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# Hampi

Hampi, the historic capital of the Vijayanagar empire in the 14th century, is now a city of ruins and a very important historic place in Southern India. Here you can have a glimpse of the majestic era, when the emperors were in power. The city was established by Harihara and Ukka in the year 1336 AD and is a UNESCO world heritage site now.



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The ruins of the ancient city of Hampi are strikingly, unexpectedly, even eerily beautiful. This 16th century capital of the Vijayanagara Kingdom lies on the banks of the Tungabhadra River, surrounded by stark rocky ridges and mammoth boulders seemingly precariously balanced on each other. The vast spaces are silent, but the ruins are eloquent.



Hampi is a popular tourist destination that is the home to around 500 marvelous historic monuments. Imperial palaces, temples and forts can be seen standing in pride holding tales of the past in every brick. It is said that during the rule of the Vijayanagar empire, diamonds were sold on the streets, more specifically in a street named Pan Supaari Street. The street is now marked by the Archaeological Survey of India for tourists to see. The 'Hampi Utsav' that takes place in the first week of November is worth a visit. It is a cultural extravaganza of music and dance and to increase visual delight,

when the monuments and the ruins are lit up.

## When To VISIT



<http://www.ixigo.com/weather-in-hampi-lp-1138174>

## What To SEE



5 Sights

<http://www.ixigo.com/places-to-visit-see-in-hampi-lp-1138174>

### 1 Vijaya Vittala Temple



 Near Kalyan Mantapa, Hampi, Bellary, Karnataka 583239, India

Archaeologists, historians, curators and explorers scramble to describe the splendour, grandeur and elegance of Vijaya Vittala Temple. A sprawling spectacle with pillared pavilions within pillared pavilions and shrines within temples, the temple appears more like a town. Back in the 15th and 16th century, before Hampi was invaded, a small township was settled around its complex, remains of which can still be seen.

Inside the temple complex, is the famous stone chariot which is Hampi's most iconic structure. It was actually a shrine housing Garuda, the Eagle God, and a vehicle of Lord Vishnu. The entire body is carved with battle scenes. Given the temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu and the stone chariot faces the inner sanctum where Lord Vishnu's idol was housed, its presence and placement is symbolic.

The main hall has a series of balustrades carved with elephants and yalis, opening out to the maha mandapam where one of Vijay Vittala Temple's most popular and fascinating aspect is present--the musical pillars. Each massive pillar has been carved out of a single rock and the outermost pillars emit different musical tones. Unfortunately, due to unmindful tapping of the pillars over the years, they have sustained considerable

damage and today tapping on them is prohibited. The entire complex is replete with fascinating and mesmerizing sculptures, carvings and stucco ornamentation.

## 2 King's Balance



 Near Vittala Temple, Nimbapura, Hampi, Karnataka, 583239, India

Remember all those fanciful tales of Kings inner sanctum where Lord Vishnu's idol was weighed themselves with gems, rubies and gold? Well, it's at Hampi where they seem to take on life with King's Balance being one such pleasant affirmation.

5 meters tall and carved out of stone, King's Balance appears like a lonesome archway left standing, but peer closely and you can spot the three loops on the beam where the balance must have hung. Legends have it that the Kings would weigh themselves with gold, precious stones and jewellery and distribute it to the temple priests on the special occasions of Dusshera, solar and

lunar eclipses.

However, the balance was also used for the purpose of weighing grains and pulses. While images of pillars themselves are carved on the columns of the structure, peering towards the square stone platform of one of the pillars and you can spot the image of the king with his two queens chiseled into the stone."

## 3 Virupaksha Temple



 Hampi, Bellary, Karnataka 583239, India

While the medieval metropolis of Hampi is practically synonymous with the formidable Vijayanagara, its crowning glory, the Virupaksha Temple, actually pre-dates the settlement of Vijayanagara and was possibly built between 9th-10th century. One of the most widely revered temples of southern India, Virupaksha Temple is dedicated to Lord Virupaksha, an avatar of Lord Shiva and the patron deity of Vijayanagara empire, and Goddess Pampa, Goddess of River

Tungabhadra from whom Hampi gets its name.

