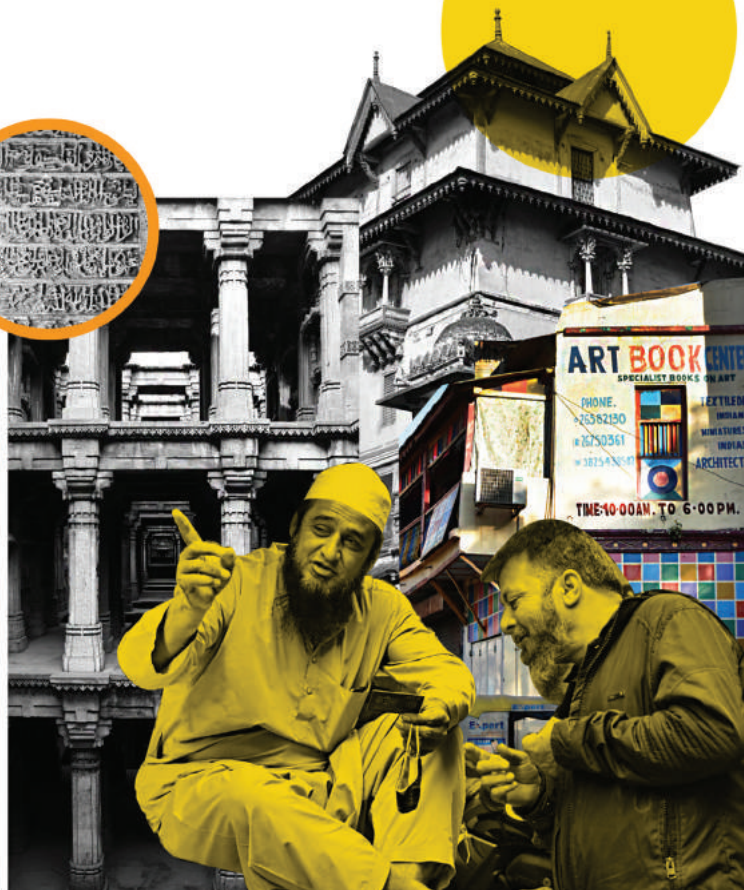


My City
My Heritage

MY AHMEDABAD



My City My Heritage

MY AHMEDABAD

Initiated by Sahapedia in partnership with the InterGlobe Foundation, the 'My City, My Heritage' project is focused on rediscovering the culture and heritage potential of Indian cities. The project entails exploration, documentation and dissemination of varied heritage and cultural aspects of 10 locations in India, including through the publication of these booklets. As a part of the project, a number of heritage walks, museum tours, baithaks and engaging educational activities for school students and general audiences were organised between 2020 and 2022. The locations covered in the first year were Ahmedabad, Indore, Prayagraj, Goa and Shillong and the locations covered in the second year were Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Nashik.

This booklet documents a mix of well-known as well as offbeat subjects from among Ahmedabad's cultural heritage. We hope you enjoy the articles, self-guided walks, museum listings and listicles within and that they enrich your experience of this remarkable city.

More about the project

The My City, My Heritage project caters to a wide user group, including but not limited to children with disabilities and from financially and socially marginalised backgrounds, culture enthusiasts, scholars, heritage professionals and tourists. The project aims at creating opportunities, building interest and capacity of young local scholars through collaborative research, documentation and mapping. An equally important and compelling goal is to create fresh avenues for residents, local administration and local businesses to re-engage with their cities' living cultural heritage and renew old as well as create new relationships of participation, community and ownership within these places. This booklet is a small step in that direction.

More detailed versions of all pieces covered in this editorial and more information about each city can be found on our website. This specially crafted cultural mapping portal features an interactive map, through which you can explore many other locations and themes documented by Sahapedia over the years. Scan this QR code to visit our portal and get access to our entire encyclopaedia.



**My City
My Heritage**

MY AHMEDABAD

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FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that we present to you this compendium of booklets showcasing some of the lesser known and lost treasures of select cities in our country. InterGlobe Foundation is committed to protecting and restoring the heritage and culture of India. We started this journey about seven years back by supporting the restoration and upkeep of the famous Khan-i-Khanan or Rahim's tomb in New Delhi. Since then, we have taken on a few more large and small restoration projects, which, while directly reviving these monuments, also contribute to the lives of craftspeople and neighbouring communities. Another project we have supported is the documentation and dissemination of a lost dance form. 'My City, My Heritage' is the first large project that we have launched to promote the intangible heritage of our country. We are fortunate to have found an able partner in Sahapedia. As part of My City, My Heritage, we endeavour to curate content and activities around both tangible (like museums) and intangible cultural heritage (like food, music, people, dances, fairs and festivals).

We also hope that in each of the project cities, a group of concerned citizens, institutions and government will come together to carry forward this beautiful curation of their city's history.

The recent disruption of our lives by the COVID pandemic has further brought to light the importance of the outdoors and local economies. This project will ably contribute to both.

We hope these booklets will entice you to discover these cities and their treasures and share it with others.

We welcome more organizations, individuals and researchers to build on the repository created here.

I am grateful to Sahapedia and my colleagues at the InterGlobe group of companies for making this project a reality.

