**Shivneri Fort**

Year in which it was built:1595

Built by: Shahaji Raje Bhosale

Shivneri is known to be a place of Buddhist dominion from the 1st century AD. Its caves, rock-cut architecture and water system indicate the presence of habitation since 1st century AD. Shivneri got its name as it was under the possession of the Yadavas of Devagiri. This fort was mainly used to guard the old trading route from [Desh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desh,_Maharashtra) to the port city of [Kalyan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kalyan). The place passed on to the [Bahmani Sultanate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahmani_Sultanate) after the weakening of [Delhi Sultanate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delhi_Sultanate) during the 15th century and it then passed on to the [Ahmadnagar Sultanate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahmadnagar_Sultanate) in the 16th century. In 1595, a Maratha chief named [Maloji Bhonsle](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maloji_Bhosale), the grandfather of Shivaji Bhosale, was enabled by the Ahmadnagar Sultan, [Bahadur Nizam Shah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahadur_Nizam_Shah) and he gave him Shivneri and [Chakan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chakan,_Maharashtra). Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was born at the fort on 19 February 1630 (some accounts place it 1627), and spent his childhood there. Inside the fort is a small temple dedicated to the goddess Shivai Devi, after whom Shivaji was named. The English traveller Fraze visited the fort in 1673 and found it invincible. According to his accounts, the fort was well-stocked to feed thousand families for seven years. The fort came under the control of the [British Rule](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Raj) in 1820 after the [Third Anglo-Maratha War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Anglo-Maratha_War).

In 2021, it was added to the tentative list of the [UNESCO World Heritage sites](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Heritage_Site) as part of "Serial Nomination of Maratha Military Architecture in Maharashtra"

Shivneri Fort[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shivneri_Fort#cite_note-3) is a hill fort having a triangular shape and has its entrance from the South-west side of the hill.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shivneri_Fort#cite_note-4) Apart from the main gate there is an entrance to the fort from side called locally as *the chain gate*, where in one has to hold chains to climb up to the fort gate. The fort extends up to 1 mi (1.6 km) with seven spiral well-defended gates. There are mud walls all around the fort. Inside the fort, the major buildings are the prayer hall, a tomb and a mosque.[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shivneri_Fort#cite_note-:0-2) There is an overhanging where executions took place.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shivneri_Fort#cite_note-Verma-5) There are many gates structures protecting this fort. Mana Daravaja is one of the many gates of the fort. It's also called the origin of Tune.

At the centre of the fort is a water pond which is called 'Badami Talav', and to the south of this pond are statues of Jijabai and a young Shiva. In the fort there are two water springs, called Ganges and Yamuna, which have water throughout the year. Two kilometers away from this fort there are the Buddhist rock-cut caves, called [Lenyadri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lenyadri) caves, which is also one of [Ashtavinayak](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavinayak) temple in Maharashtra. It has been declared as a protected monument.

The nearest town [Junnar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Junnar) is a taluka place and is well connected by road. Junnar is about 90 km from [Pune](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pune). The fort is at about 2–3 km from the junnar town. It is easy to reach the fort top via main entrance, however the trekkers with proper climbing equipment can try the chain route which is located on the western scarp of the fort. From the top of the fort, [Narayangad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narayangad), [Hadsar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hadsar), [Chavand](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chavand,_Maharashtra) and [Nimgiri](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Nimgiri&action=edit&redlink=1) forts can easily be seen.

**Rajgad Fort**

Year in which it was built:1674

Built by: Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

Rajgad is situated on the border of Bhor-Velhe Taluka in the Pune district and is a favorite amongst the fort loving tourists. The fort has three “maachi”s spread into three different directions with the citadel sitting right in the center. Rajgad fort overlooks other forts in the vicinity such as Torna, Sinhagad, Purandar, Vajragad, Lingana, Pratapgad and Raigad.

There is a mountain of Murumbdev in the valley of Nira-Lakhwandi river. Deriving its name from the same, Rajgad was named Murumbdev during the earlier Bahamani regime. Murumbdev Chowki was under Nizamshahi for some time and later under the Adil Shahi rule. Torna and Murumbdev were both crucial for the expansion of the state in the Maval region. In 1645, Shivaji Maharaj captured Murumbdev fort and renamed it as Rajgad. He also commenced the construction on new fortifications and buildings here to make it his first political center, but for the purpose of expansion and on account of lesser availability of space, he shifted the capital to Raigad later.

