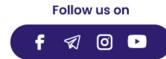Exploring Indore - Past, Present and Fascinating Trivia

Hey Aspirants! We're back with another blog on the blog series '**Know Your City**'. The city you're going to learn about is '**Indore**'. So, without a further delay, let's start exploring the city.

Indore, known as the "Heart of India," is a city where tradition and modernity coexist harmoniously. It's a place where rich heritage blends with economic vibrancy, offering something for every visitor to cherish. Located in the central part of India, it stands as a testament to a fascinating historical journey that dates back centuries. Its roots run deep, with prehistoric settlements, and it flourished under the Holkar dynasty during the mediaeval period.

Before looking at the different aspects, one must know the City symbols of the particular city. The city symbols of Indore are:

Indore	
State	Madhya Pradesh
Official Language	Hindi
City Bird	Indian Peafowl
City Animal	Asiatic Lion
City Tree	Azadirachta indica
Mayor	Pushyamitra Bhargava
Member of Parliament	Shankar Lalwani

Exploring Indore - Past, Present and Fascinating Trivia

[Source: Wikipedia]

So now, let's move on to the first aspect of the blog i.e. **History of Indore**.

History of Indore

With a history that unfolds over more than 2,000 years, Indore, the bustling metropolis of today, has a captivating past that weaves together various epochs and dynasties. Here's a historical journey through the ages of Indore:

- **Ancient Era:** Around 465 CE, in the Gupta Empire, the city that would later be known as Indore was mentioned as 'Indrapura' in a copper plate inscription. This inscription highlights the presence of a sun temple, and a generous endowment was made by Gupta king Skandagupta for its maintenance.
- **Maratha Empire:** In the 18th century, during the Mughal era, the area that encompasses modern-day Indore was divided between Ujjain and Mandu. The city's history took a turn in 1715 when the Marathas invaded this territory and demanded taxes. Local zamindars agreed to pay, and by 1720, the headquarters of the pargana was shifted from Kampel to Indore due to increased commercial activity. The Marathas maintained friendly relations with Nandlal Chaudhary and further solidified their rule in the region.
- **Princely State:** Ahilyabai Holkar, a remarkable and courageous ruler, took the reins of Indore. Her rule, starting in the 18th century, marked a golden age in the city's history. She was known for constructing hundreds of Hindu temples and Dharmashalas, including the renowned Kashi Vishwanath Temple, Shri Rama Temple in Ayodhya, and many others.
- **Post-Independence:** In 1947, after India's independence, Holkar State, including Indore, became part of the Indian Union. It went on to become the commercial capital of the state of Madhya Pradesh, with a population that has grown to nearly 4.5 million in recent years.

This historical tapestry of Indore, marked by ancient inscriptions, Maratha influence, and the legacy of Ahilyabai Holkar, reflects a city that has evolved through the centuries into the dynamic urban centre it is today.

[Source: Indore]

Timeline for the major events that occurred in the History of Indore:

- **465 CE:** Gupta Empire mentions Indore as 'Indrapura' with a sun temple.
- **1715:** Maratha invasion, tax demand from the Mughal Amil.
- **1720:** Headquarters of the pargana shifted to Indore.
- **1730:** Malhar Rao Holkar appointed as Maratha chief.
- **1766:** Ahilyabai Holkar moves headquarters to Indore.
- **1818:** Holkars defeated by the British in the Third Anglo-Maratha War.
- **1956:** Indore becomes part of Madhya Pradesh after Indian independence.

This timeline showcases Indore's rich and diverse history in a simple way. Let's move on to the next aspect of this blog i.e **Geographical Aspects**.

Geographical Aspects of Indore

Indore is located in the western region of Madhya Pradesh (approx. 76°E, 23°N) on the southern edge of the Malwa plateau, with an average altitude of 553 metres (1,814 ft) above sea level, giving it the highest elevation among major cities in Central India. The city is located 190 km west of the state capital, Bhopal. The city is distributed over a land area of approximately 530 square kilometres, and its infrastructure and layout are designed to accommodate its dense population.

Geographical Features:

- **River:** The city is situated on the banks of two small rivulets , the Saraswati and the Khan.
- **Hills:** It is surrounded by hills on three sides, with the Vindhyas range to the south.

[Source: Indore]

Physiographic Aspects:

- **Climate:** Indore has a tropical savanna climate, Summer is hot and dry, with temperatures ranging from 30 to 45 degrees Celsius and Winter is mild, with temperatures ranging from 10 to 25 degrees Celsius
- **Monsoon:** The monsoon season lasts from June to September and brings heavy rainfall, averaging 700 to 800 millimetres (28 to 31 inches).
- **Air Quality Index:** Generally good to moderate, but can become poor during the winter months due to air pollution. The current AQI of Indore City is 159, which is in the Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups category.

