

Auroville Bamboo Centre News Letter

April to September 2016



Our Service

Established in February 2009, with the aim to incorporate the following four aspects:

- ❖ Vocational training opportunities for the unemployed youth around the villages of Auroville and transforming them into craftsmen who can produce world class Bamboo products
- ❖ A technical and sociological research component to bring together Indian traditional craft with contemporary world culture
- ❖ Production and marketing of Bamboo craft for income generation and building stronger communities for sustainable living
- ❖ Unending research and development of Bamboo for the welfare of local and international communities



Auroville Bamboo Centre as a pioneer in the creative development of sustainable bamboo products, the Auroville Bamboo Centre (ABC) is committed to generate awareness of environmentally sustainable applications of bamboo through research and education. Employing people from local villages around Auroville, from Pondicherry Union Territory and Tamil Nadu State. The organisation strives to support and revitalise the community in which it is located while serving both domestic and global markets that demand high-quality, eco-friendly bamboo merchandise. Through these initiatives the ABC aims to advance the vitality of the planet and it's people.



Training & Workshops

At the Auroville Bamboo Centre (ABC) we make training accessible to everyone. We invite individuals to participate in a wide variety of workshops, covering bamboo construction and bamboo product development. Architects, designers, students and entrepreneurs attend. They may be interested in new product opportunities, technologies, or designs that use bamboo, or they may simply be curious about bamboo and want to learn about this unique material. All are welcome to take part! We also train local women and have a special program that introduces children to bamboo and its uses. And you may be pleased to know that we can tailor-make courses for groups, even large ones.

Upcoming Workshop Dates

October:

5 to 8 – Bamboo Construction Experience (Wall Panels)

12 to 16 – Bamboo Furniture Experience (Whole bamboo techniques)

24 to 28 – Earth & Bamboo Workshop

26th of Oct to 6th of Nov – Bamboo & Rammed Earth Workshop.

During April to September 2016 we hosted a number of groups workshop:

30 May to 3 June – we offered a 5-day **Earth & Bamboo Workshop** together with the *Auroville Earth Institute (AVEI)* and *Auroville Green Practices (AGP)*. Forty students from various places in India and abroad participated and learned about bamboo construction and earth building development.



20 June to 24 June –we offered a 4-day **Bamboo Workshop** for nineteen students from *Sathyabhama University, Chennai*. The students developed some wall panels and learned how to use mud walls. They were also treated to an **Auroville Experience**.



27 June to 2 July – we offered a 6-day **Bamboo Furniture & Construction Workshop** for seventeen students from *SAL School of Architecture*, Ahmadabad. The students developed a few chairs, a table and learned bamboo construction.

28 March to 29 March – we offered a 2-day **Bamboo Construction Workshop** for thirty four students from *San Academy of Architecture*, Chennai. The students developed some housing panels for an existing house as well as developed a sign for their college.

22 August to 26 August – we offered a 5-day **Earth & Bamboo Workshop** together with the *Auroville Earth Institute (AVEI)* and *Auroville Green Practices (AGP)*. Twenty three students from various places in India and abroad participated and learned about bamboo construction and earth building development.

23 August – we offered a **Jewellery Experience** for *The Design Village College* from Delhi. Thirty five students got training experience in jewellery making and most of the students designed their own creative jewellery.



Bamboo Building & Self Awareness Camp:

The Bamboo Building and Self-Awareness Camp is a 3-week immersive learning experience that offers the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of bamboo construction and sustainable living, while engaging in a unique self-inquiry in the company of an international team of mentors.



11 July to 30 July– we offered a 21-day intensive learning program on natural building with bamboo; individual sustainability and sustainable habitat, and from bamboo construction to self construction. In this workshop we got 17 participants from all over the world. The participants constructed a bamboo bloom dome, had an **Auroville Experience** and **Habitat Workshops**. Auroville Bamboo Centre technicians, with external resource persons, guided the participants through the full program with lots of hands-on and high intensity input sessions.

Testimonials from volunteers and interns:

'Working with the Bamboo Centre has inspired an out-of-the-box thinking where anything and everything is possible. Product, space or even a small box designed here is idea derived. We all support each other to execute various ideas, be it of any ones and that's how any ideal space should be. More than the dedication, honesty in people is something which comforts me. Honesty towards work, learning and team spirit.'



Working here doesn't feel like monotonous, forced work, it's more of an expression of freedom and I think this expression of freedom helps explore the best in everyone. I have been working on Architectural Projects, Product Design, Musical instruments. It's fun to be part of so vast sea of art and techniques, while working with Mohanam music and cultural Centre, I ended up learning a few instrument as well. This place helps me know myself a little better.'

~ **Amit Kalantri**

'I, **Kavin P**, am a third year student (Discipline: Industrial Design) from DJ Academy of Design, Coimbatore. I had great pleasure in working with Bamboo centre team of workers and volunteers who were very helpful in teaching me the various works which are possible in bamboo and with the furniture that I had been making for the past month as well as prepared makers space. I had an immense learning experience since this is the first time I am working with bamboo and in designing any kind of furniture. Hope to use the knowledge I have gained over the past month in the near future and to have many more great experiences with bamboo.'





Visit:

Auroville Bamboo Centre was happy to host a quick visit by **Mr. Mohan Verghese Chunkath I.A.S**, who joined the Auroville Foundation as its Secretary. He was introduced to the Auroville Bamboo Centre by Balu and Walter, followed by a tour around campus. The Auroville Bamboo Centre team was delighted to get in contact with the Auroville Secretary.



'Auroville was something almost inexistent for me, I only learned about it when I started looking up for internships this year. I was not too sure what was really in store for me, but I decided to go and give it a try.

It was not very difficult finding my way around and finding accommodation as people were very kind and helpful. Auroville is full of different kind of people young, old, and all kind, the energy that prevails amongst all makes it fun.

I would describe Auroville as a place where in one can learn, express and work freely without restrictions. Auroville has a charm to itself, be it the beautiful architecture you see around, the old culture still prevailing in the small villages, the kind people, beaches, etc.



At Bamboo Centre, I was always encouraged and pushed forward to learn and create new things. Balu was extremely helpful and always made us feel comfortable. It was a very friendly environment to work in. The love received from all the "Annas" and "Ammas" out there was very overwhelming.

Besides work, We used to have a lot of activities at the Bamboo land, like the jamming session, the sound healing, pot luck dinners etc, which was a lot of fun. My experience in these 2 months has been extremely good, I interacted with a lot of new people and made quite a few good friends. I would recommend Auroville for all; it is an Experience worth experiencing :)'

~ Pamela Britto, Bangalore (Product Designer – Intern)



Some Recent Activity photos

'Auroville, was something completely new for me. And the people from Auroville are completely different. Everyone is very talented and hard working. There is a lot to see and learn around the small villages and the different lifestyles followed there. The different festivals celebrated for full moon, new moon, etc are traditional festivals carried on from ages in Tamil Nadu and is something very special for visitors/volunteers like us to experience.

My experience in Bamboo centre as an intern has been worth while. Balu is the main foundation of the Bamboo Centre. He generates a positive energy amongst everyone and always encourages us to take up new challenges, accomplishing the impossible. Because of this, the centre stands strong and tall like a Green Bamboo rather than a yellow bamboo.

One of my favourite things at the bamboo centre is the tasty prasada prepared by the Amma who used to make us chai everyday.



While working at the centre, even if people do not know the language, they will still find a way to communicate and mingle with you.

In a nutshell, the helping nature, care, love and the spirit of the Aurovillians makes everyone fall in love with the place.'

~ AkarshVinod (Product and Interior Designer – Intern at ABC)

