

Karnataka

Temples in Karnataka: A Spiritual and Architectural Journey through South India Karnataka, a state located in the south-western region of India, is known for its rich history, diverse culture, and breathtaking architecture. The state is home to several ancient and revered temples that showcase the spiritual and architectural side of South India. These temples not only attract devotees but also provide a glimpse into the rich cultural heritage of the state. One of the most popular temples in Karnataka is the Sri Venkateshwara Temple, located in the town of Tirumala. The temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu and is known for its unique architecture, intricate carvings, and religious significance. The temple attracts a large number of devotees from across the country and is believed to be one of the richest Hindu temples in the world. The Kukke Subramanya Temple is another significant temple in Karnataka and is dedicated to Lord Subramanya. The temple is located in the Western Ghats and is known for its picturesque surroundings and religious significance. The temple is believed to have been built during the 16th century and attracts a large number of devotees, especially during the annual Subramanya Shasti festival. The Virupaksha Temple in Hampi is another popular temple in Karnataka and is dedicated to Lord Shiva. The temple is located in the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Hampi and is known for its unique architecture and historical significance. The temple is believed to have been built during the 7th century AD and attracts a large number of tourists and devotees alike. Other significant temples in Karnataka include the Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple in Srirangapatna, the Badami Cave Temples, and the Hoysaleswara Temple in Halebidu, each with its own unique history and significance. In conclusion, Karnataka's temples offer a unique blend of spirituality, history, and architecture. These temples are not only important religious sites but also popular tourist destinations that provide a glimpse into the rich cultural heritage of the state.

Venugopalaswami Temple, Yadagiri

Venugopalaswami Temple Surapur: Venugopalaswami Temple constructed by Raja Pitambar bahari Pidda Nayaka (1693-1726) in 1705 nearby beautiful Devara bhavi, is one of the Surapur Nayaks worthy structures. It has a beautiful and attractive stucco sculptures. The annual fair takes place on Gokulastami. People flock here to witness the spilling of Niru-Okuli from the top of a 35 feet high. Again close to Venugopalaswamy shrine is a partially built temple. As you see construction has been abandoned while walls were being built. The space between the two half built walls was meant for Garbhagriha and the circle would have been the center of Sabha Mantapa. Also there was a large collection of semi-finished beams and columns, all meant for this temple. I guess Wagangera was a feudatory of Vijayanagara empire and this temple was being constructed then. Looks like- after the fall of Vijayanagara at Talikota battle all temple constructions were halted. 52 KM from Yadgir and is in Surapur Yadgir-Bidar Rd, Yadgir, Karnataka 585201

Siddalingeshwar Temple, Yadagiri

Siddalingeshwar Temple It is a panchakuta temple with four separate "garbhagriha" An intricate architecture model which is arranged in four directions The ceiling of the navaranga are attractive and the pillars carry beautiful carvings. Journey towards Gurmitkal from Yadgir which is about 30km. Yadgir K Rural, Karnataka 585201

Chinthamani Temple, Koppal

It is another treasure trove of ancient history and reminder of the glory of Krishnadevaraya and the Vijayanagar empire. This place is believed to be the maternal home of Bhooma Devi and during Ramayana times, this was Kishkinda, the kingdom of Vaali and Sugreeva The nearest airports is Jindal Vijaynagar Airport (72.3Km) and Hubli Airport (123.4Km). Nearest Railway Station is Munirabad, however most of the trains do not have stop here. Hospet and Koppala are the next nearest stations. 12.2 Km from Gangavathi via SH 130 (20 min), 63.7 Km from Koppal via NH13 and SH 130(1h 14min), 71.6 Km from Bellary via SH 132 (1 h 48 min) Anegundi, Karnataka 583227

Kanakachalapathi temple, Koppal

Kanakagiri is an historical place in India, situated in Karnataka State, in Gangavati taluk of Koppal district. 20 km north west to Gangavati town. Kanakagiri means a Hill of Gold The nearest airports is Jindal Vijaynagar Airport (72.3Km) and Hubli Airport (153.4Km). Nearest Railway stations are Hospet, Munirabad, Koppal. 21 Km from Gangavathi via SH 29 (25 min), 83 Km from Bellary via NH 63 & SH 29 (2 h 10 min), 163 Km from Hubli via Koppal NH 63 (2 h 49 min), 145 Km from Raichur via SH 23 & SH 63 (2 h 41 min), 183 Km from Vijayapur via NH 13,SH 30 & SH 29(3 h 40 min), 135 Km from Bagalkot via NH 13,SH 30 & SH 29(2 h 30 min) by vechile

Mahadeva Temple, Koppal

built in 1112 CE. Soapstone was found in abundance in this regions.The first temple to be built from this material was the Amrtesvara Temple in Annigeri in the Dharwad district in 1050 CE. This building was to be the prototype for later, more articulated structures such as the Mahadeva Temple at Itagi. The nearest airports is Jindal Vijaynagar Airport (72.3Km) and Hubli Airport (123.4Km). Nearest Railway stations are Koppal, Banapur, Bannikoppa. Two important National Highways NH50, NH67 and Four State Highways SH36,SH130,SH59,SH63 intersect at Koppal. tagi, Karnataka 583232

Huligemma Temple, Koppal

The Huligemma temple is a 13th century temple devoted to Goddess Huligemma. The nearest airports is Jindal Vijaynagar Airport (72.3Km) and Hubli Airport (123.4Km). Nearest Railway stations are Hospet, Munirabad, Koppal. Two important National Highways NH50, NH67 and Four State Highways SH36,SH130,SH59,SH63 intersect at Koppal. Temple Road, Munirabad Rural, Karnataka 583234 089510 61410

Kotilingeshwar Temple, Kolar

Kotilingeshwara Temple is a temple in the village of Kammasandra in Kolar district, Karnataka, India. The presiding deity of the temple is lord Shiva. The temple has one of the largest lingams in the world. The main attraction of the temple is a huge linga measuring 108 ft (33 m) tall and 35 ft (11 m) tall Lord Nandi idol, surrounded by lakhs of small lingas spread over an area of 15 acres (61,000 m2). The Lord Nandi idol is installed over a platform which is 60 feet (18 m) in length, 40 feet (12 m) in width and 4 feet (1.2 m) in height. There are eleven small temples constructed within the premises for various deities. A water tank is set up close to the Linga, used by the devotees to perform Abhisheka. The idols vary between 1 foot (0.30 m) and 3 feet (0.91 m) in height. Bengaluru Kempegouda International Airport is the nearest international Airport which is around 100 KM far. Koramandal is of nearest railway station from Kotilingeshwar Temple and is 8 KM far. Kammasandra Gram Panchayat is nearest bus-stop from Kotilingeshwar Temple and is around 0.5 KM far. 084313 19758

Galageshwara Temple, Haveri

Galageshwara Temple also knowns as Galaganatha Temple and is located in a small village named Galaganath, which was earlier known as Palluni. It was constructed during the rule of Chalukyas. It is a breathtaking Shiva Temple with sculptures and intricate carvings. The nearest airport is Hubli. The nearest railway station is at Haveri which is at a distance of 30 kms from Galaganath. The NH-4 will take you to Ranebennur taluka of Haveri. Haveri lies at a distance of 350 kms from Bangalore. From here, you need to head towards Agadi road for 15 kms, and then make a detour after Guttal. The village is only 15 kms away from here.

Tarakeshwara Temple, Haveri

The name of the temple is derived from the Tarakeshwara form of Lord Shiva. Even though the credit of construction of this temple goes to the Kadambas, it was the Kalyani Chalukyas that made significant changes to make it into the form we see today. The Tarakeshwara temple is a listed monument of the archeological survey of India. The nearest airport is in Hubli. The nearest railway station to the temple is the Haveri railway station which is approximately 40 kms from the temple. Once you reach the railway station,

there are plenty of options for road transport to take you to Hangal. Hangal has well-connected bus network to the other districts of Karnataka. The state bus stand of Hangal is very near to the Tarakeshwara temple.

Siddhesvara temple, Haveri

The temple is located within the city limits and is walkable distance from Bus Stand. The nearest airport is Hubli. The temple is walkable distance from Haveri Railway Station. The temple is walkable distance from Haveri Bus Stand, Haveri Railway Station Rd, Netaji Nagar, Vidya Nagar, Haveri, Karnataka 581110

Hasanamba Temple, Hassan

The main tower at Sri Hasanamba has been newly constructed in Dravidian style. There are three major temples on the premises of this temple dedicated to Darbar Ganapati, Hasanamba and Siddeshwara. Another prominent attraction here is the shrine dedicated to Kallappa. The three idols installed here are said to be of three thieves, who had allegedly come to steal the idol of the presiding deity, Sri Hasanamba, and earned her wrath. Earlier, Hassan was known as Sihmasanapuri and later it got the name of Hassan. It is said that during the rule of Hoysala dynasty in twelfth century A.D. an idol was found with its face wearing a pleasant smile. Hasana Mukhi or a smiling face was transformed into Hassan. The Hasanamba temple is opened in the presence of the Deputy Commissioner for only twelve days in a year during Deepavali celebrations. The special feature of this temple is that the lamp lit this year will be alive till the temple is reopened next year. Even the flowers retain their freshness for the entire year. Devotees from across south India and Maharashtra visit the temple. Hassan does not have an airport and the nearest airport is Bangalore from where one can take flights to other major destinations in India and abroad. Hassan is connected by rail to Bangalore, Mysore, Hubli, Shimoga and Mangalore. Hassan is well connected to Bangalore, Mysore, Mangalore, Madikeri, Chickmagalore. It is around 187 km from Bangalore and 115 km from Mysore. One can get frequent Govt. buses to Hassan from these cities/towns. Hosaline Rd, Ammeer Mohalla, Hassan, Karnataka 573201

Hoysaleswara Temple, Hassan

Halebidu temple is another great example of temple architecture the twin temples of Hoysaleswara, Kedareshwara built by Vishnuvardhana and Ballala-II at Halebidu. Sequences from Ramayana, Mahabharata & Bhagavata are depicted on the outer walls of these temples. The efficiency and experience of the sculpture, who had carved these stories in stone is bewitching. Hassan does not have an airport and the nearest airport is Bangalore from where one can take flights to other major destinations in India and abroad. Hassan is connected by rail to Bangalore, Mysore, Hubli, Shimoga and Mangalore. Halebidu is 17 Km from Belur and 30 Km from Hassan. Regular bus services and Taxis are available both from Hassan and Belur. Halebidu, Karnataka 573121

Chennakeshava Temple, Hassan

Belur, situated on the banks of river Yagachi, 38 km from Hassan, is a world famous tourist destination. Belur was the erstwhile capital of the Hoysalas and referred to as Velapur, Velur and Belahur at different points in history. The town is renowned for its Chennakeshava temple, one of the finest examples of Hoysala workmanship. The temple was consecrated by the famous Hoysala king Vishnuvardhana to mark his victories in 1116 AD against the Cholas and called the Vijaya Narayana. The Hoysalas used soft soapstone for their structures as they were found suitable for intricate carvings. Enclosed by a Prakara with a Gopurabuilt in the Vijayanagar style, the temple stands on a platform or Jagati and looks like a huge casket. The fine workmanship and skill visible in this masterpiece is truly breathtaking. Hassan does not have an airport and the nearest airport is Bangalore from where one can take flights to other major destinations in India and abroad. Hassan is connected by rail to Bangalore, Mysore, Hubli, Shimoga and Mangalore. It is about 38 Km from Hassan. Regular Bus services and tourist taxis are available from Hassan. Temple Rd, Belur, Karnataka 573115

Kalleshwara Temple, Davanagere

Kalleshvara temple is located in the town of Bagali near to Harappanahalli Taluk in Davangere district , Karnataka state, India Nearest International airport is Bangalore. Hubli is the nearest Domestic airport. Harappanahalli is the nearest Railway Station for Kalleshvara Temple, Bagali Tourist Place. There are regular buses from nearby cities.

Harihareshwara Temple, Davanagere

The Harihareshwara Temple Located at Harihar taluk Davanagere District in Karnataka state, Nearest International airport is Bangalore. Hubli is the nearest Domestic airport. Harihara is the nearest Railway Station for Harihareshwara Temple. There are regular buses from nearby cities.