Originally a small, humble shrine it was expanded to its present magnificence during the reign of the Vijayanagara kings, though additions to its complex and structure were also made by the Chalukyan and Hoysala eras.

In 1565, when Hampi fell to the hands of the five Deccan sultans there was rampant destruction and much of the temple's exquisite carvings, decorations and sculptures were destroyed. While Hampi never gained its glory and grandeur, Virupaksha Temple continued to be a significant site of sacred sanctuary and pilgrimage. In early 19th century much of its missing chunks were replaced with artwork, ceiling paintings and other additions including the gopurams' towers.

Tower of the main entrance don't just seem to be reaching up to the heavens above, they are sky-high, measuring 50 meters in height. The temple's complex is replete with small shrines, gateways, courtyards, three ante chambers, pillared pavilion, etc. Its central chamber was built under the patronage of King Krishnadevaraya and is perhaps the temple's most ornate structure. At varied points in the temple's complex you will find

inscriptions dating to its origins, 9th-10th century, as well as its glorious years, the 14th century.

A fascinating aspect of the temple is the inverted pinhole image of its tower cast on one of its inner walls. Don't forget to get the blessings of Lakshmi, the resident temple elephant, on your visit to the Virupaksha Temple. On most days, the temple is home to hundreds of chattering monkeys. However, in December and February, when the temple festivals are celebrated, it comes alive with a different kind of chatter and resounds with festivities.

#### 4 Achyutaraya Temple



Sacred Centre foot of Matanga Hill, Hampi, Bellary, Karnataka 583239, India

Nestled between Gandhamadana and

Matanga Hills is one of the last glorious creations of Vijayanagara dynasty right before its fateful fall, the Achyuta Rayas temple. Established in 1534 AD by Achyuta Deva Raya, the Achyutaraya Temple was originally named Tiruvengalanatha but gradually came to be called after the king.

Dedicated to Lord Venkateshwara, the temple is laid out in the classic Vijayanagara architectural style. There are two concentric rectangular walls within which the main shrine is situated. While much of the temple and its surrounding structures are in ruins it has still managed to withstand much of the ravages of time, colonisation and weather, and even today its grandiosity and magnificence is undeniable. The temple's pillars, walls, towers are replete with fine carved ornamentation. Entering through its two stately, though ruined, towers you will find yourself entering the portal to the lost land of Vijayanagara empire. The inner small shrine once housed the idol of Garuda, mythical bird.

Guarding the inner sanctum are two club holding gigantic guard deities. Though now dark and filled with bats, the inner sanctum once housed the idol of the temple's presiding deity. The temple's complex opens out to a wide street called the Courtesan's street. The entire temple is a magnificent narrative on the myths, legends and folklores that are still an integral part of the

region's socio-cultural fabric.

#### 5 Royal Enclosure



Hampi, Bellary, Karnataka, 583239, India

The actual residing site of the Vijayanagara empire, Royal Enclosure, though a crumbling ruin now, whisks you away to the time when Vijayanagara empire was at its zenith, its reign spreading from Indian Ocean to the Arabian Sea. Within its now fragmented stone walls you will find many of Hampi's most fascinating relics.

As you walk in you can spot the Mahanavami Dibba towering over the other structures, and don't be surprised if it invokes images of King Krishnadevaraya surrounded by his entourage and queens, enjoying royal processions and festivals. Then there is the Queen's bath, a gorgeous bathing complex. Next up is the Stepped tank, called Pushkarini, a beautiful, geometrically carved

water tank usually flooded with water from river Tungabhadra via an aqueduct.