With best wishes,

Rohini Bhatia
Chairperson, InterGlobe Foundation

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- Manharbhai Patel, Art Book Center
- Shreya Shalini, The InterGlobe Foundation
- Priyanka Singh, The InterGlobe Foundation

To access Sahapedia's cultural mapping portal, visit map.sahapedia.org/home/

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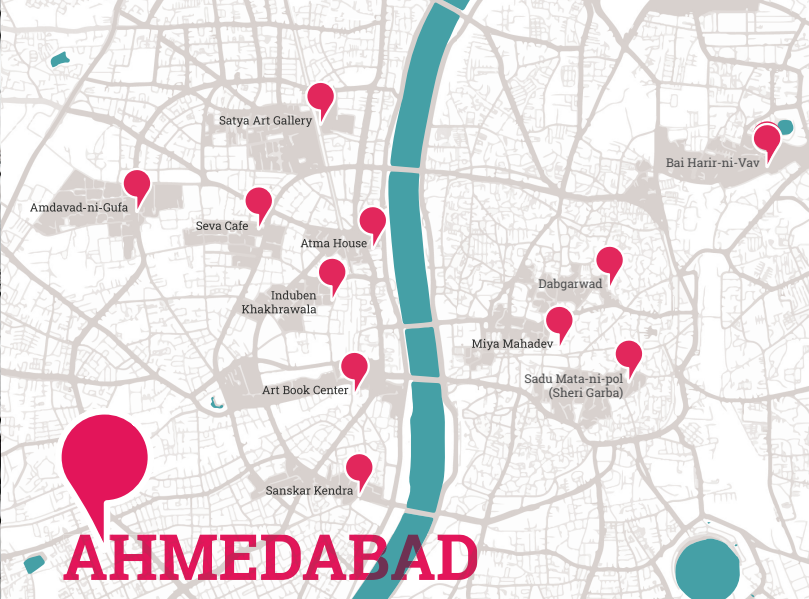
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AHMEDABAD

અમદાવાદ

Ahmedabad, the former capital of Gujarat, is the largest city in the state at 464 km² and the fifth most populous in India. Colloquially referred to as Amdavad, it was recently recognised as India's first World Heritage City by UNESCO. The city was founded in 1411 by Ahmad Shah I of the Gujarat Sultanate. Despite its deep-rooted history, Ahmedabad holds its own as a fast-growing metropolis and is presently divided into two; with the eastern side representing the old walled city, while the western side prides itself on its premier educational institutions and contemporary architecture.

Amdavadi culture is moulded by its time under Chalukya rule, followed by Delhi Sultanate, Gujarat Sultanate, Mughal, Maratha and Colonial rule. Other significant contributions to the city's identity include its age-old textile industry and indelible connection with Mahatma Gandhi. To this day,

Facing Page: Located 15 kms northeast of Ahmedabad, Bai Harir-ni-Vav is a stepwell built between 1485–99 CE.

the Sabarmati Ashram stands as testimony to the Mahatma's enduring influence on the city. Moreover, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation lists 2,696 heritage buildings in the city; these include ancient mosques, tombs and temples, as well as post-Independence architecture, replete with works by notable names such as Le Corbusier, Louis Kahn and B.V. Doshi.

Today, Ahmedabad boasts a multicultural milieu, echoed not only by existing elements of tangible and intangible heritage but also by a civic community that actively participates in local governance to safeguard its rights. It is known for its street food, its centres of higher education such as the National Institute of Design (NID), the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), the Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT University), and for being the birthplace of various eminent personalities, including Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Gulzarilal Nanda, and Dr Vikram Sarabhai.



Photo by Arastu Gupta, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

Amdavad-ni-Gufa is a cave like structure inspired by ancient Indian caves and *stupas*.

Amdavad-ni-Gufa

Kasturbhai Lalbhai campus, Navrangpura

Amdavad-ni-Gufa, or Husain–Doshi-ni-Gufa as it was formerly known, is an underground art gallery located in the Kasturbhai Lalbhai Campus in the University Area of Ahmedabad, featuring work by the Indian artist M.F. Husain, renowned for his vividly coloured *Cubist*-style art. The gallery, designed to resemble a cave (*'gufa'* in Gujarati), was planned by architect B.V. Doshi, representing a collaborative effort between the eminent painter and the gifted architect.

Doshi's tortoise shell-like design is said to have been inspired by the *Kurma avatar* (one of the ten incarnations of the Hindu God *Vishnu*, where he takes the form of a tortoise). Doshi further took inspiration from ancient Indian caves and *stupas* along with traditional Buddhist architecture to create an amorphous, submarine-like space encompassed within curvilinear walls and illuminated by cylindrical *skylights*. The gallery's structure comprises two large *rotundas*, meant to serve as interactive spaces for discourses on art and culture, while the curved interior walls, supported by trunk-like columns, act as canvases for Husain's art, showcasing *Palaeolithic* cave painting-inspired anthropomorphic figures, humans and animals.

Timings: Tue to Sun | 4:00 pm to 8:00pm
Established: 1995

The unconventional design of the *Gufa* emerged in direct response to the hot, harsh climate of the city, with its white mosaic tile exterior helping to prevent the interiors from heating up excessively. Construction was carried out manually by indigenous people from nearby villages.

The *Gufa* today happens to be one of the most frequently visited sites in the city, and includes an open-air café and exhibition gallery showcasing several local and international artists.



Photo by Sushant Savla, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

The *Gufa* has M.F. Hussain's art painted on the walls.

■ NANDINI RAWAL

Art Book Centre

Near Jain Temple, Madalpur, Ellisbridge

Timings: Mon to Sun | 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

Established: 1970

Art Book Centre is more than just a bookshop; rather, it acts as an ongoing book collection of an enthusiastic typist-turned-bookseller, Mr Manharbhai Patel. What started as a part-time venture, a small bookshop at his two-storied residence near Ellisbridge in 1970, has now grown into a significant institution and repository of books on Indian art.

Manharbhai, initially worked at New Order Book Co. An avid reader, he began building his own book collection and steadily developing a clientele of art book lovers, academics and students. The ability to source and curate requested titles—often rare and out-of-print books on Indian art, painting, textiles and history—brought the small venture good reviews. Today, the store is run jointly by Manharbhai and his two sons, and stocks a curated list of rare and valuable books with a special focus on Indian textiles, miniature painting and crafts. Along with limited edition titles which are often difficult to source, the inventory frequently accommodates art catalogues from galleries and museums around India. The Art Book Centre has also successfully established associations with publications such as Marg, Domus, Art India and leading international art publishers, to become their dependable repository. The bookshop is often of assistance to various libraries and art and design schools in the city as well.