Gopalaswamy Temple, Chamarajanagar

Himavad Gopalaswamy Betta is a hill (betta in Kannada) located in the Gundlupete Taluk, Chamarajanagar district of the state of Karnataka, at a height of 1450m India and is extensively wooded. It is also the highest peak in the Bandipur National Park. It lies in the core area of the Bandipur National Park and is frequented by wild life including elephants. Dense fog predominates and covers the hills round the year and thus gets the prefix Himavad(in the language of Karnataka) and the temple of Venugopalaswamy (Lord Krishna) gives the full name of Himavad Gopalaswamy Betta. Chamarajanagar does not have an airport. Chamarajanagar is connected by rail to Mysore and Bangalore. Gopalaswamy Betta 20 km from Gundlupete And 55km from Chamarajanagar. Regular bus services and taxis are available from Chamarajanagar and Gundlupete

Papnash Shiva Temple, Bidar

Papnash Temple is a Shiva Temple situated in Bidar district, Karnataka. It is believed that the idol of the temple was installed by Lord Rama on his way back to Ayodhya. The original temple was lost and a new temple was built at the ruins of the ancient temple. Rajiv Gandhi International Terminal, Begumpet, Hyderabad is Just 120 Kms away from Bidar District Head Quarters. Its just 2 and half hours drive from the airport to Bidar on NH9 till Zaheerabad and a diversion of 28 KMs after Zaheerabad. Rail facility is available from Bangalore and Hyderabad. Yeshwanthpur – Bidar Express, Depature from Yeshwanthpur at 7:00 PM. Bangalore – Nanded Link Express Via Bidar, Departure from Bangalore at 9.50 PM. Secundrabad – Manmad Express from Hyderabad Departure at 6 PM from Secundrabad Station, Hyderabad. Hyderabad – Aurangabad Express from Kachiguda weekly thrice. One can also take Udyan express or KK Express from Bangalore reach Gulbarga and take a bus from there, its 105 KMS from Gulbarga. From Bangalore many Govt Luxury Buses of KSRTC ply daily via Hyderabad, Its 16 hours journey from Bangalore via Hyderabad on NH 7 and NH 9. From Bangalore Via Gulbarga and Bellary its 20 hours journey. From Hyderabad Imaliban bus stand for every 15 minutes a Bus to Bidar is available from Plat form No 36. Shiva Nagar, Bidar, Karnataka 585402

Virupaksha Temple, Hampi, Bellary, Karnataka

Virupaksha Temple, Hampi, Bellary, Karnataka Virupaksha Temple is located in Hampi in the Ballari district of Karnataka, India. It is part of the Group of Monuments at Hampi, designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The temple is dedicated to Virupaksha, a form of Shiva. The temple was built by Lakkan Dandesha, a nayaka (chieftain) under the ruler Deva Raya II of the Vijayanagara Empire.[1] Hampi, capital of the Vijayanagara empire, sits on the banks of the Tungabhadra River. Virupaksha Temple is the main center of pilgrimage at Hampi, and had been considered the most sacred sanctuary over the centuries. It is intact among the surrounding ruins and is still used in worship . The temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva, known here as Virupaksha, as the consort of the local goddess Pampadevi who is associated with the Tungabhadra River. There is also a Virupakshini Amma temple (mother goddess) in a village called Nalagamapalle, Chittoor district, Andhra Pradesh, approximately 100 km from Tirupati. The Virupaksha Temple in Hampi is dedicated to lord Shiva. The distance from Bangalore to Hampi is about 350 km. Hampi is a temple town in South India and is acknowledged as one of the World Heritage Sites of UNESCO. Virupaksha Temple is dedicated to lord Shiva. This temple was constructed in Lakkana Dandesha's assistance who was a commander under King Deva Raya II. Hampi is on the embankment of River Tungabhadra. The predominant centre of pilgrimage in Hampi is this esteemed temple. It is the holiest and

sacred retreat. The Virupaksha temple has survived through the years and never ceases to prosper. It is still pristine amidst the ruins that surround it. It attracts large groups of people in the month of December. The yearly chariot festival is conducted in the month of February. At present, the main temple consists of a sanctum, three ante chambers, a pillared hall and an open pillared hall. It is decorated with delicately carved pillars. A pillared cloister, entrance gateways, courtyards, smaller shrines and other structures surround the temple. The nine-tiered eastern gateway, which is the largest at 50 meters, is well-proportioned and incorporates some earlier structures. It has a brick superstructure and a stone base. It gives access to the outer court containing many sub-shrines. The smaller eastern gateway leads to the inner court with its numerous smaller shrines. Another gopuram towards north known as the Kanakagiri gopura, leads to a small enclosure with subsidiary shrines and eventually to the river Tungabhadra. A narrow channel of the Tungabhadra River flows along the temple's terrace and then descends to the temple-kitchen and out through the outer court. One of the most striking features of this temple is the usage of mathematical concepts to build and decorate it. The temple has repeated patterns that demonstrate the concept of Fractals. The main shape of the temple is triangular. As you look up the temple top, the patterns divide and repeat themselves, just like you would see in a snowflake or some other natural wonders. Krishnadevaraya, one of the famous king of the Vijayanagara Empire was a major patron of this temple. The most ornate of all structures in the temple, the central pillared hall is believed to be his addition to this temple. So is the gateway tower giving access to the inner courtyard of the temple. Inscriptions on a stone plaque installed next to the pillared hall explain his contribution to the temple. It is recorded that Krishna Devaraya commissioned this hall in 1510 AD to mark his accession. He also built the eastern gopuram. These additions meant that the central shrine came to occupy a relatively small part of the complex. The halls in the temple were used for a variety of purposes. Some were spaces in which the images of gods were placed to witness special programmes of music, dance, drama, etc. Others were used to celebrate the marriages of deities. The temple's history is uninterrupted from about the 7th century. The Virupaksha-Pampa sanctuary existed well before the Vijayanagara capital was located here. Inscriptions referring to Shiva date back to the 9th and 10th centuries. What started as a small shrine grew into a large complex under the Vijayanagara rulers. Evidence indicates there were additions made to the temple in the late Chalukyan and Hoysala periods, though most of the temple buildings are attributed to the Vijayanagar period. The huge temple building was built by Lakkana Dandesha, a chieftain under the ruler Deva Raya II of the Vijayanagara Empire. Under the Vijayanagara rulers, in the middle of the 14th century, there began a flowering of native art and culture. When the rulers were defeated by Muslim invaders in the 16th century, most of the wonderful decorative structures and creations were systematically destroyed. The religious sect of Virupaksha-Pampa did not end with the destruction of the city in 1565. Worship there has persisted throughout the years. At the beginning of the 19th century there were major renovations and additions, which included ceiling paintings and the towers of the north and east gopura

Official Address

Udupi Sri Krishna Matha, Udupi, karnataka

Udupi Sri Krishna Matha, Udupi, karnataka Udupi Sri Krishna Matha (Tulu:ಉಡುಪಿ ಶ್ರೀ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಮಠ) is a famous Hindu temple dedicated to god Krishna and Dvaita Matha located in the city of Udupi in Karnataka, India. The matha area resembles a living ashram, a holy place for daily devotion and living. Surrounding the Sri Krishna Matha are several temples namely the Udupi Anantheshwara Temple which is over a 1,000 years old The 9-holed window, also known as the Kanakadasa window, is attached to a wall in the Chandrasala hall. The hall lends itself a sublime ambiance in aid of the holy sound made by numerous bells hanging at its arched entrance, as well as the beautiful glow of the earthen lamps burning in the hall. Devotees either sit there in meditation saying silent prayers or try to peep through the 9-holed window to get a glimpse of the Lord. One corner of the hall holds the shrine of Lord Hanuman in a meditative pose. Overlooking the Chandrasala hall is a four-pillared raised platform with a silver roof. The platform houses the traditional deepastambam, holding the sacred oil lamp. On the right side of the main sanctum in the path of circumambulation stands the statue of the temple's founder Shri Madhwacharya, while on the northern side of his statue stands the shrine of Lord Panduranga. The holy tank Madhwapushkarani is placed next to the southern entrance of the temple. The eastern entrance to Shri Balkrishna's sanctum sanctorum is strikingly beautiful flanked by a panchadhatu (5 metals) figure of Lord Vishnu mounted on his Garuda holding conch and discus. The eastern entrance usually remains closed and is open only once a year on the day of Vijaya Dashami. The Krishna Matha was founded by the Vaishnavite saint Jagadguru Shri Madhwacharya in the 13th century. He was the founder of the Dvaita school of Vedanta. It is believed that Madhwacharya found the murti of Sri Krishna in a large ball of gopichandana. As told by Sri Madhwacharya,

in his Tantrasara Sangraha, the murti is placed Pashchimabhimukha(facing West). All the other murtis in other Ashta mutts face west as well. Devotees always have darshan of Lord Krishna through the inner window, known as Navagraha kindi & the outer window known as Kanakana kindi, which is decorated by an arch named after him. A statue has also been erected. A similar window covers the immediate front of the murti and is called Navagraha kindi. It is often mistaken to be Kanakana kindi. The temple opens by 5.30 in the morning. The unique feature of the temple is that the deity is worshipped through the silver-plated window with nine holes (Navagraha kindi). The temple also offers prasadam (lunch) in the noon. According to mythology, when Lord Krishna's wife Rukmini requested her husband for the idol of Balkrishna, the child form of the Lord, Shri Krishna entrusted Vishwakarma with the task of designing the idol. Vishwakarma made a beautiful idol of Balkrishna with the holy saaligrama stone and gave it to Rukmini for worship. The idol, in the course of being worshipped by hundreds of devotees at Dwaraka with the application of sandalwood paste, got completely covered with the sandalwood paste. It is believed that this same idol is now placed at the temple. Udupi is the railway station close to the temple. You can also consider Mangalore Railway Station. Buses and taxis are also available from here. Mangalore is the nearest airport to Udupi. One may catch direct flights from Bangalore to Mangalore, from where one can hire a taxi to Udupi. The KSRTC, as well as the private buses, ply frequently between Mangalore and Udupi. You can hire private taxis or cabs to reach here. Official Address

Sringeri, Chikkamagaluru, karnataka

Sringeri, Chikkamagaluru, karnataka Sringeri (ಶೃಂಗೇರಿ) also called Sri Kshetra Shringeri is a hill town and Taluk headquarters located in Chikkamagaluru district in the state of Karnataka, It is the site of the first maṭha (Sringeri Sharada Peetham) established by Adi Shankara, Hindu theologian and exponent of the Advaita Vedanta philosophy, in the 8th century CE It is located on the banks of the river Tungā .The name Sringeri is derived from Rishyashringa-giri, a nearby hill that is believed to have contained the heritage of RishiVibhandaka and his son Rishyashringa. Rishyashringa appears in an episode in the Bala-Kanda of the Ramayana where a story, narrated by Vasishtha, relates how he brought rains to the drought-stricken kingdom of Romapada According to legend, Adi Shankaracharya is said to have selected the site as the place to stay and teach his disciples, because when he was walking by the Tunga river, he saw a cobra with a raised hood, providing shelter from the hot sun, to a frog undergoing labour. Impressed with the place where natural enemies had gone beyond their instincts, he stayed here for twelve years. Adi Shankaracharya also established mathas in the northern (at Jyotirmath, near Badrinath), eastern (at Puri) and western (at Dwaraka) quarters of India. Jagadguru Sri Adi Shankara Bhagavatpada established the first of the four Amnaya Peethams¹ at Sringeri more than twelve centuries ago to foster the sacred tradition of Sanatana Dharma. Hallowed for all times by Sage Rishyashringa who stayed and performed Tapas here, Sringeri attracted the great Acharya with a remarkable sight.Tradition has it that after the Acharya had dispersed all the non-Vedic creeds prevailing in the country, He was on the look-out for a convenient and holy place where he could establish an institution to spread the truths of Advaita Vedanta. When the Acharya came to Sringeri, he saw an unusual sight on the banks of the Tunga. A cobra was seen spreading out its hood over a frog in labour pains, to give it shadow from the scorching mid-day sun. Struck with the sanctity of the place, which could infuse love between natural adversaries, the Acharya chose this very location to establish His first Math. The Madhaviya Shankara Digvijayam describes that the Acharya came across many virtuous people at Sringeri and taught them the doctrine of Advaita. He then invoked the Divinity of Knowledge, Goddess Sharada and consecrated an icon of the Goddess. Thus the Peetham He founded at Sringeri in South India for fostering the Vedas and the sacred tradition of Sanatana Dharma came to be known as the Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham. The Acharya appointed his prime disciple, Sri Sureshwaracharya as the first Acharya of the Peetham. Since then, the Peetham has been blessed with an unbroken Guru Parampara, a garland of spiritual masters and Jivanmuktas representing Sri Adi Shankaracharya. The succeeding Acharyas have led a life of such austere penance that it has led disciples to adore in them the radiance of Sri Adi Shankara Himself. Besides being a centre of spiritual power, Sringeri also came to be known as a great place of traditional learning owing to the presence of Goddess Sharada and the erudition of the Acharyas of the Peetham. The Acharyas were instrumental in bringing forth commentaries on the Vedas and in further expounding the Bhashyas of Sri Adi Shankaracharya. The Acharyas also wrote a number of independent works related to Advaita besides producing a number of hymns underlining their ardent devotion to the non-dual Supreme worshipped in multifarious forms. The Peetham thus came to be regarded as the Vyakhyana Simhasana, The Throne of Transcendental Wisdom. Consequently, the Birudavali hails the Acharya as the occupier of this throne. Many regard Goddess Sharada Herself to be moving in the form of the presiding Acharya of the

Peetham. In the 14th century, royal patronage to the Peetham began with the founding of the famous Vijayanagar empire under the divine guidance of the 12th Acharya, Jagadguru Sri Vidyananya. The austerity of the Acharya influenced the rulers to such an extent that they began ruling in the name of the Acharya and granted the Peetham the rights over secular administration of the land. At the rulers' request, the Acharya began conducting a Durbar during the Navaratri festival – an occasion deemed by the rulers to honour their Guru. Subsequently, the Acharya came to be known as the Karnataka Simhasana Prathisthapanacharya and the Peetham became a mighty institution – a Samsthanam and is known to this day as the Jagadguru Shankaracharya Mahasamsthanam, Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham at Sringeri. Over the succeeding centuries, a number of empires and rulers including the Mysore Maharajahs Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Peshwas and the Keladi rulers and Travancore Rajas were drawn towards the Peetham and respected the Acharya as their Guru. Official Address

Shree Vishnumurthy Temple, Mangalore, karnataka

Shree Vishnumurthy Temple, Mangalore, karnataka Kulai Shree Vishnumurthy Temple is located in the town of Kulai near Surathkal about 15 km north of Mangalore in the state of Karnataka, India. It is an ancient Vishnu shrine which has a statue estimated to be about 600 years old. The temple's presiding deity is Shree Vishnumurthy who is another form of Lord Vishnu. Initially no temple complex was evident but Venkatramana Hebbar, a local archeologist and historian, found a small shrine in a state of ruin in the forest around 1911. The temple has been repeatedly renovated and is in use today with an active schedule of worship and festival celebrations. Shree Vishnumurthy Temple is situated in the town of Kulai about 15 Kilometers north of Mangalore along the West coast High way facing the eastern plain of paddy fields. It is one of the ancient Vishnu Shrines in this part of Karnataka. The Main deity of this temple is Shree Vishnumurthy who is another form of Lord Mahavishnu. Since there is no hard and fast documents available regarding history of its origin, we could not have got any kind of legendary and chronological view in connection to the temple. However, as per the opinion of Shri Gururaj Bhatt, a well-known archeologist and historian in South Kanara, the age of the statue dates back to 600 years. Initially, there was no temple complex, but Mr. Venkatramana Hebbar, found a small shrine in ruining stage midst of shrubs and forest occupant, around 1911. He then constructed the shrine with the help of local residents and villagers. His son Shri Ramakrishna Hebbar also contributed to this holy task. Since then its renovation work was taken up step-by-step and still it is going on. Since the temple is near to National High way No.17, any bus from Mangalore to Udupi will take halt in Kulai and it is just 10 minutes walk able distance from Kulai bus stop to the temple. Official Address