Royal Enclosure's crowning glory, Lotus Mahal, is yet another magnificent structure built in a surreal blend of Indo-Islamic architectural pattern. A few hundred feet away is the Hazara Rama temple, its walls narrating the epic saga of Ramayana. Underground Shiva temple and the Elephant Stables are the two other splendidous creations within the Royal Enclosure.

#### Where To Eat



5 Places

<http://www.ixigo.com/foods-in-of-hampi-ip-1138174>

#### 1 Mango Tree Restaurant



 Near Temple, Janata Plot, Hampi, Karnataka 583239, India  
 +91-94487-65213

When it comes to dining out in the ancient surreal capital of the once mighty Vijayanagara empire you will not be too far off the mark if it invokes images of sitting underneath an ancient tree on the banks of river Tungabhadra indulging in delicious local dishes, just as once the natives must have. Mango Tree Restaurant brings you close to Hampi's sublimity, with its rustic and earthy set up and then sets you afloat in the undeniable romanticism of Hampi.

Past a dense banana plantation, right into the backyard of Krishna's family home is a stately mango tree where the restaurant is set. With seating on terraced concrete levels where straw mats and wooden tables are laid out, you will have an incredible view of the landscape stretching in front of your eyes. River Tungabhadra will stream right by local market cow who comes calling you in its soothing cadence and birds fill the air with their fluttering and twitters. At Mango Tree, while their special Thali and Mango curry is a must try, do indulge in the delicious coconut lassi and tangy samosa.

## 2 Golden Paradise

 Hampi Bazaar, Bellary, Hampi, Karnataka 583239, India

As you walk into the new age vibe radiating from Golden Paradise restaurant, you will feel that you have entered a different era replete with metaphysical hangings and trance music. One of the best places in town for a sampling of Indian and Italian, Golden Paradise is located in the middle of Hampi Bazaar on the banks of Tungabhadra river, directly across Mango Tree restaurant on the opposite banks.

From steaming porridge and pancakes for breakfast to spinach curries, pasta, sizzlers with milky tea and frothy coffee for lunch and dinner, you have a range of delicious culinary options at Golden Paradise restaurant. A must try at Golden Paradise are the wood-fired pizzas. Incredible location, attentive staff and delicious food what more could you ask? Do remember to feed the restaurant's regular customer, the local market cow who comes calling everyday at closing time.&nbsp;

Returning visitors to Hampi searching for New Shanthi restaurant need to head straight to Golden Paradise- that's what the restaurant has renamed itself as.

## 3 Shesh Besh Restaurant



 Virupapur Gadde, Sanapur Post, Hampi, Karnataka 5833234, India  
 +91-94805-03602|+91-94495-61814

The in-house restaurant of Sunny Guest House, Shesh Besh, is an excellent dining option in Hampi that is sure to having you coming back for seconds. Set amidst the colourful splash of cottages and trees, Shesh Besh has a smattering of dishes from Italian, Israeli and South Indian cuisines.

Pizzas with different crusts and toppings,

creamy pasta, falafel, schnitzel, shwarma to spicy dosas with tangy chutneys on the side, at Shesh Besh you can indulge in the cuisine you are in mood for or go a little nutty and mix and match.

## 4 Geetha River View Restaurant



 Near Monolith Bull, Hampi, Bellary, Karnataka 583234, India

Walking from Hampi Bazaar to Vitthala temple along the King's Balance path or as it is called the Kama Bhuppa's path, there is yet another charming eating joint, Geeta River View Restaurant, that lures you with its beautiful surroundings and opportunity to dine amidst Hampi's natural splendour. Ideal for breakfasts and brunches, Geeta River View Restaurant is set by the banks of Tungabhadra river with the seating in a open courtyard.

Serving a range of dishes from Indian cuisine, both South and North Indian, the restaurant's spellbinding location is real draw. While the traditional perennial favourites, idlis, dosas and thalis are deliciously filling, their cashew nut curry is the real lure. The must try.

