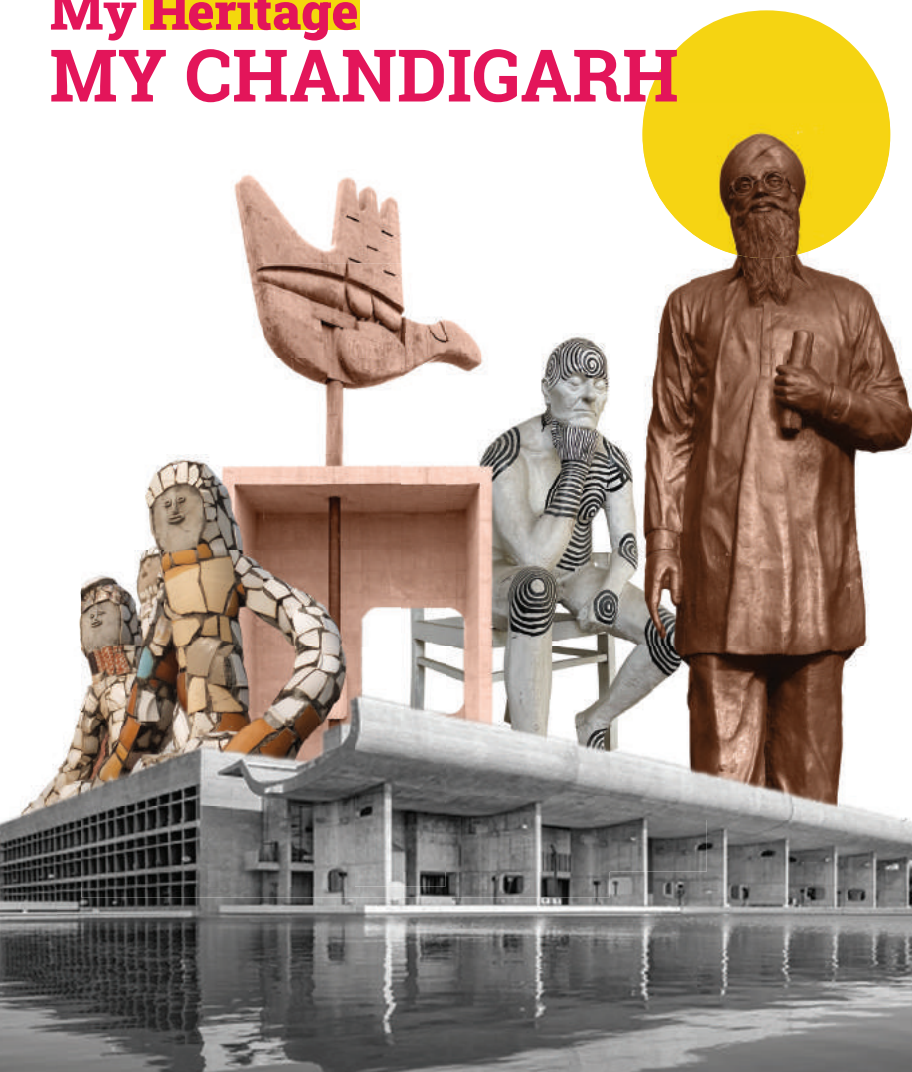


**My City  
My Heritage**  
**MY CHANDIGARH**



## My City My Heritage

### MY CHANDIGARH

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 are Bhubaneswar, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Nashik.

This booklet documents a mix of well-known as well as offbeat subjects from among Chandigarh'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 barcode to visit our portal and get access to our entire encyclopaedia.



# My City My Heritage MY CHANDIGARH

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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

Fateh Burj is an important monument of Sikh culture and heritage.

This publication has been produced by Sahapedia with support from InterGlobe Foundation as part of the My City My Heritage project.

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To access Sahapedia's cultural mapping portal, visit [map.sahapedia.org/home/](http://map.sahapedia.org/home/)

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Gandhi Bhawan

Panjab University

Sector 17 Market

Capitol Complex

Rock Garden

Sukhna Lake

Manimajra Fort

National Crafts Mela

# CHANDIGARH

## ਚੰਡੀਗੜ੍ਹ

Chandigarh, the first planned city of post-independent India, is known internationally for its architectural marvels, especially the *Brutalist* institutional buildings designed by *Le Corbusier*. The city, spanning 114 sq km in area, has a population of 970,602 according to the 2011 census. As the capital city of two states – Punjab and Haryana – and a Union Territory administered by the Central Government, Chandigarh holds a unique significance. The Chandigarh Metropolitan Region also includes Mohali and Panchkula.

Situated 240 km from Delhi at the foothills of the Shivalik range, Chandigarh was planned as the new capital of Punjab after the *Partition* of 1947. In 1966 it also became the capital of the newly formed state of Haryana, and a Union Territory. The city was a dream project of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister. He envisioned the city to represent a modern India that was embracing

the future resolutely. The 36 sq km of land was earmarked for the city in 1948 by a committee headed by Chief Engineer P.L. Verma and was named after a Chandi temple at the site.

Chandigarh took shape under the experienced eyes of the acclaimed Swiss-French architect *Le Corbusier*, fellow architects Pierre Jeanneret, Jane B. Drew, and Maxwell Fry, along with young Indian architects like M.N. Sharma, A.R. Prabhawalkar and B.P. Mathur. *Le Corbusier* visualised the city as a representation of the human body. He imagined Sector 1 as the head with the Capitol Complex containing the Legislative Assembly, the Secretariat, and the High Court representing the three pillars of Democracy – the legislature, the



A sculpture at the *Le Corbusier Center*.

executive, and the judiciary. Sector 17 was to be the heart with the shops, plaza, business centres and cinemas encouraging economic, social, and cultural activities. The Pleasure Valley with parks and gardens was the lungs,





Photo by Shubh Singh, via Wikimedia.

The Government Museum and Art Gallery in Chandigarh.

while seven types of streets made up the circulation system.