Rajgad stands tall with its citadel measuring 1400 meters high in altitude. Aurangzeb’s army attacked the fort on 4th February 1703 and emerged victorious. Aurangzeb assigned Iradat Khan to be the chief in-charge of the fort and renamed it to “Nabishahgad”. While Rajgad marks itself in the history as a difficult to conquer kind of fort owing to the safety of its fortress and glory of its robust construction, Raigad illustrates the expanse of Shivaji Maharaj’s career and efficiency.

The path to the Pali door comes from the village of Palkhurd. This route is broad and capacious and has steps to move ahead. The entrance of the Pali Darwaja is high enough for an elephant to enter along with the howdah canopy on its back. A second entrance follows the main entrance which has an impassable and sturdy bastion towers adorned with merlons, that are characterized with small circular windows. As we enter inside, we can see the “devdis” – special guard posts made for the fort guards. This entrance brings us to the “Padmavati Maachi” on the fort.

Citadel of Rajgad is actually the place of highest elevation. The approach leading to the Citadel is quite difficult and narrow too. At the end of climb, we come across a doorway also known as ‘Maha Darwaja’. The condition of this doorway is reasonably good even today. It stands 6.0M in height and has carving of a lotus and ‘Swastika’ on it. The Citadel has 1.5M high fortification all around and also has fortified places at prominent locations.  
As you enter the doorway, we come across Janani Temple with a lake little ahead of it. At the front of this lake is the Northern Bastion. The entire Padmavati Machi and its surrounding can be seen. Adjacent to this fortified place is the temple of saint. Brahmarshi. Apart from the above, one can also find devastated remains of some castles, verandah’s and structures.

**Rajmachi Fort**

Year in which it was built:1657

Built by: Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

Rajmachi Fort (Killa) is one of the many historical forts in the rugged hills of Sahyadri mountains. The Rajmachi Fort lies at an altitude of 3000 feet above sea level. Rajmachi Fort has two stronghold forts, Shrivardhan and Manaranjan. Visible from Mumbai Pune Expressway on right hand side of Borghat. It is a famous spot for trekking. Rajmachi Fort is 16 km trekking distance from Lonavala there are many routes to reach Rajmachi Fort. We will be camping at Udhewadi Village located below the two Balekilla. Surrounded by huge waterfalls during monsoon you can view the beautiful kataldhar waterfall from Shrivardhan Fort. Rajmachi Fort has many caves used by trekkers for night halt. Pre monsoon the forest around the forts is glowing with Fireflies at night. You can also trek towards Kondane Caves during monsoon and enjoy the beautiful caves and waterfall. Rajmachi Fort is located strategically overlooking Borghat an historical trade route.

Constructed by the Satavahanas, the historical Rajmachi fort complex has an interesting history. Shivaji Maharaj captured this fort in 1657 and also the surrounding forts from the Adilshahi ruler of Bijapur. The Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb again seized the fort from the Marathas in 1704. The very next year, the Marathas regained its control and later in 1713, Shahu Maharaj gave over the Rajmachi fort to Kanhoji Angre. With the downfall of the Marathas in 1818, the British took over the control of the Maratha territories and also the Rajmachi fort.

The visitors travelling by rail have to first reach the Lonavala railway station and from there private cabs are available to reach the fort. You can also take a flight to the Chhatrapati Shivaji International airport and then hire a taxi which directly drops you to the fort. The Rajmachi Fort is also easily accessible from Mumbai and Pune by road.

The Rajmachi fort offers an amazing view of the Shirota Dam and the Sahyadri mountain ranges. If you have some more time in hand after exploring the fort then pay a visit to the wax museum at Lonavala where you will find structures of wax of many well known celebrities.

Though, all the time in the year is suitable to visit Rajmach Fort. But still, you can enjoy the splendid beauty in the months of November to April.

If you want to visit Rajmach Fort, Lonavala then there are two prominent ways. One is via Lonavala while the other way is from Pune. By taking the bus, air, or road you can easily reach Rajmach Fort and it will give you a pleasant and peaceful stay when they visit the fort.

