

Beyond the Taj Mahal

Exploring the Intricacies of Indian Temples

Jainism

[Jainism](#) is one of the oldest religions in the world. The name comes from *jiva* (soul or life force but, capitalized, is also given as *Spiritual Conqueror*) as it maintains that all living things possess an immortal soul which has always and will always exist and that one's soul may be liberated from suffering by self-discipline in adhering to Jain tenets. It originated in Northern [India](#) and spread from there to the south, but how it began is unclear.

Ranakpur Jain Temple (North)

Ranakpur Jain temple or Chaturmukha Dharana Vihara is a Śvētāmbara Jain temple at Ranakpur is dedicated to Tirthankara Rishabhanatha. The temple is located in a village of Ranakpur near Sadri town in the Pali district of Rajasthan.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Ek6CgaxyYk>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= mK_C8C8Xaw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mK_C8C8Xaw)







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Sikhism

Sikhism, [religion](#) and philosophy founded in the Punjab region of the Indian subcontinent in the late 15th century. Its members are known as Sikhs. The Sikhs call their [faith](#) Gurmat (Punjabi: “the Way of the Guru”). According to Sikh tradition, Sikhism was established by [Guru Nanak](#) (1469–1539) and subsequently led by a succession of nine other Gurus. All 10 human [Gurus](#), Sikhs believe, were inhabited by a single spirit. Upon the death of the 10th, [Guru Gobind Singh](#) (1666–1708), the spirit of the eternal Guru transferred itself to the [sacred scripture](#) of Sikhism, *Guru Granth Sahib* (“The Granth as the Guru”), also known as the [Adi Granth](#) (“First Volume”), which thereafter was regarded as the sole Guru. In the early 21st century there were nearly 25 million Sikhs worldwide, the great majority of them living in the Indian state of [Punjab](#).

The Golden Temple: Sri Harmandir Sahib (Sikh)

The Golden Temple, also known as Harmandir Sahib, meaning "abode of God" or Darbār Sahib, meaning "exalted court", is a gurdwara located in the city of Amritsar, Punjab, India. (Northern India) It is the preeminent spiritual site of Sikhism.

The gurdwara is built around a man-made pool (*sarovar*) that was completed by the fourth Sikh Guru, [Guru Ram Das](#) in 1577. [Guru Arjan](#), the fifth Guru of Sikhism, requested Sai [Mir Mian Mohammed](#), a [Muslim Pir](#) of [Lahore](#), to lay its foundation stone in 1589. In 1604, Guru Arjan placed a copy of the [Adi Granth](#) in Harmandir Sahib. The Gurdwara was repeatedly rebuilt by the Sikhs after it became a target of [persecution](#) and was destroyed several times by the Mughal and invading Afghan armies. Maharaja [Ranjit Singh](#) after founding the [Sikh Empire](#), rebuilt it in marble and copper in 1809, overlaid the sanctum with gold foil in 1830. This has led to the name the Golden Temple. The Golden Temple is spiritually the most significant shrine in Sikhism. It became a center of the [Singh Sabha Movement](#) between 1883 and 1920s, and the [Punjabi Suba movement](#) between 1947 and 1966. In the early 1980s, the Gurdwara became a center of conflict between the Indian government led by [Indira Gandhi](#), some Sikh groups and a movement led by [Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale](#) seeking to create a new nation named [Khalistan](#). In 1984, Indira Gandhi sent in the Indian Army as part of [Operation Blue Star](#), leading to deaths of over 1,000 Sikh soldiers and civilians, as well as causing much damage to the Gurdwara and the destruction of Akal Takht. The Gurdwara complex was rebuilt again after the 1984 damage.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g6_Ypvcjptg (ritual)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWuRpzdoVa4> (short 1st)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m701WKQMeYQ>













Hindu Temple Architecture

Hindu temple architecture as the main form of [Hindu architecture](#) has many varieties of style, though the basic nature of the [Hindu temple](#) remains the same, with the essential feature an inner sanctum, the [garbha griha](#) or womb-chamber, where the primary [Murti](#) or the image of a deity is housed in a simple bare cell. Around this chamber there are often other structures and buildings, in the largest cases covering several acres. On the exterior, the garbhagriha is crowned by a tower-like [shikhara](#), also called the [vimana](#) in the south. The shrine building often includes an circumambulatory passage for [parikrama](#), a [mandapa](#) congregation hall, and sometimes an [antarala](#) antechamber and porch between garbhagriha and mandapa. There may further mandapas or other buildings, connected or detached, in large temples, together with other small temples in the compound.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fztNlanZfRY>