Dharmasthala Temple, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka

Dharmasthala Temple, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka dharmasthala Temple (Kannada/Tulu:ಶ್ರೀ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರ ಧರ್ಮಸ್ಥಳ) (Sanskrit: क्षेत्र धर्मस्थल Kṣētra Dharmasthala) is an 800-year-old religious institution in the temple town of Dharmasthala in Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka, India. The deities of the temple are Shiva, who is referred to as Mañjunatha, Ammanavaru, the tirthankara Chandraprabha and the protective gods of Jainism, Kalarahu, Kalarkayi, Kumarasvami and Kanyakumari. The temple is considered unique since it belongs to the Shaiva sect of Hinduism. The priests are Shivalli Brahmins, who are Vaishnava, and the administration is run by a Jain Bunt family called the Pergades. 800 years ago, Dharmasthala was known as Kuduma in Mallarmadi, then a village in Belthangady. Here lived the Jain Bunt chieftain Birmanna Pergade and his wife Ammu Ballalthi in a house called Nelliadi Beedu. According to the legend, the guardian angels of Dharma assumed human forms and arrived at Pergade's abode in search of a place where Dharma was being practised and could be continued and propagated. As was their habit, the couple hosted these illustrious visitors with all their wherewithal and great respect. Pleased by their sincerity and generosity, that night the Dharma Daivas appeared in the dreams of Pergade. They explained the purpose of their visit to him and instructed him to vacate his house for the worship of the Daivas and dedicate his life to the propagation of Dharma. Asking no questions, the Pergade built himself another house and began worshiping the Daivas at Nelliadi Beedu. This worship of daivas continues. The Dharma Daivas again appeared before Pergade to build separate shrines to consecrate the four Daivas — Kalarahu, Kalarkayi, Kumaraswamy and Kanyakumari. Also, Pergade was instructed to choose two persons of noble birth to act as the Daivas' oracles and four worthy persons to assist Pergade in his duties as the executive head of the shrines. In return, the Daivas promised Pergade protection for his family, abundance of charity and renowned for the 'Kshetra'. Pergade,

as desired, built the shrines and invited Brahmin priests to perform the rituals. These priests requested Pergade to install a Shivalinga beside the native Daivas. The Daivas then sent their vassal Annappa Swamy to procure the linga of Shiva from Kadri Manjunath Temple, near Mangalore. Subsequently, the Manjunatha temple was built around the linga. Official Address

Padutirupathi, Udupi, Karnataka

Padutirupathi, Udupi, Karnataka Karkala is a town located in Udupi district. Karkala is also the taluk headquarters. Karkala is important seats for famous Jain Basadis (Jain Temples). The idol of Gomateshwara can also be found in Karkala. Apart from the Jain temples; Karkala is also famous for Padutirupathi Sree Venkataramana Temple. This temple is one of the oldest temples of Gaud Saraswat Brahmins after Sri MadhaAnantheshwar Temple Manjeshwar. Padu Tirupathi Sree Venkataramana shrine lies to the west of Tirupathi while original shrine is in the east. The name itself indicates its meaning. Padu means 'West' in Kannada and Tirupathi means Tirumala temple. Padutirupathi Venkataramana Temple, Karkala stands one among the various ancient temples that belong to the community of Gowda Saraswath Brahmin who have their own history of about 550 years. This shrine has been constructed in an ancient style that attracts thousands of visitors round the year. It is situated at a distance of about fifty kilometer from the city of Mangalore. Popularly, this temple is known as 'Padutirupati'. The term 'Padu' refers to west in native language of Karnataka. The rituals and rites performed in this temple are almost similar to that of Tirumala. It is difficult to explain the divine glory and blessedness of Lord Venkataramana and Lord Srinivasa of this place. There is a common belief that any prayer that was offered with a resilient and strong belief is definitely fulfilled by this god. This temple is quite popular for its strong encouragement for all types of religious, cultural, social and academic activities that benefits people of both Karkala and outside this place. As an act of vision, the trustees of this temple inaugurated women's education in the name of almighty, about ten decades back in Karkala. Towards its social and academic causes, this temple has rendered helping hand to Vatsalya Seva Trust (a registered old age home), a super specialty hospital, Shree Venkataramana Goshala Trust (R), and Sri Bhuvanendra College by providing them with acres of precious temple land on lease. The last ten years, there has been remarkable changes in that took place in this temple that displays volumes of glory and eminence of this Kshetra and its God. his temple has historical background and it dates back to 14th century when the Jain Bhairarasa Odeyars ruled Karkala and neighboring places. The Gaud Saraswat Brahmins came to Karnataka in search of place food and shelter. The Jain Odeyars donated land to the Gaud Saraswat Brahmins to lead a happy life. They also donated lands for agriculture as these Brahmin people had it as an occupation. The priests of this community namely Joishys, Puraniks and Tantris are the main people who had an existence from 14th century. There are no records or written documents about the exact date of installation of this temple. The Gaud Saraswat Brahmins brought with them all their articles and household items which also included idol of Lord Venkataramana. One day all these Gaud Saraswat Brahmins met Jain King Immadi Bhairava and requested to grant a land to build a temple for Lord Sree Venkataramana. The Jain king happily granted them the Land for the very same purpose with some black stones which were common all over the area. This indicates that the Jains were patronized to other religions also. The land which they gave to these Gaud Saraswat Brahmins was occupied by a lady of some Mutt (religious institution for learning Vedas and Puranas). The lady heeded to the people and Jains only one condition that, "There are four powerful Ganas (Lord Shiva's Servants) who should be worshipped and given sacrifices of coconuts, green pumpkins, Turmeric and so on; unless they would get angry. Also a yearly sacrifice should be performed as no unholy things may happen in and around here". The Gaud Saraswat Brahmins and Jain King agreed to lady and then temple was constructed. Initially a huge platform was built and four pillars were made to stand in the four corners. Entangled coconut leaves were made as a roof for it. The idol was installed inside the temple and prayers were offered for goodness of people. The compound wall was in its progress for building up the blocks. One day Soma Sharma returned to Karkala from Tirupathi with another idol of Lord Sree Venkataramana which was given to him by the priests at Tirumala and this was at the end of 14th century. He installed this idol with the previously installed idol of Lord Venkataramana in the newly built stone platform. In 1500 AD, a group of dacoits attacked the temple the priests saved the main idols and valuables items by throwing them down a well in Mulki. As days progressed, they could retrieve the belongings of the temple except for the main deity. However, a person in Mulki found the statue in the well and thought that the Lord wanted to stay in this place and built the temple in Mulki. When people of Karkala came to know about this they rushed to Mulki and requested to return the idol; but by that time Mulki people had already installed the idol in Sree Veer Vittal Temple. People of Karkala stayed there and slept the whole night. It is said that the Lord appeared in people's dreams and asked them to leave his statue with residents of

Mulki. He seemed to have reassured them that a hermit would present them his statue in which he resides. The people of Karkala returned back and as told by the Lord himself, a hermit of Tirumala, who was a loyal devotee of Lord Venkataramana from Tirupati, came to Karkala and presented the Lord's statue with the condition that the proceeds of the temple be given to Tirupathi. Heeding to the condition, people of Karkala undertake a pilgrimage to Tirupati each year to present the temple's proceeds. The installation of new idol of Lord Venkataramana was done in 1537 and the renovation of the temple took place in the year 1700. Udipi is the major railway station situated close to Padutirupathi Venkataramana temple. Karkala has got good connectivity by road from both Mangalore and Bangalore. Most of the cities in Karnataka are well connected with Karkala. The nearest airport is Mangalore International Airport which is at the distance of about 70 km. Official Address

Nellitheertha Cave Temple, Dakshina Kannada, karnataka

Nellitheertha Cave Temple, Dakshina Kannada, karnataka Nellitheertha Cave Temple (Tulu: ನೆಲ್ಲಿ ತೀರ್ಥ ಕುಹಾರಯ) in Nellitheertha, Karnataka, India is dedicated to the Indian deity Sri Somanatheshwara, or Shiva. The temple dates back to at least 1487 CE. To the right of the temple is a natural cave, about 200 metres (660 ft) long. Access is restricted, forcing visitors to crawl in on their knees. Inside, there is a lake and a Shiva Lingam. There was an Asura named Arunasura who managed to get the blessing of Sage Jabali and got from him the sacred Gayathri Mantra. He started misusing the power of this Mantra and began to harass the world. Maharishi Jabali was not aware of this as he was performing meditation all the while. Learning from Narada Maharishi of Arunasura's atrocities, Jabali decided that he had to set right a situation that he in a way helped create. He performed a penance to Devi Durga and the Goddess, pleased with him, assured him that she will help him. She confronted Arunasura and killed him in a place called Kateel. Kateel is a temple town near Nellitheertha. Devi Durga also granted another wish of Jabali – she, Lord Shiva and Maha Vishnu decided to reside in the region. Shiva took up residence in Nellitheertha itself. Devi Durga took her lace in a temple in Muchur and Maha Vishnu resided in a temple in Kompavadu. Both regions are located near Nellitheertha. The cave temple of Nellitheertha dates back to year 1487. The cave of Nellitheertha is even believed to be used by the Sage Jabali to perform penance to appease Lord Durga Parameshwari. He wants that the Lord Durga should kill the demon Arunsura. On his sacrifices Lord Durga killed Arunsura at Kateel, which is the famous temple town near Nellitheertha cave. One of the highly revered Shiva temples in the region, Nellitheertha Cave Temple, otherwise known as Sri Somanatheshwara Cave Temple, is an ancient temple which is believed to have been established in the late 15th century. It is dedicated to Lord Shiva, and hence it is an important shrine amongst Shaivites. Being a cave temple, one need to scrawl on their knees to reach its sanctum sanctorum where a Shivalinga is worshipped. As per Hindu mythology, the cave was used by sage Jabali for meditation and penance. Today, the temple is a popular destination amongst nature lovers as well as Hindus. Surrounded by the lush greenery, it is located on the outskirts of Mangalore and maintains a peaceful and divine aura. By Air: The nearest airport to Nellitheertha is located in Mangalore at a distance of about 15 km. Once you have reached the airport, you can hire a direct cab to the temple. It will take an approximate time of 40 min to reach your destination from the airport. By Rail: Mangalore is well connected to all other major cities and towns of the country by rail. Therefore, you can take a direct train to Mangalore railway station and then from there, you can hire a taxi to reach Nellitheertha. By Road: Nellitheertha is easily accessible by road. You can either hire a cab or use the public transport to reach the Temple. Official Address

Dodda Basavana Gudi, Bengaluru, Karnataka

Dodda Basavana Gudi, Bengaluru, Karnataka Dodda Basavana Gudi (the Nandhi Temple) is situated in Bull Temple Road, Basavanagudi, area of South Bengaluru, part of the largest city of the Indian state of Karnataka. The Hindu temple is inside a park called Bugle Rock. The bull referred to is a sacred Hindu demi-god, known as Nandi; Nandi is a close devotee and attendant of Shiva. Dodda Basavana Gudi is said to be the biggest temple to Nandi in the world. The stone monolith idol of Nandi is continually covered with new layers of butter, benne in the local language of Kannada. There is an idol of the elephant-headed Hindu deity Ganesha close by. Every year on the last Monday and Tuesday of the Hindu month of Karthika Maasa a groundnut fair is held in the temple premises and groundnut is offered to the deity. This fair is known as 'Kadalekaayi Parishe' in local tongue. Groundnut sellers and devotees throng the place during Kadalekaayi Parishe. Basavana Gudi is a regular place of visit for tourists and is covered by most of the tour operators including the Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation. Nandi Temple is

exclusively for the worship of the sacred bull (Basava in Kannada) in Hinduism, known as Nandi, Lord Shiva's vahana. The word "nandi" means "joyful" in Sanskrit. The temple was built in 1537 by Kempe Gowda under the Vijayanagara empire in the Vijayanagara architectural style, he also founded the city of Bengaluru. The temple is named after the large granite Nandi monolith placed on a plinth in the temple shrine (garbhagriha) which has become blackened from years of being rubbed with charcoal and oil. The temple is a small one, consisting only of the shrine fronted by a porch in the Vijayanagara style. The current tower (vimana) over the shrine was constructed in the early 20th century and is adorned with Saivite figures and motifs. It is said to house one of the largest Nandi murthis in the world. The height of the murthi is approximately 15 ft (4.6 m) and it is approximately 20 feet (6.1 m) long. Official Address

Murdeshwara, Uttara Kannada, Karnataka

Murdeshwara, Uttara Kannada, Karnataka There are statues of Sun Chariot on side of a park, pool, statues depicting Arjuna receiving Geetopadesham from Lord Krishna, Ravana being deceived by Ganesha in disguise, Shiva's manifestation as Bhaghirnath, descending Ganga, carved around the hill. The temple is entirely modernised with exception of the sanctum sanctorum which is still dark and retains its composure. The main deity is Sri Mridesa Linga, also called Murdeshwara. The linga is believed to be a piece of the original Atma Linga and is about two feet below ground level. The devotees performing special sevas like Abhisheka, Rudrabhisheka, Rathotsava etc., can view the deity by standing before the threshold of the sanctum and the Linga is illuminated by oil lamps held close by the priests. The Linga is essentially a rough rock inside a hollowed spot in the ground. Entry into the sanctum is banned for all devotees. Official Address

Mookambika, Udupi, Karnataka

Mookambika, Udupi, Karnataka As per legends, there lived a sage in ancient years named Kola Maharishi, who was troubled by a demon. The demon was in penance to obtain boon from gods, only for the sake of troubling more. Goddess Parvathi made the demon dumb (meaning: Mooka), so he can't ask for boons. The demon was called as Mookasura (meaning: Dumb demon). The frustrated mute demon started creating even more problems to the sage and the people around. Upon the appealed request of the sage, Goddess Parvathi descended in a powerful form and killed Mookasura. So the Goddess came to be hailed as Mookambika. The sage requested the Goddess to stay in that place and so did Goddess took her abode in the same place, called Kollur. Official Address