Chandigarh is home to Corbusier's Capitol Complex – an example of *Modernist architecture*, Jeanneret's Gandhi Bhavan – where Modernism meets *Gandhian philosophy*, and Nek Chand's Rock Garden – an ode to the human imagination constructed with discarded bits of pottery and pieces of stone. The intellectual tradition of the region thrives at the Punjab University campus designed by Jeanneret. The city is dotted with gardens, with the Sukhna Lake at one end of the city increasing its beauty manifold. The pre-

Independence town of Manimajra at Sector 13 and the Mughal Garden at Pinjore, Panchkula establish the importance of this region even in the pre-modern era. The city, a gateway to Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh, attracts a lot of tourists and is a shopping hub. Handlooms, handicrafts, and cuisines from these states are major attractions for tourists. The annual National Crafts Mela facilitates interactions between craftspersons and artisans of various states and buyers.

■ RITUPARNA PAL



Photo by Raakesh Blokhra, via Wikimedia Commons.

The Open Hand Monument designed by Le Corbusier.

# Capitol Complex

## Sector 1, Chandigarh

**Opening Hours:** Daily | 9am – 5pm

**Established:** 1955–1961

Located in Sector 1, Chandigarh, the Capitol Complex designed by the famous Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2016. Spread over a hundred acres, it consists of three buildings – the Palace of Assembly, the Secretariat Building and the High Court and four monuments – the Open Hand, the Geometric Hill, the Tower of Shadows, and the Martyr's Monument, as well as the manmade Sukhna Lake.

Corbusier placed the Capitol Complex away from the main city, allowing the three pillars of democracy, the executive, the judiciary, and the legislature, to function efficiently. The ideology behind the design stems from Corbusier's wish to reacquaint man, nature, and the cosmos; the architecture was to seamlessly blend in with the landscape provided by the Shivaliks. The principal material used for construction across the site was reinforced concrete. The Capitol's architecture fuses *Purist geometry* with



Entry Gate to The Palace of Assembly, Capitol Complex.

Brutalist expression, which is intertwined with the use of bold primary colours that offsets the grey concrete. The buildings are reminiscent of modern European building styles while retaining local techniques and materials.

The buildings are offset by other posthumous Corbusian creations, such as the Open Hand, Depth of Consideration, Martyr's

**The ideology behind the design stems from Corbusier's wish to reacquaint man, nature, and the cosmos.**





The Palace of Assembly is enclosed by reinforced concrete columns.

Photo by duncid, via Wikimedia Commons.



The 240m high Secretariat was the tallest building in Punjab when it was built.

Photo by Sanyam Bahga, via Wikimedia Commons.

Memorial, Tower of Shadows, Geometrical Hill, and the reflecting pools of the High Court and Assembly. The Depth of Consideration is a sunken gathering space meant to be a meeting space for debates. The High Court and the Assembly are connected by a 440m elevated *piazza*, called the *esplanade*, while the Secretariat building reminds the viewer of layers of concrete.

The 240 m high and 250 m long Secretariat is the biggest building in the complex. With eight storeys of rough-cast concrete, it houses both the Punjab and Haryana headquarters. The Palace of Assembly was designed to have an open-plan interior enclosed by reinforced concrete columns. The building features an enamel door by Corbusier that can be read as an eternal sun atop a landscape of animals and

birds, with the *Modular Man* placed among them. The High Court is equipped with a double roof that encloses the entire building in shade with brightly coloured porticos and columns. Corbusier not only designed these three buildings and monuments, but also the furniture, and a variety of *tapestries* that are part of the interiors.

After the creation of the new state of Haryana out of the former Punjab in 1966, the Secretariat and the Assembly were divided to cater to both the states. Chandigarh's local government moved their office to a building in the city. These political changes altered the grand vision of the Capitol Complex which remains largely unattended today.



Gandhi Bhawan

White cast-concrete forms the floating-lotus shaped three-winged structure of Gandhi Bhawan.



# Gandhi Bhavan

Panjab University, Sector 14,  
Chandigarh, 160014

Established: 1962

One of the finest examples of Modernist architecture in India is the Gandhi Bhavan at the Panjab University campus. This landmark site inside the campus was designed by *Pierre Jeanneret* and Bhanu Pratap Mathur. The building has been listed as a Grade I Heritage Building by the Special Heritage Committee of the city.

The Gandhi Bhavan in Chandigarh was inaugurated in 1962 by the first President of India, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. The lone Gandhi Bhavan in the country to have been built in a Modernist architectural style, it signifies a departure from the prevailing colonial and *orientalist* architectural tendencies towards a modern sensibility, using materials like concrete, steel and glass. A remembrance of Gandhian ideals, the white, lotus-like structure of the building reflecting off the still water body surrounding it symbolises peace and wisdom.

In contrast with Corbusier's grand-scale structures, Jeanneret's modest and detailed architectural style is evident in the contained and sculptural form of the Gandhi Bhavan. This white cast-concrete formed three-winged structure amidst the red sandstone of the surrounding buildings. The interior has three wings housing a library containing literature on Gandhi's life and work, a small auditorium, and a seminar hall. The separate wings converge in the centre at a sky-lit exhibition space. In 1965, a

**The building has been listed as a Grade I Heritage Building by the Special Heritage Committee of the city.**

Photo by Raghuvir Khare.



In 1965, the Department of Gandhian Philosophy started functioning from Gandhi Bhavan.

Photo by Raghuvir Khare.

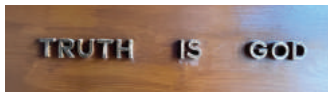


The interior space has three wings: a library containing, an auditorium, and a seminar hall.

Department of Gandhian Philosophy started functioning from this building.

In 2015, the University received funds from the Getty Foundation, Los Angeles, for restoration work of the building. The project was carried out by the architecture department of the University, with assistance from the Development and Research Organisation for Nature, Arts and Heritage (DRONAH) and IIT Madras. As part of the project, several workshops on conservation techniques and exhibitions were held at the building in 2016. This conservation project is regarded as a torch-bearer for the conservation of modernist architecture in India.