Khajuraho Temples of Love (Central India)

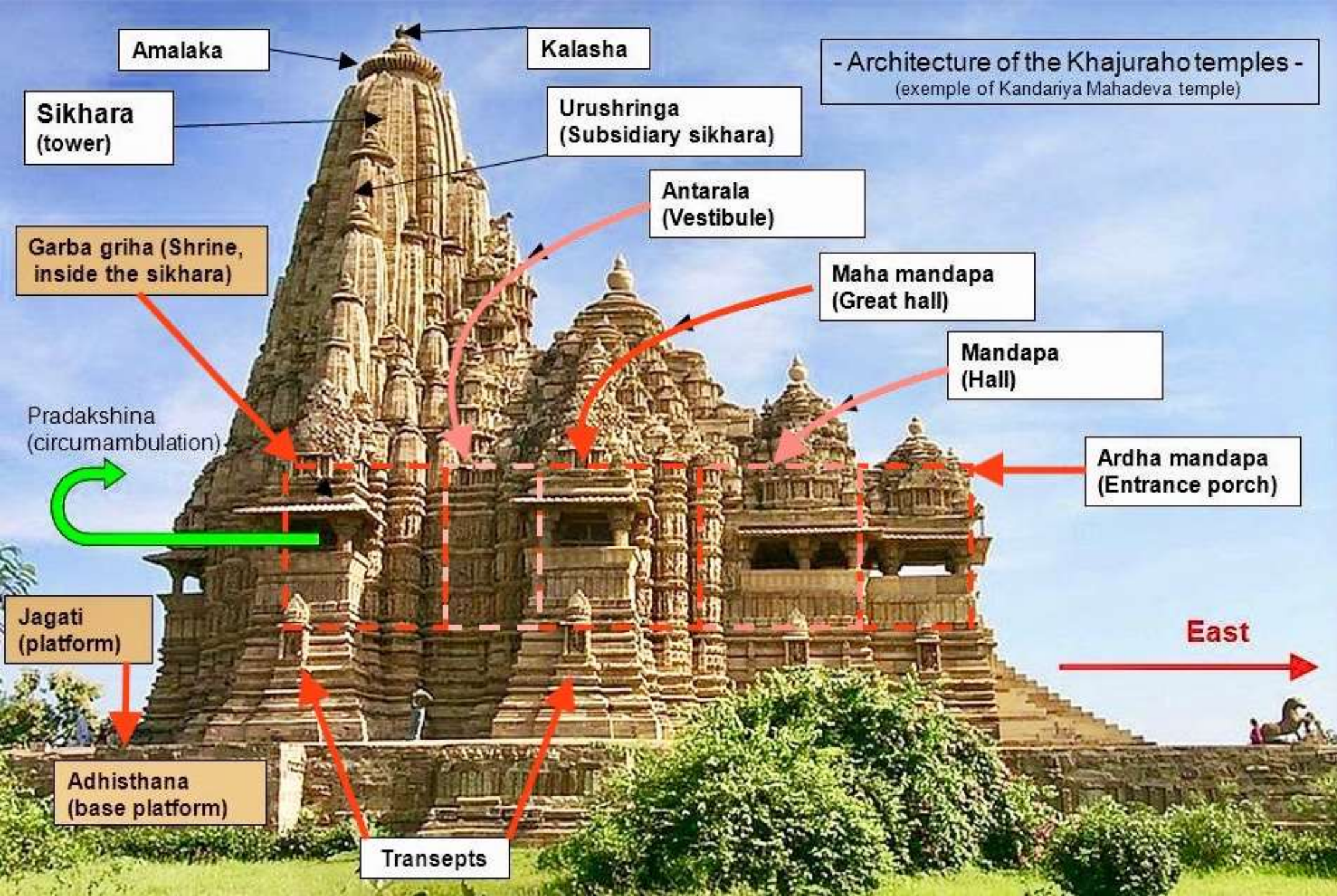
The **Khajuraho is a city of Group of Monuments** is a group of [Hindu temples](#) and [Jain temples](#) in [Chhatarpur district, Madhya Pradesh, India](#), about 175 kilometres southeast of [Jhansi](#). They are a [UNESCO World Heritage Site](#). The temples are famous for their [nagara](#)-style architectural symbolism and their [erotic sculptures](#).^[3]