**Tikona Fort**

Year in which it was built:7th century

Built by: Malik Ahmad Nizam Shah I of the Nizam Shahi dynasty

Tikona Fort, also famous as ‘Vitandgad Fort’, is a triangular hill fort located near Kamshet which is 18 km from Lonavala. Perched on a high hill, the fort is a trekking destination. Though, not much is known about the history, the fort was conquered by Malik Ahmad Nizam Shah I of the Nizam Shahi dynasty in 1585 and annexed it to the Nizam territory. In 1657, Shivaji Maharaj became the ruler of the whole Konkan region, and thus, brought Tikona along with the forts of Karnala, Lohgad, Mahuli, Songad, Tala, and Visapur. The strategic location of the fort made it a watch tower for the entire Pawana Mawal (Panmala) region. Later, Dhamale family ‘Deshmukhs’ from Maval Region became in charge of the security of the fort in 1660. It takes not more than one day to trek to this fort, dig into its history and admire the stunning views from it.

The places that can be covered on your visit to the fort are Trimbakeshwar Mahadev Mandir, Seven Water Tanks, Shakti Sai Baba Mandir, Taljai Temple and Satvahan caves. One can also relish the views of Pawna dam and the nearby forts of Tung, Lohgad and Visapur.

The nearest town is [Kamshet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kamshet) which is 51;km from [Pune](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pune). The base village of the fort is Tikona peth which is 26 km from Kamshet. There are good hotels at Kamshet, now tea and snacks are also available in small hotels at Tikonapeth and Kale colony. The trekking path starts from the hillock south of the parking area near Tikonapeth. The route is very safe and wide. There are few trees on the trekking route. It takes about an hour to reach the entrance gate of the fort. There are very steep and high, which makes the climb a thrilling experience. There is very little space in the fort. It is advisable not to accompany large groups for climbing the fort. The steps are so narrow that only a single person can climb at a time. The night stay on the fort can be made in the caves either near the entrance of the fort or on the top of the fort. The villagers from the local fort restoration committee in the Tikonapeth make night stay and food arrangements at a reasonable cost. The [Bedse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bedse) caves which are on the way from Kamshet can also be visited on the way to Tikona on the same day.

Walking ahead from the caves on your left-hand side, you will find the rock-cut steps that take you to the Fort's summit. These Rock cut steps are steep and tall, steel chains installed on the sides for support. Steps recently repaired to make it safer for a large number of hikers visiting on the weekend. There is hardly any tree cover on the trail wear hat for sun protection. After climbing the steps, you will find caves on your right-hand side. These [caves](https://www.treksandtrails.org/tours/rajmachi-and-kondhane-caves-trek) believed from the Satvahan period. You will always find a few common structures on most of the forts, like caves and rock-cut water tanks, many paths leading to the summit and hidden exit routes.

**Harishchandragad Fort**

Year in which it was built: 6th century

Built by:Kalchuri Dynasty

Harishchandragad Fort is famous for its height, its toughness and the famous 'Konkan Kada'. Harishchandra Temple is known to be the pride of the fort. Sant Changdev stayed here for some time and completed his manuscript - 'Tatwasaar'. The Nandi and Shivling in the temple are breathtaking. A cave nearby is always full of very cold water. Harishchandragad Fort is situated in Junnar region near Malshej Ghat.  
  
The fort is very popular to trekkers and nature lovers as it is one of the best forts to trek. Konkan Kada is a challenge for trekkers as it is at a height of 3,500 feet. Rohidas, Taramati and Harishchandra are the three peaks in Harishchandragad. Taramati peak is the highest one in the fort. Many peaks, fort and other beautiful places such as Malshej Ghat, Jivdhan, Nane Ghat, Ratangad, Kalsubai, etc. can also be seen from here.  
  
Lucky tourists can sometimes see like tigers, cheetah, snakes, swallow and flamingos, etc. Harishchandragad is must to visit to enjoy the beauty of forest, especially for the Konkan Kada. Nearest airport is in Mumbai (154 km), while nearest railway station is Kalyan. Hotels are available at Mumbai and Pune.

Harishchandragad trek is one of the most challenging treks in the western ghats of Maharashtra. A popular trek which offers a variety of adventures to all kinds of trekkers.

It is a hill fort in the Ahmednagar district situated in the Malshej Ghat. It climbs up to an altitude of 4,670 ft.

Harishchandragad is an ancient fort. Its origin is said to have been in the 6th century during the rule of the Kalchuri dynasty. But the caves which you see on the top are probably carved out in the 11th century.

The various constructions on the fort and those in the surrounding region indicate the existence of diverse cultures. Saptatheertha Pushkarni, Kedareshwar cave, Harishchandra temple and other caves are the examples for that.

Harishchandragad trek has multiple routes and each route offers a surprise to the trekkers. It is also a complete package of views once you reach the top.