Photo by Raghuvir Khare.



# National Crafts Mela and Kalagram

## National Crafts Mela and Kalagram

Opening Hours: Daily | 8am – 8pm

Established: 2009

A collaborative event organised by the North Zone Cultural Centre and the Department of Cultural Affairs, Chandigarh, the National Crafts Mela is a major annual cultural event held every winter at the open grounds of Kalagram in Manimajra. First held in 2009, the *mela* provides traditional artists an opportunity to display their art and reach a market, as it attracts city-dwellers and tourists alike.

Craftspeople from all over the country participate in the festival. Stalls showcase and sell handcrafted *Banarasi silk* sarees, cotton silk dress material from Banaras, crockery items from Khurja, UP, Terracotta from Pokhran, Rajasthan, hand-woven carpets from Badhoi, UP, wooden artefacts from Karnataka, *Pashmina* and woollens from Kashmir, dried flowers from Nagaland, handlooms from different states, jewellery, traditional footwear, home decor, tribal crafts and much



The Mela provides the traditional artists and craftspeople an opportunity to display and sell their work.

more. Some years, the number of stalls goes up to as many as 200!

Folk dancers from different states like Himachal Pradesh, Kashmir, West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Gujrat participate in the cultural evenings. Performances by *Been Jogis* from Haryana, *Bazigars* from Punjab and *Behrupias* from Maharashtra make the evenings come alive. Popular singers like Kailash Kher, Daler Mehndi and Roop Kumar Rathod too have been part of the



The Sculpture park at Kalagram.



festival. Stalls are set up offering food from different states like Rajasthan, Bihar, Gujarat, Orissa, Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana.

The open ground of Kalagram was established as a craft village to support local crafts and artisans. The site also has a representation of the traditional courtyard-centred mansion of Punjab called 'Citco Da Vehra'. Additionally, there is a museum called



A sculpture on display at Kalagram.



Photo by Raghuvir Khare.

The National Crafts Mela is held every winter at the open grounds of Kalagram.

Virasat displaying a wide variety of cultural objects from different parts of Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh. These range from farming instruments, pottery wheels, and spinning tools to vessels, jewellery and artwork. An on-site restaurant called Baithak serves traditional Punjabi cuisine and fusion food. They also host a culinary festival called Amritsari Food Festival.

■ RITUPARNA PAL



Photo by Raghuvir Khare.

Kalagram was established as a craft village to support the local crafts and the artisans.



The original Manimajra fort structure was mentioned in William Moorcroft and George Trebeck's travelogues from the 1820s.

## Manimajra

### Manimajra, Sector 13, Chandigarh

Manimajra, at the border of Chandigarh and Haryana, is a town much older than the planned city. With its multiple alleyways juxtaposed between residential and commercial areas, the town stands in contrast with the planned sectors of Corbusier's Chandigarh.

Manimajra was under the jurisdiction of the Ambala province in the pre-Partition undivided state of Punjab. According to legend Manimajra was named after the local *zamindar* and a forefather of the Manimajra royal family, Maniram Singh Dhillon (16th century). Another story talks of Raja Bhagwan Singh encouraging people from a nearby village, Manaa, to settle around the royal fort. Almost 70 families from Manaa came here and established a settlement, hence the name Manimajra. Soon, it became the biggest village in the area and a major market for people from as far as Ambala, Kalka, and Ropar. Bhagwandass Singh (1866) was the last sovereign ruler of Manimajra.

Although Raja Bhagwan Singh is credited as the founder of the Manimajra fort, the

original structure finds mention in travelogues of William Moorcroft and George Trebeck from before his reign in the 1820s. Also known as Surajpur fort, the structure remains a private property. While its interiors are not publicly accessible, the *Nanakshahi bricks* on the dilapidated exterior bear witness to its antiquity. Despite being accorded the status of a heritage structure, restoration and preservation work has not started due to legal disputes.

Manimajra is home to the Gurdwara Manji Sahib, or Mata Raj Kaur Gurdwara, said to have been the residing place of Mata Raj Kaur, wife of *Baba Ram Rai*. Moreover, Manimajra has a proud history of communal harmony with Sikhs, Hindus, and Muslims residing peacefully in this town. At the time of the Partition, the Muslim families in the locality were given shelter at the *Gurudwara*.

Today, the town is home to Chandigarh's IT Park. In 2020, it was officially renamed Sector 13, though many residents were not happy with the change. Of late, rapid urbanisation is drastically changing Manimajra's cultural character.



# Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry & the Company

9, Sector 4, Chandigarh

Established: 1983

A *Sangeet Natak Akademi* and *Padma Shri* awardee, the thespian Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry brought the Chandigarh theatre scene to national and international stages through her theatre group, The COMPANY (The Centre of Music and Performing Arts – Natya Yatris).

Born in Amritsar, Neelam Mansingh studied Art History at Panjab University in 1971, where she worked under the director and playwright Balwant Gargi. Around this time, watching two of *Ebrahim Alkazi's* productions, *Othello* and *Jasma Odan*, in her hometown Amritsar inspired her to join the *National School of Drama* in 1975.

**The lack of a serious theatre scene in the city prodded her towards exploring the roots of the art form in the folk theatre forms of Punjab.**

On moving to Mumbai after her marriage, she worked with contemporaries like Naseeruddin Shah and Om Puri. In 1980, she moved to Bhopal where she worked with and learnt from theatre personality, B.V. Karanth. Under Karanth's guidance, she explored ways of working with folk theatre forms in the *proscenium theatre*. In 1980, she debuted as a director with *Jasma Odan*, a play from the *Bhavai* tradition of Gujarat. She shifted to Chandigarh in 1983.