Marikamba Temple, Sirsi, Karnataka

Marikamba Temple, Sirsi, Karnataka 0. The temple's façade, a 19th-century addition, is painted blue. After one enters through the façade, there is courtyard in the middle, which has cloisters surrounding it. The cloisters are filled with images of deities from the Hindu epics. The changes made inside the temple have hidden any evidence of older structures. The sanctum sanctorum has the central image of a fierce form of the goddess Durga, multi-armed (eight shoulders), riding a tiger and killing a demon. It is believed that the 7-foot-tall (2.1 m) image was retrieved from a pond on the road to Hanagal. The temple has very special paintings of murals in Kaavi art, an art form which was popular in the coastal Konkan region of Karnataka. In this art form, now extinct, the top plastered layer of the mural was first dyed with a red pigment, which when removed revealed a lower white layer of plaster over which the murals were created Official Address

Kukke Subramanya Temple, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka

Kukke Subramanya Temple, Dakshina Kannada, Karnataka Kukke Subramanya (Tulu and Kannada: Kukke Subrahmanya) is a Hindu temple located in the village of Subramanya, Karnataka. In this temple Kartikeya is worshipped as Subramanya, lord of all serpents. The epics relate that the divine serpent Vasuki and other serpents found refuge under Subramanya when threatened by the Garuda. Kukke lapped in the luxurious abundance of the beauty of the nature the village of Subramanya lies in the Sullia Taluk in Dakshina Kannada with a sanctity which very few places can boast of. The temple is situated in the heart of the village. Nature reveals herself in all her unhidden beauty in the rivers, forests and mountains which the temple is surrounded by. It is about a 105 km from Mangalore and can be easily reached by train, buses or taxis. Subramanya used to be called as Kukke Pattana in the past. In the 'Shankara Vijaya'

Anandagiri observes that Sri Shankaracharya camped here for a few days during his religious expedition (Digvijaya). Shankaracharya referred to this place as 'Bhaje Kukke Lingam' in his 'Subrahmanya Bhujangaprayata Stotram'. Sri Subrahmanya Kshetra has been brilliantly described in the 'Thirthakshetra Mahimanipurana' chapter of the Sahyadrikhanda comprised in the Sanatkumara Samhita of Skanda Purana. This kshetra is situated in the banks of the river 'Dhara' which originates in the Kumara mountain and proceeds to the western sea. Pilgrims going to the temple have to cross the Kumaradhara River and take a holy dip in the river before entering the temple for their darshan holy viewing of the Lord. The devotees enter the courtyard from the doorway at the back, and circumambulate the deity. Between the sanctorum and the portico entrance, there is the Garuda pillar covered with silver. Devotees circumambulate this pillar. It is believed that this pillar was enchanted and planted there to shield devotees from the poisonous flames arising from the breath of Vasuki, who resides inside. Beyond the pillar is the outer hall, the inner hall, and then the sanctorum of Sri Subrahmanya. At the centre of sanctorum is a pedestal. On the upper dais stands the deity of Sri Subrahmanya and the deity of Vasuki and, at a somewhat lower level, the deity of Shesha. Ritual worship is offered to these deities every day. The temple is slowly increasing in popularity, owing to its religious significance and importance. According to one belief, after killing the demon rulers Tharaka, Shurapadmasura and their followers in a war, Lord Shanmukha reached Kumara Parvatha with his brother Ganesha and others. He was received by Indra and his followers. Indra being very happy prayed Lord Kumara Swamy to accept and marry his daughter Devasena for which the Lord readily agreed. The divine marriage took place on Margashira shudha shashti at Kumara Parvatha. Gods like Brahma, Vishnu, Rudra and many other deities assembled for the marriage and coronation ceremony of Shanmukha for which waters of several holy rivers were brought. With these waters of Mahabhisheka fell down to form a river which was later known by the popular name Kumaradhara. The great Shiva Bhakta and Serpent king Vasuki was performing tapas for years in the Biladwara caves of Kukke Subrahmanya to avoid the attack of Garuda. Following Lord Shiva's assurance Shanmukha gave darshan to Vasuki and blessed him that he would stay with his parama bhakta in this place forever. Hence the poojas offered to Vasuki or Nagaraja are nothing but the poojas to Lord Subrahmanya. Official Address

Lakshmi Narasimha Temple, Bhadravati, Shimoga, Karnataka

Lakshmi Narasimha Temple, Bhadravati, Shimoga, Karnataka An urban centre in the Shimoga district of Karnataka, Bhadravati is a beautiful city on the banks of Bhadra river and is known for its age-old history and culture. As per local legends, this industrial town is believed to have been in existence since the advent of the Common Era. However, strong evidence to prove this fact has still not been found. The major places which you can explore within the boundaries of Bhadravati include its ancient temples and other historical sites. The most prominent amongst all of these tourist attractions in Bhadravati is Lakshmi Narasimha Temple, which is one of the oldest and highly revered temples in the region. Hence, it remains the most frequented tourist spot in Bhadravati. The best way to reach Bhadravati if you desire to travel By Air: The best way to reach Bhadravati if you desire to travel by air is to take a direct flight to Mangalore airport and then from there, a bus or cab to Bhadravati. The distance between Mangalore airport and Bhadravati is 195 km. Hence, it will take you an average time of 5 h to reach the destination. By Rail: Bhadravati has its own railway station and hence, you can catch a direct train from the nearby station to Bhadravati. By Road: Being an industrial city, the region in and around Bhadravati has a good network of roads. Therefore, you can easily reach Lakshmi Narasimha Temple by road. Official Address

Chennakesava Temple, Somanathapura, Mysore, Karnataka

Chennakesava Temple, Somanathapura, Karnataka The Chennakesava Temple, also referred to as Chennakeshava Temple, Keshava Temple or Kesava Temple, is a Vaishnava Hindu temple on the banks of River Kaveri at Somanathapura, Karnataka, India. The temple was consecrated in 1258 CE by Somanatha Dandanayaka, a general of the Hoysala King Narasimha III. It is located 38 kilometres (24 mi) east of Mysuru city. The ornate temple is a model illustration of the Hoysala architecture. The temple is enclosed in a courtyard with a pillared corridor of small shrines (damaged). The main temple in the center is on a high star-shaped platform with three symmetrical sanctums (garbha-griha), set in a square matrix (89' x 89') oriented along the east-west and north-south axes.[3] The western sanctum was for a statue of Kesava (missing), the northern sanctum of Janardhana and the southern sanctum of Venugopala, all forms of Vishnu. The sanctums share a common community hall (sabha-mandapa) with many pillars. The outer walls, the inner walls, the pillars and the ceiling of the temple are intricately carved with theological iconography

of Hinduism and display extensive friezes of Hindu texts such as the Ramayana (southern section), the Mahabharata (northern section) and the Bhagavata Purana (western section of the main temple). The Chennakesava temple, states George Michell, represents the climax of the development in Hoysala temple style and yet is also unique in many ways. The northern and southern row of small shrines inside the pillared courtyard corridor consists of eighteen single shrine and one linked-double shrine each. The linked-double shrine is at the northwestern and southwestern corners of the courtyard. The western row consists of fourteen small shrines, while the eastern row consists of eight single small shrines and two linked-double shrines. In total, the Kesava temple consists of 58 small 1×1 small shrines, 4 small 2×1 linked-double shrines, 2 near entrance, and the main central temple. The 64 corridor shrines once featured Vedic and Puranic deities and rooms for pilgrims. The statues in the smaller shrines were defaced, their limbs broken or destroyed. Some of the recovered broken pieces are in a heap inside the temple. The collection includes Jaina statues in the Kayotsarga posture as well as numerous Hindu statues. The ceiling of the southern array of shrines has carvings on its ceiling, the western does not and it have an repair related inscription instead from Vijayanagara Empire era. The northern array also mostly lacks any ceiling art work except near the stairs in the middle, while the eastern array shows the greatest signs of damage and restoration with most small shrines missing but for signs of their foundation. The main temple is built on a jagati, which symbolizes worldly platform. It is about 3 feet high, star-shaped and has stone steps at its east end for the visitor to climb up to it. Near the stairs, on each side are two dvarapala (guardian) shrines but these are damaged. The platform around the temple serves as the circumambulation passage. The raised jagati platform circles around the main temple with a broad walking space. It is the pradakshina patha (circumambulation path), and is supposed to be walked in a clockwise manner in order to pictorially read the Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagavata Purana legends in the correct sequence. The eastern side of the platform is rectangular, while the space below the vimana (temple tower) mirrors the pointed star tower shape, with nine points on each side and two linking edges (a total of 29). A stone elephant originally stood at each star point end of the platform, but only 11 of the 15 original have survived in a damaged condition. On the sides of the star side and where two stars of the jagati platform meet were 14 mid size images likely of Nagas and 58 images of Yakshas but all of this are now missing. The temple premises stores 7 of the broken pieces found in the early 20th century. The platform appears from distance to be five stacks from the careful moulding. From the jagati level, there are four stone steps that leads the devotee into the temple's sabha mandapa inside. The hall appears to be rectangular, yet consists of two fused squares and a rectangle. A small square is at the entrance, the largest square in the middle, and a rectangle facing the three sanctum (garbha griya), all supported by intricately carved pillars. The main hall opens to each sanctum through a small square shaped puja mandapa. The three sanctums house Keshava (image lost), Janardhana and Venugopala. Above each of these sanctums rise the 16 pointed star shaped North Indian style tower (shikara). Wall panel relief and molding frieze around the main Kesava Temple The outer wall of the main temple consists of parallel horizontal bands of artwork carved above the circumambulatory platform. It has three major section, the basement band, the wall band and the top band. The lowest band in the basement section is about 6 inches tall and shows a row of elephants mostly marching to the left in the clockwise direction the devotee is expected to walk. The elephants are not exact copy of each other, rather show different natural expressions and playfulness of elephants. Some show elephants in war, throwing enemies; while others show them teasing the riders in front. The band above the elephants is of horses with armed riders, depicting a military march. In some spots, camels substitute for horses suggesting that the Hoysala had adopted camels into their army. Some spots also show battle scene with horses. In various places, the artists added humor by placing dwarfs and monkeys supporting the front raised leg of the horses. The band above the horsemen friezes is a scroll of nature. It shows flowers, fruits, occasionally some peacocks and wildlife. The band above it is the mythology frieze. It is about 7 inches tall, around 2.5 feet above the platform, and it depicts the legends and spiritual stories found in the Ramayana (up to face 5), the Puranas particularly the Bhagavata Purana (from face 6 to 11) and lastly the Mahabharata. There are numerous panels around the temple that tell the various Hindu fables and stories. The Somanathapura town was founded in the 13th century by a general named Somanatha (Someya Dandanayaka in some inscriptions). He was working for the Hoysala King Narasimha III. Somanatha created an Agrahara, that is granted land to Brahmins and dedicated resources to build and maintain temples therein. The town (pura) became known after the name of the patron, Somanatha-pura. The location is also referred by alternate spellings, such as Somnathpur. In the middle of the new settlement, Somanatha built the Kesava temple and consecrated it in 1258 CE. This was a Vaishnavism tradition temple. In addition to this temple, Somanatha consecrated a Shaivism tradition related Panchalinga temple (literally, "five linga temple") in the east-northeast corner of the land grant. He also built a fort wall around the land, but these are now in ruins. According to the inscriptions and textual evidence, Somanatha additionally built the Purahara, Narasimhesvara, Murahara, Lakshminarasimha and

Yoganarayana temples in Hoysala style in the region, but all these temples except the Lakshminarasimha have disappeared, after wars between the Hindu kingdoms and Muslim Sultanates ravaged the region. The Lakshminarasimha temple is also in ruins. From the other disappeared temples, the sanctum image of Yoganarayana temple is only known surviving artwork, but it too is in a damaged form. The Kesava temple too was badly damaged, according to 15th-century inscriptions. It was repaired in the 16th century with financial support and grants by the emperors of the Vijayanagara Empire. The repairs are evidenced by the different color of stones and quality of work in the veranda and parts of the northern tower and platform of the main temple. The repaired temple was damaged in the 19th century, then repaired again in the early 20th century by the colonial era Mysore government. A part of the inscription stone at Keshava temple entrance. The Kesava temple is one of some 1,500 Hindu and Jain temples built by the Hoysala Empire kings in different parts of their kingdom. The other well studied Hoysala temples include those at Belur and Halebidu. A few of the significant historical dates and circumstances around the Kesava temple is inscribed in eight stones in different parts of South India. Four of the inscriptions are found on soapstone slabs at the entrance of the temple. Two inscriptions are found in the ceilings of the veranda that surrounds the temple, one near the southeast corner and the other about the northwest corner. Another inscription is found near Harihareshwara Temple on the banks of the Tungabhadra River. The eighth inscription is found in the Shiva temple at the periphery of the original land grant, the Panchalinga temple. Most of these inscriptions confirm that the temple was operational about mid 13th century. Two inscriptions, one dated 1497 CE and another to 1550 CE describe the damage and the repairs done to this temple. Chennakesava Temple is in Somanathapura, which is near Mysore. You can get on a bus from Bangalore, Mysore and Srirangapatna. The month of October is the right time to visit this temple. Official Address

