CULTURE & ARCHITECTURE OF KERALA

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Location of Kerala – the God’s own Country

Culture & Architecture of Kerala
• **KERALA** is an Indian state located on the **Malabar coast** of south-west India.

• The state has an area of 38,863 km² (15,005 sq mi) and is bordered by Karnataka to the north and northeast, Tamil Nadu to the east and south, and the Arabian Sea on the west.

• **Thiruvananthapuram** is the state capital.

• Kerala is a popular destination for its **backwaters, beaches, Ayurvedic tourism and tropical greenery**.

• The state has the highest literacy rate in India with 99 percent.

• Kerala’s **principal religions** are **Hinduism (56.2%), Islam (24.7%), and Christianity (19.00%)**.

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• The **story of Kerala** is mirrored in the evolution of its art and culture.
• Kerala’s geographical features led to the distinct ways in which **Kerala culture** developed in the territory.
• The relative isolation of Kerala from the mainland of India in the east, and the long open coast on the west had strong influences on culture of Kerala.
• Kerala’s long and inviting coastline that witnessed the arrival of many foreign people and cultures and its backbone of hills facilitated the retention of its legacy.
• **Kerala offers a cultural kaleidoscope in its literature, language, music, dance, theatre and rituals**; the pluralist basis of Kerala culture mosaic is reflected in its art forms.
• The culture of Kerala is distinct with an admixture of innumerable facets of various cultures.
• The tradition of classical arts which has been existed in Kerala for more than a thousand years are:
• Koodiyattam: Sanskrit drama performed in Kerala—the oldest existing classical theatre form in the entire world, having originated much before Kathakali and most other theatrical forms.
• Kathakali: The spectacular dance drama of Kerala integrates dance, music, poetry, and histrionics.
• Mohiniyattam (the dance of Enchantress): It is one of the gracefully elegant classical dance forms with lasya as the predominant element.
• Thullal: This art is characterized by simplicity of presentation, wit & humour.
• Folk arts are: Theyyam, thira, Mudiyettu, kaduvakali, Velakali, kakkarissnatakam, Chavittunatakam, Maragamkali, kolakali, Parichamuttukali, Bhadrakalipattu, pulluvanpattu and Thiruvathirakali are some of Kerala’s folk art forms.
• Martial Arts: Kalaripayattu is an ancient tradition of martial training and Discipline.
VARIED CULTURE OF KERALA

Pookolam  The colorful Onam Sadhya

Boat Race  Backwaters & boathouses
CLASSICAL ART FORMS OF KERALA

Kathakali

Mohiniaatam

Oppana

Thiruvathirakali

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TRADITIONS OF KERALA

Elephants are an integral part of daily life in Kerala. Indian elephants are loved, revered, groomed and given a prestigious place in the state's culture. They are often referred to as the 'sons of the sahya'.

Ayurveda Massage

Traditional Jewellery

Temple Festival

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KERALA ARTS

• The earliest known form of artistic expression in Kerala art were cave paintings, engraved and painted in caverns and rock shelters.
• The first available evidence of this Kerala art belonged to the Neolithic period at Marayoor and Edakkal.
• Kerala also has a rich mural heritage dating back to the 8th century.
• Kerala Mural art employed natural color, extracted from plants and minerals applied on a specifically prepared surface.
• Mural remained the major form of artistic expression for many centuries.
• However, since mural art, Kerala found expression only on the walls of temples and palaces, its reach was confined to a small segment of the population.
KERALA ARCHITECTURE

- **Kerala architecture** is one of the most unique in India, especially in its striking contrast to Dravidian architecture, Tamil architecture popularly seen in South India and its close resemblance to Oriental architecture like Japanese, Tibetan and Nepalese.

- The architecture of Kerala has however been influenced by Dravidian and Indian Vedic architectural science *Vastu Shastra* over two millennium.

- The *Tantrasamuchaya, Thachu-Shastra, Manushyalaya-Chandrika* and *Silparatna* are important architectural sciences, which have had a strong impact in Kerala Architecture.

