

# Historic Monuments You Must Visit In Maharashtra

## 1. Aga Khan Palace



The handsome palace in Pune (pictured above), which sits in a ground spread over 19 acres, was built by the Aga Khan III in 1892. It was here that Gandhi, Kasturba Gandhi and Gandhi's secretary Mahadev Desai were held captive from August 9, 1942 to May 6, 1944 in retaliation to Gandhi's call for the British to 'Quit India'. Gandhi's ashes have been preserved on the palace grounds and the room in which he stayed remains untouched. Visitors can also see photographs and archival material on his life.

**Open** daily, 9am to 5.30pm.

**Getting there:** The monument is on Aga Khan Palace Road, which is 35 minutes from Swargate bus station and 25 minutes from Pune railway station.

## 2. Shaniwarwada



One of Pune's most prominent landmarks, Shaniwarwada is a fortress that was built by the Peshwas in 1732. It stayed the seat of Peshwa power till 1818 when Bajirao II abdicated his throne in favour of the East India Company. Ten years later, a fire laid waste to much the fort, leaving behind only the ramparts, teak wood gates and stone foundation. One of the gates is called Mastani Darwaja after Mastani, the wife of Bajirao II. Hindi movie buffs will be familiar with the couple from Sanjay Leela Bhansali 2015 drama *Bajirao Mastani*. The real history of the fort beats fiction with its stories of blood and intrigue.

**Open** daily, 9.30am to 5.30pm.

**Getting there:** Shaniwarwada is in Shaniwar Peth, which is less than 20 minutes by road from Swargate bus stand and Pune railway station.

### 3. Bibi ka Maqbara



Even though they call it the poorer cousin of the Taj, the tomb in Aurangabad is lovely in its own right. Here lies Dilras Banu Begum, also known as Rabia-ud-Daurani, first wife of Aurangzeb. The mausoleum was built in 1660 by her son Azam. It was designed by the architect Ata-ullah, whose father Ustad Ahmad Lahauri is believed to have been the main architect of the Taj Mahal.

**Open** daily, 8am to 6pm.

**Getting there:** Bibi ka Maqbara is in Begumpura, which is 15 minutes from the bus station in Aurangabad and 20 minutes from the railway station.



## 4. Daulatabad Fort



Not far from Aurangabad is Daulatabad Fort, a massive fort city that was the seat of Delhi sultan Muhammad bin Tughluq in the fourteenth century when he moved his capital here. The fort itself was built by Yadava kings in the twelfth century. Before it was renamed Daulatabad by Tughlaq, the city around the fort was called Devagiri.

**Open** daily, 8am to 6pm.

**Getting there:** Daulatabad is about 17 km or a half-hour drive from Aurangabad.

## 5. Raigad Fort



Built on a hill, the imposing fort was Shivaji's seat in the seventeenth century. Built by Chandraraoji More, from the Marathi clan of More that claimed descent from Chandragupta Maurya, the fort was seized by Shivaji in 1674, the year he became the king of the Maratha kingdom. It was sacked and partly destroyed by British forces in 1818 and taken over by the East India Company. One of the sites to see at the fort is the statue of Waghya, which was believed to be Shivaji's pet dog. Getting to the fort requires climbing around 1450 steps. If you're not up for the challenge, take the ropeway that drops visitors right to the top.

**Open** daily, 8am to 6pm.

**Getting there:** Raigad Fort is a four-hour drive from Mumbai. The nearest train stations are Veer and Mangaon that are connected to Mumbai. Alternatively take a bus – several buses leave Mumbai every day from across the city – to the depot in Mahad, the nearest major town, and an auto from there to the fort.