Kodlamane, Uttara kannada, Karnataka

Kodlamane, Uttara kannada, Karnataka The temple is very beautiful which will take the pilgrims to the world of devotion. The Temple is designed and built on Vedic Hindu temple architecture. It has Garbhagriha, Antarala, Sandya Mandap, Maha Mandap, Pradakshina, Subsidiary Shrines, Bali Peetha, Garuda Stambha. The Garbhagriha is Sanctum sanctorum facing east where presiding deity Lord Vishnumurthy is residing along with other deities which are Lord Maheshwar (in the form of Shiva Linga), Lord Ganapati, Devi Durga. Sacred Saligram are also there which is which is symbol of God Vishnu. Utsav Murthy (Lord Vishnumurthy processional deity) is also residing at Garbhagriha which will be taken out on special occasions. They all are in Mandan, hence called Devata worshiped in Mandan. Lord Vishnumurthy is in standing posture with four hands holding Shanka, Chakra, Gada, Padma. The murthy also called Vighraha or Idol is carved in sacred black natural stone. Murthy height is about 3.5 ft from peetha to top of crown and peetha is 1.5 ft height. The Garbhagriha is square shape built with natural stones and Shikhara or Gopura or Vimana above sanctum sanctorum is octagon which is also built by natural stones. The roof of Shikhara is covered by Copper sheets (which passes higher energy). Kalash is fixed on top of copper roof called Shikhara Kalash which is gold plated on copper. After the Antarala in Sandya Mandap there is Kuladevata Stan who is Shree Kamakshi Devi of Shiroda, a Goddess of Shakti. The whole set up is called Garbhagudi. The roof of Garbhagudi is coved with copper sheets. The walls and pillars of Garbhagudi are beautifully painted in Kaavi art , depicting Dashavatars of Mahavishnu, Ganapati, Saraswati, Hanumatha, Garuda, Temple chariot, pallaki, flowers etc. Whole Garbhagudi is elevated around 3 feet above the pradakshina level. On either side of first door of Garbhagudi there is Jaya-Vijaya beautifully carved in natural black stone. Garbhagudi has 3 doors facing east looking at Holy River of Sharavati which flows within 500 m. Garbhagudi has 3 doors. Its door frame carved from natural stone. Beautifully carved wooden doors fixed over the 3 stone door frames, and are in descending order height width, which is very well planned architecture. Wood used is Shivani for door frame and jack fruit for door leaf. First door of garbhagudi (door of sandya mandap) has Shree Yoga Narasimha on top and Shree Hanuman on left and Shree garuda on right side on door frame. The whole door is matt painted in dark chocolate colour, thus gives feel of an stone or metal. Second door which is for Antarala is covered with pure silver and Shree Astha Lakshi on top. Third door which is door of garbhagriha is also covered with pure silver with Shree Lakshmi-Narayan to top. Artists have shown their best in wooden and silver carving. Oil lamps are placed both sides of garbhagriha door which is very appealing, gives feel of ancient temple. Pilgrims are not allowed to enter garbhagudi. The pradakshina (going round of garbhagudi clockwise) will lead to other shrines which are Shree Mukhyaprana first on right side facing north and Shree Yakshi or Yakshini Shrine (where sanyasi peetha is presided) on left side facing east. They are called Parivar Devatas. Then it will lead to Yagna Mandap (Yagna Shala). The main temple building door is facing east. In second prakara (also called

as Prakaram to east(front side) there are other small shrines of Shree Jataka, Shree Nag and Shree Chawndi, Garuda Stamba, Bali Peetha and Tulasi, to south (left side) is Vishnu Tirth, to west (behind) is paak shala (temple kitchen) where prasada or naivedya is prepared, to north (right side) is function hall. Pilgrims who will enter temple main gate from north side will come to second prakara which will lead to temple main door. Before entering the main gate, there is Shree Kshetra pala Peetha on hill forest, who is there to safeguard the whole temple premise and Kodlamane. Kodlamane Shree Vishnumurthy Temple : of Serenity and Mystery,[1] is situated in a heavenly beautiful hill forest in Shree Parashurama Kshetra called Kodlamane. A beautiful stream flows next to the temple which is called Vishnu Tirtha. This temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu(or Mahavishnu is same)who is only giver of Moksha or Mukti. This is very ancient untarnished Tirth Kshetra, an Hindu pilgrimage site. Visiting such a Shrine away from the crowd is pleasing for the heart. There is no other place like this anywhere in Brahamanda. This temple is a place of great spiritual significance and great Mukti Stal. From the temple Mahadwar (arch) one can reach by tar road in hill forest or trekking in hill forest(ancient route) to reach temple. The temple is just a km from Idagunji and 23 km from Honnavar Taluk, in the Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka state, India. This temple is famous of Darshana Seva. Official Address

ISKCON Temple, Bangalore, karnataka

ISKCON Temple, Bangalore, karnataka In 1987, the society was operating from a rented house in Bangalore. In the year 1987, the leaders of the society applied to Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) for allotment of land to construct a grand temple and cultural complex. The land was allotted on 3 August 1988 – a seven-acre hillock, which was nothing but a huge piece of monolithic rock that could not be converted into sites. The BDA described it as “karaab land” (waste land). A temporary shed was constructed to set up a makeshift temple and the Deities of Sri Sri Krishna Balarama moved to this shed on the appearance day of Lord Balarama (September 1988). Around 1976, devotees from different parts of India and the world had initiated activities of ISKCON in different parts of South India like Bangalore, Hubli, Madras, etc. Sankirtans in the streets, enrolling Life Members, arranging programs in the houses, and arranging large public programs in pandals were being conducted. The society was registered in the year 1978 under the Karnataka Societies Registration Act, 1960. The objects of the society are derived from the Seven Purposes of ISKCON as stated by Srila Prabhupada. In May 1997, Bangalore ISKCON Temple was inaugurated by the ninth president of India – Shankar Dayal Sharma. Official Address

Hoysaleswara Temple, Hassan, karnataka

Hoysaleswara Temple, Hassan, karnataka Hoysaleswara temple, also referred simply as the Halebidu temple, is a 12th-century Hindu temple dedicated to Shiva. It is the largest monument in Halebidu, a town in the state of Karnataka, India and the former capital of the Hoysala Empire. The temple was built on the banks of a large man-made lake, and sponsored by King Vishnuvardhana of the Hoysala Empire. Its construction started around 1121 CE and was complete in 1160 CE. During the early 14th century, Halebidu was twice sacked and plundered by the Muslim armies of Delhi Sultanate from northern India, and the temple and the capital fell into a state of ruin and neglect. It is 30 kilometres (19 mi) from Hassan city and about 210 kilometres (130 mi) from Bengaluru. The Hoysaleswara temple is a Shaivism tradition monument, yet reverentially includes many themes from Vaishnavism and Shaktism tradition of Hinduism, as well as images from Jainism.[9] The Hoysaleswara temple is a twin-temple dedicated to Hoysaleswara and Santaleswara Shiva lingas, named after the masculine and feminine aspects, both equal and joined at their transept. It has two Nandi shrines outside, where each seated Nandi face the respective Shiva linga inside. The temple includes a smaller sanctum for the Hindu Sun god Surya. It once had superstructure towers, but no longer and the temple looks flat. The temple faces east, though the monument is presently visited from the north side. Both the main temples and the Nandi shrines are based on a square plan. The temple was carved from soapstone. It is notable for its sculptures, intricate reliefs, detailed friezes as well its history, iconography, inscriptions in North Indian and South Indian scripts. The temple artwork provides a pictorial window into the life and culture in the 12th century South India. About 340 large reliefs depict the Hindu theology and associated legends. Numerous smaller friezes narrate Hindu texts such as the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Bhagavata Purana. Some friezes below large reliefs portray its narrative episodes. The artwork in Hoysaleswara temple is damaged but largely intact. Within a few kilometers of the temple are numerous ruins of Hoysala architecture. The temple along with the nearby Jain Temples and the Kedareshwara temple, along with the Kesava temple in Belur have been proposed to be listed

under UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The Hoysala period of South Indian history began about 1000 CE and continued through 1346 CE. In this period, they built around 1,500 temples in 958 centres. Halebidu was originally called Dvarasamudra (or Dorasamudra), a name derived from two Sanskrit words “Dvara” (gateway, door) and Samudra (ocean, sea, large water body). The capital used to be Belur, Karnataka, but Dvarasamudra became the established capital under king Vishnuvardhana and served as the capital of the Hoysala Empire for nearly 300 years. Unlike other Hoysala temples that have survived into the modern age, and despite numerous inscriptions in the temple premises, the Hoysaleswara Temple lacks a dedication inscription. It is likely lost, along with the many other features of the original temple. An inscription found about five kilometers from the temple site, near the Kallesvara temple ruins in Ghattadahalli, states that Ketamalla – officer in the employ of king Vishnuvardhana constructed this temple. It also notes that the king made grant of lands to support the construction, the operation and the maintenance of the Shiva temple in Saka 1043, or 1121 CE. It was not the only temple built in that era. The inscriptions suggest that the capital consisted of numerous other temples, both of Hinduism and Jainism traditions, along with stepwells, ponds and mantapas (mandapas, public halls) in the vicinity of the large Dorasamudra lake. Evidence within the temple suggest that the temple was reconstructed and repaired over its history, sometimes for enhancements, sometimes to address structural issue with the towers above it (now missing), and sometimes after wars with the remains of ruined temples elsewhere in the region. It is the largest temple built by the Hoysalas that is dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva in South India. The Hoysala Empire and its capital Dvarasamudra was invaded, plundered and destroyed in early 14th century by the Delhi Sultanate armies of Alauddin Khilji, with Belur and Halebidu becoming the target of plunder and destruction in 1326 CE by another Delhi Sultanate army of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughlaq. The territory was taken over by the Vijayanagara Empire. The Hoysala style, states James C. Harle, came to an end in mid 14th century, when King Ballala III was killed in a war with the Muslim army led by Malik Kafur. Dvarasamudra and its temples became ruins, the capital abandoned and the site became known as “Halebidu” (literally, “old camp or capital”). About 300 of the original Hoysala Empire temples survive in different states of damage, scattered around the Halebid region. Of these, states Hardy, about 70 had been studied to varying degrees of detail by 1995. The Hoysaleswara Temple is in Halebidu, also called Halebeedu, Halebid, Dorasamudra. Halebidu is a town in Hassan district of the Indian state of Karnataka. It is about 30 kilometres (19 mi) northwest of Hassan. The temple is about 16 kilometres (9.9 mi) from Belur, Karnataka temples. Halebidu has no nearby airport, and is about 210 kilometres (130 mi) west of Bengaluru (IATA Code: BLR), about 4 hours drive accessible with a four lane NH75 highway through Hassan. Halebidu is connected by railway network at Hassan to major cities of Karnataka. Official Address

Hampi, Ballari, Karnataka

Hampi, Ballari, Karnataka Hampi, also referred to as the Group of Monuments at Hampi, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site located in east-central Karnataka, India. It became the centre of the Hindu Vijayanagara Empire capital in the 14th century. Chronicles left by Persian and European travellers, particularly the Portuguese, state Hampi was a prosperous, wealthy and grand city near the Tungabhadra River, with numerous temples, farms and trading markets. By 1500 CE, Hampi-Vijayanagara was the world’s second-largest medieval-era city after Beijing, and probably India’s richest at that time, attracting traders from Persia and Portugal.[3][4] The Vijayanagara Empire was defeated by a coalition of Muslim sultanates; its capital was conquered, pillaged and destroyed by sultanate armies in 1565, after which Hampi remained in ruins. Located in Karnataka near the modern-era city of Hosapete, Hampi’s ruins are spread over 4,100 hectares (16 sq mi) and it has been described by UNESCO as an “austere, grandiose site” of more than 1,600 surviving remains of the last great Hindu kingdom in South India that includes “forts, riverside features, royal and sacred complexes, temples, shrines, pillared halls, mandapas, memorial structures, water structures and others”. Hampi predates the Vijayanagara Empire; there is evidence of Ashokan epigraphy, and it is mentioned in the Ramayana and the Puranas of Hinduism as Pampaa Devi Tirtha Kshetra. Hampi continues to be an important religious centre, housing the Virupaksha Temple, an active Adi Shankara-linked monastery and various monuments belonging to the old city. The toponym Hampi—traditionally known as Pampa-kshetra, Kishkindha-kshetra or Bhaskara-kshetra—is derived from Pampa, another name of goddess in Hindu theology. According to mythology, the maiden Parvati resolves to marry the loner ascetic Shiva. Her parents learn of her desire and discourage her, but she pursues her desire. Shiva is lost in yogic meditation, oblivious to the world; Parvati appeals to the gods for help to awaken him and gain his attention. Indra sends the god Kama—the Hindu god of desire, erotic love, attraction and affection—to awake Shiva from meditation. Kama reaches Shiva and shoots an arrow of desire. Shiva opens his third eye in

his forehead and burns Kama to ashes. Parvati does not lose her hope or her resolve to win over Shiva; she begins to live like him and engage in the same activities—asceticism, yogin and tapasya—awakening him and attracting his interest. Shiva meets Parvati in disguised form and tries to discourage her, telling her Shiva's weaknesses and personality problems. Parvati refuses to listen and insists in her resolve. Shiva finally accepts her and they get married. According to Sthala Purana, Parvati (Pampa) pursued her ascetic, yogini lifestyle on Hemakuta Hill, now a part of Hampi, to win and bring ascetic Shiva back into householder life. Shiva is also called Pampapati (lit. "husband of Pampa"). The river near the Hemakuta Hill came to be known as Pampa river. The Sanskrit word Pampa morphed into the Kannada word Hampa and the place Parvati pursued Shiva came to be known as Hampe or Hampi. The site was an early medieval era pilgrimage place known as Pampakshetra. Its fame came from the Kishkindha chapters of the Hindu epic Ramayana, where Rama and Lakshmana meet Hanuman, Sugriva and the monkey army in their search for kidnapped Sita. The Hampi area has many close resemblances to the place described in the epic. The regional tradition believes that it is that place mentioned in the Ramayana, attracting pilgrims Hampi is situated on the banks of the Tungabhadra River in the eastern part of central Karnataka near the state border with Andhra Pradesh. It is 376 kilometres (234 mi) from Bangalore, 385 kilometres (239 mi) from Hyderabad and 266 kilometres (165 mi) from Belgaum. The closest railway station is in Hosapete (Hospet), 13 kilometres (8.1 mi) away. During the winter, overnight buses and trains connect Hampi with Goa, Secunderabad and Bangalore. It is 140 kilometres (87 mi) southeast of the Badami and Aihole archaeological sites Official Address