Most Khajuraho temples were built between 885 AD and 1050 AD by the [Chandela](#) dynasty. Historical records note that the Khajuraho temple site had 85 temples by the 12th century, spread over 20 square kilometers. Of these, only about 25 temples have survived, spread over six square kilometers. Of the surviving temples, the [Kandariya Mahadeva Temple](#) is decorated with a profusion of sculptures with intricate details, symbolism and expressiveness of ancient Indian art.

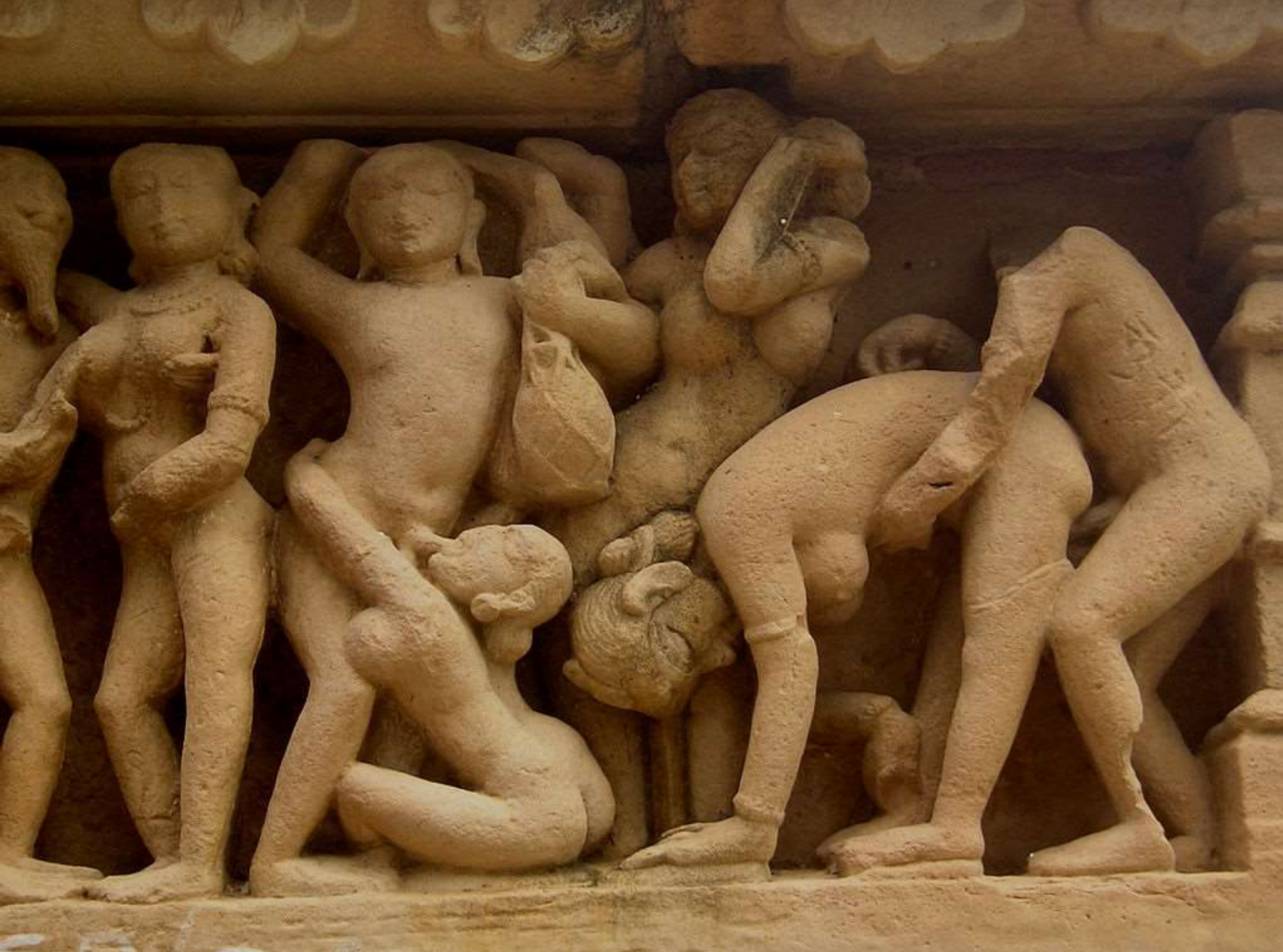
When these monuments were built, the boys in the place lived in [hermitages](#), by being [brahmcharis](#) (bachelor) until they attained manhood and these sculptures helped them to learn about the worldly role of 'householder'. The Khajuraho group of temples were built together but were dedicated to two religions, [Hinduism](#) and [Jainism](#), suggesting a tradition of acceptance and respect for diverse religious views among Hindus and Jains in the region.