The store has become an important landmark for art scholars, textile designers and art historians, as well as foreign diplomats and ambassadors visiting Ahmedabad. The Centre's list of patrons includes such names as artist Amit Ambalal, art collector Anil Relia and the esteemed architect B.V. Doshi, among others, many of whom have described it as a 'treasure house' and 'priceless gem' in Manharbhai's visitor's book.

■ NIHARIKA JOSHI



Photo by Jamsheed Kavina.



Photo by Jamsheed Kavina.

Above: Art book centre's building exterior has a colorful tiled façade with its signage. Below: Various books on Indian arts and crafts are on sale at the Art book centre.



Photo by Sanyambhaga at English Wikipedia, CC BY 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

The three-storied building with brises-soleil and a protruding ramp entrance.

ATMA House

Atma House, Ashram Rd, Navrangpura

Located in the heart of Ahmedabad on the busy Ashram Road, the Ahmedabad Textile Mill Owners' Association House (ATMA House), also known as Mill Owners' Association Building (AMOA Building), is an architectural marvel. It was commissioned by Surottam Hutheesing, a former president of the Ahmedabad Mill Owners' Association (AMOA) as the headquarters of the city's then thriving textile industry.

Ahmedabad had become an important industrial centre by the late nineteenth century, leading prominent mill-owning families to make an effort to modernise the city in order to put their business on the global map. These industrialists were instrumental in bringing globally celebrated architects including Charles Correa, Louis Kahn and Le Corbusier to Ahmedabad.

At the time, AMOA wished to relocate headquarters from Lal Darwaja in the Old City to the banks of the Sabarmati river, envisioning a private space away from the noisy textile mills. The project was assigned to the renowned architect Le Corbusier, who created a three-storied river-facing building complete with unique architectural features including *brises-soleil* (sunbreakers), *double-height ceilings*, *free-standing walls*, *hanging staircases* and protruding ramps. The grey-patterned concrete of the building is colour-blocked

Timings: By appointment only
Established: 1954

with colorful doors, while the greenery on the parapet of each floor breathes life into the structure. The iconic structure encompasses a climate-responsive design, and is regarded to be an important milestone in Corbusier's work.

ATMA House marks the advent of the post-colonial modern architectural movement in Ahmedabad.

With the advancement in technology, the mills took a backseat as the local handloom industry started booming. Over the next decades, most of the mills went out of business, though the building continues to be managed by the association. The ATMA House marks the advent of the *post-colonial modern architectural movement* in Ahmedabad. The building is frequented by art and architecture lovers from across the globe, and guided tours are provided on prior reservation. Many art and design exhibitions are held on its premises to encourage aspiring artists and designers.

■ NANDINI RAWAL

Miya Mahadev

Pankore Naka, Old City, Khadia

Timings: Mon to Sat | 7:30 am to 7:00 pm
Established: 2004

Miya Mahadev is the nickname given to a Hindu-Muslim duo—the late Bharat Makani, a tailor, and Hassan Saiyed, a trader—whose small enterprises lie facing each other in Pankor Naka in the eastern part of Ahmedabad's Old City along with their and honorary inquiry centre.

The pair was known to go out of their way to help people find directions in the clustered, winding lanes of the Old City.

The pair was known to go out of their way to help people find directions in the clustered, winding lanes of the Old City; their small acts of kindness made them popular in the neighbourhood, and they eventually set up an inquiry centre called *Miya Mahadev Puch Parach* office in 2004 to assist people officially. Along with handling their small businesses, the duo would also help lost children and catch pickpockets, while simultaneously acting as a lost-and-found centre and also operating a free water cooler. This inquiry centre is frequented daily by visitors who often lose their way; it also has a mobile number for people who want to make enquiries.

Their friendship, which went back a long way, withstood many tests, including the communal conflict in the city in 1985. Bharat passed away in February 2020 due to age-related ailments, but his son Tushar continues to carry forward his legacy with Hassan. Several local NGOs and organizations have honoured the pair for setting an example of communal harmony for the citizens of Ahmedabad to follow. Their story serves as a reflection of the inter-faith camaraderie in Ahmedabad that exists even today.

■ NANDINI RAWAL



Photo by Jamsheed Kavina.



Photo by Jamsheed Kavina.



Photo by Jamsheed Kavina.

Above: Miya Mahadev's set up an inquiry centre called *Miya Mahadev Puch Parach* office in 2004. Middle: Tushar Makani and Hassan Saiyed at *Miya Mahadev Puch Parach* Office. Below: Images displayed inside the *Miya Mahadev Puch Parach* Office.





The stepwell has five underground storeys each featuring a covered gallery supported by beams and columns.

Bai Harir-ni-Vav

Hanumansingh Rd, Haripura, Asarwa

Bai Harir-ni-Vav, also known as Dhai or Dada Harir-ni-Vav, is a *stepwell* built between 1485–99 CE by a *dhai* (nurse), Harir Sultani, a lady in the household of Sultan Mahmud Begada of the Gujarat *Sultanate*, who was also the superintendent of the royal *harem*. It was built to provide water and shelter to travellers and animals. The *stepwell* now lies in the Haripura suburb in Asarwa, fifteen kilometres north-east of Ahmedabad.

The entrance to the sandstone *stepwell* has a domed canopy, with the steps from the porch gradually descending through five underground storeys towards the well, which is 196 ft long and 40 ft wide at ground level. Each storey features a covered gallery supported by beams and columns, replete with intricately carved Hindu motifs such as lotuses, rosettes and diamonds, as well as Islamic designs

Center: Details of calligraphy carvings,
Photo by Jamshed Kavina.
Facing page: Structure at the entrance of the Vav premises.

Timings: Daily | 7:00 am to 6:00 pm
Established: 1485–99

such as vines and floral creepers. The two canopied spiral staircases on either side of the main well extend from the ground floor to the bottom of the well.

The well has a second circular shaft that was designed and used for irrigation purposes.

The typical multi-storied open galleries stepped corridors and ornate carvings of this *stepwell* all seem to have drawn inspiration from the Queen's *stepwell*, a grand Solanki *stepwell* built in the eleventh century in Patan, approximately 250 km away.

