

My City
My Heritage

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 **TRAIL**

Zamorin's Trail: Exploring Kozhikode's Glorious Heritage

 **3 KM**

 **NEAR THALI SIVA TEMPLE TANK**

The port city of Kozhikode, also known as Calicut, became prominent in the 12th century when ships from far and near reached its shores seeking a single commodity: pepper. Founded under the rule of the Zamorin dynasty, the city has become a place where communities from varying cultures and religious beliefs coexist and prosper together.

From the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries, it was frequented by Arab, Chinese, Gujarati, and European traders who catered to the world's growing demand for black pepper as well as ginger, cotton, silk, and other commodities.

Through this heritage trail, we explore the centuries of growth and cultural diversity of the city. This trail is a mix of monuments and memories, tracing the history of a city and a kingdom that became prosperous not through war and conquest but through ethical trade and commerce.

1 Tali Temple

Dedicated to Lord Siva, the temple existed even before the rule of the Zamorin was established in the twelfth century. It was in the hands of Brahmins who defied the authority of the new ruler. The Zamorin took control of the temple after executing the Brahmin trustees.



As atonement, the king set up an annual literary competition, known as *Revathi Pattathanam*. With scholars from all over participating, the competition's debates covered four fields of knowledge, namely, *Tarka*, *Vyakarana*, *Mimamsa*, and *Vedanta*. The winners in each category were honoured at the temple and awarded a purse of 101 gold coins.

The temple is known today for its architectural brilliance and this enduring literary tradition. The *Revathi Pattathanam* is still held every year in the month of October-November. It is on the foundations of such robust traditions that Calicut came to be recognized as the UNESCO City of Literature in 2023.

2 Palayam Market

The camping grounds of the royal soldiers of Calicut are an essential part of the city's royal heritage. Palayam marks the area where

Hyder Ali's forces camped on 20 April 1766. They encircled the palace, which was nearby at Kottapparambu. With no viable recourse, the Zamorin sent away the women and children before setting fire to the armoury, igniting the stored gunpowder and destroying the three-century-old palace. Although the Zamorin would return with the help of the British, this was a pivotal moment.



The Palayam Vegetable and Fruit Market, once a royal garden tended by women for leisure, is now a bustling hub for fresh produce. Opening as early as 3 am, it sees overnight arrivals of vegetables from neighbouring states and fruits from across India and abroad, including imports from Egypt, Israel, Vietnam and China. By 6 am, the fruit trade slows as new vegetable supplies replenish the city.

delights, this bustling market also boasts a rich literary past. There is a granite bust of Calicut's own novelist and travel writer, SK Pottekkat at the junction between Mananchira and SM Street. For the people of Calicut, he was the chronicler of their street (in *Oru Theruvinte Katha*). The next street is Vaikom Mohammed Bashir Road, celebrating the literary contributions of the maverick writer who made Calicut his home. His characters are carved in stone in the nearby Children's Literature Park, previously called Ansari Park.

Many old sweet shops like Krishna Maharaj (1889) and Shankaran Bakery (1922) still function in the street.

This area also houses a Parsi Anjuman, built in the 1800s. It looked after the religious affairs of Parsis who lived in Calicut, Kochi, Mangalore, Alleppey, Ooty, and other places in the region.



3

SM Street

Famed for its iconic *halwa* and culinary



5 The Big Bazaar Market

Big Bazaar stands as a vital link between Calicut's past and present—a place where history continues to resonate through its vibrant lanes and diverse trading community. This 800-year-old market, or Valiyangadi, was once a global trading hub and the heart of the spice trade. It was established close to the sea, stretching for about 1.5 kilometres to Palayam.

4 Chembotti Street

After you encounter a lane of gold and silver shops in the street, there is a lane of brass and bronze shops. From the time of the Zamorins, a community of coppersmiths (Chembottis) have lived and worked their trade in this area. It also housed brass and bronze worker communities called Moosharis. Other metal craftsmen like gold and silversmiths (Thattans) also lived nearby. Many trader communities who came and settled in Calicut saw business opportunities here. Thus, Konkani Brahmins called Kamaths and Saiva Vellala Pillais who came from Tamil Nadu established shops there to sell these. Many Goan Christians also later established shops here.

Near the street is a settlement and temple of Kanyakubj Brahmins, called Bairagis, who came and settled here from central India. The idol at the Bairagi Madom here was specially brought from Jaipur centuries ago.



It took centre stage in the town planning by the Zamorin dynasty, who settled traders belonging to different communities close to the market area. The market was widened and the roofs of the shops were tiled during the time of the British.

Today, looking at the name boards of the numerous shops that dot the market, you will get a fair idea of the diversity of the trading community in Calicut, featuring people belonging to many regions, faiths, and cultures.

6 **Kuttichira: Mishkal Mosque, Muchundi Mosque, and Juma Mazjid**

Kuttichira was a centre for literary activities, cultural exchange, and Mappila culture. The Mishkal Mosque, also known as Mishkal Palli, was built in the fourteenth century by Nakhooda Mishkal, a wealthy Arab trader. This mosque is one of a few surviving medieval mosques in Kerala and has a unique architectural style that blends traditional Kerala and Arab influences. Unlike typical mosques, it lacks minarets and domes, featuring instead gopuram-style arches reminiscent of Hindu temple architecture.