Halebidu, Hassan, Karnataka

Halebidu, Hassan, Karnataka Halebidu (IAST: Haḷēbīḍ, also Halebeedu or Halebid, literally "old capital, encampment") is a town located in Hassan District, Karnataka, India. Halebidu (which used to be called Dorasamudra or Dwarasamudra) was the regal capital of the Hoysala Empire in the 12th century. It is home to some of the best examples of Hoysala architecture. Most notable are the ornate Hoysaleswara and Kedareshwara temples. The city got the name "Halebidu" because it was damaged and deserted into "old capital" after being ransacked and looted twice by Islamic forces of the Delhi Sultanate in the 14th-century. Halebidu is located in Hassan district in Karnataka. Ketumalla, the chief of staff of Hoysala Kingdom, built this temple during 1121 A.D and attributed to his king, Vishnuvardhana and queen, Shantala Devi. Even then it is learnt that it took 105 years to complete. If one stands on the platform of the temple and sees around he will see the hills opposite and two big bulls facing the temple and Ganesha figure on the south. It is believed that Queen Shantala Devi, was an epitome of beauty and fashion, she was also a great Bharatnatyam dancer and musician. Sculptors were inspired by this and the Shilabalikas, the dancing figures, are models of Queen Shantala Devi and her courtisans. History of Hoysalas mentions Shantala Devi had great influence in the administration and religious reforms during Vishnuvardhana reign. She was follower of Jainism and the King follower of Sri Vaishnavism and was influenced by Saint Ramanuja Charya. In the 14th century, this glorious city fell into ruins with the invasion of Malik Kafur, Mughuls, from the North India. This place was ransacked and plundered repeatedly rendering it in ruins. Hence its name Halebid, meaning "City in Ruins". Monolithic soapstone or Chloritic Schist was used for the construction of these temples. The God on the northern side temple is called as Shanthaleswara and that on southern side is called as Hoysaleswara. The walls of the temple are covered with an endless depictions from Hindu mythology, animals, birds and Shilabalikas. Yet no two postures of the sculptures are similar. Built after Shantala Devi, queen of king Vishnuvardhana. The Shantaleswara temple on the northern side stands on a platform like a casket in shining black soft stone – chlorite schist covered with variety of gods and goddesses, animals, birds and dancing girls. The temple took 190 years to build requiring skills of more than 20,000 laborers. It has a Museum on the lawns that showcases 12th-century sculptures and gold coins in use at the time. One km from Halebid is Basti hill with Jain bastis with gleaming black stone pillars. Also check out Basdi Halli, a group of 3 Jain temples situated very near the Hoysaleswara temple that is famous for carved ceilings, highly polished Blackstone pillars. The Parshwanatha Swamy temple is the most important and well-preserved one. The idol is 14 feet tall and is carved out of Blackstone and bears a 7 headed serpent on its head. By Road: Halebidu is well connected by road and rail to Bangalore, Mysore and Mangalore. Regular buses ply from Hassan. Official Address

Gokarna, Uttara Kannada, Karnataka

Gokarna, Uttara Kannada, Karnataka Gokarna is a small temple town on the western coast of India in the Kumta taluk of Uttara Kannada district of the state of Karnataka. The main temple and deity is Lord Shiva, who is also known as Mahabaleshwara. This temple houses what is believed to be original image of Lord Shiva's linga (Atmalinga). There are many other temples all over this small town. Ankola and Kumta on NH66 are the main towns near Gokarna and Bhatkal and Karwar are the main cities near Gokarna where almost all trains stops. Gokarna is known as one of the seven important Hindu pilgrimage centers. It is on what was once an unspoiled beach near the estuary of the river Aghanashini. Recently, due to the influx of tourists, the character of the town has changed; it is no longer just a centre of pilgrimage, though large numbers of devotees visit to offer prayers and worship to Lord Shiva. Due to its laid-back, unspoiled and rustic nature many younger western tourists started visiting Gokarna about a decade ago. The beaches around Gokarna were hardly used by the locals until these mainly western tourists started coming. Enterprising locals started stores and restaurants, and now the resorts also cater to wealthier tourists.

The earliest history of the city is in Tretayuga, Ravana (Demon/Asura King of Lanka) reaches Kailasa and performed rigorous penance to get the "Atma Linga" from Lord Shiva, as Ravana's mother expressed a keen desire to worship the atmalinga of Lord Shiva.[5][6] After a long penance, Shiva gave the Atma linga to Ravana as a boon and instructs Ravana to carry it home by walk, that he should never place it on the earth even for a short while failing which the linga would get eternally embedded at the place where he broke his commands. Lord Maha Vishnu learned that Ravana will become all powerful by worshipping the 'Atma Linga' and menace to the world and Ravana's conviction that nobody could defeat him, once he acquired the very power of Shiva. Maha vishnu devised a plan to install the linga somewhere and as he thought that Lord Ganapati was alone capable of doing it, he along with all the gods pleased Ganapati to execute the plan. Lord Ganapati accepts and reaches Gokarna as a Brahmin boy. As Ravana was nearing Gokarna, Maha Vishnu who had known well that Ravana was punctual in performing his periodical rites (Sandyavandhana), hides sun with his Sudarshana Chakra (Wheel). Thinking that it was time to perform the evening rites, Ravana finds a Brahmin boy and asked him to hold the Atmalinga in his hand till he came back after finishing the rites. Ganapati agreed to hold the linga on one condition that he would do so till he would be able to bear the weight of linga and that thereafter he would call Ravana three times and if failed to come to him by then he would place the linga on the earth. Ganapati calls Ravana three times when he was performing his rites and places the linga on the earth and he vanished. The Atmalinga at once got firmly entrenched in the earth. Ravana learned that he had been tricked by the Gods. The depressed demon king Ravana was deeply agitated and tried to pull up the linga, but the linga did not budge a little. It resulted in his throwing the coverings of the Linga to Dhareshwara, Gunavanteshwara, Murudeshwara and Shejjeshwar temples. Ravana was unable to lift the linga from the ground again and called the Shiva linga as Mahabala, one with great strength, and ever since, the linga illustrious as Mahabaleshwara. Shiva learned all these from Vayu Deva, the god of wind, and came on to Earth with Goddess Parvathi devi and his train of Gods, he visited these five places and worshipped the linga which had now taken five forms. He acknowledged that these five places would be his "Pancha Kshetras" (Five Holy Places) A sect of Brahmins fled from the Gomantak to escape forcible conversions by the Portuguese and British and settled in and around Gokarna in the 15th century. It was part of the Sodhe and Vijayanagar kingdoms. When the Konkan region — including Goa — was occupied by the Portuguese, it became part of their rule. A few temples were destroyed by the Portuguese in 1714, rebuilt in the 18th century, and under the supervision of Guru H. H. Shrimad Anandashram Swamiji in 1928. Official Address

Ghati Subramanya, Bangalore, Karnataka

Ghati Subramanya, Bangalore, Karnataka Ghati Subramanya kannada is an ancient Hindu temple, situated on the outskirts of Bangalore near Tubagere, Doddaballapura. It is 60 km from the city and is a popular pilgrimage centre. The uniqueness of this temple is that the prime deity Lord Karthikeya, is found together with Lord Narasimha. According to mythology, both idols are believed to have emerged from the earth. It is also an important centre in South India for snake worship. Special rituals are performed during Brahmarathotsava, i.e., on the day of Pushya shudda Shashti. Narasimha Jayanti is the other major festival celebrated here. Ghati Subramanya has a recorded history of more than 600 years. It was first developed by the Ghorpade rulers of Sandur who ruled parts of Bellary. The high pyramid shaped gateway tower of the temple is one of the most distinctive features, a perfect example of Dravidian architecture. It is adorned with sculptures of various deities and events of Hindu mythology. It is believed that the idols have always been present here, and according to the legend, the idols of Karthikeya and Narasimha emerged from the ground and the temple was built around it. There is an anthill which is opposite the temple and devotees pour milk

on it as part of one of the rituals. One of the distinguishing aspects of this temple is that one can find two deities here – Lord Subramanya and Lord Narasimha. The idols are found in the sanctum of the temple. The idol of Lord Subramanya, in his serpentine form, faces the east while the idol of Lord Narasimha sits at the back of the former and faces the west. Devotees can view the idol of Lord Narasimha through a strategically placed mirror, allowing both deities to be worshipped at the same time. The idol of Lord Subramanya or Karthikeya is made from a single stone. It is believed that on this spot, the deity Lord Subramanya was performing penance in the form of a snake. Lord Subramanya prayed to Lord Narasimha to provide the Naga's family from Lord Vishnu's vehicle, the Garuda, known for his dislike towards serpents. Lord Subramanya's form is that of a seven-hooded snake and it is believed that this is the region where he vanquished Ghatikasura, the demon. The temple is believed to be more than 600 years old, according to the written records, while its origin might go back many more years. The construction of the Ghati Subramanya temple is attributed to Ghorpade, who belonged to the Sandur dynasty. It is believed that the deity appeared in the dreams of the king, revealing the whereabouts of the idols. The king, with the help of the locals, discovered the self-manifested idol of the deity and then commissioned a temple to be built around them. The Ghati Subramanya temple is one of the most major spots for snake worship in Southern India.

Brahmarathotsava is one of the important days at the temple, celebrated with special rituals. Another major festival at the Ghati Subramanya temple is Narasimha Jayanti. In December, this temple provides the venue for a fair. Agriculturists, cattle rearers and traders converge for this cattle fair from neighbouring states like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Kerala, along with people from all over Karnataka. Some of the major rituals that can be performed at the temple include Kuja Dosha, Naga Pratistha, Sarpa Dosha and Nivarana Puja. It is a firm belief of devotees that the temple should be visited by childless couples so that they may be able to conceive. Another ritual practiced here is the installation of snake idols near the temple, which is believed to be an auspicious act and offering. Visitors to the temple are greeted with the sight of thousands of such idols around the complex, planted by devotees. Ghati Subramanya is about 60km from Bangalore. The most popular route is via Doddaballapura. If opting for a public transport, direct routes to Ghati from Bangalore are pretty less in number and one may have to change over at Doddaballapura. The closest airport to the temple is the Bangalore International Airport, which is 48 kilometres away. From the airport, the most convenient route would be the NH648 and the journey time would be a little over an hour. The closest railway station is in Bangalore city, 60 kilometres away. From the City Railway station, one has to traverse via the Bellary Road to reach the temple, a journey of around 90 minutes to 2 hours. Bellary Road is the main arterial road that connects Ghati Subramanya temple to the urban areas around it. From the centre of Bangalore, the distance to the temple is around 61 kilometres. If one is travelling by bus, then there are buses that pass through Doddaballapura, where local transport needs to be arranged to cover the remaining short distance to the temple. Official Address

Gavi Gangadhareshwara Temple, Bengaluru, Karnataka

Gavi Gangadhareshwara Temple, Bengaluru, Karnataka The inner sanctum of the temple has a tall Shivalinga. Another major attraction of the temple is the presence of a rare idol of Agni, the God of fire. The figure has two heads, seven hands and three legs. It is perhaps the only temple in South India that has such an idol. The temple has a wonderful sculpture of Nandi (a bull), Shiva's mount. A beautiful image of Shakti Ganapathi with 12 hands adorns the left side of the main entrance to the temple. This cave temple dedicated to Shiva in Bengaluru is a well visited temple. Built in the 16th century AD by Kempe Gowda, the founder of Bengaluru, Temple Gavi Gangadhareshwara is an architectural marvel that attracts the faithful by the hordes. One of the oldest temples in Bengaluru, Gavi Gangadhareshwara temple was built by Kempe Gowda in recognition after being released from prison of five years by Rama Raya. There are other idols inside idol Agnimurthi including having two heads, seven hands and three legs. Those who worship this deity believe will cure one of the defects of the eye. The temple is also known for its four monolithic pillars, representing Damaru, Trishul and two fans on the patio. Built in a natural cave in Gavipuram, the temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and cut into a monolithic stone. The courtyard of the temple here contains several monolithic sculptures. The main attractions of Gavi Gangadhareshwara temple are two granite pillars that support the giant disk of the sun and moon, while the other two have a number of Nandi at the top. On the occasion of Makar Sankranti, temple witnesses a unique phenomenon in the evening sunlight passes through an arc between the horns of Nandi and falls directly on the linga inside the cave and illuminating the interior idol. This phenomenon is a proof of the technical excellence of the ancient architects. Official Address

Dharmaraya Swamy Temple, Bengaluru, Karnataka

Dharmaraya Swamy Temple, Bengaluru, Karnataka When we look at the history of the temple, it is believed that the temple was constructed by the Ganga Arasu people. These people also known as Vanhi Kula Kshatriyas or “Thigalas” The Archeology survey department which has undertaken a study of the stone and masonry has concluded that this temple is about 800 years old. It is also learnt that when Bangalore city was built by Kempe Gowda in the 16th century, the Kempegowda Gopuras (towers) were built in the four corners of the city keeping the Sri Dharmarayaswamy Temple vimanagopura kalasa as a centre point. The four towers are the Ulsoor tower in the North-East, The Bellary Road Tower in the North-West, The Lalbagh Tower in the South-East, The Gavipura Tower in the South-West. The Ganga Arasu or Ganga Arasu kings used to build their towns near lakes or river beds and also, built their temples at a lower level to the ground with a further lower level pradakshina patha. Sri Dharmaraya Swamy temple was built in the Sidhikatte lake bed area & it is below the land level that existed prior to current Bangalore. It is also learnt that this old town was called as Kalyanapuri, a Town of Temples, Ponds & Religious centres. Later, it was named as “Bendhakaluru” and then as “Bengaluru”. The temple resembles the architectural features of the Gangas, the Pallavas and the Vijayanagara styles. The garbhagruha is in Ganga style, the vimanagopura is in Pallava style and the mukhamantapa is in Vijayanagar style, which shows the development of this temple in three different ages. The fourth stage of development of rajagopura and sabhangana was taken up in the 20th century. The earlier rajagopura was built well before Kempe Gowda founded Bangalore in the year 1530 A.D. Kempe Gowda was an ardent devotee of this temple. Bangalore city was designed keeping this temple as its reference. The temple area was developed as Halasuru pete. This area is also known as Kalyanapuri. The temple had vast area around with a Kalyani & Dharmachatra, which however are not found today. There were Pallavas style carved chambers between prangana & the newly built sabhangana, these carved chambers were removed and replaced by Ashtalakshmi Idols. The study quotes that the vimanagopura which is in the Pallava style matches with that of the Magadi temples & Halasuru temples built by Kempe Gowda. By Air: Bangalore is well connected to all other major cities by air and hence, you can catch a direct flight to Bangalore airport. From the airport, you can hire a direct cab to Dharmaraya Swamy Temple. The distance between the temple and the airport is 36 km. By Rail: There are direct trains available to Bangalore railway station from all the major cities and towns. From the station, you can take a taxi to the temple, which is located in the Thigalarpet locality. By Road: You can either catch a bus or drive on your own directly to Dharmaraya Swamy Temple in Bangalore as it is well connected to other cities and towns by road. Official Address