Currently, the well is dry, but the historical complex is well-maintained and is managed by the Archaeological Survey of India. It attracts visitors for its architectural beauty and serves as a physical representation of the city's multicultural ethos on account of it bearing traces of both Hindu and Islamic culture.

■ NANDINI RAWAL





Photo by Jamshed Kavina.

A typical music store at Dabgarwad.

Dabgarwad

Swaminarayan Mandir Road, Old City, Kalupur

The Dabgarwad market is located in the vicinity of the famous *Swaminarayan Temple* in the bustling Kalupur area of the Old City. The street leading to the temple is flanked by numerous shops and stalls that are solely owned and run by the people of the Dabgar community. The shops sell a variety of articles ranging from musical instruments to umbrellas, all of them made by the artisans of the Dabgar community. The market is open throughout the year but sees particularly heavy footfall during the festive seasons.

The Dabgars originally belonged to Rajasthan and used to serve as soldiers for the Hindu kings. Legend suggests that they vowed to resist the Mughals but were defeated. This led to the conversion of several Dabgars into Islam, thus forming the Muslim Dabgar community. Several of the remaining Dabgars relocated to present-day Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. The Rajasthani Dabgars were involved in making *dhals* (armour) while the ones from Uttar Pradesh made rawhide jars. The Dabgars from Gujarat, on the other hand, specialised in making tablas and *dholaks* (Indian drums) and *chhatris* (umbrellas).

It is believed that the market has been operating since the reign of Sultan Ahmad Shah (circa 1411 CE), the founder of

Timings: Daily | 9:00 am to 9:00 pm
Established: circa 1940

Ahmedabad. While the exact origin of the market is not known, the formal market setup has been in place since around 1940 CE, and currently has about 40–45 shops selling umbrellas and a variety of musical instruments like *tablas*, *dhols*, *khanjaris*, *manjiras*, etc.



Photo by Jamshed Kavina.

Shree Swaminarayan Temple near Dabgarwad.

■ NANDINI RAWAL

Induben Khakhrawala

IKC Mithakhali Gam, Mithakhali, Vejalpur

Timings: Mon to Sat | 9:00 am to 9:00 pm
Sun | 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Established: 1964

Gujarat is famed for its varieties of *farsan* (dry snacks), of which *khakhra* is a popular example. The crispy *khakhra*, originally made by crisping day-old *chapatis* (flatbread) on a flat pan, was a way of preserving food in the hot and unforgiving weather conditions. From the 1950s onwards, as the demand for packaged snacks increased in Ahmedabad and elsewhere, *farsan* became a commercially viable opportunity.

In the early 1960s, Induben Jhaveri, then a homemaker, began to make and sell *khakhra* in small quantities, working out of a makeshift extension in a Jain kitchen to support her family in a time of financial distress. Soon, her home-made *khakhra* became popular, and blossomed into a thriving business, now famous for its brand 'Induben Khakhrawala' (Induben the *Khakhra* Maker). Induben kept adding new varieties and flavours of *khakhra* to her menu to cater to growing demand at her small shop in Mithakhali in western Ahmedabad. Eventually, her journey as a successful woman entrepreneur even inspired a television show.

After Induben's demise in 1981, the family worked to expand the snack shop, which now also sells assorted Gujarati *farsan*, pickles, *kachoris* and local versions of nachos, tacos and toasts. However, *khakhra* remains the best-selling product, with up to 50 varieties selling over 500 kg every day, each crisp *khakhra* hand-rolled and cooked by one of over a hundred women workers. Induben Khakhrawala now has over 20 outlets across Gujarat and Mumbai, with eight branches in Ahmedabad itself, apart from being linked to export-chains around the world.

■ NIHARIKA JOSHI



Photo by Janshed Kavina.



Photo by Janshed Kavina.

Above: Photos of (top to bottom) Induben and a still from the TV show Krishnaben Khakhrawala inspired by Induben Khakhrawala.

Below: Various flavours of khakhras on sale.





The Seva café kitchen typically serves a mix of Indian and continental cuisine to about 40 to 50 guests a day.

Seva Cafe

4th floor, Shopper's Plaza, Chimanlal Girdharlal Rd, Navrangpura

Timings: Fri to Sun | 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm
Established: 2005

The unique Seva Cafe has been serving guests since 2005. Conceived by the founders of the NGO Manav Sadhana, John Silliphant and Jayesh Patel, as an experiment in 'gift economy', the cafe is an attempt to bring the culture of seva or service and gratitude into the mainstream.

A meal here is considered a 'gift' and has been paid for, in fact, by an earlier visitor. The bill handed over to a guest at the end of the meal amounts to zero; it is given along with an envelope encouraging the

visitor to keep the chain of gifting alive by paying or writing a heartfelt message for future diners. This contribute-as-you-wish model invites guests to offer participation at will, building a circle

of trust and kindness. The accounts and revenues are transparent for all to see, with profits being channelled into charity, while the kitchen is open for anyone to volunteer in food preparation, serving and cleaning.

While the cafe typically serves 40 to

50 guests a day, efforts

are made to accommodate a surplus of both volunteers and visitors.

A mix of Indian and Continental cuisine is served. The cafe space, designed by architect Yatin Pandya, is simple and minimalistic, with an open-air seating area, a traditional Gujarati *hichko* (swing) and vibrant artefacts handmade by volunteers.



The bill handed over to a guest at the end of the meal amounts to zero.

Center: An image of the signage at the entrance of Seva café. Photo by Jamshed Kavina. Facing page: The cafe space is simple and minimalistic, with an open-air seating area.

■ NIHARIKA JOSHI



Photo by Jamshed Kavina.

Entrance to the Navajivan Trust building.

Satya Art Gallery

Navajivan Trust, Ashram Rd, Navrangpura

Navajivan Trust was established by *Mahatma* Gandhi in 1929. During the Indian Independence movement, the Trust's publishing house, Navajivan Press, became a symbol of the liberty of the free press. In 2015, the Trust set up *Satya* Art Gallery, an art gallery and exhibition space for photographs, in its premises.

