Mamallapuram

Tamil Nadu
where stories never end

Mamallapuram, also known as Mahabalipuram, is a town in Chengalpattu district in the southeastern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, best known for the UNESCO World Heritage Site of 7th- and 8th-century group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram. It is one of the famous tourist sites in India. The ancient name of the place is Thirukadalmallai.

Mamallapuram was one of two major port cities in the Pallava kingdom. The town was named after Pallava king Narasimhavarman I, who was also known as Mamalla. Along with economic prosperity, it became the site of a group of rock-cut royal monuments. These are dated to the 7th and 8th centuries: Rathas (temples in the form of chariots), mandapas (cave sanctuaries), the giant open-air rock relief the Descent of the Ganges, and the Shore Temple dedicated to Shiva. The contemporary town plan was established by the British Raj in 1827.

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where stories never end

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Government of Tamil Nadu
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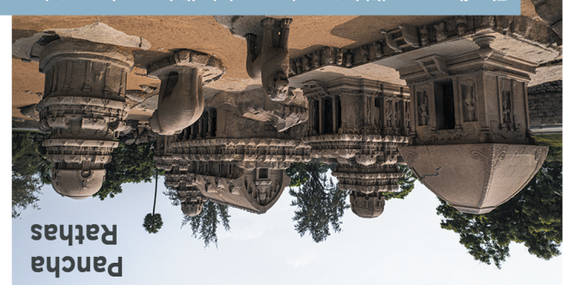
Pancha Rathas



The five monolithic temples, each built in a unique style, are also known as Pancha Pandava Rathas. Four of the Rathas are believed to have been scooped out of a single rock foundation. It is a treat to see the richly carved walls with art motifs and divine deities.

Entry fee:For Indian Adult Rs. 40 (through online Rs. 35/-)
For Foreigners Rs 600/- (thourgh online Rs 550/-)
Timing: All days 6 AM to 6 PM
Contact: Conservation Assistant, ASI- +91- 7207895044

Tiger Cave

The Tiger Cave is a rock-cut Hindu Temple complex located in the hamlet of Saluvankuppam near Mamallapuram. It gets its name from the carvings of tiger heads on the mouth of a cave which forms a part of the complex. It is considered to be one of the Mamallapuram rock-cut temples constructed by the Pallavas in the 8th century AD and is a UNESCO world heritage site.

Entry fee: For Indian Adults Rs. 40 (Online Rs. 35/-)
For Foreigners Rs 600/-
Timing: All days 6 AM to 6 PM
Contact: Conservation Assistant, ASI - +91- 7207895044

Varaha Caves

Varaha cave temple is a part of a hill top village. It is located 4 kms to the north of the main Mamallapuram sites of the Rathas and shore temple. It is a classic example of Indian rock-cut architecture dating from the late 7th century. This temple is a part of the group of monuments in Mahabalipuram and is a UNESCO World heritage site.

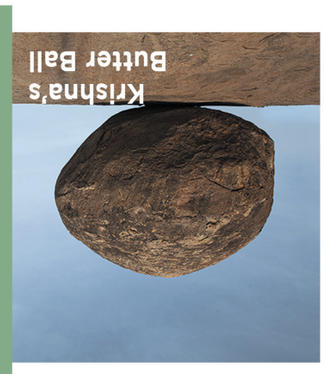
Entry fee: Free | **Timing:** All days 6 AM to 6 PM
Contact: Conservation Assistant, ASI - +91- 7207895044

Arjuna's Penance

Arjuna's Penance (aka descent of ganges) is the largest bas relief in the world. Measuring 96 by 43 feet, it is a giant open-air rock relief carved on two monolithic rock boulders. The legend depicted in the relief is the story of the descent of the sacred river Ganges to earth from the heavens led by Bhagiratha. This massive structure was built in the 7th Century during the rule of Pallava Kings.

Timing: All days 6 AM to 6 PM
Entry fee: Free
Contact: Conservation Assistant, ASI - +91- 7207895044

Krishna's Butter Ball



Krishna's Butterball is a gigantic granite boulder, approximately 6 metres (20 ft) high and 5 metres (16 ft) wide and weighs around 250 tonnes. It seems to float and barely stand on a slope on top of a 1.2-meter (4 ft) high naturally eroded hill which is said to have been at the same place for 1,200 years.