The lack of a serious theatre scene in the city prodded her towards exploring the roots of the art form in the folk theatre forms of Punjab. Her decision to work in her mother tongue Punjabi raised many eyebrows, but this did not curb her enthusiasm. Her theatre group, The COMPANY (The Centre of Music

and Performing Arts - Natya Yatris) took shape in this city. Here she worked with a group of Naqqal artistes to find the performative idiom for her work, which developed as a result of a creative dialogue between Punjabi indigenous performance sensibilities and the proscenium form. These performers dress up as women, excel in lampooning and improvisations and possess a deep knowledge of ballads and traditional songs which they use in their performance. These artistes now work as repertory members in The COMPANY.

Over the years, Mansingh Chowdhry has directed plays such as *Clytemnestra* by Kamal Kapoor (1989), *Nagamandala* by Girish Karnad (1991), *Phaedra* by Jean Racine (1996), *Kitchen Katha* by Surjit Patar (2003), and *Gumm Hai* (2019). She has participated in several national and international festivals like the National School of Drama Festival (Delhi), South Pacific Basin Festival (Japan), Zannani Festival (Pakistan), Festival d'Avignon (France), etc. Her latest production *Black Box* (2020) deals with the precariousness that humanity is facing due to the pandemic.

Apart from directing, she has taught at the Department of Indian Theatre in Panjab University from 1990 to 2015. After her retirement, she was honoured as a Professor Emeritus of the University.

# Panjab University and STU-C

Sector-14 and Sector 25, Chandigarh

**Opening Hours:** Monday to Friday | 9am - 5pm

**Established:** 1958

The Panjab University, a pre-Independence institution was established in 1882 at Lahore, in present-day Pakistan. Post-Partition, the University was formally relocated to India on October 1, 1947. Initially the institution functioned from campuses spread across different cities like Rohtak, Amritsar, Delhi, Shimla, etc., until the current campus in Chandigarh came up in 1958-1960.

The first buildings on the campus were designed by the architect Jugal Chowdhary and constructed by Executive Engineer Agya Ram. In 1959, architect Bhanu Pratap Mathur started working on the campus under the guidance of Pierre Jeanneret, cousin and assistant of Le Corbusier, and a master architect in his own right. The duo designed several iconic buildings on the campus including the Gandhi Bhavan, A.C. Joshi Library, the Student Centre and the Fine Arts Museum.

Thespians like Balwant Gargi, after whom the

open-air theatre is named, Neelam Mansingh Chowdhry, luminaries like Professor Virendar Mendiratta, Professor Indernath Madan, author and critic Mulk Raj Anand, economist and former Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh, are among the legendary names that have taught here.

The Student Centre, more popularly Stu-C, is the liveliest spot on the campus. It is a community centre for not only the University's students but also visitors. The three-storied circular building, with a ramp going around its cylindrical structure, houses a recreation room, offices of the Students' Council and the Dean of Students' Welfare, apart from stationery shops and eateries.

The Student Centre is an important site for the democratic and vibrant cultural life of the campus, which also plays host to various activities like fundraising events, student body meetings, election campaigns etc.

■ RITUPARNA PAL



Photo by Raghuvir Khare.

# Pinjore Gardens

Ambala, Kalka - Shimla Rd, Pinjore

**Opening Hours:** Daily | 7am - 9.30pm

**Established:** 17th Century CE

The 17th-century Mughal garden, popularly known as Pinjore Gardens is one of the main attractions of the town of Pinjore, 22 kms from Chandigarh. Also known as Yadavindra Gardens, this place was designed as a summer retreat by the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb's foster-brother and architect Fadai Khan. It is said that Corbusier drew inspiration from this garden while designing the Governor's Garden in Chandigarh.

When Aurangzeb made Fadai Khan the governor of Panchpura (Panchkula district), he envisioned this classical Mughal-style *Charbagh-pattern garden* surrounding the Panchkula spring. In 1769, this district along with the garden and the lands around it were claimed by the Patiala kingdom. The garden was renamed after Yadavindra Singh of the princely state of Patiala when the Patiala kingdom joined the Indian state after Independence.

Villiers-Stuart, in her book on Indian gardens, *Gardens of The Great Mughals* (1913), calls Pinjore a "garden of butterflies." The hundred-acre garden surrounds a water body from which channels are drawn for a number of fountains. Here the central water body is placed at a lower level rather than a higher one, as was the norm in most Mughal gardens.

Being a summer retreat of the governor, this place was divided into three segments - *Diwan-i-Aam* to hold court with common citizens, *Diwan-i-Khas* for the elite, and the *Purdah/Zenana* garden for the royal women. Placed at different levels, these segments are separated by walls and connected by the spring water running through slopes and channels. Three structures - *Rang Mahal*, *Sheesh Mahal*, and *Jal Mahal* - were also

Photo by Raghuvir Khare.



Yadavindra or Pinjore Gardens was designed as a summer retreat by Fadai Khan.

Photo by Raghuvir Khare.



The Garden is surrounded by a water body from which channels are drawn.

constructed in the garden. In the lowest area of the enclosure, English style gardens co-existed with Indian mango and avocado trees,

Nowadays, the fountains are lit up in the evening and there are restaurants where visitors can enjoy their meals against the beautiful surroundings. The Baishakhi festival in the month of April and mango festival in June-July are also celebrated at the garden.

# Rock Garden

## Sector 1, Chandigarh

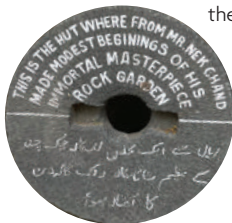
Opening Hours: Daily | 9am - 6pm

Established: 1976

Spread across 20-25 acres on what used to be forest land next to the Sukhna Lake, Chandigarh's Rock Garden was fashioned from rocks and so-called waste materials by Nek Chand Saini. Under construction from 1958, the garden was opened to the public in 1976.