Satya Art Gallery has conducted over 25 shows in the five years since its inception. Not only has it preserved the legacy of the revolutionary newspapers *Navajivan* (new life) and *Young India*, among other writings, it also has on display the city's oldest printing press, procured in 1922. The letterpress is on display in a room with rare photographs and original manuscripts published during the Independence movement. The *foyer* is an extension of the printing-press exhibit, with messages from freedom fighters, a wall painting with glimpses from Gandhi's life, and printed documents in Hindi and Gujarati arranged on the walls.

The gallery has displayed important works, including documentation of the Indo-Pakistan War of 1971. The gallery also became one of only three locations in India to host an exhibition of classic photographs by Swiss photojournalist Walter Bosshard, titled 'Envisioning Asia: Gandhi and Mao', depicting the historic

Timings: Tue to Sun | 12:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Established: 2015

Dandi March of 1930. Other well-known photographers and artists who have exhibited here include Jyoti Bhatt, Vivek Desai and Anuj Ambalal.

Being a simple *white cube space*, the gallery is flexible enough to accommodate the varying formats and display systems required by particular exhibits. While the area is available on rent for shows, requests to exhibit artwork are moderated by a panel of artists and curators to maintain quality and to ensure accessibility for all.



Photo by Jamshed Kavina.

Photographs of Mahatma Gandhi on display.

■ NIHARIKA JOSHI

Sheri Garba

Sadu Mata Ni Pol, Shahpur

Established:
circa 1868

Navratri is a widely celebrated nine-night long Hindu festival held to honour the feminine divinity, *Shakti*, who is worshipped in different forms across India. In Gujarat, the festival is celebrated with nine nights of dancing to venerate the Goddess *Amba* (a form of *Shakti*) and invoke her blessings. The traditional Gujarati folk dance called *Garba* is performed in concentric circles around the shrine of *Amba*, where the circles symbolise her divine energy. Prominent among the celebrations is a unique *Garba* tradition carried out in an alleyway of the Old City area of East Ahmedabad, where the men cross-dress and dance to honour the goddess Sadu Mata, who is believed to guard their locality.

According to the local tradition, as celebrated in Sadu Mata-ni-Pol in Shahpur, the men of this *pol* (*pol* is a traditional residential cluster indigenous to Ahmedabad) dress up in *sarees* (the traditional drape worn by Indian women) and perform *Garba* to atone for a 200-year-old curse. The legend says that Saduba, a lady married into the *Barot* community, was sent a marriage proposal by a *Gaekwad* king, which led to hostilities between the two communities. It is said that the men from the *Barot* community did nothing to fight for her honour, leading an enraged Saduba to then ask her husband to behead her before her imminent capture, but not before cursing the *Barot* men that their sons would remain childless. To appease her spirit, the *Barot* community made a temple in her memory, and the men vowed to dress up as women and perform *Garba* as *Ashtami* or the eighth night of *Navratri*. It is believed that Saduba was pleased by this gesture and revoked her curse, blessing the *Barot* men with offspring. Ever since, Saduba has been revered as a local deity, anointed as Sadu Mata or Mother.

■ NANDINI RAWAL



Photo by Jamsheed Kavina.



Photo by Jamsheed Kavina.



Photo by Jamsheed Kavina.

Above: Sadu Mata temple at Sadu Mata-ni-Pol
Middle: Housing clusters on both sides of a narrow lane at Sadu Mata-ni-Pol. Below: A religious shrine located inside Sadu Mata-ni-Pol.





The Sanskar Kendra City Museum focuses on the historical, cultural, economic and political aspects of Ahmedabad. Photo by Nizil Shah, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

Sanskar Kendra City Museum: Karnavati Atit ni Jhanki

Sanskar Kendra, Bhagtacharya Rd, Paldi

Timings: Tue-Sun | 10:30am to 6:00pm

Established: Permanent exhibition established since 2002

Entry Fee: Not applicable

Services:

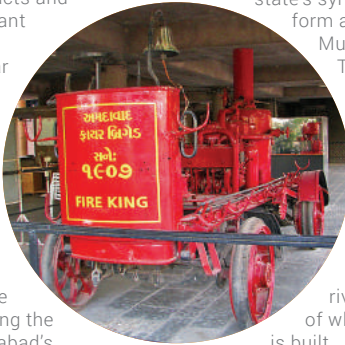
Conference/ Seminar hall

Facilities:

Wheelchair Friendly • Restroom • Drinking Water • Locker Room • Parking • Garden/ Picnic Area • Workshops/seminars/lectures • Guided tours • Library and archives services • Seating facilities • Elderly friendly

The Sanskar Kendra City Museum focuses on the historical, cultural, economic and political aspects of Ahmedabad through its collection of exquisite art, artefacts and historically significant documents.

Housed in Sanskar Kendra, a cultural centre designed by the renowned architect Le Corbusier in 1954, the Museum was conceived and curated by the Vastu Shilpa Foundation with the intention of capturing the nuances of Ahmedabad's history. Exhibits of the museum belong to diverse categories such as textiles, photography, contemporary arts, architecture and commerce. Folk arts and crafts, important chapters



Center: An Ahmedabad fire brigade vehicle from 1907 on display. Photo by Kalyan Shah, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons. Facing page: A sculpture of Queen Victoria on display.

in Gujarat's history such as the struggle for independence, Mahatma Gandhi, the institutions, festivals and architecture of Ahmedabad and the state's syncretic culture also form a vital part of the Museum's exhibition.

The City Museum also houses the world's tallest incense stick and the foundation block of the famous Ellis Bridge, one of the many bridges over the Sabarmati river, on the banks of which Ahmedabad is built.

Housed in an open-plan space with a large volume, the exhibits are displayed within sections, segregated by low-heighted partitions in wood or MDF boards. Architecture models are encased in glass, while to-scale architectural elements such as chabutro, sections of a traditional house etc are kept free-standing.

