

FAQs

1. Write a few notes on the historical Padmanabhapuram palace.

- The Padmanabhapuram Palace Thuckalay, is one of the old palaces in Kerala, once the residence of the royal family of Travancore, is located in Southern India adjoining the State of Kerala, in a region with high realm, fall and a tropical climate. Padmanabhapuram palace's architecture is famous for many reasons.
- The palace was constructed around 1601 AD by Iravi Varma Kulasekhara Perumal who ruled between 1592 and 1609. The founder of modern Travancore, King Marthanda Varma (1706–1758) who ruled Travancore from 1729 to 1758, rebuilt the palace in around 1750. King Marthanda Varma dedicated the kingdom to his family deity Sree Padmanabha, a form of Lord Vishnu

2. Discuss the zoning and planning of the palace.

- The main entry to the palace complex is from the West, by a high door with a **pitched roof structure** abutting it, as found everywhere in vernacular architecture in Kerala. The first court is large and consists of stables on its sides.
- From here on, a series of courtyards are established using building blocks and walls, incrementally increasing in privacy as it moves to the core of the complex known as *thai kottaram* (literally, the generic mother) palace of the complex.
- This is credited to be the oldest structure and is a two-storied building with a courtyard and a tank attached to it.
- The structure of this wooden palace in Kerala attains the status of 'the Mother' by virtue of the fact that it forms the **center piece in the Vaastu purusha mandala** (the ancient Indian diagram representing the cosmos) which forms the basis of the design of the entire palace compound.
- The *brahma sthana*, or the central crossing point of the two main axes, falls immediately outside of this structure, in line with the main entry and the side entries punctured in the buildings on all sides.
- The same point is also crossed tangentially by another esoteric axis, established by openings in the generic palaces.

3. Write a few lines on one of the structures of the palace.

- King's Council chamber or Mannarasala is the most beautiful part of the entire palace complex.
- It has windows, with colored mica, which keep the heat and the dust away, and the interior of the council chamber remains cool and dark.
- Delicate and beautiful lattice work can be seen all over the council chamber.
- The floor is also beautifully done, with a fine and perfect finish. The floor is made of a mixture of varied substances, including burnt coconut shells, egg white and so on.
- The remarkable aspect is that this particular floor finish and texture could not be duplicated in any other construction.

4. Write a few lines on the principles of Vasthu Sasthra followed in design of the Palace.

- The general slope of the land is towards **East and North-East** (considered auspicious according to local traditions) and all water tanks are located to the east of the structures.
- Surface water drainage and sewage disposal through an underground system are also laid towards the South-East. All toilets are located on the first floor with the closets carved out in stone, since the main bedrooms and rest rooms always occupy the upper levels.
- Another significant structure which forms an annex to the palace complex by virtue of its location is the thecke kottaam or the southern palace. As the name implies, it is located south of the main palace building and interestingly falls outside the Vaastu purusha mandala – like hall where foreigners were received.

5. Describe the Koothambalams.

- A Hindu temple is a unique place of reverence and veneration and follows various rituals related to the deities in the temples.

- More often than not, a part of the Hindu temple is used for performing dances, particularly in many Nataraja or Shiva temples. With some exceptions there is no separate space or theater in the temples of other states.
- The temple tradition of Kerala is altogether different and unique in its own way. For centuries, temples have been designed in such a way as to allow staging art forms on the temple premises. The debut performance by the artists is dedicated to the God Almighty