## 5 All Tribes Cafe



📍 East Side Road, Hampi, Karnataka 583234, India

📞 +91-94837-97775

A testament to Hampi's ever widening popularity in the tourist circuit, All Tribes Cafe is a cosmopolitan eating joint, bringing together people from across the world on their sojourn to the glorious adventure that Hampi is. A quaint and cosy one structure affair, All Tribes Cafe is set up in a bamboo hut with mattresses for seating and low rise tables for laying out the simple, delicious fare served out here.

While a smattering of Indian, European, Israeli and Continental dishes are available, it's the french press coffee out here that is the real lure. The cafe's owners are engaged in a number of community development programs and the coffee beans sold out here and prepared into hot, frothy drinks are fair trade marked, sourced from local plantations.

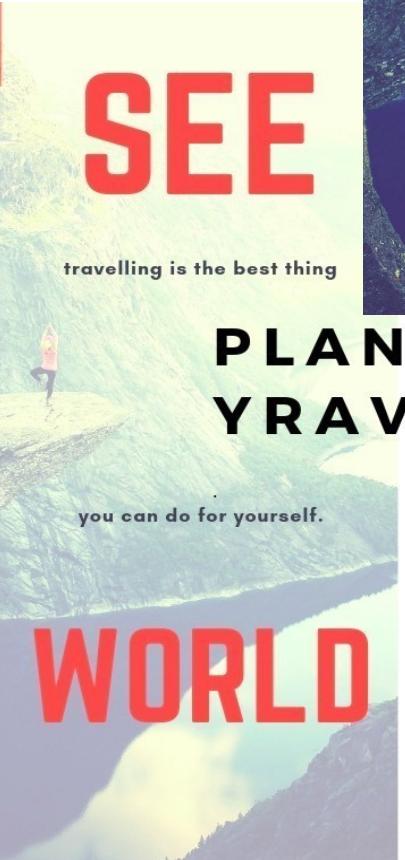
They also provide facilities for volunteering in their community development programs. At 11 AM daily meditation classes are held here and frequently, from 2 to 4 PM, dream interpretation sessions.

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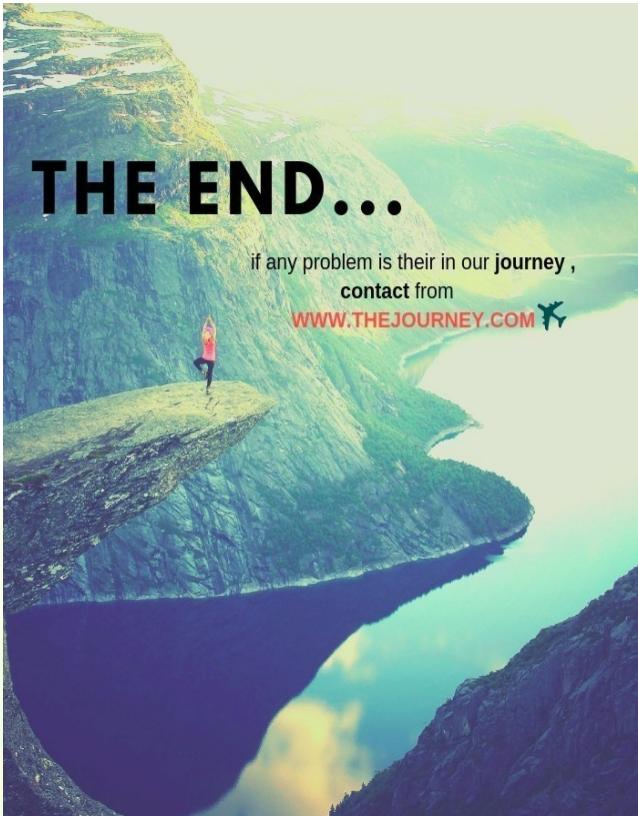
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