Within these two styles, a large degree of variation is evident. The indigenous Dravidians and subsequent Aryan invaders who came from living religion. Hinduism was born thousands of years ago along the banks of India's HINDUISM.

INTRODUCTION

In 1860 indentured labourers from India were introduced to the British colonies of Natal in the sugar canes. They were followed by waves of immigrants from the subcontinent, eventually forming the largest Indian community outside of India. Today Durban is home to a rich legacy of Indian culture, including more than 40 Hindu temples.

ARCHITECTURE

In Durban, the Indian culture, including more than 40 Hindu temples. The temple consists largely of interwoven layers of ideas originating from Hinduism. Gengaimman is a river goddess, and you'll find it at 699 Bellair Rd, Durban. SP Chetty, its three towers each symbolize in low relief to integrate the deities into the structure. The design is enhanced by the contrasting plain surfaces and reflected light.

THE SHIVA TEMPLE was built in 1947 to replace the original structure which had been destroyed by flooding. This major temple was built in 1900, this is the oldest example of temple architecture in South Africa, the temple is the most extensive example of temple architecture dates back to 1913 and is home to more than 500000 members. The temple is the most extensive example of temple architecture dates back to 1913 and is home to more than 500000 members.

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PEACE AND RESPECT

All are welcome in Hindu temples, but please dress modestly and remove your shoes before entering. Certain areas, such as the cella, are out of bounds for non-believers, and other areas are the exclusive domain of priests or temple staff. Tread with care, and ask if you’re unsure.

SYMBOLS IN HINDUISM

Although there is one Absolute God in Hinduism, the theology has evolved a hierarchy of consorts and vehicles through which the supreme being communicates. These deities are in turn accompanied by a variety of symbols.

Every element of a Hindu temple is symbolic. Fire is the carrier of all sacrifices. The bell represents divine awakening. The conch shell, creation. The beads, a spiritual journey. The nail shoes, penitence. The lion symbolises power. The bull, strength and tenderness, and so on.

A Shiva temple is denoted by Nandi, the bull on whose back Shiva rides, while the presence of the eagle-like Garuda denotes a Vishnu Temple. As well as Shiva and Vishnu temples, there are many other kinds of Hindu temples, each corresponding to a particular deity.

THE SCULPTURES

The sculptures on these sites are made from a steel-and-wire armature with a cement-rich finish. While strict rules are traditionally applied in their construction, these rules have become more loosely interpreted over time, as can be seen in the different versions of the eagle-like Garuda in the Second River and Tinley Manor temple sites. The relationship between the architecture and the sculptures also varies. The Cato Manor Hindu Temple, for example, perfectly integrates the sculptures into the plasterwork, while in Tinley Manor Temple the deities are like toys sitting on a shelf.

THE SOUTH INDIAN STYLE

Includes a horizontal layout, usually representing the Ganges flood plain, with an elevated square shrine (cella) symbolising the Himalayas, where the deity is housed in a cave.

3. Cella – sanctum for deity
4. Kiya – final or uppermost point

THE NORTH INDIAN STYLE

was influenced by the Buddhist need to walk around the circumference of the temple in ritual meditation, and always includes a central tower and some form of excising ambulatory or walkway. Both North and South Indian styles are represented in this brochure.

3. Cella – sanctum for deity
4. Kiya – final or uppermost point

THE MULTICULTURAL CITY OF DURBAN IS HOME TO A LARGE INDIAN COMMUNITY AND MORE THAN 40 HINDU TEMPLES, WHOSE DETAILED STRUCTURES ADD A UNIQUE CHARACTER AND INFLUENCE TO THE CITY’S DIVERSE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

Brochure Produced by the City Architecture Department of eThekwini Municipality 166 KE Masinga Road, Durban 4001 Tel: 031 311 7098 Photography: Angela Buckland
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Emperumal Temple, Canelands

Details of a North Indian temple
(This example is the Shree Gopalal Temple in Verulam)

1. Ambulatory – walkway which encircles the temple
2. Cella – sanctum for deity
3. Kiya – final or uppermost point

Details of a South Indian temple
(This example is the Shree Gopalal Temple in Verulam)

1. Kiya – final or uppermost point
2. Cella – sanctum for deity
3. Kiya – final or uppermost point

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