

FAQ's

1. Which styles of architecture influence the town of Pondicherry?

Pondicherry has evolved with various styles beginning from traditional Tamil architecture, Mughal, Portuguese, French and Dutch styles predominantly

2. Describe the French town or French influenced architecture in Pondicherry.

- The French styled architecture is suited for this town because of the salubrious weather with its long and huge windows with vertical cast iron bars as grills, ornate balconies, large courtyards, circular arched gates, engaged columns and stucco designs.
- The French styled houses are much more imposing and the personal and social lives of the inhabitants remain a mystery behind those very high walled houses.
- Most of them were built on a rather similar ground plan with variations in size, orientation and details, i.e. a symmetrical plan with the principal façade usually opening on to the garden/court, perpendicular to the street and the high and solid enclosing wall and the elaborate gateway forming a clear limit between domestic and public space

3. Describe the Tamil town or Tamil influenced architecture in Pondicherry

- In the Tamil town most of the buildings are of similar vernacular style and typology with, however, individual variations.
- Unlike the colonial house, the Tamil house is very much open to the street
- It is built on rubble foundations, with walls of flat bricks and Madras terrace roofing. It is characterized by a street veranda, called talvaram with Mangalore tiles over wooden posts and a raised platform with wooden columns and masonry benches for visitors, called tinnai. Then, a corridor leads to the interior or central courtyard, open to the sky, called mutram, lined up by an inner veranda with country (canal) tiles of baked earth over wooden columns. Beyond, are the more private spaces like sami arai (pooja room), storeroom or bedroom and kitchen which opens in to a rear courtyard that encloses a well, toilet and bathroom.

4. Which style of architecture most influenced the town of Pondicherry?

The French were prevalent in occupying Pondicherry after many nations trying to occupy it in 18th century , hence their style of architecture altered to suit the local climate is the most influential factor in Pondicherry

5. Define and describe Tamil Franco houses

- The Franco-Tamil house is a evolved style with features of both the French style house and the Tamil style house.
- It was largely a result of modifying existing Tamil houses by the French
- The Tamil house was retained mostly as is but was extended to another storey
- This storey was influenced completely by the French style
- While the lower floor had thinnai and more open to street design , with a courtyard, the upper storey had a balcony and large windows