



GANDHI 3.0

IMMERSION

Jan 13th - 17th, 2024

In addition to the retreat, for those who can come earlier, we're delighted to invite you to join us between Jan 13-17th, 2024; for local immersions.

Settle-in, adjust from jetlag, engage with local inspirations, soak in local culture, and visit modern-day programs initiated by Gandhi.

Read on to see what's in store!



VILLAGE A VISIT



Our first immersion steps into the life of an Indian village. We'll be welcomed into villagers' homes, experience their community rhythm, and learn about the decades-long friendship and work that has been co-created between communities.



ADALAJ

STEPWELL



This 5-story, 500+ year-old stepwell is a stunning display of Indo-Islamic architecture. Built as a community water source in the dry climate, its ornate design sheltered pilgrims and traders along their journeys, and became a space for daily worship, cultural festivals, and casual conversation.

Speaking of pilgrims, don't forget to turn to ask your tour guide about their own experiences walking and fetching water. :) If we're lucky, they may just be **Swara** and **Trupti**, who embarked on a 6-month walking pilgrimage along the Narmada River this year! In the spirit of renunciation, they relied on the kindness of strangers, and were met with far more.



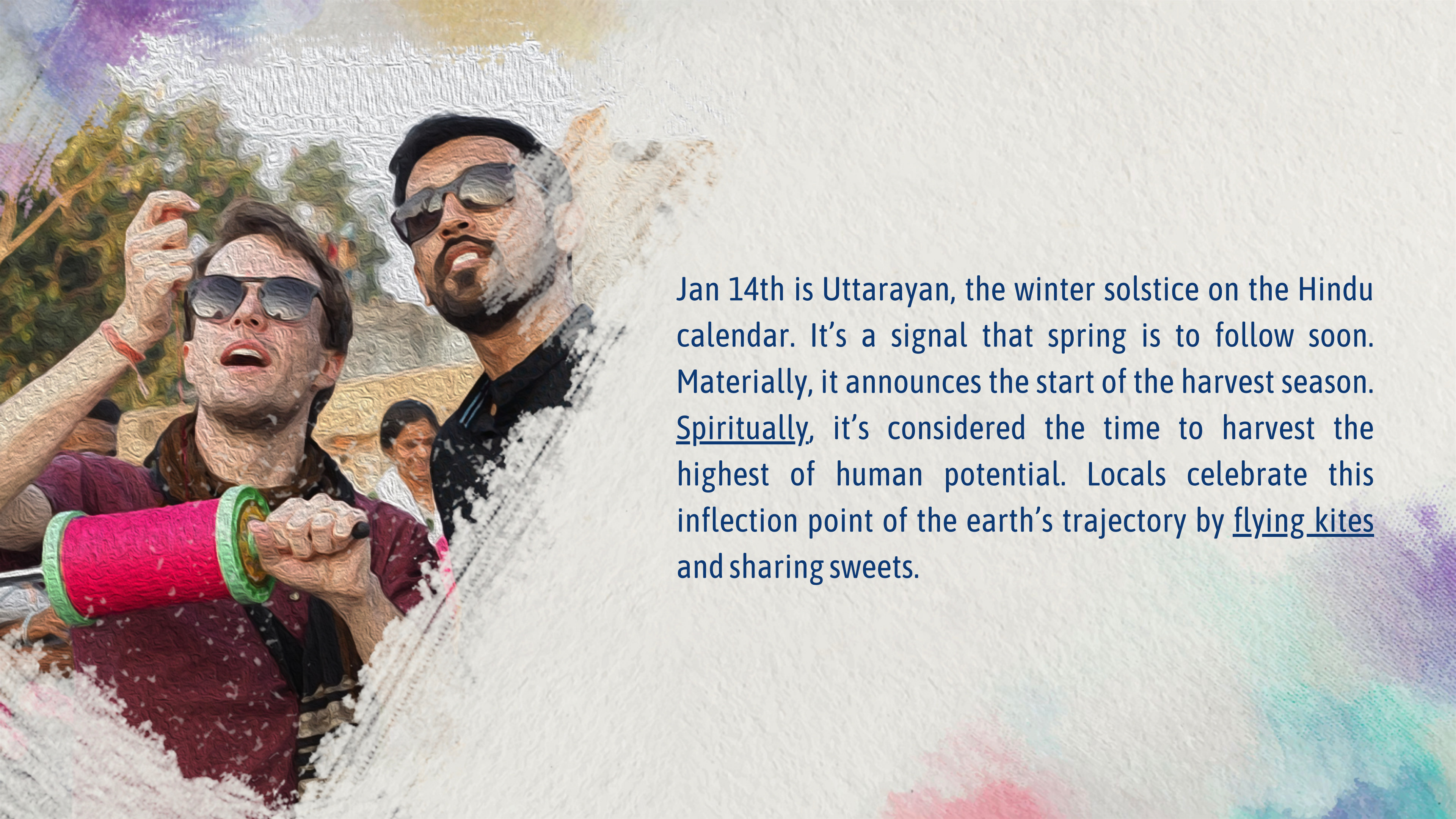
OLD CITY



With a 600-year history, the “Old City” of Ahmedabad is an ancient, walled area characterized by iconic mosques and “Pols,” or self-contained neighborhoods. Led by quiet Gandhian legend, **Jayesh-bhai Patel**, we’ll amble around the narrow lanes, converse with locals, and wind down with dinner at the rooftop of one of the best-preserved Pols.