Devarayanadurga, Tumkuru, karnatka

Devarayanadurga, Tumkuru, karnatka The temples at this hill station include Bhoganarasimha, Yoganarasimha and the Laxmi Narasimha. Devarayanadurga has three distinct elevations. The Bhoganarasimha temple lies at the foothills while the Yoganarasimha shrine is located at the top of the hill. The Laxmi Narasimha temple lies on the first elevation. Yet another attraction here is the natural Namada Chilume spring. Local legend claims that the spring gushed out when an arrow from Lord Rama’s bow pierced the ground here. The devout claim Rama’s footprint has been impressed on the ground near the spring. The forests contain a cultivated nursery with rare Ayurvedic plants and the car festival and Sri Narasimha Jayanti are celebrated with much fervour. Devarayanadurga lies 65 km from Bangalore. The nearest railway station is at Tumkur and the area also has excellent bus connections. By Road :Several private, state, air conditioned and deluxe buses for Devarayanadurga are available from Bangalore By Train: Tumkur Railway Station is nearest railway junction to Devarayanadurga, situated at a distance of about 18 km. The railway station is well connected to all the major cities and towns in India. Trains for Tumkur are available from cities, such as Bangalore, Delhi, Mumbai and Mysore, to name a few. Travellers can hire taxis to reach Devarayanadurga from here. By Air :Tourists from several cities, like Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi and Kolkata, can visit Devarayanadurga via Bangalore International Airport, which is the nearest airport. Situated at a distance of about 71 km from Devarayanadurga, it is ideal for tourists coming from international destinations as well, including European, Asian, American and Middle East countries, among others Contact Details Official Address

Chennakeshava Temple, Belur, Hassan, Karnataka

Chennakeshava Temple, Belur, Hassan, Karnataka The Chennakeshava Temple, also referred to as Keshava, Kesava or Vijayanarayana Temple of Belur, is a 12th-century Hindu temple in the Hassan district of Karnataka state, India. It was commissioned by King Vishnuvardhana in 1117 CE, on the banks of

the Yagachi River in Belur also called Velapura, an early Hoysala Empire capital. The temple was built over three generations and took 103 years to finish. It was repeatedly damaged and plundered during wars, repeatedly rebuilt and repaired over its history. It is 35 km from Hassan city and about 200 km from Bengaluru. Chennakesava (lit, “handsome Kesava”) is a form of the Hindu god Vishnu. The temple is dedicated to Vishnu and has been an active Hindu temple since its founding. It is reverentially described in medieval Hindu texts, and remains an important pilgrimage site in Vaishnavism. The temple is remarkable for its architecture, sculptures, reliefs, friezes as well its iconography, inscriptions and history. The temple artwork depicts scenes of secular life in the 12th century, dancers and musicians, as well as a pictorial narration of Hindu texts such as the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Puranas through numerous friezes. It is a Vaishnava temple that reverentially includes many themes from Shaivism and Shaktism, as well as images of a Jina from Jainism and the Buddha from Buddhism. The Chennakeshava temple is a testimony to the artistic, cultural and theological perspectives in 12th century South India and the Hoysala Empire rule. The Belur temple complex along with the nearby Hindu and Jain Temples at Halebidu have been proposed to be listed under UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The Hoysala period of South Indian history began about 1000 CE and continued through 1346 CE. In this period, they built around 1,500 temples in 958 centres. Belur is called Beluhur, Velur or Velapura in old inscriptions and medieval era texts. It was the early capital of the Hoysala kings. The city was so esteemed by the Hoysalas that it is referred to as “earthly Vaikuntha” (Vishnu’s abode) and “dakshina Varanasi” (southern holy city of Hindus) in later inscriptions. One of the Hoysala kings was Vishnuvardhana, who came to power in 1110 CE. He commissioned the Chennakeshava temple dedicated to Vishnu in 1117 CE after an important military victory in 1116 CE. According to a later mythology, Vishnuvardhana built this temple to mark his conversion to Sri Vaishnavism after coming under the influence of Ramanuja, but states Shadakshari Settar, the historical records do not support this theory. The Chennakeshava temple at Belur took 103 years to build. Vishnuvardhana moved his capital to Dvarasamudra (now called Halebidu), where he started the construction of the Hoysaleswara Temple dedicated to Shiva. Its construction continued till he died in 1140 CE. His legacy was continued by his descendants who completed the Hoysaleswara Temple in 1150 CE, and the Chennakesava Temple, Somanathapura in 1258 CE. The Hoysalas employed many noted architects and artisans who developed a new architectural tradition, which art critic Adam Hardy called the Karnata Dravida tradition. The Hoysala Empire and its capital was invaded, plundered and destroyed in the early 14th century by Malik Kafur, a commander of the Delhi Sultanate ruler Alauddin Khalji. Belur and Halebidu became the target of plunder and destruction in 1326 CE by another Delhi Sultanate army. The territory was taken over by the Vijayanagara Empire. The Hoysala style, states James C. Harle, came to an end in the mid 14th century, when King Ballala II was killed in a war with the Muslim army led by Malik Kafur. The Chennakeshava Temple is located in Belur taluk in Hassan district of the Indian state of Karnataka. It is about 35 kilometres (22 mi) northwest of Hassan. The temple is about 16 kilometres (9.9 mi) from Halebidu temples. Belur has no nearby airport, and is about 200 kilometres (124 mi) west of Bengaluru (IATA Code: BLR), about 3.5 hours drive accessible with a four lane NH75 highway. Hassan is the closest city near Belur that is connected by railway network to major cities of Karnataka. The Chennakeshava Temple is an active Hindu temple and a major Vaishnava pilgrimage site. It is located on the banks of Yagachi River (also called Badari River in historic texts), a tributary of Hemavati River. Belur is where Chennakesava Temple is located so all transit routes need to go via the town. The other major urban areas around the temple include Hassan city. The Mangalore Airport is around 130 kilometres from Belur, while Bangalore International Airport is around 222 kilometres away. From the airports, the most ideal choice of travel is by road. The nearest railway station to the town of Belur is in Chikmagalur, which is 22 kilometres away. Hassan railway station is around 32 kilometres away from Belur town. There are many buses that ply between these towns. Bangalore city is 220 kilometres away from Belur via the NH75. If one is travelling from Mysore, the journey is 155 kilometres long via the SH 57. The coastal city of Mangalore is 153 kilometres away via the NH73. There are regular buses that ply to Belur from Hassan, Chikmagalur, Bangalore, Mysore and Mangalore. Official Address

Cheluvanarayana Swamy Temple, Mandya, Karnataka

Cheluvanarayana Swamy Temple, Mandya, Karnataka Cheluvanarayana Swamy Temple is located in Melkote in the Mandya District, Karnataka, India. The place is also known as Thirunarayanapura. It is built on rocky hills known as Yadavagiri or Yadugiri overlooking the Cauvery valley. It is about 30 miles (48 km) from Mysore and 97 miles (156 km) from Bangalore. The temple is a square building of large dimensions but is very plain and only sparsely ornamented with carvings or sculptures. The presiding deity

is Cheluva Narayana Swamy, also known as Tirunarayana ತಿರುನಾರಾಯಣ or Cheluvapille Raya ಚೆಲುವಪಿಲ್ಲೆ ರಾಯ, a form of Lord Vishnu. It appears from inscriptions that in the early centuries after the temple was built, the Lord was also known by the name Ramapriya, but this usage has now completely disappeared. The utsavamurthi ಉತ್ಸವ ಮೂರ್ತಿ, which is a metallic idol used for processions and certain religious rituals, represents the deity 'Cheluvanarayana Swamy. According to a legend, this metallic image was once lost but was recovered by Sri Ramanujacharya. The annual report of the Mysore Archaeological Department states on the strength of epigraphic evidence, that the presiding deity of this temple was already a well known object of worship even before Sri Ramanujacharya worshipped at the shrine in December 1098 CE. and even before he came to the Mysore region and that very probably he used his influence to rebuild or renovate the temple. From the lithic records of the period, existence of Tamil influence and Vaishnava worship in the area are also evident. The temple is richly endowed, having enjoyed the special patronage of the Rajas of Mysore. As early as 1614, King Raja Wodeyar I (r.1578–1617), who first acquired Srirangapatna and accepted the Srivaishnava pontiff as his guru, handed over to the temple and to the Brahmins at Melkote, the estate granted to him by Vijayanagar Emperor Venkatapati Raya. While that estate was lost when Zamindari was abolished in the 1950s, the temple still possesses many properties and valuables, in particular an extremely valuable collection of jewels. On one of the pillars of navaranga of the Narayanaswami temple is a bas-relief about one and a half feet high, of Raja Wodeyar, standing with folded hands, with his name inscribed on the base. He was said to have been a great devotee of the presiding deity and a frequent visitor to the temple. A gold crown set with precious jewels was presented by him to the temple. This crown is known as the Raja-mudi (royal crown), a play on the name of Raja Wodeyar, the donor. According to legend, King Raja Wodeyar was observed entering the sanctum sanctorum of the Lord on the day of his death, and was seen no more afterwards. From the inscriptions on some of the gold jewels and on gold and silver vessels in the temple it is learnt that they were presents from Krishnaraja Wadiyar III and his queens. Krishnaraja Wodeyar III also presented to the temple a crown set with precious jewels. It is known after him as Krishnaraja-mudi. The Vairamudi ("diamond crown"), another crown of great value, seems to be older than the Raja-mudi and the Krishnaraja-mudi. However, it is not known who presented it to the temple. All the three crowns are kept in the safe custody of the Government and brought to the temple on specific annual occasion for adoring the image of Cheluvanarayana Swamy. The vairamudi festival, which is the chief annual celebration is attended by more than 400,000 people. Cheluvanarayana Swamy Temple is over 1000 years old. The engravings on the temple mention the historical evidence of the temple. On one of the columns of navaranga is a bas relief, of Raja Wodeyar. This name is etched on the base. He was said to be a great devotee of the presiding deity and a constant visitor to the temple. Cheluvanarayana Swamy Temple is a lavishly empowered temple by the Wodeyar dynasty, the Royals of Mysore. The temple has the most valuable collection of jewels given to the lord by Mysore king Raja Wodeyar. Wodeyars gifted two gold crowns known as Vairamudi or Vajramukuta and Krishnaraja-mudi to the lord. There is another crown, must older than these two crowns gifted to the lord by some unknown person. All the three crowns are currently in the custody of the Government and are brought to the temple on special occasions. Vairamudi Festival is one such occasion when the crowns are taken out and adorned on the deities, post which the deities are taken out for a procession in the town. This festival is attended by more than 4 lakh people every year. An interesting fact is that the main priest is blindfolded before the crowns are taken out, as it is believed that no one should see the crown until it is adorned by Tirunarayana, the main deity. This temple is one of the most important shrines for the Vaishnavas. It is also listed as an Abhimana Sthalam. The main idol of the temple is that of Narayana, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Mostly visited by the Vishnu believers or the Vashnavites, this ancient temple was built in phases including the royals of Mysore. Vairamudi Seva Festival is organized on a huge scale during the time of March-April. A chariot procession is taken out during this festival. The deities of the temple are: The presiding deity of this temple is of Lord Vishnu also known as Tirunarayana or Cheluvarayana. Utsavamurthy, the small metal idol, represents the main deity. Sri Chelunarayana Swamy was worshipped in Kritayuga by Lord Dattatreya and got the name of Vedadri. In Tretayuga it was called as Narayanadri succeeded by Yasavadri as it was idolized by Balrama and Krishna. In Kalyuga it was idolized by Saint Ramanujacharya. As far as mythology is concerned it is believed that Lord Rama visited this temple. This fact has been mentioned in the ancient texts as well as can be found in the manuscripts kept in the temple. Lord Rama along with his two sons Lava and Kush visited this temple and offered a flower tribute to the temple deities. And hence Cheluvanarayana Swamy was originally called as Ramapriya. As per another legend utsavamurthy, the metal statue symbolizing the chief deity got lost during the Mughal invasion. It was then found by Ramanujacharya from Bibi Nachiyaar, Mohammed Shah's daughter. She was given this idol as a toy, however rather than playing she was found worshipping it. Mohammed Shah gave the idol back to Ramanujacharya and it was then Bibi Nachiyaar came from Delhi

to Melukote in search of it. She collapsed and died the moment she saw the idol. It is believed that her soul in the form of flame united with her idol. As an honor to her devotion, her idol is placed next to the feet of main idol. The temple has more than one Brahmotsavam and follows Pancharatra Agama. Thuni Thengol and Puliyogare are the popular prasadam of the temple. Official Address

