

4th-5th century AD and attribute its construction to a local ruler called Subandhu. Some Scholar also conjecture it was built as early as the Mauryan period. (322-185BC)

Documented history states that the Holkar ruler, Malhar Rao captured the fort in 1733 and undertook some repairs and reconstructions. When his daughter-in-law Ahilya Bai Holkar ascended the throne in 1767, she rebuilt the fort as we see it today. The formidable walls of the Maheshwar Fort are pierced with five gates, of which two are more frequently used by the local population.



Narmada Retreat, Maheshwar

How to Reach

By Air: Nearest airport is Indore (91km).

By Rail : Nearest railheads are Barwaha (39km), Khandwa (110km), Indore (91km) and Mhow on the Western Railway.

By Road : Regular buses are available from Barwaha, Khandwa, Dhar and Dhamnod.

Your Host : Narmada Retreat, Tel : 08349994784

Best Season : July to March



Narmada Resort, Omkareshwar

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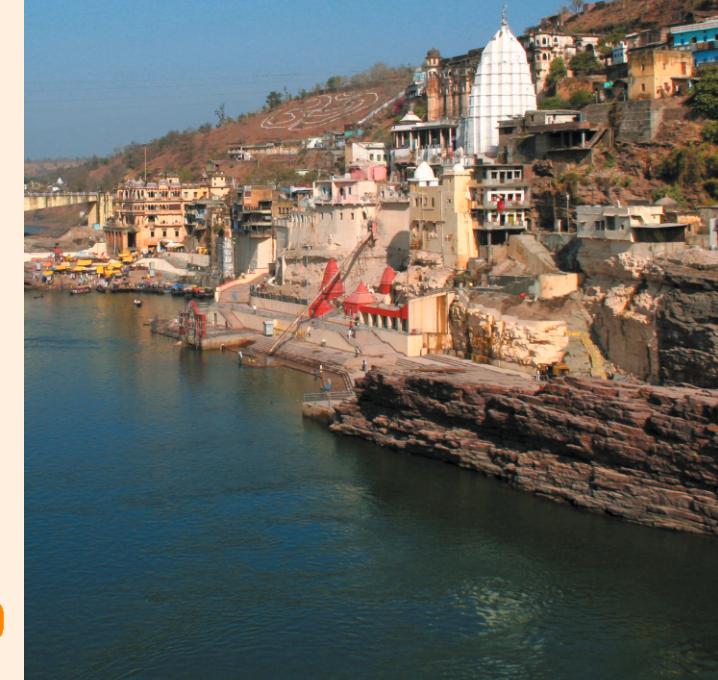
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OMKARESHWAR MAHESHWAR

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OMKARESHWAR

Omkareshwar, the sacred island, shaped like the holiest of all Hindu symbols, 'Om' has drawn hundreds of generations of pilgrims. Here, at the confluence of the rivers Narmada and Kaveri, the devout have gathered for centuries to kneel before the Jyotirlinga (one of the twelve throughout India) at the temple of Shri Omkar Mandhata. And here, as in so many of Madhya Pradesh's sacred shrines, the works of Nature complement those of Man to provide a setting awe-inspiring in its magnificence.

What to See

Shri Omkar Mandhata : The temple stands on a one mile long, half mile wide island formed by the fork of the Narmada. The soft stone of which it was constructed has lent its pliable surface to a rare degree of detailed work, of which the frieze figures on the upper portion are the most striking. Also intricately carved is the stone roof of the temple. Encircling the shrine are verandahs with columns which are carved in circles, polygons and squares.



Shri Omkar Mandhata houses one of the 12 Jyotirlingas

Siddnath Temple : A fine example of early medieval Brahminic architecture. Its unique feature is a frieze of elephants carved upon a stone slab at its outer perimeter.

24 Avatars : A cluster of Hindu and Jain temples, remarkable for their skillful use of varied architectural modes.

Satmatrika Temples : 6 km. from Omkareshwar, a group of 10th century temples.

How to Reach

By Air : The nearest airport is Indore (77km), connected by regular flights with Delhi, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Nagpur, Kolkata, Jabalpur, Gwalior and Bhopal.

By Rail : Nearest railhead is Omkareshwar Road (12 km) on the Ratlam - Khandwa section of the Western Railway.

By Road : Omkareshwar is connected to Indore, Ujjain, Khandwa and Omkareshwar road by regular bus services.