KITE FESTIVAL



Jan 14th is Uttarayan, the winter solstice on the Hindu calendar. It's a signal that spring is to follow soon. Materially, it announces the start of the harvest season. Spiritually, it's considered the time to harvest the highest of human potential. Locals celebrate this inflection point of the earth's trajectory by flying kites and sharing sweets.



CRAFTROOTS

MEETING ARTISANS



After learning art from a range of artisans in the morning, we'll visit Craftroots, a local artisan cooperative and crafts store. In an era of factory-produced goods, this initiative weaves historic lineages of arts into modern urban culture and markets, thereby breathing life into age-old crafts, and igniting a cultural renaissance in artisan's work and family heritage.

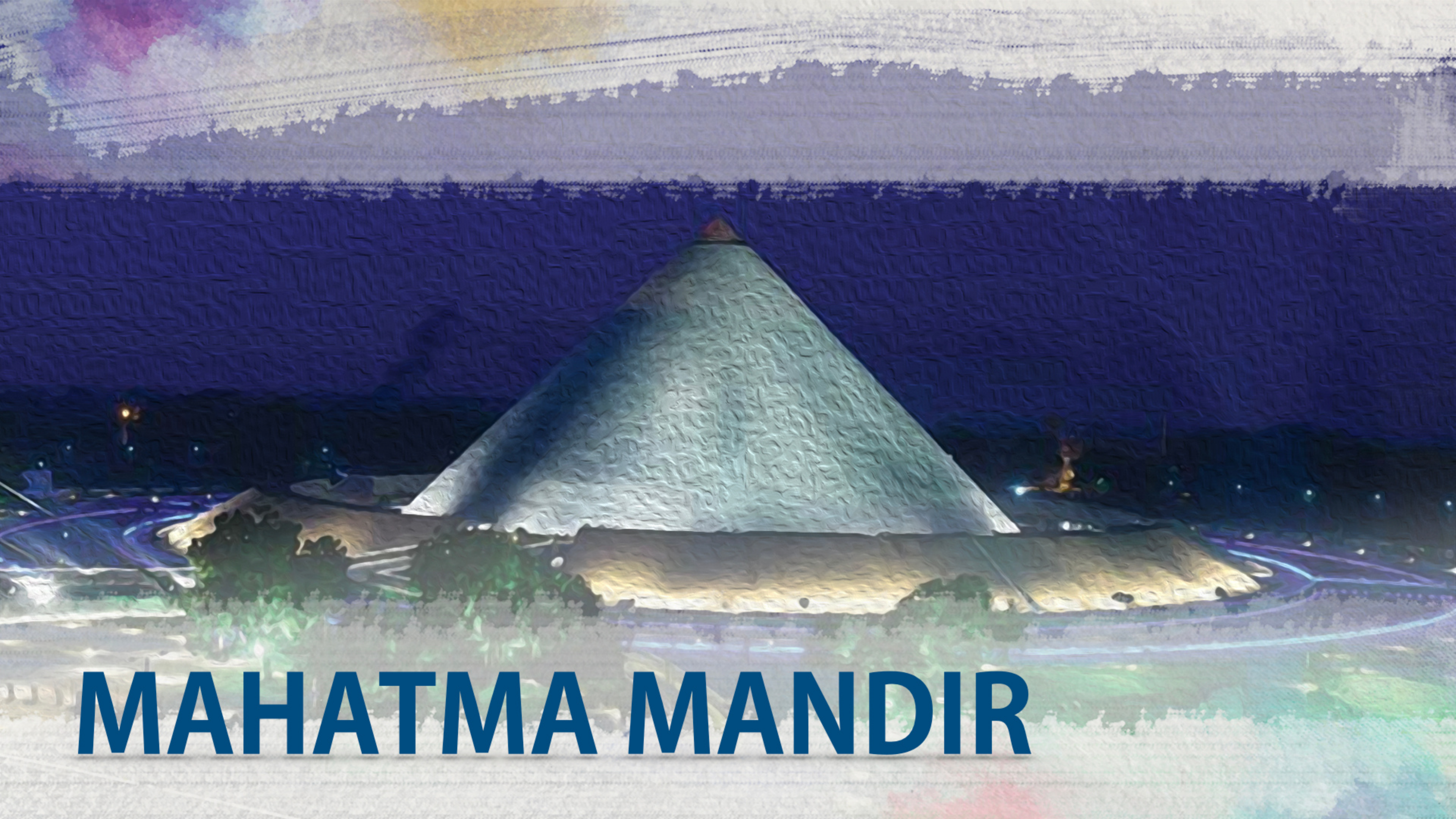
If we're lucky, we'll get to hear from **Meghna Banker**, visionary of *many* sources of goodness -- including Wisdom Crafts, a gift economy offering of values-based products and "heART".