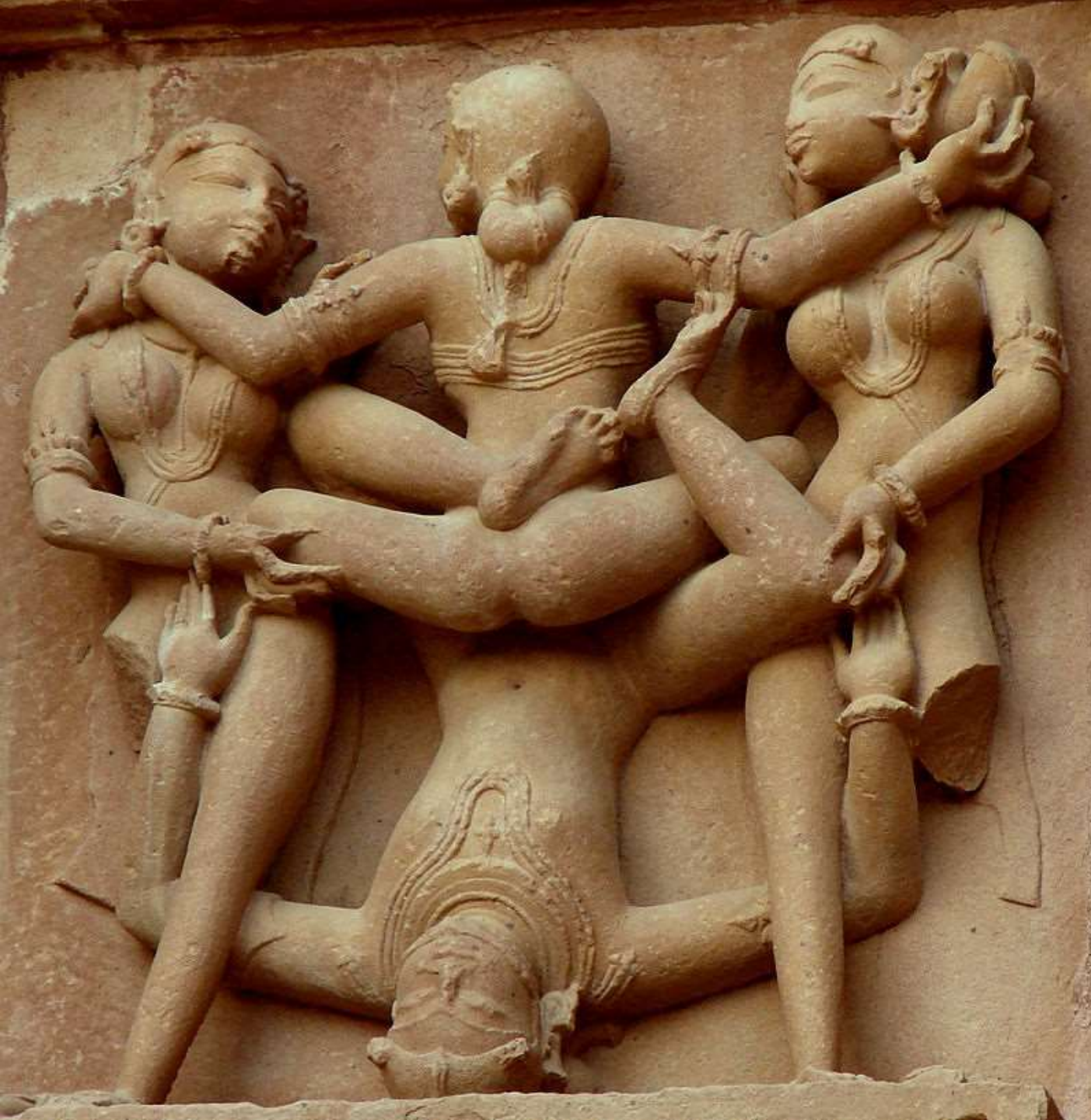
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXu7N86K4zE>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmGoBQyHPIY>





