Your Host : Narmada Resort, Tel : 07680-271455, 8349994785

Best Season : July to March

MAHESHWAR

Maheshwar was a glorious city at the dawn of Indian civilization when it was Mahishmati, capital of King Kartivarjun. This temple town on the banks of the river Narmada finds mention in the epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata. Revived to its ancient position of importance by the Holkar queen Rani Ahilyabai of Indore, Maheshwar's temples and mighty fort-complex stand in quiet beauty, mirrored in the river below.

What to See

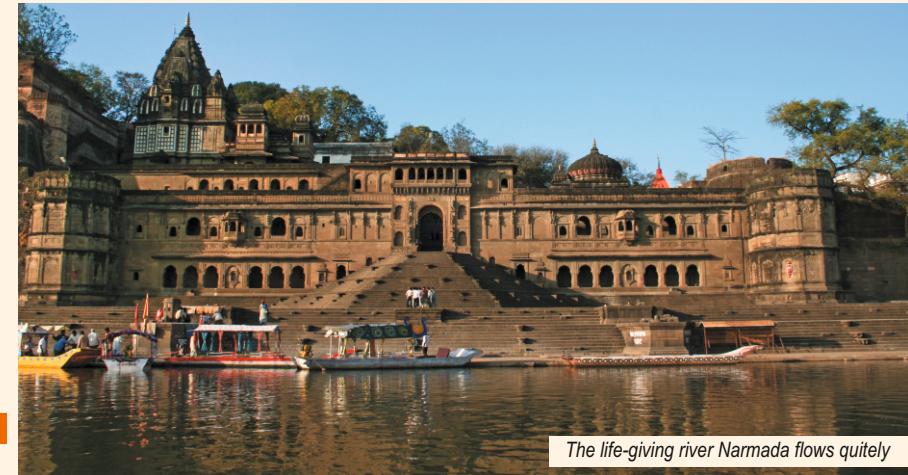
Rajgaddi and Rajwada : A life-size statue of Rani Ahilyabai sits on a throne in the Rajgaddi within the Fort complex. This is the right place to begin a tour of Maheshwar, for this pious and wise queen was the architect of its revived importance. Other fascinating relics and heirlooms of the Holkar dynasty can be seen in other rooms which are open to the public. Within the complex is an exquisite, small shrine which is the starting point of the ancient Dussehra ceremony which is carried out even today. The image on this day is installed reverently in a splendid palanquin and carried down the steep Fort road to the town below to receive the yearly homage of the people of Maheshwar.

Ghat : Peshwar Ghat, Fanase Ghat and Ahilya Ghat line the river Narmada, flights of steps lead down from the sandy banks to the river, and through the day a kaleidoscope of rural India can be seen here, in the pilgrims and holy men who sit here in silent meditation, in the rows of graceful women who carry gleaming brass pots down to the holy, life-giving river, in the ferry loads of villagers who cross and recross these surging waters. Lining the banks, too, are poignant memorials in stone to the 'Satis' of Maheshwar, who perished on the funeral pyres of their husbands.

Temples: With their soaring spires, the many-tiered temples of Maheshwar are distinguished by their carved overhanging balconies and their intricately worked doorways. Temples to see are : Kaleshwar, Rajarajeshwara, Vithaleshwara and Ahileswar.



A Maheshwari saree being woven



The life-giving river Narmada flows quietly

Maheshwari Sarees : Introduced into Maheshwar 250 years ago by Rani Ahilyabai, the sarees are renowned throughout India for their unique weave. Woven mostly in cotton, the typical Maheshwari saree has a plain body and sometimes stripes or checks in several variations. The mat border designs have a wide range in leaf and floral patterns. The pallu is particularly distinctive with five stripes, three coloured and two white alternating, running along its width. Maheshwari has a reversible border, known as bugdi.



Maheshwari saree

Devi Ahilya Archaeological Museum, Maheshwar (Khargone)

Named after the prudent queen of Holkar dynasty, together with antique armaments, this grand and novel museum conserves some rare manuscripts as well as photographs of freedom struggle. The double-storey museum is demarcated into different galleries based upon the idols of various deities displayed in.

Maheshwar Fort : The massive Maheshwar Fort stands on a hill overlooking the Narmada on the South and the modern town of Maheshwar to its North. Some historians argue that it was done by the Parmaras while other historians stretch the antiquity of the fort to the