■ NIHARIKA JOSHI

DIY Heritage Trail

The built heritage of the Gujarat Sultanate in Ahmedabad

The walled city of Ahmedabad was founded by Ahmad Shah I of the Gujarat Sultanate in 1411 and remained an important cultural and economic centre for decades to come. This trail will acquaint you with four historic landmarks from the walled city of Ahmedabad that are vital to the city's built heritage.

Starting Location:

Badshah-no-Hajiro

Ending Location: Teen Darwaza

Distance: 595 metres

Time taken: 2-3 hours

Walk requirements: Please bring comfortable shoes and water.

RANI-NO-HAJIRO

Manek Chowk Road, Khadia

Rani No Haziro is a tomb complex that houses tombs of Mughalai Bibi and Murki Bibi among other female family members of Gujarat Sultanate rulers and was completed in the year 1445 by Ahmed Shah.



TEEN DARWAZA

Old City, Bhadra

This three-arched gate was conceived as a ceremonial exit gate from Bhadra Fort to the eastern part of the city and was completed in 1415 by Ahmed Shah I.

JAMA MASJID

Manek Chowk, Khadia

Ahmedabad's Friday mosque was built in 1423 by Ahmed Shah as one of the largest mosques in the subcontinent.



BADSHAH-NO-HAJIRO

Ahmedshah Badshah's Tomb, Manek Chowk

Badshah-no-Hajiro is an ancient structure housing cenotaphs of several male members of the Shah dynasty and was completed in 1451 by Muhammad Shah.



Sahapedia's award winning program, India Heritage walks, offers guided walks across India. Visit www.indiaheritagewalks.org for more.

DIY Food Trail

A Culinary Trail Through the Old City

While the Gujarati thali is famous all over the country, it is Ahmedabad's street food that makes it a food lover's paradise. Ahmedabad's Old City is littered with decades-old shops that serve a variety of food in the bylanes surrounding the city's ancient monuments. This trail will cover four landmarks that exemplify the culinary experience offered by the city.

Starting Location: Raipur Bhajia House

Ending Location: Chandravilas Restaurant

Distance: 1.3 km

Time taken: 2-3 hours

Walk requirements:

Please bring comfortable shoes and water.

CHANDRAVILAS

Gandhi Road, Old City, Khadia

This 119-year-old eatery still serves around 500 people in the city each day and is famous for its Gujarati thali that serves 11 different dishes.

JUNA SHARE BAZAR CHAVANAWALA

Old City, Danapidh, Khadia

Juna Share Bazar was started by a Rajasthani migrant Achratlal Kuberdas as a small makeshift shop and now is known internationally for its unique namkeen mixtures.

DAS KHAMAN HOUSE

Navovas, opp. Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, Near Danapith, Gol Limda

Famous for selling traditional Gujarati snacks, Das Khaman was started in 1922 by Shri Pitambardas Thakkar and his wife Nandubaa. The shop has multiple varieties of khaman to offer such as - dahi khaman, sev khaman, green fry khaman, etc.

NEW RAIPUR BHAJIYA HOUSE

Jamalpur, Mahajan No Vando, Behrampura

Raipur Bhajiya House has been standing tall since 1933, when Somabhai Patel sold a kilo of delicious bhajiyas for just Re 1.

5

MARVELS OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN AHMEDABAD

Ahmedabad's built heritage contains architecture from the period of the Sultanate to the British. However, it found expression as a city on the cusp of modernity through buildings constructed by Indian and foreign architects in the post-independence decades. Here are five buildings that best exemplify Ahmedabad's liaison with modern architecture.

Gandhi Smarak

**Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya,
Hridaya Kunj, Old Wadaj**

The structure was completed in 1958 and designed by the Indian architect Charles Correa. The museum has a human-scaled structure made of stone floors, tiled roofs and brick piers to reflect the Mahatma's philosophy of life - swadeshi.

The Mill Owners Building (ATMA House)

**Near Natraj Cinema,
Ashram Road, Navrangpura**

Constructed in 1954 by Le Corbusier, a French-Swiss architect, this structure is made of exposed concrete with a few wooden and steel elements painted in bright colors, to add contrast.

Sanskar Kendra

**Bhagtacharya Road, Near
Sardar Patel Bridge, Paldi**

Le Corbusier's second major contribution to the city is Sanskar Kendra, which was completed in 1956. The building possesses an array of sun shading systems, an exposed brick exterior and several elements of raw concrete.

IIM Campus

Sargam Marg, Vastrapur

The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Campus was designed by Louis Kahn in 1962 and is known for its large geometrical extractions and communal spaces.

Sangath

**Drive In Rd, Opposite BKN
Movers, Nilmani Society, Thaltej**

B.V. Doshi designed Sangath in 1980 as his workspace and research centre. The space has numerous vaults covered with broken china mosaic and experimentally constructed interior spaces made of clay and concrete with local construction techniques.

5 PROMINENT THEATRE GROUPS IN AHMEDABAD

Gujarati theatre has a long and winding history that has culminated in its contemporary form that is a hybrid of traditional elements and the theatre trends of urban India. These are five of the city's prominent theatre groups that hold performances and workshops throughout the year.

Budhan Theatre

**Budhan Theatre, 131,
B Ward, Chharanagar Road,
Kuber Nagar**

Budhan Theatre is an independent initiative by the Chhara community of Ahmedabad to enter the cultural sphere of theatre to raise awareness about the status of denotified tribes in India and assert their political subjectivity.

Ahmedabad Theatre Group

**45, 2, Satellite Rd,
Bimanagar, Ambawadi**

Started in 1992 by a group of theatre practitioners from the city, this theatre group has adapted several plays to Gujarati apart from documenting songs and music from Gujarati theatre.

Theatre and Media Centre

**Theatre Media Centre Campus,
Near Chenpur Petrol Pump,
New Ranip**

Started in 2000 by Hamukh Baradi as a place for training and research in theatre and mass media, the Centre now produces plays in Gujarati, with its students and mentors.