Kailasa Temple Ellora (Western India)

The Kailasha or Kailashanatha temple is the largest of the rock-cut Hindu temples at the Ellora Caves, Maharashtra, India. Formed from a single block of excavated stone, **Kailasa temple** is considered one of the most impressive cave temples in India. The enormous structure is one of 34 cave temples and monasteries that are collectively known as the Ellora Caves. Located in the western region of Maharashtra, the caves are a UNESCO World Heritage Site and include monuments dating between 600 and 1000 CE. While there are many impressive structures on-site, it's the megalithic Kailasa temple that is perhaps the most well known.

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_H6bExNYeY

















Hindu Temples of South India

South Indian temple architecture, also called Drāviḍa Style, **architecture** invariably employed for **Hindu temples** in modern Tāmil Nadu from the 7th to the 18th century, characterized by its pyramidal, or kūṭina-type, tower. ... The tower is topped by a dome-shaped cupola and a crowning pot and finial.

The South Indian temple consists essentially of a square-chambered sanctuary topped by a superstructure, tower, or spire and an attached pillared porch or hall (*maṇḍapa*, or *maṇṭapam*), enclosed by a peristyle of cells within a rectangular court. The external walls of the temple are segmented by pilasters and carry niches housing sculpture. The superstructure or tower above the sanctuary is of the *kūṭina* type and consists of an arrangement of gradually receding stories in a pyramidal shape. Each story is delineated by a parapet of miniature shrines, square at the corners and rectangular with barrel-vault roofs at the center. The tower is topped by a dome-shaped cupola and a crowning pot and finial.

Golden Temple Vellore (of the South)

Sripuram Golden Temple || Mahalakshmi Temple Vellore || Sripuram Golden Temple-pride of India Sri Lakshmi Narayani Golden Temple

Golden Temple Vellore complex inside the **Thirupuram** spiritual park is situated at the foot of a small range of green hills at **Thirumalaikodi** (or simply **Malaikodi**) [Vellore](#) in [Tamil Nadu](#), [India](#). It is 120 km from [Tirupati](#), 145 km from [Chennai](#), 160 km from [Pondicherry](#) and 200 km from [Bengaluru](#). The [Maha Kumbhabhishekam](#) or consecration of the temple and its chief deity, [Sri Lakshmi Narayani](#) or Maha Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, was held on 24 August 2007, and devotees from all religions and backgrounds are welcome to visit.

- [Golden temple tamil nadu\(south\) - YouTube](#)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yuj51kpNOnk>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72rBHeuofhc>











Sri Padmanabhaswamy Temple (Southwest)

The Richest Temple in the World

The **Padmanabhaswamy temple** is a [Hindu temple](#) located in [Thiruvananthapuram](#), the state capital of [Kerala, India](#). The name of the city of Thiruvananthapuram in Malayalam translates to "The City of Lord Ananta", (City of the Divine Serpent) referring to the deity of the Padmanabhaswamy temple. The [Sri Padmanabhaswamy Temple](#) in Thiruvananthapuram is believed to have been built in the 6th century. It was converted into its present form in the 18th century by the erstwhile royal family of Travancore, which ruled the princely state as 'Padmanabha Dasa'. The temple is built in an intricate fusion of the [Chera style](#) and the [Dravidian style](#) of architecture, featuring high walls, and a 16th-century [gopura](#).

The principal deity Padmanabhaswamy ([Vishnu](#)) is enshrined in the "Anantha Shayana" posture, the eternal [yogic sleep](#) on the [serpent Adi Shesha](#). Padmanabhaswamy is the tutelary deity of the [royal family of Travancore](#). The titular [Maharaja of Travancore](#), [Moolam Thirunal Rama Varma](#), is the trustee of the temple.