Born in present-day Pakistan, Nek Chand was forced to leave his home during the Partition and settle in Delhi. He eventually worked as a road inspector for the Chandigarh Capital Project. The seed of the future Rock Garden was planted in his mind in 1958

when he started collecting rocks from the Ghaggar river bed in the Shivalik hills. The planning and development of Chandigarh city displaced the inhabitants of some 20 villages, some of whose belongings ended up in the city dump. Nek Chand salvaged many of these objects and secretly started making sculptures



By 1972, two thousand sculptures had been designed and constructed in the Garden.



Sculptures and other structures were built using rocks, broken tiles, toilet and basin units, electrical equipment, etc.

and miscellaneous structures using pieces of rock, broken tiles, toilet units, electrical equipment, bangles, oil drums, etc within the construction site of the city.

However, the *Chandigarh city edict*, issued by its architect Le Corbusier, prohibited any construction in the area, rendering Chand's structures technically illegal. When they were finally discovered by the authorities in 1972, some two thousand sculptures were already found standing. After



20 Camped staircases lead to a large rock cavern.

Photo by Raghuvir Khare.

Photo by Raghuvir Khare.



**A study found to be the second most visited tourist site in India after the Taj Mahal.**

the story of Chand's secret project came to light, mass public protests erupted in support of his work. The protests along with the attention from the international art world stopped the authorities from destroying these structures.

The garden is designed like a multi-room maze with doorways, archways, vestibules, streets, and lanes of differing sizes which give way to courtyards and chambers. All seemingly natural elements here, such as the waterfalls, are engineered. A miniature rural landscape commemorates Nek Chand's lost home. The sculptures include folk dancers, musicians, water carriers, gods, goddesses, poets and animals. Nek Chand coloured his creations using brick dust, chalk, and other pigments.

In 1989, Nek Chand won a landmark case where the Rock Garden was given permanent protection, including green space buffers around the boundary wall. He was awarded the Padma Shri in 1984. India's postal department has issued a stamp bearing the image of Rock Garden, which a 2006 study found to be the second most visited tourist site in India after the Taj Mahal.



Photo by Raghuvir Khare.

The garden is designed like a multi-room maze.



Photo by Raghuvir Khare.

The garden stands in stark contrast to the austere and functional design discipline of Le Corbusier.

■ NAYANTARA SINGH & RITUPARNA PAL



Photo by Raghuvir Khare.



Photo by Raghuvir Khare.



Photo by Raghuvir Khare.

A complete pedestrians' zone, the city centre at Sector 17 is the go-to place for recreation.

## Sector 17

Sector 17, Chandigarh

**Opening Hours:** Daily | 10am - 10.30pm

**Established:** 1950s

Positioned between Madhya Marg and Jan Marg, the city centre at sector 17 is a pedestrians' zone and a major tourist attraction in Chandigarh. It is an ideal spot in the city for shopping, eating out, and recreation. In Le Corbusier's original plan of Chandigarh, Sector 17 was the heart of the city.

Its central attraction, the piazza, lies at the juncture of the promenades moving from north-east to south-west and north-west to south-east. The town hall, central library, general post office, and Neelam, the oldest standalone cinema of the city, are placed around the piazza. The Sector has a number of shops, malls, street-side stalls, parade ground, district courts, office buildings and an inter-state bus terminus for destinations such as Delhi, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan, etc.

In the tree-lined plaza, shops selling a wide variety of commodities sit next to each other – their stock including western wear, Punjabi embroidered dupattas, handicraft items, bridal clothes, woollens from Ludhiana, ethnic footwear, electronic goods, books, music, ethnic jewellery, and more. Brand outlets, as

In Le Corbusier's original plan of Chandigarh, Sector 17 was the heart of the city.

well as pavement stalls, run their business here along with a variety of food and drink stalls selling North Indian, Chinese and continental cuisine, apart from chaat, icecream, juices, and lassi. The two cinemas in the area, Neelam and Jagat, were designed by architect Aditya Prakash between 1950 - 60 under the guidance of Pierre Jeanerret, one of the architects of the city. Today, Jagat Cinema has been turned into

TDI mall with a multiplex, while Neelam still stands as a single-screen cinema at the centre of the Sector 17 plaza. The musical fountain originally designed by architect M.N. Sharma with laser lights opposite Neelam is another major attraction of the

plaza. The National Gallery of Portraits and the Central State Library stand nearby.

The city corporation has been making efforts to spruce up the heart of the city. As a part of this, in 2018, eight *murals* by Charanjeet Kaur on the outer wall of a subway were unveiled. These murals capture the essence of Chandigarh in vivid colours. Every Saturday, a Plaza Carnival is organised to provide a stage for local artistes and as a weekend gathering for citizens.



The musical fountain was originally designed by architect M.N. Sharma.

# Sukhna Lake

## Sector 1, Chandigarh

Established: 1958

Sukhna Lake is a man-made water body created in 1958 under the supervision of the master planner of Chandigarh, the Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier and chief engineer P.L. Verma. The city of Chandigarh, otherwise built along rigid grid lines, accommodated the irregularities of three streams that served as its main sources of water; Sukhna Choe, Patiala ki Rao, and Choa Nadi. Sukhna Choe was dammed to create the Sukhna Lake in Sector-1.

The map of the city shows that the Capitol Complex is slightly off the central axis of the city due to the course of the Sukhna Choe. Although the city was rigorously planned, it seems that Corbusier made an exception for the Lake, a site of urban nature for the citizens to breathe and for non-human beings to thrive. It was as important to the architects as the complex; one an architectural monument, the other an aquatic one. The lake was such an important place that the ashes of Pierre Jeanneret, Corbusier's cousin and collaborator in designing Chandigarh, were immersed in these waters in accordance with his wishes.

The lakefront is used for recreational purposes. It is a place for locals to realign with nature, exercise, lounge and unwind. Sports activities like rowing and trampoline jumping are

Photo by Raghuvir Khare.



A man-made water body, the Sukhna lake was formed in 1958 in Sector-1.

carried out here. Three Asian and six national-level rowing competitions were organised at the Lake between 1980 and 2010. Boating facilities are also available here for tourists.