- The *Manushyalaya Chandrika*, a work devoted to domestic architecture is one such science which has its strong roots in Kerala.

- The architectural style has evolved from the state’s peculiar climate and long history of influences of its major maritime trading partners like Chinese, Japanese, Arabs and Europeans.
Vaastu shastra is an ancient science which helps to get the natural benefits freely offered by the five basic elements of the universe.

These basic elements are Akash (SKY), Prithvi (EARTH), Paani (WATER), Agni (FIRE), and Vayu (WIND).

Vastu Shastra can be applied by keeping in harmony with these basic five elements of nature.

Vastu refers to 'abode' or mansion and Shastra or Vidya means science or knowledge.

Vastu Vidya is the sacred holistic science pertaining to designing and building of houses.

The principles of vastu have been derived from Sthapathy Veda- one of the ancient sacred books in Hinduism.
• The ancient relics say that Vaastu is based on two forces "positive" and "negative" which are constantly interacting with each other on the surface of the land.

• These forces would get disturbed whenever any structure is erected on a vacant land, to maintain a balance.

• If there are more positive energies (forces) than the negative energies, the result of such a construction would yield more benefits to the inmates leading to a more successful, healthy, wealthy and peaceful life, contrary to this if the negative energies dominate the premises the effects could be negative.
The Sanskrit word *vaastu* means a dwelling or house with a corresponding plot of land.

The *vrddhi*, *vāstu*, takes the meaning of "the site or foundation of a house, site, ground, building or dwelling-place, habitation, house".

The underlying root is *vas* "to dwell, live, stay, abide". The term *shastra* may loosely be translated as "science, doctrine, teaching".

**What is the name for the Earth as per ‘Thatchusastra’?**

As per ‘Thatchusastra’ the Earth is called ‘Vasthu’.

**What is the basis of ‘Thatchusastra’?**

The basis of Thatchusastra is the measure. The measure is evolved from ‘paramanu’. The *muzhakool* (carpenter’s measure) is the elementary measure of ‘Thatchusastra’.
• **Vastu shastra** is an ancient doctrine which consists of precept born out of a traditional and archaic view on how the laws of nature affect human dwellings.

• The designs are based on directional alignments. It is primarily applied in Hindu architecture, especially for Hindu temples.

• The foundation of Vastu is traditionally ascribed to the mythical sage Mamuni Mayan in South and Vishvakarman in North India.

• While Vastu had long been essentially restricted to temple architecture, there has been a revival of it in India, in recent decades, notably under the influence of late V. Ganapati Sthapati, who has been campaigning for a restoration of the tradition in modern Indian society since the 1960s.

• While the fields are related, **Shilpa Shastra** explicitly deal with sculpture – forms, statues, icons, stone murals etc.

• The doctrine of Vastu Shastra is concerned primarily with architecture – building houses, forts, temples, apartments and other buildings.
TYPES OF HOUSES

• Usually the single houses are called 'Sala' in Thatchusastra. (They face towards the East, the North, the West or the South).

• The house that faces the East, may have extensions from the northern and southern edges, it becomes a house with three parts.

• This is called "Sukshetra'.

• Prosperity will flourish if one lives in such a house.

• If two extensions are made from the edges of the house facing west such a construction is called 'Dhwamsyam'. Residents in 'dhwams' will suffer from loss of sons, torture from enemies, and obstructions for everything such other ruins.
• If a house is constructed facing the south and extensions are taken from the eastern and western edges, it becomes a house with three parts. This is called 'Chulli' as per Thatchusastra.
• Residents of such a house will suffer from loss of wealth, loss of children, diseases for kids, increasing enemies etc.

• If extensions from both the ends of a house facing the north is made it is called 'Hiranyanabhi'.
• Living in such house bring in prosperity and wealth to the inmates. Godliness will prevail always in such houses.
• If two separate salas (houses) existing one at the south and the other at the north are joined by a long trough such a residence is called 'kancham'. Life in a 'kancham' will be always quarrelsome.