Akshat Drama Group

**215, C- Wing, Siddhivinayak
Towers Nr. D.A.V. School, Off
Sarkhej - Gandhinagar Highway**

Engaging in both street plays and stage theatre, this theatre group has performed a myriad of plays in both Gujarati and English on several issues of social relevance

Indie Productions

**7, Suhasnagar Society, Near
Dinesh Hall, Behind Prabhudas
Jadiya Jewellers, Ashram Road**

A theatre group that specialises in curating theatre workshops and performances for different clients, Indie Productions performs in multiple languages, delving into experimental theatre and contemporary techniques.

CALENDAR

Festivals and Cultural Events

SAPTAK ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF MUSIC

LD Arts College,
opposite IIM

With nearly 125 top artistes attending and about 50 performances spread over 13 days, this music festival has been held every year since 1980. The festival features both emerging talents and established performers.

CHAOS - THE CULTURAL FESTIVAL OF IIM AHMEDABAD

IIM Ahmedabad,
Sargam Marg, Vastrapur

IIM Ahmedabad was established in 1961 and has become a defining factor in Ahmedabad's status as a city renowned for its institutes of higher education. Chaos, the annual cultural festival of the college is a four-day event in which more than 500 colleges from across the country participate in competitions and workshops.

JAN

UTTARAYAN

Sabarmati Riverfront
Walkway East, Lal Darwaja

Uttarayan is celebrated every year on the day of Makar Sankranti by flying kites to celebrate the coming of spring. The government of Gujarat organises the international kite festival every year at the Sabarmati Riverfront.

MODHERA DANCE FESTIVAL

On Mehsana - Becharaji
Road, Highway, Modhera

Every year, in the third week of January, after Uttarayan, the Modhera sun temple serves as a backdrop for several classical dance performances which constitute the Modhera Dance festival.

RANG SRUSHTI THEATRE FESTIVAL

Scrapyard - The Theatre, Paldi

This theatre festival was established under the guidance of Rajoo Barot, founder of Ahmedabad Theatre Group and is organised by 'The Earthing Society' - a theatre school based in the city.





VAUTHA FAIR

Sangam Tirtha Fairgrounds,
Vautha, Dholka

Held 50 km south of Ahmedabad, this is Gujarat's largest livestock fair held on the Hindu festival of Kartik Purnima every year.

Vautha is also the place of confluence for seven rivers and therefore the fair is also attended by several pilgrims.

HUNGRITO FOOD FEST

Lavish Green at
Sindhu Bhavan Road

A confluence of food and music, the Hungrito Food Fest has been an exciting event for the residents of Ahmedabad since 2018.

NAVRATRI

Bhadra Road, Old City,
Lal Darwaja

All nine days of Navratri are celebrated with dance and music across the city.

Bhadra Fort and GMDC Ground are venues famous for hosting the best garba performances.

MAR

JUL

OCT

NOV

DEC

RATH YATRA

Shri Jagannathji
Mandir Trust, Jamalpur

The annual rath yatra in Ahmedabad starts from the ancient Jagganath temple and covers about 14 km before returning to the temple in the evening. The procession is marked by huge crowds and tableaux, with decorated elephants and trucks accompanying the ceremonial chariots.

**AHMEDABAD
INTERNATIONAL
LITERACY FESTIVAL**
310 Samaan 2, Prahalad
Nagar, Satellite

Founded by Umashanker Yadav in 2016, the Ahmedabad International Literature Festival invites reputed writers and speakers to facilitate discussions and engagements on topics of current relevance and celebrate the written as well as spoken word.

Glossary of Terms

Amdavad-ni-Gufa

Gufa: Translates to 'cave' in Hindi.

Cubism: An abstract artistic style emerging in the early twentieth century, depicted through breaking figures and objects into distinct planes to offer unique viewpoints.

Kurma Avatar: One of the ten avatars or incarnations of the Hindu god Vishnu, where he takes the form of a tortoise in the myth of the churning of the ocean of milk.

Vishnu: A major Hindu deity, forming a Holy Trinity with Shiva and Brahma, and known for his ten avatars or incarnations, as well as his incorporation of lesser deities, including Rama and Krishna.

Stupa: A Buddhist monument containing sacred relics belonging to the Buddha or other associated religious figures, and usually taking a hemispherical architectural form.

Skylight: A window or opening in the roof of a building, designed to let in natural light.

Rotunda: A circular building, room or area, often covered with a dome.

Palaeolithic: The first cultural period in the ancient Stone Age, dating roughly from 2.5 million years ago to 10,000 BC, and characterised by the first recorded evidence of tool construction in the form of simplistic chipped stone tools.

ATMA House

Brise-soleil: Translating to 'sun breaker' from French, denoting an architectural sun protection feature designed to cool the interior of the building.

Double-height ceiling: A ceiling placed at roughly twice the normal height, i.e 9-11 feet, lending the space a larger, more open feel.

Free standing wall: A standalone wall unconnected to a ceiling or any other part of a building at either end.

Hanging staircase: A staircase that appears to be supported by only one side, for example, by being built into the wall, giving it a floating appearance.

Post-colonial Modern Architecture: An architectural movement emerging in the post-Independence period and characterised by modernist free expression, as opposed to a state-driven revivalist style.

Miya Mahadev

Puch Parach: Translates to 'inquiry' in Gujarati.

NGO: Acronym for 'non-governmental organisation.'

Bai Harir-ni-Vav

Stepwell: Also known as vav in Gujarati and baoli or baori in Hindi, stepwells are underground water sources found in dry, arid regions in the Indian subcontinent, frequently doubling as places of rest and shelter.

Sultanate: Refers to a territory ruled by a sultan. Here, it corresponds to the Gujarat Sultanate, a kingdom established by Zafar Khan in the early fifteenth century.

Harem: Referring to private, secure parts of the house separately assigned to women, the term is of pre-Islamic origin but was largely relevant to Islamic societies around the world, including India, where the term was often associated with the royal harem: comprising the ruler's wives, concubines, female attendants and eunuchs, who served as guards.