Demographic Snapshot:

- **Population:** Indore has a population of over 3.5 million people, making it the most populous city in Madhya Pradesh.
- **Gender Ratio:** The city has a gender ratio of 920 females per 1000 males.
- **Density:** The population density of the city is 6,724 people per square kilometre.
- **Literacy Rate:** It has a literacy rate of 82.32%, which is higher than the national average.

Soil and Vegetation:

- Indore has black cotton soil, which is fertile and well-suited for agriculture.
- It is also known for its fertility and is well-suited for growing a variety of crops, including cotton, wheat, soybeans, and pulses.
- The city is surrounded by forests, which are home to a variety of trees and plants.
- The planted vegetation is mostly ornamental, with trees such as gulmohar, jacaranda, and bougainvillaea.
- Some of the common trees found in Indore include neem, mango, peepal, and banyan.

Indore City consists of iconic landmarks including:

- **Rajwada Palace:** A seven-story palace that was the former residence of the Holkar rulers of Indore. It is a popular tourist destination and is known for its stunning architecture.
- **Lalbagh Palace:** A beautiful palace built in the 19th century by Maharani Holkar. It is known for its lush gardens and its collection of artefacts and paintings.
- **Kanch Mandir:** A Jain temple with a mirrored mosaic interior. It is a popular pilgrimage site and is known for its intricate carvings and its beautiful architecture.
- **Sarafa Bazaar:** A bustling night market where you can find everything from street food to jewellery. It is a popular spot for both locals and tourists and is known for its lively atmosphere.

[Source: Navbharat Times]

Indore is a beautiful city with a rich history and culture. Its many famous landmarks are a testament to its vibrant past and its bright future.

Now let's move on to the **political aspects of Indore**.

Political Aspects of Indore

Indore has a city government, or municipality, with a mayor-council form of government. It was the first city in India to have an elected municipal government.

- The Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) is spread over an area of 269 square km and consists of 69 Council members whose districts are divided into 12 zones and these zones had been further divided into 85 wards defined by geographic population boundaries.
- The mayor and councillors are elected to five-year terms. The elected wing of the city government is headed by the Mayor.
- The IMC is responsible for public education, correctional institutions, libraries, public safety, recreational facilities, sanitation, water supply, local planning, and welfare services.
- Indore city is represented in the parliament through the Indore Lok Sabha constituency, which covers most of the district. As per delimitation from 2008, It is represented in the state assembly constituency through 5 Constituencies.
- The Indore Police, a division of the Madhya Pradesh Police, is under the direct control of the Department of Home Affairs. The government of Madhya Pradesh is the law enforcement agency in Indore. Indore district is divided into 39 police stations and seven police outposts.
- Indore is also a seat for one of the two permanent benches of Madhya Pradesh High Court with Gwalior, the city, its agglomerates, and other 12 districts of western Madhya Pradesh falling under the jurisdiction of Indore High Court.
- Most of the regions surrounding the city are administered by the Indore Development Authority (IDA). IDA works as an apex body for planning and coordination of development activities in the Indore Metropolitan Region (IMR) comprising Indore and its agglomeration covering an area of 398.72 km^2 (153.95 sq mi).

Indore is a well-governed city with a strong focus on public service delivery. The city government has been successful in providing clean drinking water, sanitation, and other essential services to its residents. It is also one of the cleanest cities in India and has been ranked as the cleanest city in the country for the past six years in a row.

[Source: Zee Business]

Now let's discuss the **culture of Indore**.

Culture of Indore

Indore is a vibrant city with a rich culture that is a blend of Maharashtrian, Malawi, Rajasthani, and Gujarati influences. The city is known for its delicious food, lively music scene, and diverse population.

- **Language:** The official language of Indore is Hindi, but many people also speak Marathi, Gujarati, and English.
- **People:** It is home to a diverse population of over 3.2 million people. The majority of the population is Hindu, but there are also significant Muslim, Jain, and Sikh communities.
- **Attire:** The traditional attire of the city is the dhoti kurta for men and the saree for women. However, many people also wear Western clothing.
- **Cuisine:** The city is known for its street food, which includes popular dishes like poha, kachori, samosa, jalebi, and gulab jamun. Indore is also home to many popular restaurants that serve Indian, Chinese, and Continental cuisine.
- **Dance:** The most popular dance forms in the city are Kathak, Bharatnatyam, and Odissi.
- **Music:** The city is home to many talented musicians who perform a variety of genres, including rock, metal, classical, and folk.
- **Handicraft:** It is known for its beautiful handicrafts, such as Maheshwari sarees, Chanderi sarees, and Indore namkeen. The city has many artisans who create these handicrafts using traditional methods.
- **Literature:** Indore has a rich literary tradition. The city is home to many talented writers and poets. Some of the most famous writers born in the city include Premchand, Makhanlal Chaturvedi, and Harivansh Rai Bachchan.
- **Religion:** The majority of the population of Indore is Hindu. However, there are also significant Muslim, Jain, and Sikh communities. The city has many temples, mosques, churches, and gurdwaras.
- **Festivals:** Indore celebrates many festivals throughout the year. Some of the most popular festivals include Diwali, Holi, Navratri, and Eid-ul-Fitr.