Entry fee: For Indian Adults Rs. 40/- (Online Rs. 35/-)
For Foreigners Rs 600/-
Timing: All days 6 AM to 6 PM
Contact: Conservation Assistant, ASI- +91- 7207895044

Mudaliarkuppam

Mudaliarkuppam, also known as Raindrop Boat House, is a water sport facility located on the East Coast Road, 36 km to the south of Mamallapuram and 92 km from Chennai in India. It was developed by the Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation on the Odiyur lake back waters. It has rowing, cruising, speed boating, water scooter, kayaking facilities and also a private beach.

Entry fee: Depending on the ride
Timings: All days 9 AM to 6 PM
Contact: TTDC Manager - +91- 9176995827

Shore temple

The Shore Temple (c. 725 AD) is a complex of temples and shrines that overlooks the shore of the Bay of Bengal. It is a structural temple, built with blocks of granite, dating from the 8th century AD. At the time of its creation, the site was a busy port during the reign of Narasimhavarman II of the Pallava dynasty. As one of the Group of Monuments at Mamallapuram, it has been classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1984.

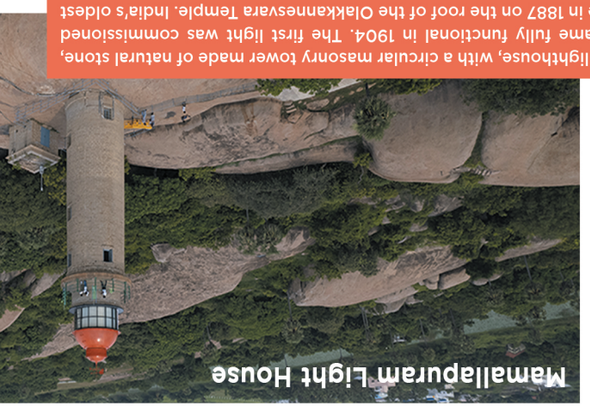
Entry fee: For Indian Adults Rs. 40/- (Online Rs. 35/-)
For Foreigners Rs 600/-
Timing: All days 6 AM to 6 PM
Contact: Conservation Assistant, ASI- +91- 7207895044

India Seashell Museum

India seashell museum is the largest museum in its own type and is one of the unique places to visit in Mamallapuram. The musuem houses more than 40,000 varieties of exhibits. The architecture of the musuem grants an illusion of the sea and its life. It also houses a shopping area known as Maya Bazaar where one can get different things related to sea life. Moreover, there is a beautiful and attractive aquarium and a sea food restaurant within its compound.

Entry fee: For Indian Adults Rs. 40/- (Online Rs. 35/-)
For Foreigners Rs 600/-
Timing: All days 6 AM to 6 PM
Contact: Conservation Assistant, ASI- +91- 7207895044

Mamallapuram Light House



The lighthouse, with a circular masonry tower made of natural stone, became fully functional in 1904. The first light was commissioned here in 1887 on the roof of the Olakkaneswara Temple. India's oldest lighthouse, built around 640 CE by Pallava king Mahendravarman-I stands next to this modern structure. The Pallava era lighthouse is a protected monument, maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India.

Entry fee: For Indian Adults Rs. 10/- ,For children Rs. 5/-
For Foreigners Rs 600/-
Timing: All days 10 AM- 1 PM and 2-5:30 PM
Contact: Navigational Assistant Grade 1- +91- 9789688668

Indian Dance Festival

December - January is the time at Mahabalipuram when the Indian dance festival is celebrated every year. To the accompanying music of wind and the waves, with Arjuna's penance serving as a fitting backdrop, artists of Indian classical dance and folk dance forms from all over the country come together to perform. It is a celebration that you would want to mark and visit.

Entry fee: Free
Timing: Evening 5.30 PM to 8.30 PM
Contact: Tourist Officer - +91- 9176995869

Mahabalipuram Beach

At a distance of 2 km from Mahabalipuram Bus Station, the golden sandy Mahabalipuram Beach is a serene beach situated near the Shore Temple. The beach stretches 20 km and comprises rock-cut sculptures. Also, this is the venue for the captivating Mahabalipuram Dance Festival (held in December-January) where one can get to see extremely talented classical dancers performing against the backdrop of the sea.

Entry fee: Free
Contact: Mamallapuram special town panchayat - 044-27442223

DakshinaChitra Heritage Museum

Established by the Madras Craft Foundation, DakshinaChitra is a repository for living traditions of South Indian folk art, performing arts, craft, and architecture. Artisans and weavers exhibit their talent and dexterity here. The centre explores the traditions of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu.

