

A VISIT TO ONE OF LONDON'S GREAT SIGHTS –MONDAY OCTOBER 2nd SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR (HINDU TEMPLE)

The Shri Swaminarayan temple is rightly considered as one of the 7 wonders of London and is well worth a visit. Many U3A groups have visited and have, without exception, reported extremely favourably.

Located in an unexpected and fairly barren area on the edge of north-west London this stunning Hindu temple is an amazing spiritual and architectural gem, well worth the trip out to the suburbs - in fact, the bleak location makes the beauty and symbolism of the temple all the more spectacular. The first traditional Hindu Mandir in Europe, every one of the 26,300 individually carved pieces that make up Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in its entirety were carved in India and shipped over to London. All of these pieces were then fitted together in just three years, between 1992 and 1995. Inside and outside this place is absolutely stunning. The stark white exterior, riddled with intricate detail and carvings, belies an opulent, colourful interior. Highly-fashioned pillars, domes, columns, carpets and ceilings provide the setting for some spectacular murtis rich with lavish thrones and royal attire.

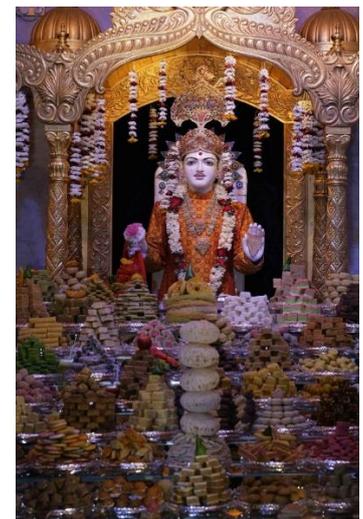


The lower floor of the Mandir is dedicated to a permanent exhibition. Spread over 3,000 square feet, it provides an educative insight into the values and wisdom of Hinduism through 3D dioramas, paintings, tableaux and traditional craftwork. Visitors can learn about the origin, beliefs and values of Hinduism, the contribution of Hindu seers, and how this ancient religion is thriving today through traditions such as the Swaminarayan Sampradaya.



The exhibition also features an 11-minute documentary which narrates the Mandir's religious significance and the story of its creation – from inception to ceremonial consecration. BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir is a masterpiece of traditional Hindu design and exquisite workmanship that rises serenely amid London's iconic skyline. Using 5,000 tonnes of Italian Carrara and Indian Ambaji marble and the finest Bulgarian limestone, it was hand-carved in India before being assembled in London. Adjacent to the stone mandir is a unique cultural centre intricately designed in traditional Haveli architecture. Exquisite traditional wood-craftsmanship has been combined with modern environment-friendly techniques to create this hub of activity for all who come to learn, worship and celebrate at the Mandir. –

Following the visit, we will take lunch in the Mandir's own award winning vegetarian restaurant



Ticket price is £32

Entrance to the temple and exhibition with a guided tour and presentation.

- **A vegetarian buffet in the temple's award winning on site restaurant (mild/non spicy food available).**

Payment due with booking either by cheque payable to "Kings Hill U3A Social Acct" and mailed to Mark Richards or by bank transfer to the following account

Account: Kings Hill U3A Social Acct, Number: 00024944, Sort: 40 52 40