Dabgarwad

Swaminarayan: Born Ghanshyam Pande in 1781, Swaminarayan was a yogi and ascetic, known for his spiritual contributions to Hinduism.

Dhal: Literally translating to 'armour' from Hindi.

Tabla: Small Indian hand drums often played in a pair, to be played with the palm and varying in pitch.

Dholak: A two-headed cylindrical drum native to South Asia.

Chhatra: Literally translating to 'umbrella' from Hindi.

Khanjari: A small frame drum with a set of jingles, similar to a tambourine, originating from Southern India.

Manjira: A traditional Indian percussion instrument consisting of a pair of small hand cymbals, also known as taal.

Induben Khakhrawala

Khakhra: A thin cracker originating in the Gujarat region of India, made with flour, spices, clarified butter and lentils and prepared by roasting.

Chapati: A flat unleavened form of bread native to the Indian subcontinent, usually made of whole-grain flour and eaten with lentils, vegetables or meat.

Jain: A person practicing Jainism, an ancient Indian religion that forms an integral part of South Asian religious practices today. It shares some features with Hinduism and Buddhism, the two other dominant religions of

Indian origin, and is characterised by its belief in spiritual purity and disciplined nonviolence.

Farsan: Found abundantly in Gujarat, Rajasthani and Maharashtrian cuisine, farsan refers to a variety of salty snacks, which are either fried, dried, steamed or served fresh. Popular farsans include the dhokla (made of fermented rice and split chickpeas), fafda (made from gram flour) and bhajiya (spicy fritters).

Kachori: Kachoris, originating in the Indian subcontinent, are spicy deep-fried balls of a flour-dough and stuffed with pulses, served with a chutney made of mint or tamarind.

Seva Cafe

Gift Economy: A type of economic system where goods and services are offered without a predetermined expectation of quid pro quo, and is often based on the principles of goodwill, karma and loyalty.

Seva: The term is derived from a Sanskrit word implying 'selfless service', often done as a means to develop spirituality. It is a concept common to more than one religion in India, and is often carried out in the form of voluntary work.

Hichko: Meaning 'swing' in Gujarati, also known as 'jhula' in Hindi.

Satya Art Gallery

Navajivan: Navajivan is a Hindi word which literally translates to 'new life'.

Mahatma: A title awarded to a person of great prestige or honour in the fields of selflessness and wisdom.

Satya: A Sanskrit word which could be loosely translated to 'truth'.

Foyer: A lobby or anteroom.

Dandi March: Also called the Salt March, the Dandi March was a historic protest march led by Mahatma Gandhi in 1930 in the state of Gujarat, from Sabarmati in Ahmedabad to Dandi, a town on the coast of the Arabian Sea. The march, which demonstrated his belief in nonviolent methods of revolt, was based on the principle of violating the salt tax imposed on the Indian people by the British.

White Cube Gallery: A term referring to a style of gallery aesthetic introduced in the early twentieth century, characterised by white spaces and simple lighting, in an effort to ensure focus on the displayed art and minimise distraction.

Sheri Garba at Sadu Mata-ni-pol

Navratri: Literally translating to 'nine nights' from Sanskrit, Navratri is a major Hindu festival held over nine days, usually in the

months of September-October. The festival is also called Durga Puja in some parts of India, and is celebrated differently in different regions, ending on the tenth day with the festival of Dussehra, which commemorates Lord Rama's victory over Ravana, as recorded in the Hindu epic Ramayana.

Shakti: Shakti, meaning 'power' in Sanskrit, indicates the cosmic energy in the form of the divine feminine in Hinduism, and is deified through its manifestation by numerous goddesses, including Parvati, Lakshmi and Durga.

Garba: Garba is an Indian folk dance originating in Gujarat, characterised by its circular choreographic formation and sweeping actions. The dance is typically performed by women, and celebrates fertility and marriage.

Pol: Derived from the Sanskrit word pratoli, meaning 'gate', pols are distinct housing clusters in Ahmedabad's Old City, and are secured by a guarded gate at a single entrance for security purposes. Said to date back to almost 600 years ago, these close-clustered neighbourhoods are often organised according to community or profession.

Saree: Also spelt as sari, it indicates the outer garment worn by Indian women. Varying widely in types of fabric, colour and pattern, the saree consists of a single long piece of cloth draped in an array of styles, differing from region to region.

Barot: An Indian caste native to the states of Gujarat and Rajasthan, originally employed as bards or mythographers.

Gaekwad: A surname native to the state of Maharashtra. Also refers to the Maratha Gaekwad dynasty that ruled the princely state of Baroda from the mid-eighteenth century to 1947.

Ashtami: Ashtami, meaning 'eighth day in the lunar fortnight' in Sanskrit, refers to the eighth day of celebration during the nine-day festival of Navratri. Ashtami is celebrated in a variety of ways across India, including Krishna Janmashtami and Bhairava Ashtami.

Bibliography

To get access to bibliography for all the pieces in this booklet visit:



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InterGlobe Foundation (IGF) - www.interglobe.com/foundation is the CSR arm of the InterGlobe Group of companies.


The key focus areas of IGF include Heritage Conservation, Promotion of Livelihoods and Environment Conservation including Waste Management. The Heritage projects cover both the tangible and intangible aspects of heritage. The environment projects support development and protection of Natural Resources thereby increasing the green cover and ground water recharge. It also includes work on Waste Management. The livelihood projects support income enhancement of marginalized groups, especially women through environment friendly projects. By partnering with leading NGOs of the country, IGF has been able to impact more than 600,000 lives.

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This booklet documents various well-known and offbeat treasures of Ahmedabad's living heritage and culture. Designed as a guide to navigate the city's better kept secrets, the publication spans themes such as built heritage, people and communities, institutions of cultural importance, and literature and the arts.

Other editions include: Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Goa, Hyderabad, Indore, Kolkata, Nashik, Prayagraj, Shillong



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