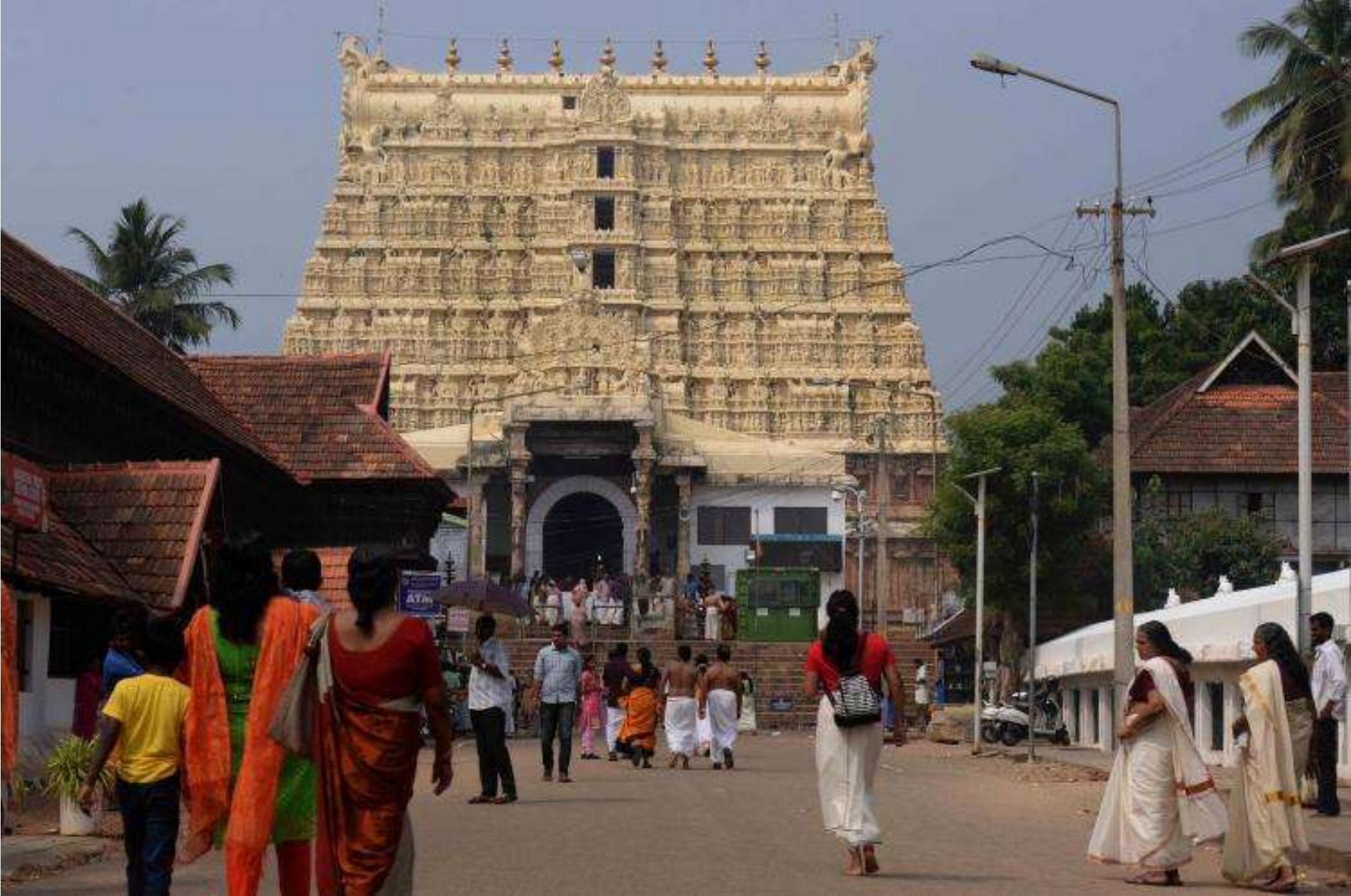
The **Padmanabha Swamy temple** estimated treasure so far is around R. 90,000 crore (\$22 billion) after **gold**, jewels and statues were unearthed from the 16th century shrine. The value of treasure is based on what has been found Vaults A, C, D, E and F as **Vault B**, which contains exotic treasure, is yet to be opened.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaLTdL9CEzQ> (equinox)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QjuZLeHA1FQ>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMCVF4DzyvI>
- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jimdobson/2015/11/13/a-one-trillion-dollar-hidden-treasure-chamber-is-discovered-at-indias-sree-padmanabhaswam-temple/?sh=6786c2471ba6>



