

and havelis, reminders of a bygone era. The shops in its narrow alleys are treasure troves of traditional Bhopali crafts; silver jewellery, exquisitely fashioned beadwork, embroidered and sequined velvet fashioned purses and cushions.

Regional Museum of Natural History: The Museum deals with general aspects of natural history, depicts the flora, fauna and ecosystems of Region and promotes conservation and environmental awareness through its exhibit galleries and educational activities.

Things to Do

Heritage Walk : Tourists interested in undertaking Bhopal Heritage walk may contact -0755-2661100

Bhopal Darshan : This bus is available from Hotel Palash at 10: 30 am except Monday. It covers the main monuments, viz, the Royal enclave, Taj-ul- Masajid, Birla Mandir, Mantralaya, the State & Tribal museum and the Boat club.

Shopping : Bhopal is famous for **Zardozi** work since the time of the Begums. The tradition is still alive in the form of **Bhopali Batua** and Zardozi work on **Kurtas and Saris**. They can be purchased from Chowk and Ibrahimpura area of the old city.



Bhopali Batua

Excursion

Islamnagar : 11 km on the Bhopal-Berasia Road and 20 km on the Bypass Road, Islamnagar was the palace of Bhopal's Afghan rulers and was built by Dost Mohammed Khan. Formal gardens surround the palace and pavilion. The latter, a synthesis of Hindu and Islamic decorative art, has columns lavishly embellished with floral motifs. Other monuments to see are the hamam of the Chaman Mahal and the double-storeyed Rani Mahal.

How to Reach

By Air : Regular flights connect Bhopal with Delhi, Indore, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Raipur.

By Rail : Bhopal is on the main Delhi-Chennai main line. Major trains going from Mumbai to Delhi via Itarsi and Jhansi also go through Bhopal.

By Road : Regular bus services connect Bhopal with Indore (186 km), Mandu (210 km), Ujjain (188 km), Khajuraho (383 km), Pachmarhi (210 km), Gwalior (423 km), Sanchi (46 km), Jabalpur (295 km) and Shivpuri (311 km).

Best Season : July to March

Your Host

Palash Residency

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REGIONAL/TOURIST OFFICES

Bhopal - Paryatan Bhawan, Bhadbhada Road, Bhopal Tel:0755-2766750, 2779631

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Tourist Information Counter: Khatia (Kantha National Park) Tel: 07649-277242,
E-mail: khatia@mptourism.com

Jhansi - Railway Station, Jhansi, Tel: 0510-2442622, E-mail: tojhansi@mptourism.com

Khajuraho - Tourist Interpretation & Facilitation Centre, Near Circuit House, Khajuraho
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BHOPAL

A Many-splendoured City





The imposing Taj-ul-Masajid

Bhopal, capital of Madhya Pradesh, combines scenic beauty, historicity and modern urban planning. It is situated on the site of an 11th century city, Bhojapal, founded by Raja Bhoja. The founder of the existing city was, however, an Afghan soldier of fortune, Dost Mohammed (1708-1740). Fleeing from Delhi in the chaotic period that followed Aurangzeb's death, Dost Mohammed met the Gond queen Kamlapati, who sought his aid after the murder of her consort.

A charming legend relates how the queen would recline in a lotus barge that, on moonlit nights, would drift across the lake. The two lakes of Bhopal still dominate the city, and are indeed its nucleus. Bordered along their shores stand silent sentinels that testify to the growth of a city. Bhopal today presents a multi-faceted profile; the old city with its teeming marketplaces and fine old mosques and palaces, still bears the aristocratic imprint of its former rulers, among them the succession of powerful Begums who ruled Bhopal from 1819 to 1926. Equally impressive is the new city with its verdant, exquisitely laid-out parks and gardens, broad avenues and streamlined modern edifices.

What to See

Taj-ul-Masajid : Said to be the largest mosque in the country, the building of this towering edifice was begun by Shahjehan Begum (1868-1901) but was incomplete on her death. This great queen, Bhopal's eighth ruler, left many monuments in the city and to her goes the credit for Bhopal's postal system, railways and waterworks. After her death, lack of funds prevented the completion of the masjid and construction was resumed only in 1971. The most striking features of the mosque are the impressive main hall with its inter-arched roof, broad facade, spacious courtyard and smooth marble floors.

Jama Masjid : Gold spikes crown the minarets of this beautiful mosque, built in 1837 by Qudsia Begum.

Moti Masjid : Architecturally akin to Delhi's Jama Masjid, this imposing mosque was built by Sikander Jehan, daughter of Qudsia Begum, in 1860.

