

ABOUT VADODARA

The city of Vadodara, situated on either side on the banks of the river Vishwamitri, is blessed with a rich legacy and varied background. Over a period of time, it has nurtured many historical personalities like Maharishi Aurobindo, Ghosh, Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Dadabhai Navroji, Dr. Ambedkar, who, in turn, in their own ways have helped enrich India through their stellar contributions to the society. This city though, however, had to undergo a change in its name many a time for various reasons. During its long travel through the sands of times it initially was known as Chandravati, then Viravati and later, Vadpadraka (City of banyan trees), and for a quite long while as Baroda. Presently, it is Vadodara known also as Sanskari Nagari the cultural capital of Gujarat. It was Sayaji Rao Gaekwad's dream for this city a dream to propel and transform it into a vibrant, modern and progressive city, viz. one that is self-reliant on all parameters day's Vadodara with its all-around progress on diverse fronts be it educational, commercial or industrial seems to have largely vindicated his pioneering vision. Among other things, especially on the industrial front, the city now boasts of giant industrial complexes and government undertakings like I.P.C., G.S.F.C. etc., to name a few. Apart from this, its strategic position, in geographical terms, in the whole confers on it the advantage of being the nerve-centre of business activities.

THE LAKSHMI VILAS PALACE:

Designed in Indo Sarcenic style of architecture, the palace built by Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III in 1890 is the residence of the Royal family. its ornate Darbar Hall has an Italian mosaic floor and walls with mosaic decorations. The palace houses a remarkable collection of old armoury and sculptures in bronze, marble and terracotta. Within the palace compound is stepwell called the Mavlakhi Vay, dating back to 1405 AD. A part of the palace can be seen with special permission.

Gaekwad Baroda Golf Club has been developed within the palace premises. It is a 10-hole golf course and a venue for international golf tournaments.



PRATAP VILAS PALACE:

It is designed in Renaissance style of architecture and presently houses the Railway Staff College. The college has a working model which shows complicated rail operations.

Location: Pratapnagar.

For more details: +91 265 2653477.

**MAKARPURA PALACE:**

Built by Maharaja Khanderao in 1870, it was renovated and extended by Maharaja Sayajirao III. This palace is now an Airforce Station.

Location: Makarpura. Entry Restricted.

SAYAJI GARDEN:

Spread over a sprawling 113 acres of land, this garden, also popularly known as Kamati Baug, was conceptualized by Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III in 1879. The garden has an excellent zoo, a planetarium, health museum, a toy train, fountains, an amphitheatre and a Bandstand. A visit to the Garden can be a 'one day excursion'.

For more details:

Zoo - +91 265 2784079.

**VADODARA MUSEUM AND PICTURE GALLERY:**

Founded in 1894 by Maharaja Sayajirao III, it is one of the finest museums in Asia modeled on the lines of the Victoria and Albert Museums of London. The museum has an impressive collection of art, archaeology, natural history, geology and ethnology. The art gallery has a collection of old European masters like Veronese, Giordano, Zurbaran, Flemish and Dutch paintings.

A collection of palm leaf manuscripts of Buddhist and Jain origins, Mughal miniatures, an Egyptian Mummy and the Akota Bronzes, besides many others artifacts make the Museum worth exploring.

Location: Sayajigunj.

For more details: +91 265 2793801

SARDAR PATEL PLANETARIUM

The 200-seat capacity Sardar Patel Planetarium located in Sayaji Baug, runs three shows on all days barring Thurse: The narration for the shows is carried out three languages viz. Gujarati, English, Hindi at 1600, 1700 and 1800 - respectively. Also on request it orgar special shows for educational institutions.

Planetarium - +94 265 2794152.

**NEW JOY TRAIN IN KAMATIBAUG**

Nearly seven months after the heritage toy train running through Vadodara's Kamatibaug Garden was suspended, the city has got a brand new toy train.

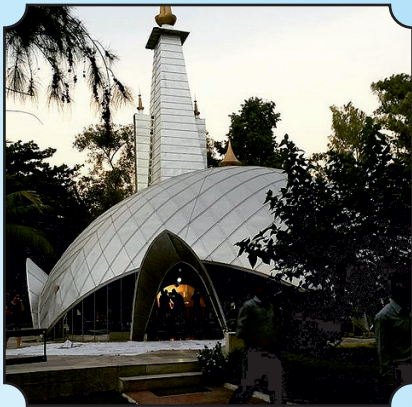
The train, Sayaji Express, runs over a 2.3 km stretch and is much bigger than the previous one, Udyanpari, which was gifted by former king of the erstwhile Baroda kingdom Maharaja Ranjitsinh Gaekwad to the zoo. The new train has been set up at an investment of Rs. 9.5 crore. the four-bogie train has a seating capacity of 144 people of all age group. An Ahmedabad-based company, Khodal Corporation Private Limited, has set up the track and the train has been bought from UK-based Severn Lamb at a cost of Rs. 5 crore. People who were visiting the zoo were asked to take a ride. "The were excited to take a joyride on the new train on its maiden run. The train has been running fine."