• If the 'kizhakkini' in the east and the 'padinjattini' in the west are joining by a long trough (wooden or metallic) such a residence is called 'Sidhardhakam'. Life in such a house will always be prosperous and flourishing.
NALUKETTU

- Nālukettu is the traditional homestead of Tharavadu where many generations of a matrilineal family lived.

- The traditional architecture is typically a rectangular structure where four blocks are joined together with a central courtyard open to the sky.

- The four halls on the sides are named Vadakkini (northern block), Padinjattini (western block), Kizhakkini (eastern block) and Thekkini (southern block).

- The architecture was especially catered to large families of the traditional tharavadu, to live under one roof and enjoy the commonly owned facilities.

- **KIZHAKKINI** - House structure existing north-south – prayer & pooja

- **THEKKINI** - House structure existing east-west; keeping wealth & for human dwelling

- **PADINJATTINI** - House structure existing south-north for storage (crops and grains in the olden days)

- **VADAKKINI** - House structure existing west-east; Kitchen.
NALUKETTU

- If all the four structures above are joined as one house it is called a 'Nalukettu'.
- Among them at the middle of the padnijatini, there will be the pooja muri (place of worship) and 'nellara' (room for keeping paddy).
- On both the sides there will be two bedrooms Thekkini and kizhakkini are meant receiving he guests.
- Vadakkini is for cooking and dining. (Kitchen and dining room).
- In the middle of the structure there will be the central yard which will be in a rectangular shape. 'Nadamuttam' (central yard) will be usefull for getting light and air into the house.
- Moreover there will be an underground cave for flowing cut the rain water that falls in the 'Nadumuttam'.
- An 'Ettukettu' is that which is joined by two 'nalukettu's. An 'Ettuketu' will have two nadumuttam's.
TYPES OF NALUKETTU

Nalukettus were differentiated based on structure kind as well as based on caste of its occupants.

**BASED ON STRUCTURE**

- Traditionally Nalukettu has one courtyard with 4 blocks/halls constructed around it in cardinal directions.
- Nalukettus having 2 courtyards are known as Ettukettu (8 Blocked structure) as they have altogether 8 blocks in cardinal directions.
- Some super structures have 3 courtyards, which then are known as Pathinarukettu (16 blocked structure).

**BASED ON CASTE**

- For Nairs and other Feudal lords, including Mappila Muslims of Malabar, most of the Nalukettus are referred as Tharavadu or Mallikas.
- For Upper Ezhava and Thiyya classes, their Nalukettus are referred as Madom.
- For Kshatriya, their residences are referred as Kovilakoms and Kottarams.
- For Syrian Christians, their residences are referred as Medas and Veedus.
- For Nampoothiri communities, their residences are referred as Illams.
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Elements of Naaluketu
SITE PLAN OF A TYPICAL ILLAM

- 'Natasaala' & 'Poomukham' (Drawing Room) - Place to receive guests
- 'Padinjattithara' (The western wing of quadrangular type of house) - Place to receive respected persons and serve them meals.
- 'Deenamuri' (Sick Room) - Room for sick male members.
- 'Vadukkini' (The northern part) - Place to do rituals
- 'Meladukkala' - Day-to-day dinner hall for Namboothiris.
- 'Kalavara' (Store room) - Room to store Rice, Coconut Oil, Coconuts, etc.
- 'Paathrakkalavara' (Vessel store room) - Room to store vessels which are not in daily use.
- 'Puthanara' (New chamber) - Room to store pickles and keep luggage of Antharjanams.
- 'Vadakke Akam' - Labour Room
- 'Vadakke Kett' - Lunch hall for Namboothiris for noon meals.
- 'Kizhakke Kett' ('Thekketh') - Dinner hall for Namboothiris on special occasions.
- 'Sreelaakam' - Worship Room
- 'Adukkala' - Kitchen
- 'Oottupura' - Place to prepare feast on special occasions.
- 'Nadumittam' - Inner courtyard
PADIPPURA

• It is a structure containing a door forming part of Compound wall for the house with a tiled roof on top.
• It is the formal entry to the compound with the house.