SARKHEJ ROZA



We continue our exploration to visit [Sarkhej Roza](#), a mosque and once-prominent center of Sufi wisdom in India. This monument's design is a fusion of Islamic, Hindu, and Jain architecture. While the legendary Le Corbusier compared it to the Acropolis, its design has been interpreted as composed of both jism (body) and ruh (spirit). Soak in the beauty of this 550-year-old creation.



MAHATMA MANDIR



Mahatma Mandir (“Temple of the Great Soul”) is a museum built on one man's story -- “Father of the Nation,” Mahatma Gandhi. The museum is housed within a structure that is designed as a mound of salt, reminding us of the iconic Dandi March. It thus represents Gandhi's powerful idea of people across lines of class, gender, age and community asserting their common right to salt itself, a symbol to inspire a pluralistic society to march towards independence.

On this journey, we'll be joined by **Preeta Bansal**, who dedicated a year to studying Gandhi, after clerking for the US Supreme Court. Known for her 30+ years of senior roles in government, including serving as former US President Barack Obama's General Counsel, in recent years she's unlocking nuances of “love and power” and the role of inner transformation in social systems.



SEVA CAFE



Imagine a restaurant where there are no prices on the menu, and where the check reads “Rs. 0” with only this footnote: *“Your meal was a gift from someone who came before you. To keep the chain of gifts alive, we invite you to pay it forward for those who dine after you.”* Here at Seva Cafe, we’ll bookend the day with an evening of stories, songs, and conversations, in this volunteer-run, labour of love experiment in 'peer to peer' generosity.



GANDHI ASHRAM



When Gandhi engaged the nation in its unprecedented Freedom Movement, Gandhi Sabarmati Ashram was a hub of activity. We have the privilege of visiting Gandhi's prayer grounds, living quarters, and beyond with **Jayesh-bhai Patel**, who grew up at the ashram and whose way of being has transformed thousands from all walks of life, celebrities to vegetable sellers alike.



MANAV SADHNA



Those engaged with the social sector may like to join a group visiting Manav Sadhna within the Gandhi Ashram campus and the nearby slum community that it serves.

We may have the good fortune to be taken around by **Nimesh “Nimo” Patel** -- a rap star turned “servant ladder” whose Empty Hands Music serves as a vehicle to ignite inner transformation and bridge communities. When he first arrived at Gandhi Ashram over a decade back, his first assignment was to “play with the children in the slums”. :) A special stop along this visit could be to his “HeART Center” performing arts education!



KALAM KHUSH HANDMADE PAPER



Kalam Khush, a handmade paper centre next to the Gandhi Ashram, transforms scraps of cotton fabric into paper for cards and crafts, correspondence and journaling. Gandhi originally introduced papermaking as part of the ashram activities, and over a half a century later, the factory continues to run on shared values, recycling waste and saving water and energy. [Learn more, and more, and more.]



VISHALLA

TRADITIONAL DINING



After a full day, we'll dine at Vishalla restaurant, known for their authentic, local Gujarati cuisine as well as unique performance offerings of puppet shows, Gujarati folk music, art, and beyond. :)

En route, you may like to ask your driver about his or her life. One of them may just be **Parag Shah**, a business leader, and one of the most successful diamond merchants in South Asia, who describes his journey in transformation as walking towards 3 kinds of “ROE”: First, as a businessman gaining “return on equity.” Then, as a philanthropist, fulfilling a “return on ego”. Finally, as a volunteer, practicing a “return on equanimity”.



KOCHRAB ASHRAM



Kochrab Ashram is the first ashram in Ahmedabad. Upon returning to India from South Africa, before deciding on a plan of action, Gandhi spent a year traveling India, seeing and listening to the state of the nation and its people. After a year, he began his Satyagraha work at Kochrab Ashram. Two years later, the ashram activities and work were relocated to what's known today as the Gandhi Sabarmati Ashram. We'll have the privilege of seeing this original space where observation and inner reflection transformed into action, and eventually, the Indian Independence Movement [\[more\]](#).



GUJARAT UNIVERSITY



Soon after Indian Independence, Gandhi and many other leaders established Gujarat University, to improve education in the city and state, and provide more holistic pathways to bridge education with the betterment of society. Walking alongside the transformative presence of Jayesh-bhai, we'll visit the university, and dialogue with students, professors, or alumni whose spirit of service inspire many.



SEE YOU SOON!