The Lake serves as a sanctuary for a large number of birds and fish. Apart from the 30 local bird species, a large number of migratory birds from Siberia and other European countries visit the lake in winter. The latter include coots, pochards, mallards, geese, egrets, teals, herons, ducks, etc. In 1988, the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests recognised parts of the Lake as a wetland of national importance to be prioritised in conservation, eventually including it in the Sukhna Wildlife Sanctuary.

The Lake has suffered heavy damage due to siltation. It has also been estimated that due to unplanned urbanisation the lake has lost nearly 66 percent of its area and water holding capacity till 2009.

■ NAYANTARA SINGH & RITUPARNA PAL

Photo by Raghuvir Khare.



Sukhna Choe, one of the streams that form Chandigarh's boundary was dammed to create the Sukhna Lake.





Dr Diwan Singh was a poet who died fighting colonial powers in the prison at Andaman.



# Shaheed Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani Museum

Chandigarh Baddi Rd, near Siswan

**Opening Hours:** Tuesday- Sunday | 9am - 5 pm

**Established:** 2013

**Entry Fee:** Free Entry

**Facilities and Services**

Free guided tour, Library, Drinking water, Washroom

Shaheed Dr. Diwan Singh Kalepani Museum is located at Siswan in Mohali district, about 15 km from Chandigarh. Hailing from Ghalotian Khurd village in present-day Pakistan, Dr. Diwan Singh was a Punjabi poet and medical practitioner who died in the prison at Andaman, where he had been imprisoned for resisting British colonial power.

Born in the year 1897, Dr. Singh joined the Indian Army as a doctor in 1919 and was posted in Rawalpindi. During his posting in Lahore in 1922, he corresponded with many Punjabi and Urdu writers. Around this time, he was influenced by Gandhian ideals and took up the cause of Swaraj. In 1925, he was transferred to Rangoon in Burma (today's Myanmar) as a punishment for his efforts to campaign for Swaraj. In 1927, he was transferred again, this time to Port Blair, Andaman. Here he served in the notorious Cellular Jail, colloquially known as *Kalapani* (literally, 'black waters') jail. British authorities exiled freedom fighters to this prison in the islands of Andaman, surrounded by the deep waters of the Bay of Bengal. Here he took up the pen-name 'Kalepani'.

Apart from serving as a medical doctor, Dr. Diwan Singh took part in community building among the local Indians, mostly ex-convicts. He was writing poetry in Punjabi and Urdu at this time. The anthology *Vagde Pani* (Running Water) was published in 1938. In 1942, during World War II, the Japanese Navy took over Andaman. Diwan Singh, at the time, was the head of the local chapter of the Indian Independence League. He was arrested for espionage in 1943 and imprisoned in the Cellular Jail, where he was tortured by the Japanese force. He passed away on January 14,



Photo by Raghuvir Khare.

The Museum has five sections displaying photographs and writings from Dr. Singh's life.

1944. His other anthologies, *Antim Lehran* and *Malhian de Ber*, were published posthumously.

The Museum, inaugurated in 2013, came into being due to the effort of Diwan Singh's daughter-in-law Gurdarshan Kaur, granddaughter Sonia Dhillon and other family members. A tall statue of Dr. Diwan Singh greets the visitors on the outside. The Museum has five sections with carefully curated photographs and writings. In the first one, a television screen lays out a timeline of Dr. Diwan Singh's life. The second section called 'Punjabiyat' demonstrates his intimate relation with Punjabi culture, his writings and interactions with literary figures of the time. The third and the fourth sections deal with his work as a devout Sikh and a compassionate human being. The trail ends with a replica of the doctor's 14ft x 7ft x 10 ft. cell in the Andaman prison where he spent his last days. Additionally, there is an archive containing Dr. Singh's personal library, articles written on him, archival notes etc. The Museum is maintained by Dr. Singh's family members without much state support.

# DIY Heritage/ Garden walk

## A Hike Through Parks at Leisure Valley

Envisioned as the lungs of the City Beautiful by Corbusier, Leisure Valley refers to a stretch of land on either side of a seasonal stream where a number of gardens and themed parks have been created for the citizens as a relief from the urban surroundings.

**Starting Location:** Rajendra Park

**Ending Location:** Garden of Fragrance

**Distance:** 6.9 km

**Time taken:** 2-3 hours

**Walk requirements:**

Comfortable shoes and water

+ mosquito repellent

### Bougainvillea Garden

Sector 3

Bask among the many-hued varieties of bougainvilleas and click pictures while enjoying the sight of the quiet stream that flows through this 20-acre garden.

Rajendra Gardens

### Rajendra Park

Sector 1

Enjoy a quiet walk around the trees and evergreen foliage on these 400 acres of land adjacent to the Secretariat building, designed by Corbusier himself.

### Dr. Zakir Hussain Rose Garden

Sector 16

Lose yourself among almost 1600 varieties of roses at Asia's largest rose garden, named after India's former president.

Dr. Zakir Hussain Rose Garden



### Hibiscus Garden

Sector 36

Spread over eight acres, this garden features over 40 different varieties of hibiscus which blooms throughout the year.

Hibiscus Garde

### Garden of Fragrance

Sector 36

End your walk on a fragrant note here among the Raat ki Rani, Motia and many different kinds of jasmynes. See if you can tell the Damask Rose, the Mehndi, the Champa and the Haar Shingar by their scent.



Garden of  
Fragrance



Sahapedia's award winning program, India Heritage walks, offers guided walks across India. Visit [www.indiaheritagewalks.org](http://www.indiaheritagewalks.org) for more.

# DIY Food Trail

## A Pocket-Friendly Culinary Trail through Chandigarh

Chandigarh is full of eateries serving food that would fill your heart and stomach, but without burning a hole in your pocket! Here are a few of them:

**Starting Location:** Classic 44

**Ending Location:** Babaji Ke Paranthe

**Distance:** 6.9 km

**Time taken:** 2-3 hours

**Walk requirements:** Comfortable shoes and water.

### Indian Coffee House

**Sector 17**

Known for their coffee, dosa and cutlets, the Coffee House has been around since 1957. They have maintained their ambience through the years. It's the perfect place to indulge in conversations over a cup of coffee.