POOMUKHAM

• It is the prime portico soon after steps to the house.
• Traditionally it has a slope tiled roof with pillars supporting roof. Sides are open.
• In the earlier days, the Head of the family called Karanavar used to sit here in a reclining chair with thuppal kolambi (Spittoon) by the side of chair.

Poomukham with a covered walkway (Nadappura) from gate
• From the Poomukham a verandah to either side in front of the house through open passage called Chuttu Verandah.
• It has hanging lights in equal distance hanging from its slope roof.

CHARUPADY
• By the side of Chuttu verandah and Poomukham, wooden benches with carved decorative resting wooden pieces for resting the back are provided. This is called Charupady.
• Traditionally the family members or visitors used to sit on these Charupady to talk.
AMBAL KULAM (POND)

- At the end of Chuttu verandah there used to be a small pond built with rubble on sides where water living plant called Thamara (lotus) or Ambal used to be planted.

BATHING TANKS (KULAM)

- Almost every house has its own Bathing Tank (Kulam) and hall at the entrance of tank (Kulappura).
POOJAMURI

• The best spot for 'poojamuri' is in the east corner.
• But usually the position for poojamuri is fixed in the arapurra (central store house for paddy and other riches) or closer to the arappura towards the centre.
• The room for worship should not be located under any staircase as it is a bad omen & a call for misfortune.

NADUKATTILA

• The spot for the central door frame (Nadukattila) for a house facing the East must also face the East.

Azhiyakam (the room with wooden ventilator) adds to the functional and architectural value.
NADUMUTTOM

• Traditionally **Nadumuttom or central open courtyard** is the prime center the Nalukettu.
• There is an open area usually square shaped in the exact middle of the house dividing the house in its four sides.
• Due to this four side division of the house by having a Nadumuttom, Houses with one Nadumuttom used to be called as **Nalukettu house**.
• Similarly there was **Ettu kettu and Pathinaru kettu** which are quite rare with two and four Nadumuttom respectively.

• Nadumuttom will be normally open to sky, allowing sunshine and rains to pour in.
• This is to allow natural energies to circulate within the house and allow positive vibrance within.
• A thulsi or tree will be normally planted in center of Nadumuttom, which is used to worship.
• Architecturally the logic is allow tree to act as a natural air purifier.
• The courtyard created at the centre by these four halls is auspicious and is called Nadumuttom or Ankanam.
• The outer verandahs along the four sides of the Nalukettu are enclosed differently.
• While both the western and eastern verandahs are left open, the northern and southern verandahs are enclosed or semi-enclosed.

As the Ankanam is usually sunk it is also called Kuzhi(pit)-Ankanam.
• The inner verandah around the Ankanam is open.

The protruding roofs of the four halls formed shady verandas and protected the rooms from direct sunlight, keeping them cool even on the hottest of days.
Jasmine platform (Mullathara), an integral part of Nadumittam

Nadumuttom with holy thulsi in center of it

Snake-mound (Paambumputtu) in Nadumittam
Art work/sculptures on pillar

Gigantic pillars

Twin pillars

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COMMON BUILDING MATERIALS

• The common building materials used for vernacular construction in Kerala are mud, laterite and granite stone blocks, lime mortar, wood, bamboo, clay roofing tile and coconut palm leaves.

• Though granite stone is a strong and durable building material, due to its limited availability mostly to the highlands, the use of granite is limited to the foundation of buildings.

• Clay was used in many forms - for walling, in filling the timber floors and making bricks and tiles.