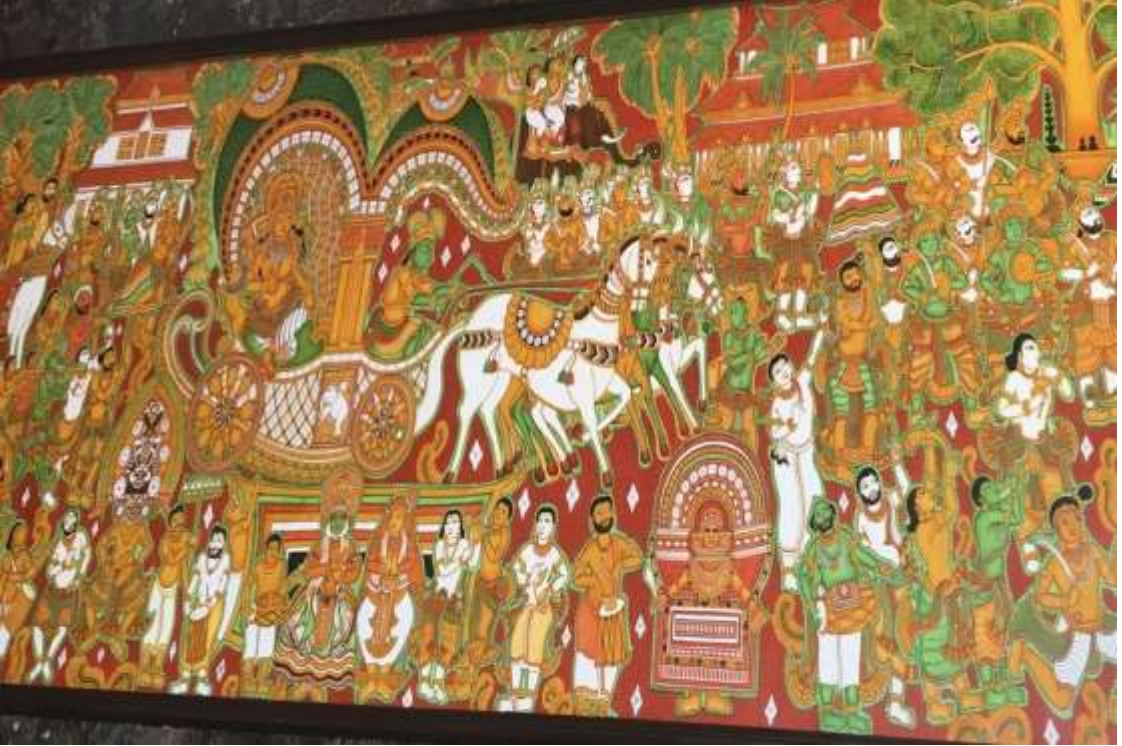












Meenakshi Amman Temple (South)

Arulmigu Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple is a historic Hindu temple located on the southern bank of the [Vaigai River](#) in the temple city of [Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India](#). It is dedicated to Thirukamakottam udaya aaludaiya [nachiyaar](#) ([Meenakshi](#)), a form of [Parvati](#), and her consort, *Sundareswarar*, a form of [Shiva](#). The temple is at the center of the ancient temple city of Madurai mentioned in the Tamil Sangam literature, with the goddess temple mentioned in 6th century CE texts. This temple is one of the [Paadal Petra Sthalam](#). The Paadal Petra sthalam are 275 temples of lord Shiva that are revered in the verses of Tamil Saiva [Nayanars](#) of 6th-9th century CE.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMCVF4DzyvI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3mjvIYFQDE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04q3qQfLycE> (temple painting)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6VJxDvboko>





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Assignment Suggestions...

- Create an artwork dense with figurative imagery
- Create an intricate pattern
- Use gold leaf in an artwork