Photo by DIGJOT SINGH, via Wikimedia Commons.

Sector 17

Sector 9

### Amritsari Kulcha Hub

**Sector 9, behind CISCO petrol pump**

A small stall serving delicious, melt-in-your-mouth buttery Amritsari Kulcha, with a variety of stuffings like mashed potato, paneer, and mixed vegetables. They are served with chhole, onion chutney and pickles.

Sector 37

### Classic 44

**Sector 37**

Known for their chicken burger filled with soft and juicy patties, they have branches all over the city. Not only is the food delicious and filling, it is pocket-friendly as well!

Sector 23

### Garg Chaat

**Sector 23**

One of the oldest eateries in the city, Garg Chaat has been serving a wide variety of mouth-watering snacks like golgappa, aloo tikki chaat, papdi chaat, and chhole tikka since 1968. This popular eatery is ever-bustling with happy customers chilling over their favourite chaats.



Photo by DIGJOT SINGH, via Wikimedia Commons.

### Babaji ke Paranthe

**Service lane of Sector 16, Madhya Marg**

Named after its owner and cook, this eatery offers street food at its best. Open throughout the night, Babaji serves piping hot anda parathas straight from his roadside tawa. His skilled folding of the delicately fluffy egg inside the paratha is a visual delight as much as a culinary one.

# 5

## Places to go for Shopping while in Chandigarh

Street shopping is a great way of getting to know a place as well as contributing to the local economy. Here are five places you can shop at in Chandigarh.



Photo by Elabbishek, via Wikimedia Commons.

### Gandhi Smarak Sector 19

Known for the wide variety of items on sale like clothes, accessories, cosmetics, food products and the affordable prices, this market is a favourite among shopping-enthusiasts.

### Shastri Market Sector 22

One of the oldest markets in the city, this place will enchant anyone with its colourful collection of Phulkaris, juttis and oxidised jewellery.

### Punjab Government Emporium Sector 17

A one-stop destination for all kinds of traditional Punjabi attire, they also sell other handicraft items from Punjab.



Photo by Sheebamadaniowinger, via Wikimedia Commons.

### Krishna Market Sector 41

Head to this place if you are looking for ethnic wear and fashion jewellery to go with it.

### Rehri Market Sector 15

With fashion apparels as well as household items on offer, this market takes care of all the needs of the buyers.

# Gardens of Calmness in Chandigarh

Known as the City of Gardens, Chandigarh offers all kinds of themed parks and gardens, from which we have curated some for those craving silence amidst the hustle and bustle of the city.

## Japanese Garden Sector 31

Inaugurated in 2014, this garden with its meditation hut, Zen garden, pagodas and Buddha statues, is a must-go if you are seeking some quietude.



Photo by Raghuvir Khare.

## Shanti Kunj Sector 16

Enjoy the music of the petite flowing stream at this noise-free zone tucked between the Rose Garden and the cricket stadium.



Photo by Raghuvir Khare.

## Garden of Silence Lake Walking Way

Located at the back of the Sukhna Lake, this place has been designed as a place of meditation. The serene location, the Buddha statue at the centre with concentric trails around, the view of Shivalik range ensure a calming experience.

## Smriti Upavan Sector 1 Sector 1

Placed between Sukhna Lake and the Rock Garden, this garden of memory was inaugurated in 1998. People plant saplings here in memory of the dear departed ones and spend time with them as the plants grow.

# CALENDAR

## Festivals and Cultural Events

### GURU RAVIDAS JAYANTI

The birth anniversary of Sikh Guru Ravidas, who sang messages of equality, is celebrated on this day. Devotees read his poems from religious texts, and also take out processions traversing the city roads singing his songs to commemorate the day.

### BAISHAKHI FESTIVAL

The first day of the Punjabi calendar as well as the day the Khalsa Panth was established, Baishakhi is celebrated across Chandigarh. It is also a harvest festival. It falls on the 13th or 14th of April. Sikhs gather at gurdwaras, passages from the *Granth Sahib* are read and sung, *langars* are organised, people wear new clothes and greet each other.



Photo by Dimesh Vaikre from Thane, India, via Wikimedia Commons.

FEB

### FESTIVAL OF GARDENS / ROSE FESTIVAL

Held the last week of February, this 49-year-old festival is the pride of Chandigarh. For three days, Zakir Hussain Rose Garden is decked up with flower and shrub topiaries, with up to 800 varieties of roses and other flowers grown by local gardeners are displayed, and the best blooms awarded.

### MAHA MOORKH SAMMELAN FESTIVAL

Held on the 1st of April, that is the April Fool's day, this is a one-of-its-kind poetry event in which poets from all over the country participate to recite jocular and satirical verse. The winner gets a donkey-ride as the prize.



Photo by Carla Nunziata, via Wikimedia Commons.

JUN

### MANGO FESTIVAL

This annual two-day Festival, also called Mango Mela, is held at the Pinjore Gardens and on the banks of Sukhna Lake. Over 4,000 varieties of mangoes are displayed along with other summer fruits. Farmers and agricultural companies join with products like jam, jelly, sauces, pickles, and traditional savouries like aam-papad.

JUL

AUG

## CHANDIGARH ART AND HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Comprising three days packed with art competitions, exhibitions, workshops, dance performances, drama shows for budding artists and enthusiasts, the annual Festival is organised by the Lalit Kala Akademi, Chandigarh.

## CHANDIGARH CARNIVAL

This annual carnival is a three-day long festival hosted by Chandigarh Tourism at Leisure Valley, Sector-10. The most-awaited attraction of the carnival is the parade with colourful tableaux that cover the entire city. Special transport is provided for senior citizens.