• Palm leaves were used effectively for thatching the roofs and for making partition walls.
LATERITE

• Laterite stones and timber are the most common building materials in Kerala.
• Soft laterite stones are available in most parts of the state, at relatively low depths. These are quarried and dressed for building the walls.
• Laterite stones, called ‘Vettukallo’ in local language, is abundant in the midlands of Kerala. These are relatively soft stones that could be dressed and cut with ease.
• Laterite stones improve in strength as they are exposed to sun and moisture. This unique quality makes laterite a material of choice for construction.
TIMBER

- Timber, abundant in the state, is the other most important structural element used in Kerala.
- Large number of rivers and water bodies made it easy to transport huge trees from the hilly regions of the state to the plains.
- The masterful joinery and skillful carvings are common in older buildings.
- The elements are dressed and accurately cut on the ground and joined to form the wooden roof frame, on which then the tiles are spread.
- The local artisans use elaborate systems to ensure absolute accuracy in woodwork without which framing the roof structure would be impossible.

- Rose wood and teak are popular hard wood used in construction.
- Timber is the prime structural material abundantly available in many varieties in Kerala - from bamboo to teak.
- Perhaps the skilful choice of timber, accurate joinery, artful assembly and delicate carving of wood work for columns, walls and roofs frames are the unique characteristics of Kerala architecture.
TILES

• Tiles are the most commonly visible unifying feature of Kerala architecture.
• Tiles paved on wooden trusses were the most common and elegant roofing of the yester years.

Today, Due to the limitations of the materials, a mixed mode of construction has evolved in Kerala architecture.
• The stone work was restricted to the plinth even in important buildings such as temples.
• Laterite was used for walls.
The various areas of a typical Kerala Nalukettu House. Wood, Laterite, Terracotta and Granite plays an important role in forming a traditional Kerala house.
ETTUKETTU

- For larger homes and wealthier families, there are more elaborate forms of the Nalukettu, called the Ettukettu (eight halled with two central courtyards) or Pathinarukettu (sixteen halled with four central courtyards).

Traditional sloped elaborate roofing of an Ettukketu
Ettukketu Tharavad
COMPOSITION & STRUCTURE

• Kerala architecture can be broadly divided into 2 distinctive areas based on their functionality, each guided by different set of principles;

• The **gabled roof and ceiling works** are the prime feature of Kerala architectural style.

• **RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE**, primarily patronized by temples of Kerala as well as several old churches, mosques etc.

• **DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE**, primarily seen in most of the residences. There are distinctively styles, as Palaces and large mansions of feudal lords different from houses of commoners and also marked difference exists between religious communities.
COMPOSITION & STRUCTURE

• The primary elements of all structures tends to remain same.
• The base model is normally circular, square or rectangular plain shapes with a ribbed roof evolved from functional consideration.
• The most distinctive visual form of Kerala architecture is the long, steep sloping roof built to protect the house’s walls and to withstand the heavy monsoon, normally laid with tiles or thatched labyrinth of palm leaves, supported on a roof frame made of hard wood and timber.
• Structurally the roof frame was supported on the pillars on walls erected on a plinth raised from the ground for protection against dampness and insects in the tropical climate.
• Often the walls were also of timbers abundantly available in Kerala.
• Gable windows were evolved at the two ends to provide attic ventilation when ceiling was incorporated for the room spaces.
COMPOSITION

• Most of the buildings appears as low height visually, due to over-sloping of roofs, which are meant to protect walls from rains and direct sun shine.

• The science of Vastu plays a very important role in developing architecture styles.

• The basic concept underlines that, every structure built on earth has its own life, with a soul and personality which is shaped by its surroundings.

• The most important science which Kerala has developed purely indigenously is Thachu-Shastra (Science of Carpentry) due to the easily availability of timber and its heavy use of it.

• The concept of Thachu underlines that as timber is derived from a living form, the wood, when used for construction, has its own life which must be synthesized in harmony with its surroundings and people whom dwell inside it.
WOOD CARVING OF KERALA

• The large number of temples in Kerala and the doors, windows, and ceilings of most ancient taravads or ancestral homes show the high level of craftsmanship prevalent in wood-carving.
• The wood used is mainly teak.
• These elegant taravads have massive teak doors, studded with brass.
• Rich carvings are found in the archways of these doors and the ceilings have scenes from religious epics, as well as flowers, foliage and animal motifs.
• A lot of sculptural and relief work is found as part of wood work.
• The motifs found in the woodwork are Puranic scenes and depictions from the epics, along with human figures, animals, birds, trees, and flowers.

