WALKING THROUGH THE GUJARATHI ROAD IN MATTANCHERRY

By,

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ABSTRACT

The work intends to examine a group of Gujarati families that have settled in Mattancherry, . This research focuses particularly on the cultural, social, and religious activities of the more than 125-year-old residents. In addition, we'll explore the Jain temple in Mattancherry. I conducted fieldwork in and around Mattancherry and Fort Kochi to aid in the writing of the report.

CONTENT

There is a common perception that Mattancherry is a melting pot of cultures. Many groups' cultural promotion and eventual assimilation into Keralan society are on full display here. Mattancherry's cultural distinctiveness is attested to by its several ethnic enclaves and architectural styles, including Jew Town, Dutch architecture, Kunnankurishu, Jain temples, and Gujarati Road. A lot of international tourists came to the region to learn about the history of the structures. The area's natural charm and thriving economy make it a popular tourist destination.

Evidence from the past suggests that the about 600 families of Marwadies and Gujaratis who settled in Mattancherry originally hailed from the regions of Kutch and Sourashtra in Gujarat. A small number of Rajasthanis (about 100 households) also reside there. The Konkani people originated in Goa and migrated with the Portuguese (forced religious conversion). Their native tongue is Gujarati, although many have accents typical of the Kutchi people of southern India. The fact that the street is called Gujarati Road hints at the presence of a miniature Gujarat is more evidence of this. Gujarati traditions like dancing, the Ganapathi festival, Navarathri, Holi, and Shivaratri have been preserved in the little street of Mattancherry, where the people's forefathers first settled. The people have integrated into Kerala culture via the three-day sadhya held in honor of Onam. Northern influences on Keralan architecture are visible (agraharas). When you take a closer look at the stunning architecture, you can see how people are more intimately linked via the layout of their homes and businesses. Some of the structures have an exotic flair.

Gujarati schools and colleges with graduate programs diverge from the traditional classroom model. They subscribe to the gurukul philosophy, which emphasizes reverence for nature and the educational system (mother goddess). The locals here are very business-minded. Many stores are

connected to people's houses, so shopping and socializing may go hand in hand. The aesthetic value of paintings, sculptures, and other works of art enhances a visitor's experience. The inhabitants valued a wide range of foods. Some examples are peda, Gujarati ladoo, jalebi, and kachori, all of which are sweets. Regardless of the circumstance, people there love to indulge in sweets. Folks from all around Kochi come there to sample the confections.

The Jain temple at Mattancherry is recognized as an extremely significant place of worship in the region. The temple's location, close to the central part of the road, lends the interior and outside of the building a nice ambiance due to the surrounding landscape. People had the mentality that they should "live and let live." The temple's construction proceeded with the assistance of relatives who lived in the surrounding region. The birds, sometimes known as pigeons, are looked after by the administration of the temple itself. It wasn't until around 25 years ago that it first began. The Jains eventually elevated the practice of pigeon prathikshana to the status of a ceremony. Idols are put in the temple for the Murthi puja. Each idol is given its location inside the temple, and people are granted the authority to do the puja. Jains place a strong emphasis on the concept of ahimsa as well as the question of why humans are born.

Walking down a typical street in Gujarat will give us a chance to think about the different ways the people who live there have integrated their cultures. The arrival of new businesses and marketplaces in Mattancherry gave it greater significance. Entering Mattancherry as a tourist from Kottayam is like going into another universe full of interesting people, places, and stuff. The stories the locals tell here have more effect than those told elsewhere. People living on the streets tend to be receptive to new experiences and cultures. They try to familiarize themselves with other languages and customs and welcome visitors. The flavor of the food at dhabas and the closeness of the local music and dance made for a unique nightlife experience. A few kilometers distant, Fort Kochi, has also made major historical contributions to the area. Simply put, when the Gujarati Road was built, it gave Mattancherry much more importance.