Indore is a vibrant city with a rich culture. The city is known for its delicious food, lively music scene, and diverse population. Indore is a great place to visit or live, and it offers something for everyone.

[Source: Indore]

Now let's talk about the next aspect i.e. **Environment in Indore**.

Environment in Indore

Indore is a city with a rich and diverse urban biodiversity. The city faces a number of environmental challenges but Indore is a model for other cities in India and around the world in terms of its commitment to environmental protection.

- **Urban Biodiversity:** It is home to a variety of plants and animals, including over 500 species of birds, 100 species of mammals, and 50 species of reptiles. The city also has several urban forests and parks, which provide habitat for many of these species.
- **Green Cover:** Indore has a green cover of over 26%. This includes both public and private green spaces. The city has also been working to increase its green cover in recent years. In 2022, Indore planted over 1 million trees.
- **Flora and Fauna:** The flora and fauna of Indore are diverse and reflect the city's varied climate and topography. The city's forests are home to a variety of trees, including neem, mango, and banyan. Some of the common birds found in Indore include the common myna, the Indian peafowl, and the house crow. Some of the common mammals found in Indore include the Indian grey mongoose, the Indian fox, and the nilgai.
- **Lakes and Water Bodies:** Indore has several lakes and water bodies, including the Yashwant Sagar Lake, the Pipliyapala Lake, and the Upper and Lower Tank Lakes.
- **Challenges:** Indore, like many other cities, faces a number of environmental challenges, including air pollution, water pollution, and noise pollution. The city is also working to address these challenges.

Indore is a city with a rich environment. The city is home to a variety of plants and animals, and it is working to increase its green cover and address environmental challenges.

[Source: Wikipedia]

Let's talk about the **economic aspects of the city Indore**.

Economy of Indore

Indore, often referred to as the financial capital of Madhya Pradesh, boasts a thriving and diverse economy.

- In 2020-21, the city's GDP reached an impressive INR 64,813 crores, with a per-capita nominal GDP of INR 1,51,101.
- Known for its commercial prowess, Indore attracts investors from around the world through its biennial global investors' summit.
- The city houses significant industrial areas, including Pithampur, often dubbed the "Detroit of Madhya Pradesh." Pithampur, with its three phases, hosts over 1,500 industrial setups, while the Indore Special Economic Zone spans approximately 3,000 acres.
- Moreover, IT parks like Crystal IT Park and Pardeshipura IT Park contribute to the city's technological advancement.
- Major players like TCS, Infosys, and Impetus have established their presence in Indore, strengthening the IT sector.
- The city's economic achievements are not limited to industry, as it has ranked as India's cleanest city for six consecutive years.

Now let's delve into a few **Interesting Facts about Indore**.

Some Interesting Facts about Indore

- Indore, known for its unique attractions, boasts a 14-foot robotic traffic cop at Barfani Dham, which has managed traffic since 2017 with rotating arms.
- The city is home to a 35-foot statue commemorating India's 2011 World Cup victory, costing ₹12 Lakh, unveiled in 2014 at Pipliyahana Square.
- It's also home to the world's largest Lord Ganesha statue.
- Sudama Nagar, Asia's largest colony, earned the nickname "Labrinth" due to its maze-like streets, perplexing even locals. Indore's blend of tradition and innovation, from colossal statues to cutting-edge technology in traffic management, makes it a fascinating and multifaceted city.
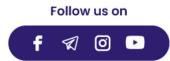

[Source: Facts.net]

Exploring Indore - Past, Present and Fascinating Trivia

In conclusion, Indore, the "Heart of India," weaves together a captivating tapestry of history, geography, culture, environment, and economics. This city, over 2,000 years old, boasts a rich heritage that thrived under the Holkar dynasty and continues to flourish as a bustling metropolis. Its geographical diversity, with hills, rivers, and a commitment to green spaces, makes it a model for urban biodiversity. Indore's robust economy, industrial prowess, and technological advancements are complemented by its environmental consciousness.