• Rathas or temple chariots used during certain ceremonies showcase the artistry and technical mastery of the craftspersons of Kerala.

• Wood-carving is a highly evolved craft in Kerala, and the best examples are seen in the temples and churches.

• One of the richest examples of wood-carving is the Mahadeva temple, Katinakulam, Trivandrum. The ceiling is beautifully carved with Brahma, the god of creation, sitting on a swan in the centre.

• Elephant carving is also a specialisation here and elephants are produced in a variety of postures and sizes.
PADMANABHAPURAM PALACE
THE SREE PADMANABHAPURAM PALACE

• Represents the most classic Kerala domestic architecture.
• It is also the world’s largest wooden palace made on sloping roofs, granite and rosewood-teak wood work combinations.
Important buildings in the palace include:

- **MANTRASALA**— King’s Council Chamber
- **THAI KOTTARAM**— Mother Palace (also known as Darbha Kulangara Kottaram)
  The Thai Kottaram is the oldest part of the palace. It was built during the reign of Ravi Varma Kulasekhara perumal, 1592 – 1620 CE. A secret tunnel over one kilometer long from this building provided the royal family with an escape route in times of war.
- **NATAKSALA**— the Hall of Performance, or of Performing Arts
- **UPPARIKA MALIKA**— the King’s Quarters — a four-story building at the center of the palace complex containing the King’s Treasury, sleeping quarters, resting and study rooms, and the top floor serving as the worship chamber of the royal household. Martanda Verma built the King’s Quarters in 1744 A.D.
- **THEKEE KOTTARAM**— the Southern Palace
- A ceremonial feasting hall, which can accommodate around 1000 guests
Ornamental wooden brackets
Interior – with rich wooden carvings - carved out of a single jackfruit tree

Thai Kottaram

Culture & Architecture of Kerala
Padmanabhapuram Palace

The Bath House is a small airier room, where the male members of the royal family were given a massage before they descended down covered steps to a private tank to bathe.

Mother's Palace
Built in 1550, this is the oldest building in the complex. It contains intricately carved wooden pillars fashioned from the wood of the Jackfruit tree. The floor was polished to a red gloss with bibiscus flowers.

Lamp
A horse lamp (the horse is a symbol of valour) in the entrance hall, hangs suspended from a special chain that keeps the lamp perfectly balanced.

Council Chamber
The king's council chamber has wooden lowers to let in light and air. The gloss on the floor was achieved with a mixture of lime, sand, eggshive, coconut water, charcoal and jaggery.

The Palace Museum
Houses artifacts including furniture, wooden and granite statues, coins, weapons and utensils.

The Lining Hall, laid out over two storeys, could seat 2,000 guests.

The Clock Tower's Chimes could be heard from a distance of 3km.

The lady's Chamber
Houses two large swings a pair of enormous Belgian mirrors and a royal bed.

Prayer Hall
The prayer hall on the third floor of the king's palace, has exquisite murals on its walls. A bed here, carved from 64 different types of wood, was a gift from the Dutch.

Entrance Hall
The entrance hall has a profusely carved wooden ceiling with 50 different inverted flowers, a polished granite bed and an ornate Chinese throne.

Main gate
The main entrance to the palace complex is reached after crossing a large courtyard. This gate has a decorated roof.

trivandrumonline.com
AMBARI MUGHAPPU

Built for King to view the holy chariots during festivals. The structure built in the shape of Ambari, the seat put on the elephant’s back for safaris.
Navaratri Mandapam- with its reflective flooring and carved pillars, where dance performances take place.
Wooden Brackets

The wooden overhead beams that support the roof
The ceremonial Dining Hall - Ootapura

Upparika Malika

Culture & Architecture of Kerala
Ornamental carvings on wood
CONTEMPORARY EXPRESSIONS