**LAL BAUG**

This beautiful piece of garden, amongst the most popular ones, is situated close to some of the magnificent landmarks of the coty most notably among them in the Pratap Vilas Palace.

NYAY MANDIR

Built by Sayaji Rao III, the Temple of Justice or more popularly, the Nyay Mandir, is a magnificent two-storeyed structure housing large courts and a central hall, decorated with mosaic. Its architectural pattern is an amalgamation of Indo-Saracenic and European styles. Inside the hall is a beautiful marble statue of Chimnabai, the first queen of Sayaji Rao III. Presently, the District Courts function from here.



EME TEMPLE:

The EME temple, constructed by the Electrical and Mechanical Engineering school of the army is dedicated to Dakshinamoorti, a form of Lord Shiva. A beautiful garden had been developed around the temple and the idols of Gods and Goddesses recovered during the excavations have been displayed.

Location: Mandir Marg.

For more details: +91 265 2481773/2481415.

KIRTI MANDIR:

A memorial of Gaekwad rulers, Kirti Mandir means the hall of fame. Built by Maharaja Sayajirao III, it is designed in a Hindu style. It is an E-shaped large magnificent stone building with domes, terraces, balconies and the central shikhara. The interior of this elegant structure is marble finished and has murals by the famous artist Nandlal Bose. **Location:** Near Kalaghoda. Entry with permission from Devasthan Trust.



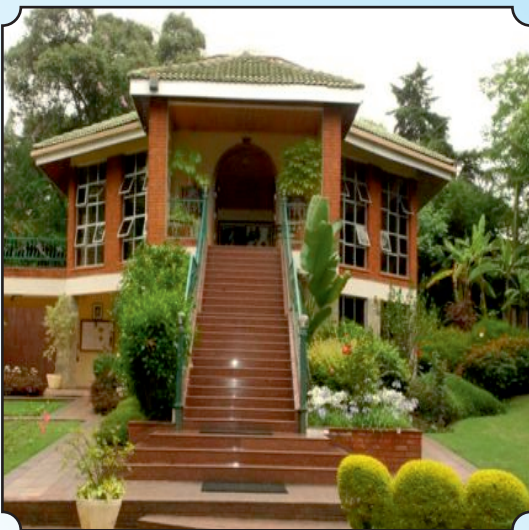
Among other imposing buildings of Vadodara, are Kothi Kacheri - Collector Office, Khanderao Market - Vadodara Municipal Corporation Headquarters, Lehripura Gate - The Gate of the Medieval Fortified Town, Mandvi, Qutubuddin Maqbara, Sursagar Lake, Tambekar Wada, Old Havelis in the fortified town etc. that are worth a visit.



MAHARAJA SAYAJIRAO UNIVERSITY OF BARODA

Originally known as Baroda College, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda became a University in 1949. It is one of the oldest centres of learning in western India. A campus spread over 275 acres of land; the university has various faculties and departments, having rich diversity of courses. Notable amongst those are Faculty of Fine Arts, Faculty of Performing Arts, Faculty of Human Development and Family Studies (Home Science) and the Polytechnic.

The Central dome of faculty of arts built in 1880 is 144 ft. high and is the second largest masonry dome in India.



SHRI AUROBINDO NIVAS :

Also known as Aurobindo Ashram, it was the residence of Sri Aurobindo Ghose, a yogi, philosopher, a social and political reformer. He was the personal secretary to the Maharaja and also the Vice Principal of Baroda College. It was during his 13-year stay in Baroda, that he had the realization of God. The holy relics of Sri Aurobindo are enshrined in the premises of the Aurobindo Nivas. It is open to all for meditation.

Location: Opposite Shantidevi nursing home, Dandia Bazar.

For more details: +91 265 2412685.

PLACES TO SEE AROUND VADODARA**AJWA BRINDAVAN PATTERN GARDEN:**

Ajwa is an ideal place for a weekend picnic. The place lights up with illuminated fountains every Saturday, Sunday, Monday and public holidays. A separate musical fountain is a major attraction for visitors as the entire garden turns into a fairy land. There are three shows of Musical Dancing Fountains also held at the Ajwa Garden from Saturday to Monday.

Location: 23 km from Vadodara.

**DAKOR:**

A temple town, Dakor is sacred for the devotees of Lord Krishna. His image is said to be the original from Dwarka. It is said that Lord Krishna was so pleased by the devotion of his disciple, Bodana, who used to walk all the way from Dakor to Dwarka, that He opted to come along to Dakor. Thus the diety was installed in Dakor.

Location: Around 50 km from Vadodara.

CHANDOD:

The city of temples is at the confluence of the Narmada, Orsang and Saraswati rivers, hence considered highly sacred. In the Puranas it is referred to as Dakshin Prayag Tirth. A dip in the holy confluence is said to purify you! You can easily reach there by hiring a cab.

Location: Around 58 km from Vadodara.