Entry fee: Indian- Rs. 75/-, Student- Rs. 30/-
Foreigner- Rs. 200/-, Foreign Student- Rs. 70/-
Contact: 044- 24918943/27472603

Sculpture Museum

Located on the East Raja Street in Mamallapuram, the museum boasts over 3000 sculptures of deities from Hindu mythology, holding historical importance. Along with that, the sights of monolithic effigies, relief sculptures, and Ratha-sculptures can also be captured in the museum. On the display, one can find some impeccable paintings which are captivating for a historical and cultural tour.

Entry fee: Rs. 5 | **Timing:** All days 9.30 AM - 5.00 PM
Contact: Principal, Govt. Architecture and sculpture college - +91 7397368962

Muttukadu

On ECR, in Muttukadu lies the water sports facility, Muttukadu Boat House. It offers speedboat rides, water skiing, windsurfing, and rowing. This is a backwater region of the Bay of Bengal. Tamil Nadu Tourism Development Corporation owns and manages the facility, which opened in 1984. It also serves as a great picnic spot.

Entry fee: Depending upon the boat ride
Timing: All days 9 AM to 6 PM
Contact: TTDC Manager at +91-9176995826

Getting there:

By Road

A good motorable road connects Mamallapuram with Chennai and otherplaces. The State Transport Corporation operates buses to Chennai, Kalpakkam, Chengalpattu, Kancheepuram, Vellore directly and buses to Chidambaram, Nagapattinam and Bangalore via Mamallapuram.

By air

The nearest airport is Chennai which is 55 Kms from Mamallapuram.

By local transport

Taxis, Auto rickshaws, Bicycles and Mopeds are available for hire in and around the area.

By railway

The nearest railway station is Chengalpattu, 30 Kms from Mamallapuram. Trains to Chidambaram, Thanjavur, Thiruchirappalli, Madurai,Rameswaram, Tirunelveli and Kanniyakumari, coming from Chennai can be boarded here.

Just a little further north on East Coast Road
Further north
Venue: Four Points by Sheraton
44th FIDE CHESS OLYMPIAD CHENNAI 2022
Toll Gate
Chengalpattu - GST Road to Pudhucherry, Chengalpattu
Thirukkazhukkundram Road
To ECR
Towards Chennai
Tourist Office
Aanaikatti Street
East Raja St.
Othaivadai Street
Othaivadai Street
Othaivadai Street
West Raja St.
Koneri Tank
Koneri Road
Thirukula Street
N. Mada St.
East Raja St.
Bus stops
S. Mada St.
Mada St.
Toilets
Tourist Interpretation Centre
Heritage Antique Sales Counter
Toilets
Parking Lot
Beach/ Shore Temple Road
Newly Excavated Site
GKM Street
Buckingham Canal
West Raja St.
Mada Kovil St.
GKM Street
Mahabalipuram Beach
Bay of Bengal
Toilets
Shopping Complex
GKM Street
To Kalpakkam
Places to Visit
Tiger Cave 01
Karukkathamman Temple 02
Valayankutta Ratha 03
Pidari Amman Ratha 04
Thirumoorthy Cave 05
Kodi Kaal Mandapam 06
Krishna's Butter Ball 07
5-celled (Pancha Pandava) rock-cut cave 08
Ganesha Ratha 09
Varaha Cave 10
Descent of the Ganges - Arjuna's Penance 11
Krishna Mandapam 12
Koneri Tank 13
Temple Tank 14
Shore Temple 15
Pancha Ratha 16
Seashell Museum 17
Mahishasuramardini Cave 18
Dharmaraja rock-cut throne 19
Arulmigu Sthala Sayana Perumal 20
Adhivaraha Cave 21
Dharmaraja Cave Temple 22
Ramanuja Mandapam 23
Maragatha Poonga 24
Mahishasura Rock 25
Dolotsava Mandapam 26
Experiences to have
Sculpture Park at TTDC Resort 01
Chronicles 7DX Experience 02
Heritage Museum 03
Maritime Museum 04
Mahabalipuram Light House 05
Sculpture Museum 06
Food to eat
Hotel Mamalla Bhavan 01
Hotel Mamalla 02
Moonrakers Restaurant 03
Objects to buy
Poompuhar Sales Showroom, Mahabalipuram 01
Traditional handicraft, stoneware, and sculptures 02