- IIM, KOZHIKODE
- CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
- ASHTAMUDI RESORT
- NAPIER MUSEUM
The Institute is located in Kunnamangalam, a sub-urban area of Kozhikode, Kerala.
The campus is spread across two hills which are part of the Western Ghats
“Bricks to me are like faces. All of them are made of burnt mud, but they vary slightly in shape and colour. I think these small variations give tremendous character to a wall made of thousands of bricks, so I never dream of covering such a unique and characterful creation with plaster, which is mainly dull and characterless. I like the contrast of textures of brick, of stone, of concrete, of wood.” - Laurie Baker.
The campus, designed and constructed by the famous architect, Dr Laurie Baker epitomizes his unique style and philosophy of adaptive building methods.
• The design exhibits a range of concepts applied by Laurie Baker, to the individual buildings as per suiting to their needs of function, scale, and dimensions.

• Also these buildings are a good example of the saying ‘Form Follows Function’.

Construction features used in the structure are:

• Foundation constructed of random rubble mixed in lime surkhi mortar; (lime manufactured from manufactured from sea shells on the site).

• Super structure of load bearing brick. Slabs are of filler tiles; whereas flooring is a mixture of local quarry tiles.

• Windows are made out of jack wood. Bathrooms are plastered, rest all surfaces either exposed or whitewashed.

• The precast stair treads used in circular stair tower are made of filler slab and bamboo reinforcement.

• Roofs are of folded concrete slab.
All the concerns of his architectural practice the sensitivity to the natural contours & elements of a site, the honest & optimum utilization of the materials find an expression in the plan & structures of the center. It has all the Baker characteristics- the jalis, the traditional roofs, the stepped arches, the overhanging eaves and the skylights. Baker is able to transform vernacular architecture to suit the requirements of a modern academic institution.
ASHTAMUDI RESORT

• The resort’s architecture reflects the unique style of construction deployed by the Travancore Raj.
• Ashtamudi means, 'eight-armed', after the eight arms of the lake.
• The Ashtamudi Lake is the gateway to a glimpse of the serene backwaters, located in Kollam.

• Ashtamudi Resort is famed for its magnificent views of nature that leaves an indelible impression on one’s mind.
• It is built in the Traditional THARAVAD STYLE; a contemporary expression of the vernacular style indigenous to Kerala.
The traditional elements/features with contemporary materials.

Traditional ornamental carved pillars
NAPIER MUSEUM

• The Napier Museum is an art and natural history museum situated in Trivandrum, the capital city of Kerala.

• The architectural masterpiece was designed by Robert Chisholm.

• Napier Museum is a landmark in the city with its unique ornamentation and architectural style with gothic roof and minarets.

• Interestingly, the structure has been designed to condition air naturally. The museum remains cool even on a scorching summer day.

• The museum houses a rare collection of archaeological and historic artifacts, bronze idols, ancient ornaments, a temple chariot and ivory carvings. It also contains the Sri Chitra Art Gallery, which contains works from Raja Ravi Varma and Nicholas Roerich, as well as examples of Mughal and Tanjore art.

• The Museum grounds also hold a Zoological garden, which is one of the oldest in India. This Zoo was established in 1857 and is spread over 55 acres.
NAPIER MUSEUM

Culture & Architecture of Kerala
• The main architectural features of the museum are its gothic roof and minarets; ornamentation using bronze and stone sculpture;

• The Museum building is a combination of the Kerala, Mughal, Chinese and Italian architectural styles.
• The museum is an architectural marvel with natural air-conditioning,
• The Napier Museum in Trivandrum displays a unique combination of authentic Kerala style of architecture added with Chinese and Mughal touch.
The most intriguing feature of the museum is its architecture. The magnificent edifice stands in the lush observatory gardens, a symbol of the architectural magnificence achieved by combining Chinese and Mughal styles with Kerala’s traditional forms of construction.

The tall minarets, gothic roofs and stained glass windows and the vivid use of colors such as blue, pink, yellow, red and white make it a dreamy sight.

High arches, intricately carved balconies, red and white grilles and stone ornamentations give the museum its charms.
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