Upper and Lower Lake- Created by Raja Bhoj, by constructing an earthen dam across the Kolans river, the Upper lake with a catchment area of 361 sq km is the source of drinking water, fish and water chestnuts. It drains into the Kaliasot river and the outflow of water is controlled by a weir called Bhadbhada, located on the south-east corner. The Lower Lake- It was created in 1794 by Nawab Chhote Khan, minister of Nawab Hayat Mohammad Khan. With an area of 1.3 sq km and a catchment area of 9.6 sq km, the Chhota talab drains into the Halali river.



The royal Shaukat Mahal and Sadar Manzil

Shaukat Mahal and Sadar Manzil : Situated at the entrance to the Chowk area in the heart of the walled city. Shaukat Mahal is an architectural curiosity. Its mixture of styles in Occidental idioms sets it apart from the predominantly Islamic architecture of the area. It was designed by a Frenchman, said to be a descendant of an offshoot of the Bourbon kings of France. Post-Renaissance and Gothic styles are combined to charming effect here. Nearby is the elegant once-opulent Sadar Manzil, Hall of Public Audience of the former rulers of Bhopal.

Gohar Mahal- This palace was built between 1819-1837 by Qudsia begum . The palace has halls for public and private audiences, stone paved courtyards with fountains and shady trees. The interiors are specially notable for the carved wooden doors,balconies,pillars, brackets, cornices and lintels with floral and geometrical motifs.

Bharat Bhawan : One of the most unique national institutes in India, Bharat Bhawan is a centre for the performing and visual arts. Designed by the renowned architect, Charles Correa, the contours of Bharat Bhawan merge in exquisite harmony with the landscape creating a visual impact of spacious and natural elegance. The centre houses a museum of the arts, an art gallery, a workshop for fine arts, a repertory theatre, indoor and outdoor auditoria, rehearsal room, and libraries of Indian poetry, classical and folk music. Open from 2 pm to 8 pm every day except Mondays.

Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya: Situated in 200 acres of picturesque site at Shamla Hills overlooking the Upper Lake, the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya is the largest open-air anthropological museum in India. Established in 1977, this Museum depicts the story of humankind in time and space through its Open Air and Indoor Exhibitions, consisting of Tribal Habitat, Coastal Village, Desert Villa, Himalayan Village, Mythological Trail and Traditional Technology, constructed by the concerned ethnic groups using raw materials brought from their respective localities. The Veethi Sankul, the Indoor museum depicts topics related to the human biological and cultural evolution.



Upper Lake, the engineering feat of 11th century

Periodical exhibitions, performing art presentations, artist workshops and education programs are also a regular part of this Museum. The museum is open every day except mondays and national Holidays. (March to August 11:00 to 18:30 and September to February 10:00 to 17:30)

State Museum : Situated on the picturesque Shamla Hills in a beautiful new building, the State Museum houses the best of art and culture of Madhya Pradesh. It has 16 different theme galleries, showcasing the State's sculptural masterpieces, pre-historic articles and fossils, excavated objects, epigraphs, manuscripts, paintings, royal collection, textile, documents, postal stamps, autographs, miniature paintings, coins, arms and weapons, and articles associated with India's freedom struggle.

MP Tribal Museum : The Museum is represents the tribal heritage of the state under one roof through life size replicas of the tribal habitat, temples, granaries, pictures and statues. Chhattisgarh is the guest state of the museum. There is a souvenir cum book shop where one may find tribal jewelleries.



MP Tribal Museum, the home of rural art

Laxminarayan Temple and Museum : This beautiful temple on the Arera Hills has a museum attached to it which houses a collection of sculptures from Raisen, Sehore, Mandsaur and Shahdol districts of Madhya Pradesh. The Museum is open from 9 am to 5 pm on all days except Mondays.

Van Vihar : The safari-park is located on a hill adjacent to the Upper Lake, with an area of 445 hectares. In these natural surroundings, wildlife watchers can view a variety of herbivorous and carnivorous species. Open everyday, except Tuesdays, from 7 to 11 am and 3 to 5.30 pm.



The foot bridge of Sair Sapata

Sair Sapata : This is an open air family entertainment park, at the backwaters of the Upper lake. There are swings for children, eating joints and a unique toy train. The family bar located on the banks of the Lake is unique because of the glass flooring. Timings- 11 am to 9:30 pm.

Regional Science Centre : Basically a science museum, located on the picturesque Shamla Hills, Regional Science Centre houses about 300 participatory exhibits distributed equally in 'Invention' & 'Fun Science' galleries, and a 'taramandal' (Planetarium). The museum remains open from 10.30 am to 6.30 pm on all days except Mondays.

Chowk : In the heart of the old city, the Chowk is lined with old mosques