The Muchundi Mosque, built in the thirteenth century, is considered one of the oldest mosques in Kozhikode. It reflects the spirit of communal harmony, as it was constructed with the support of the Zamorin rulers who patronized Islam. The Kuttichira Juma Mazjid, situated between

Mishkal Mosque and Muchundi Mosque, is known for having one of the largest floor areas among mosques in Kerala, accommodating approximately 1,000 people at once.

7 **Gujarati Street**

The Gujarati community in Calicut trace their roots back to the fourteenth century, when traders began



arriving to engage in the lucrative spice trade. When Vasco da Gama first landed in Kerala in 1498, it is said that he was guided through the streets of Kozhikode by a Gujarati merchant. This highlights the role Gujaratis played in establishing trade links between India and various parts of the world. Over time, the Gujarati community became synonymous with commerce in Calicut.

Gujarati Street consists of narrow lanes, weaving a historical landscape with



faded buildings that feature wooden windows and tile-clad roofs. The ground floors of these structures function as shops while the upper stories house families. This architectural style reflects a blend of local Kerala influences and traditional Gujarati design, reflecting the city's unique urban fabric.

gested lanes.

- Please try to be on time at the venue, as the roads tend to get busy, and the weather becomes less enjoyable later in the day.
- Kindly respect the cultural and religious significance/sentiments of the spaces as conveyed by the walk leader.

8

Refreshments at 1980 Restaurant

Set in a heritage building, this restaurant features excavated remnants of the Zamorins' fort. Guests can enjoy snacks or refreshments while taking a well-deserved break in a space steeped in history.

Photo Credits: Joseph Rahul

Heritage Experience/Walk Leader:

Sruthin Lal
(Founder, Archival and Research Project (ARPO) & GULI Heritage)

Email: sruthinlal@gmail.com

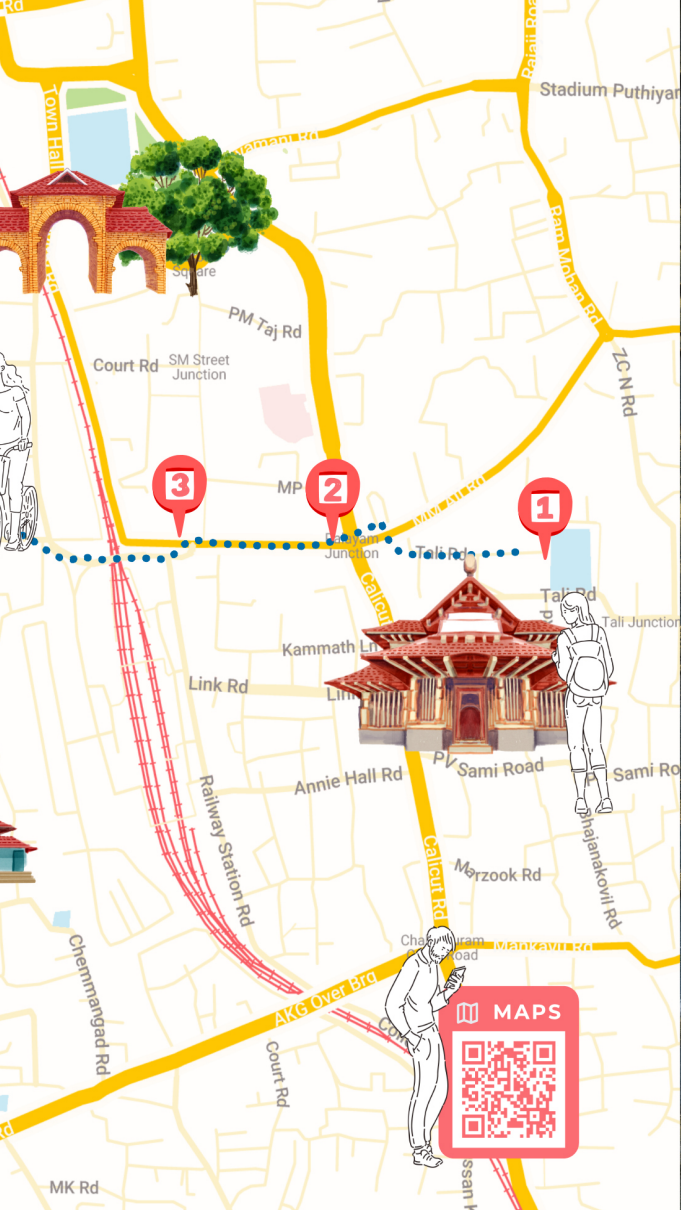
Contact: +91 95999 17517

Please note:

- There is no entry fee.
- Photography allowed (exterior of buildings).
- Wear comfortable footwear, and carry a hat/umbrella along with a bottle of water.
- Please start early, as we may be travelling through narrow con-



1. Tali Temple
2. Palayam Market
3. SM Street
4. Chembotti Street
5. Valiyangadi (Big Bazaar) Market
6. Kuttichira
7. Gujarati Street
8. 1980 Restaurant



Stadium Puthiyar

Pajati Road

Town Hall

PM Taj Rd

Court Rd SM Street Junction

7C N Rd

1

2

3

MP

Basijam Junction

Tali Rd

Tali Rd

Tali Junction

Kammath Ln

Link Rd

Link

Annie Hall Rd

PV Sami Road

Sami Ro

Marzook Rd

Mahajanakovil Rd

Railway Station Rd

Calicut Rd

Chakram road

AKG Over Bro

Court Rd

Chemmangad Rd

MK Rd

MAPS

