally and internationally since the 1970s. Originating from Japan, marbling on paper is an ancient art form that involves handcrafting intricate patterns and effects with colors on water. Under the guidance of the Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, who played a pivotal role in setting up various units at the ashram in Pondicherry, this unit flourished. The marbling process on pure silk and pure silk chiffon involves delicately laying the fabric on the water's surface, allowing the mesmerizing patterns to be imprinted onto it. This meticulous technique results in unique and visually captivating designs, showcasing the expertise and creativity of the Marbling Group.



From Waste to Wonder: The Journey of Sri Aurobindo Handmade Paper Factory

In the mid-1940s, sadhaks of Sri Aurobindo Ashram initiated the Sri Aurobindo Handmade Paper Factory, crafting innovative handmade paper from discarded materials on a modest scale. Over time, their creations gained widespread recognition, leading to the establishment of a larger production unit in 1959. Today, situated in the heart of the city, this factory operates on a large scale, utilizing waste materials to produce tons of creative paper varieties. Its products are exported to numerous foreign countries, reflecting the factory's commitment to sustainability and artistic excellence.



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