## CHRYSANTHEMUMS SHOW

The three-day long Chrysanthemums Show, organised by the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation, displays the vibrant array of winter flowers grown in the city and adjacent areas at the Terraced Garden, Sector-33. Government horticultural institutions as well as private enthusiasts participate with a wide variety of flowers.

SEP

## TEEJ FESTIVAL

Teej, a traditional celebration of monsoon, is organised by the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation every year in the first week of August. Women, dressed in traditional attire and colourful bangles, sing and dance to folk songs. Mehendi stalls and swings are the highlights of the celebration.



Photo by Lalche, via Wikimedia Commons.

OCT

## CHANDIGARH SANGEET SAMMELAN

Come October, and classical music lovers in Chandigarh gear up to enjoy three evenings with the best musicians of the country. Held every year since 1978 by the Indian National Theatre, Chandigarh, the festival has seen performances by the likes of Vilayat Khan, Hariprasad Chaurasia, Gangubai Hangal, Kishori Amankar.

NOV

## OPEN HAND JAZZ FESTIVAL

Held since 2018, a first of its kind festival in the city celebrating jazz in its various forms, the Open Hand Jazz Festival is the brainchild of Prithvideep Singh, a Blues vocalist and Nipun Cheema, pianist and composer.

DEC

# Glossary of Terms

## INTRODUCTION

**Brutalist Architecture:** An architectural style inspired by Modernism, characterised by minimalist construction emphasising materials and textures, that emerged in the 1940s and 50s.

**Le Corbusier:** Influential Swiss-French architect, Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris, a pioneer of modern architecture.

**Partition:** The partition of 1947 that took place prior to the independence of the two nations— India and Pakistan, formed by it led to one of the most violent refugee crises in human history. Based on a theory of religious nationalism, the partition affected the states of Punjab and Bengal the most.

**Modernist Architecture:** The architectural style in vogue 1930s onward, that celebrated minimalism as opposed to the ornate style of the previous era.

**Gandhian Philosophy:** Broad philosophy associated with Mahatma Gandhi, laying emphasis on truth and non violence.

## CAPITOL COMPLEX

**Purist Geometry:** Referring to purism, a movement formed around 1918, with representation of powerful basic forms founded by Le Corbusier and Amédée Ozenfant.

**Piazza:** Open space approached by various streets.

**Esplanade:** A wide level path.

**Modular Man:** A recurring motif in Corbusier's buildings, the Modular Man is designed in the image of a man standing squarely with one arm raised. It represents Corbusier's attempt to synchronise universal mathematics,

**Tapestries:** Cloth with different patterns or pictures woven together.

## GANDHI BHAVAN

**Pierre Jeanneret:** Swiss architect and Corbusier's cousin, worked closely with Le Corbusier in Chandigarh.

**Orientalist:** Referring to perception of Western colonialists of the east.

## MANIMAJRA

**Zamindar:** Landlord

**Nanakshahi bricks:** decorative bricks used in structural walls.

**Baba Ram Rai:** Eldest son of the seventh Sikh Guru, Guru Har Rai. He also founded the sect of Ramraiya.

**Gurudwara:** Place of worship for followers of Sikhism, housing the Sikh sacred text.

## NEELAM MANSINGH CHOWDHRY AND THE COMPANY

**Padma Shri:** Fourth highest civilian award presented by the President of India.

**Sangeet Natak Akademi:** India's national academy of performing arts.

**Ebrahim Alkazi:** Celebrated Indian theatre director.

**National School of Drama:** India's premier school for drama in New Delhi.

**B.V. Karanth:** Pioneer of Kannada and Hindi theatre and cinema.

**Proscenium theatre:** European style of theatre where the actors are separated from the audience spatially.

**Bhawai:** Popular folk theatre form of Gujarat.



## NATIONAL CRAFTS MELA

**Mela:** Fairs

**Banarasi silk:** Handloom silk with intricate patterns and rich colours, produced in the city of Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh by Muslim weavers.

**Pashmina:** Soft, luxurious wool from Kashmir, used to make shawls etc.

**Been Jogis:** Traditional singers from Haryana.

**Bazigars:** Performance artists especially of acrobatics.

**Behrupias:** Impersonator, impressionist performance artists.

## PINJORE GARDENS

**Charbagh-pattern garden:** Quadrilateral gardens of flower, shrubs and fruit trees segmented by running water channels, adorned by fountains and pavilions- these gardens were popularised in India by Mughal emperors.

**Rang Mahal:** Literally Palace of Colours, Rang Mahal refers to the women's quarter in Mughal architectures.

**Sheesh Mahal:** Palace of Mirrors

**Jal mahal:** Water Palace

## ROCK GARDEN

**Chandigarh city edict:** The edict of Chandigarh, formulated by the city's chief planner Le Corbusier, intended to inform its citizens of the principles Chandigarh was built on, so that they can act as its guardians. He said "The seed of Chandigarh is well sown. It is for the citizens to see that the tree flourishes".

## SECTOR 17

**Murals:** Work of art on the canvass of a wall

# Bibliography

To get access to bibliography for all the pieces in this booklet visit [map.sahapedia.org/inchandigarh/100006](http://map.sahapedia.org/inchandigarh/100006) or alternatively, scan this (QR Code)



# Notes

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# About Us

## InterGlobe Foundation

InterGlobe Foundation (IGF) - [www.interglobe.com/foundation](http://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.

## Sahapedia

Sahapedia is an open encyclopedic resource on the arts, cultures and histories of India offering digital content in multimedia formats such as articles, books, photo essays, videos, interviews, oral histories, maps and timelines, authored by scholars and curated by experts. Subject areas range from ideas and belief systems, rituals and practices, to visual and performing arts. The values that guide our work are accessibility, inclusiveness, collaboration and reliability.

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For more information, please visit [www.sahapedia.org](http://www.sahapedia.org)

This booklet documents various well-known and offbeat treasures of Chandigarh'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: Ahmedabad, Bhubaneswar, Goa, Hyderabad, Indore, Kolkata, Nashik, Prayagraj, Shillong



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