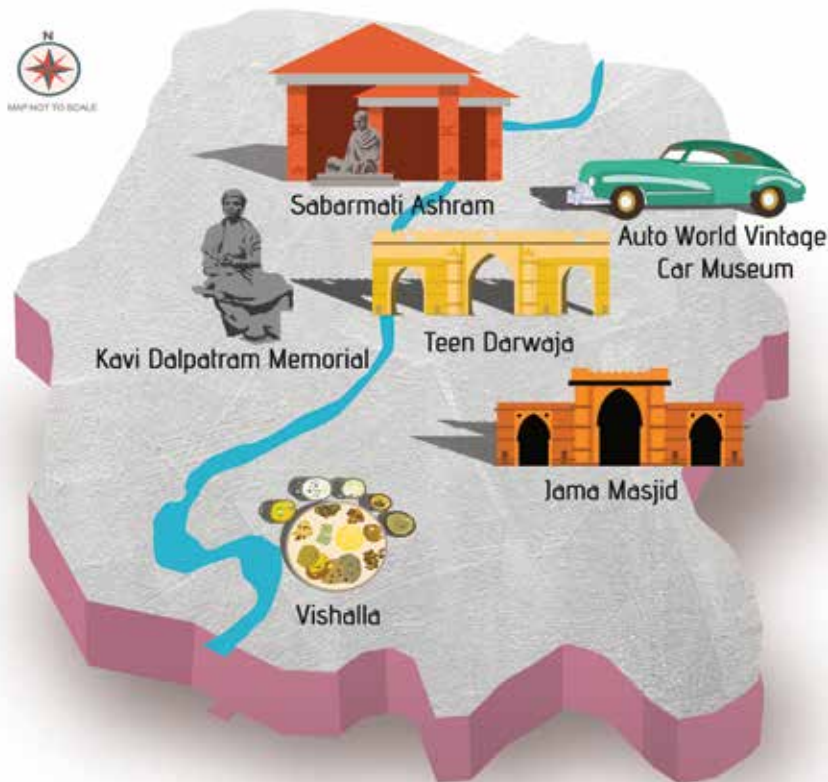




HOURS IN AHMEDABAD

India's first UNESCO World Heritage City is a potpourri of cultural scenes, architectural marvels and delectable cuisines. The warm hospitality of the locals will linger in your memory long after you have left the city.

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Morning



Start your day by participating in the heritage walk conducted daily by Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation which starts at 8 am from Swaminarayan Temple. Pass through the live memorial built in honour of Kavi Dalpatram — a noteworthy Gujarati poet. Next, stroll through the labyrinthine alleyways of the old city and acquaint yourself with the Hindu, Muslim and Jain *pols* of Ahmedabad. *Pols* are gated community living systems of the bygone era, with some characteristic features like a common sitting area, a place of worship, a bird feeder, and secret passages for quick escape to nearby *pols* and one gate enclosing all. Notice the Indo-Islamic, Indo-Chinese and European influence on the doors, pillars and brackets of the havelis.

Stop for some scrumptious *fafda-jalebi* at the 120-year old Chandravilas

Restaurant. Continue your journey to Gandhi Road book market to flip through some second haul books. Take photos of the old building of Ahmedabad Stock Exchange before ending your walk at the Jama Masjid — the biggest mosque in the city which can accommodate 10,000 people at one time. Pick up some souvenirs from the market around Teen Darwaza which is the gateway to Bhadra Fort. An Indo-Gothic citadel built by Ahmad Shah I in 1411, this fort also houses a clock tower. Climb up its winding, musty staircases to reach the roof which offers the quintessential view of the bustling city of Ahmedabad unfolding below. Hail an auto and reach Sidi Saiyyed Mosque — home of the intricately carved stone-latticed windows erected by a Sidi Muslim named Saiyyed who had migrated to Gujarat via Yemen.



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Noon



No trip to Ahmedabad is complete without a taste of the local cuisine. Experience the flavourful Gujarati thali at Gordhan Thal, a restaurant exuberating with a haveli-like charm. Post lunch, move towards the most peaceful stretch of the city, the Sabarmati Ashram, Mahatma Gandhi's residence. The ashram played a pivotal role in the Indian independence movement. It consists of a museum, displays of original oil paintings of Gandhi by various artists, a timeline of Gandhi's birth to death visually narrated, a yarn spinning wheel museum, Upasana Mandir (meditation hall) and Hriday Kunj (Gandhi's residence).



After Hours



Head back to the cramped walled city of Ahmedabad and pull a stop at Manek Chowk. A cacophony of sounds and a melange of fragrances would welcome you. This city square is a jewellery market during daytime but transforms into a buzzing

Evening



Reach the Sabarmati promenade to watch the sky change colours from shades of golden red, to tinges of pink, then purple and finally the sky wears a cloak of black. When the city lights glitter, get up and leave for Law Garden, one of the best places to buy embroidery work meticulously prepared by the skilled artisans in the villages of Gujarat. Sift through the kaleidoscopic ethnic outfits in Law Garden and haggle hard like the locals. With hands full of shopping bags, get on a cab and turn to Auto World Vintage Car Museum. Antique cars are put on display in this museum but the best part is that the visitors are allowed to drive the cars on a three kilometre stretch for ₹ 1,000.



fast-food market from 9 pm to 2 am. Indulge yourself with a Gwalior Dosa which is stuffed with generous amounts of butter. Trying the gooey chocolate cheese sandwich may baffle your senses. After the tiring day, you may crave for some nutritious food to re-energise yourself. Then Vishalla, a restaurant serving Gujarati food on the western bank of Sabarmati river, would suit your need. The restaurant exudes a rustic ambiance with minimal decor, leaf plates and cross-legged seating arrangement on floor. Go for a stroll after dinner in the adjacent utensils museum, Veechar.

Veechar Utensils Museum; Vishalla; RealityImages/Shutterstock.com; KD PICS/Shutterstock.com; Harsht Trivedi/Shutterstock.com