Chamundeshwari Temple, Mysore, karnataka

Chamundeshwari Temple, Mysore, karnataka The Chamundeshwari Temple is a Hindu temple located on the top of Chamundi Hills about 13 km from the palace city of Mysore in the state of Karnataka in India. The temple was named after Chamundeshwari or Durga, the fierce form of Shakti, a tutelary deity held in reverence for centuries by Mysore Maharajas. Chamundeshwari is called by the people of Karnataka as Naada Devathe which means State Goddess. The original shrine is thought to have been built in the 12th century by Hoysala rulers while its tower was probably built by the Vijayanagar rulers of the 17th century. In 1659, a flight of one thousand steps was built leading up to the 3000-foot summit of the hill.[2] At the temple are several images of Nandi (the bull mount of Shiva). There is a huge granite Nandi on the 700th step on the hill in front of a small Shiva temple a short distance away. This Nandi is over 15 feet high, and 24 feet long and around its neck are exquisite bells. The temple is famous for the celebrations of festivals like Aashada Shukravara, Navaratri and Ammanavara Vardhanthi. In the month of Ashadha, Fridays are considered particularly auspicious. Lakhs of devotees throng the temple during this occasion. Another festival celebrated during this month is Chamundi Jayanti. This day is celebrated on the anniversary of the consecration of the utsava murthy of the goddess by the Maharaja of Mysore. On this occasion, the goddess's icon is taken around the temple in a golden palanquin. The most important festival that is celebrated here is Navaratri. Mysore Dasara is celebrated as the state festival of Karnataka, called Nadahabba in Kannada. During Navaratri, the Goddess is decorated in 9 different ways to depict nine different aspects of the goddess. On the 7th day of Navaratri that is Kaalaratri, valuable jewels donated by Maharajas are brought from the District Treasury of Mysuru and decorated to Chamundi. Another temple is situated at the foothill which is in Utthanahalli called as Jwalamuki Shri Tripurasundari Temple. This goddess is considered the sister of Chamundi who helped her at the battlefield to slay the demon Raktabīja. Chamundi Hill is about 13 kms from Mysuru, which is a prominent city in Karnataka State of India. Chamundi Hills is famous not only in India but also abroad. 'Chamundi' or 'Durga' at atop of the hill, the famous Sri Chamundeswari Temple is the fierce form of 'Shakti'. She is the slayer of demons, 'Chanda' and 'Munda' and also 'Mahishasura', the buffalo-headed monster. She is the tutelary deity of the Mysore Maharajas and the presiding deity of Mysore. For several centuries they have held the Goddess, Chamundeswari, in great reverence. In 'Skanda Purana' and other ancient texts, it is mentioned a sacred place called 'Trimuta Kshetra' surrounded by eight hills. Lying along side of west is the Chamundi Hills, it is one among the eight hills. In the earlier days, the hill was identified as 'Mahabaladri' in honour of God Shiva who resides in the 'Mahabaleswara Temple'; this is the oldest temple on the hills. In the later days, the hill came to be known as 'Chamundi Hills' in honour of the Goddess Chamundi, the chief subject of the 'Devi Mahathme'. The Goddess is believed to be an incarnation of Parvati, the consort of Lord Shiva. A large number of devotees from all over the country and also from abroad visit the temple every year. They believe that the Goddess fulfills their desires and aspirations. Chamundi Hills rises to a height of 3,489 feet MSL and is visible from a distance itself while traveling towards Mysuru. There is a good motorable road to the top. Besides from Mysuru side, there is also a motorable road from its rear side, i.e. road goes to Nanjangud. City Bus facilities are available to visit the hills. Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) operates regular bus services every day for the convenience of pilgrims and others. A temple of great antiquity with over 1,000 years of history, it was a small shrine initially and assuming importance over the centuries it became a big temple as seen today. It is being assumed significance after the Mysuru Maharajas, the Wodeyars, came to power in 1399 A.D., who are great devotees and worshippers of the Devi, Chamundeswari became their home deity and thus assumed religious prominence. The crowning glory of Mysuru, Chamundi Hills is an enchanting place surrounded by natural beauty. In the forest, there are varieties of trees, birds and animals. While going up the hills, a bird's eye view of Mysore can be seen and several prominent places be spotted. It offers a spectacular scene when the Palace and its surroundings are illuminated during the Dasara and other occasions. Some of the places that can be spotted from the hills are the Palace, Lalitha Mahal Palace, which houses the ITDC hotel, Dasara Exhibition grounds, Race Course, Golf Ground Kukkarahalli Lake, St. Philomena's Church, and Krishnarajasagar (K.R.S) at a far off distance. Besides the Chamundi and the Mahabaleswara temples, there are a few more temples at atop the hills. There are also some interesting spots and the monolith statue of 'Nandi' is among them. While proceeding towards the Chamundi Temple, the statue of 'Mahishasura' attracts

the visitors. The 'Chamundi Village' is located close to the temple. The Architecture of the Chamundi Temple: The temple is of a quadrangular structure built in Dravidian style, it consists of the Main Doorway, Entrance, Navaranga Hall, Antharala Mantapa, Sanctum Sanctorum, and Prakara. There is a beautiful seven-tier Gopura or pyramidal tower at the entrance and a 'Vimana' (small tower) atop the sanctum sanctorum. Atop the 'Shikara', the tower at the entrance, are seven golden 'Kalashas'. Krishnaraja Wodeyar III repaired the shrine in 1827 A.D and built the present beautiful tower at the entrance (Gopura). Blessed by the Goddess, Krishnaraja Wodeyar, an ardent devotee of the mother Goddess, presented 'Simha-vahana' (A lion-shaped vehicle) and other animal cars and jewels of value to the temple. The cars are used even now for processions on special religious occasions. The tower at the entrance has a small image of Lord Ganesha on the doorway. The doorway is silver-plated and has the images of the Goddess in different forms. On either side of the doorway have images of 'Dwarapalakas' or door-keepers. As one enters inside, on the right hand side is a small statue of Lord Ganesha, the remover of all obstacles. After a few steps, there is a flagstaff, the footprints of the Goddess and a small statue of Nandi, facing the sanctum sanctorum. On the right side, before approaching the flag staff, there is an image of 'Anjaneya' attached to the wall. On either side of this entrance are two Dikpalakas, Nandini and Kamalini. In the 'Antharala' prior to the sacred sanctum sanctorum are the images of Lord Ganesha on the left side and of 'Bhyrava' on the right side. To the left of Ganesha, there is a beautiful 6-foot statue of Maharaja Krishnaraja Wodeyar III. He is standing with his hands folded in his religious costumes. On either side of him are his three wives, Ramavilasa, Lakshmivilasa and Krishnavilasa. Their names are carved on the pedestals. In the sanctum sanctorum is the stone statue of the Goddess, 'Mahisha Mardhini' having 'Ashta Bhujas' or eight shoulders, she is in a seated posture. According to the local legend, the image was established by sage Markandeya and hence it is said to be very old. The idol of the Goddess is decorated every day and worshipped by a number of priests. The Mysore Maharajas have donated number of valuable gifts to their family deity. Coconuts, fruits and flowers are offered to the deity. On top of the sanctum sanctorum, a small tower or 'Vimana' is seen. In the 'Prakara' or enclosure, behind the sanctum sanctorum, are small images of a few deities, which are also worshipped.

Official Address

Badami, Bagalkot, Karnataka

Badami, Bagalkot, Karnataka The Puranas state the wicked asura Vatapi was killed by sage Agastya, and it refers to this area as Vatapi and Agastya Tirtha. In the Ramayana, Agastya and Lopamudra are described as living in Dandaka forest, on the southern slopes of Vindhya mountains. Rama praises Agastya as the one who can do what gods find impossible. He is described as the sage who used his Dharma powers to kill demons Vatapi and Ilwala after they had jointly misled and destroyed 9,000 men. In the Mahabharata, sage Agastya is described in the epic as a sage with enormous powers of ingestion and digestion. To kill men, asura Vatapi used to become a goat and his brother Ilvala would cook him. Then, Vatapi would recollect in the stomach and tear himself out from the inside of the victim, killing the victim. When Agastya arrives, Ilvala offers the goat again. He kills Vatapi by digesting the meal as soon as he ate, giving Vatapi no time to self organize. Agastya, in the legends of Mahabharata, kills the demons Vatapi and Ilvala much the same mythical way as in the Ramayana. Badami Chalukyas was founded in AD 540 by Pulakeshin I (AD 535–566), an early ruler of the Chalukyas is generally regarded as the founder of the Early Chalukya line. An inscription record of this king engraved on a boulder in Badami records the fortification of the hill above "Vatapi" in 544. Pulakeshin's choice of this location for his capital was no doubt dedicated by strategic considerations since Badami is protected on three sides by rugged sandstone cliffs. His sons Kirtivarman I (AD 567–598) and his brother Mangalesha (AD 598–610) constructed the cave temples. Kirtivarman I strengthened Vatapi and had three sons Pulakeshin II, Vishnuvardhana and Buddhavarasa, who at his death were minors, thus making them ineligible to rule, so Kirtivarman I's brother Mangalesha took the throne and tried to establish rule, only to be killed by Pulakeshin II who ruled between AD 610 to 642.[5] Vatapi was the capital of the Early Chalukyas, who ruled much of Karnataka, Maharashtra, parts of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh between the 6th and 8th centuries. The greatest among them was Pulakeshin II (AD 610–642) who defeated many kings including the Pallavas of Kanchipuram. And was later killed by Narasimha Pallavi 1 in the famous battle of vatapi. Old Kannada inscription of Chalukya King Mangalesha dated 578 CE at Badami cave temple no.3 The rock-cut Badami Cave Temples were sculpted mostly between the 6th and 8th centuries. Badami has eighteen inscriptions, among them some inscriptions are important. The first Sanskrit inscription in old Kannada script, on a hillock dates back to 543 CE, from the period of Pulakeshin I (Vallabheswara), the second is the 578 CE cave inscription of Mangalesha in Kannada language and script and the third is the Kappe Arabhatta records, the earliest available Kannada poetry in tripadi (three line)

metre.one inscription near the Bhuthanatha temple also has inscriptions dating back to the 12th century in Jain rock-cut temple dedicated to the Tirtankara Adinatha. Official Address

Badami cave temples, Badami, Karnataka

Badami cave temples, Badami, Karnataka The Badami cave temples are a complex of four Hindu, a Jain and possibly Buddhist cave temples located in Badami, a town in the Bagalkot district in northern part of Karnataka, India. The caves are considered an example of Indian rock-cut architecture, especially Badami Chalukya architecture, which dates from the 6th century. Badami was previously known as Vataapi Badami, the capital of the early Chalukya dynasty, which ruled much of Karnataka from the 6th to the 8th century. Badami is situated on the west bank of a man made lake ringed by an earthen wall with stone steps; it is surrounded on the north and south by forts built in later times. The Badami cave temples represent some of the earliest known examples of Hindu temples in the Deccan region. They along with the temples in Aihole transformed the Malaprabha River valley into a cradle of temple architecture that influenced the components of later Hindu temples elsewhere in India. Caves 1 to 4 are in the escarpment of the hill in soft Badami sandstone formation, to the south-east of the town. In Cave 1, among various sculptures of Hindu divinities and themes, a prominent carving is of the Tandava-dancing Shiva as Nataraja. Cave 2 is mostly similar to Cave 1 in terms of its layout and dimensions, featuring Hindu subjects of which the relief of Vishnu as Trivikrama is the largest. The largest cave is Cave 3, featuring Vishnu-related mythology, and it is also the most intricately carved cave in the complex. Cave 4 is dedicated to revered figures of Jainism. Around the lake, Badami has additional caves of which one may be a Buddhist cave. Another cave was discovered in 2015, about 500 metres (1,600 ft) from the four main caves, with 27 Hindu carvings. The Badami cave temples are located in the town of Badami in the north-central part of Karnataka, India. The temples are about 88 miles (142 km) east of Belgavi (IATA Code: IXT), and 87 miles (140 km) northwest of Hampi. The Malaprabha River is 3 miles (4.8 km) away. The cave temples are 14 miles (23 km) from the UNESCO world heritage site Pattadakal and 22 miles (35 km) from Aihole – another site with over a hundred ancient and early medieval era Hindu, Jain and Buddhist monuments.[2] Caves on the cliff above Agastya Lake Badami, also referred to as Vatapi, Vatapipura, Vatapinagari and Agastya Tirtha in historical texts, the capital of Chalukya dynasty in the 6th century, is at the exit point of a ravine between two steep mountain cliffs. Four cave temples in the escarpment of the hill to the south-east of the town were carved into the cliff's monolithic stone face. The escarpment is above a man made lake called Agastya Lake, created by an earthen dam faced with stone steps. To the west end of this cliff, at its lowest point, is the first cave temple. The largest and highest cave is Cave 3, which is further to the east on the northern face of the hill. The fourth cave, Cave 4, is a few steps down further east. The cave temples, numbered 1 to 4 in the order of their creation, in the town of Badami – the capital city of the Chalukya kingdom (also known as Early Chalukyas) – are dated from the late 6th century onwards. The exact dating is known only for Cave 3, which is a temple dedicated to Vishnu. An inscription found here records the dedication of the shrine by Mangalesha in Saka 500 (lunar calendar, 578/579 CE). [9] The inscription, written in the old Kannada language, has enabled the dating of these rock cave temples to the 6th century.[3][11][12] This makes the cave the oldest firmly-dated Hindu cave temple in India. The Badami caves complex is part of a UNESCO-designated World Heritage Site candidate under the title “Evolution of Temple Architecture – Aihole-Badami-Pattadakal” in the Malaprabha river valley, considered a cradle of temple architecture that formed the model for later Hindu temples in the region. The artwork in Caves 1 and 2 exhibit the northern Deccan style of the 6th and 7th centuries, while those in Cave 3 simultaneously represent two ancient Indian artistic traditions; the northern Nagara and the southern Dravida styles. Cave 3 also shows icons and reliefs in the so-called Vesara style, a fusion of ideas from the two styles, as well as some of the earliest surviving historical examples in Karnataka of yantra-chakra motifs (geometric symbolism) and colored fresco paintings. The first three caves feature sculptures of Hindu icons and legends focusing on Shiva and Vishnu, while Cave 4 features Jain icons and themes. The Badami cave temples are carved out of soft Badami sandstone on a hill cliff. The plan of each of the four caves (1 to 4) includes an entrance with a verandah (mukha mandapa) supported by stone columns and brackets, a distinctive feature of these caves, leading to a columned mandapa, or main hall (also maha mandapa), and then to the small, square shrine (sanctum sanctorum, garbha ghriya) cut deep inside the cave. The cave temples are linked by a stepped path with intermediate terraces overlooking the town and lake. The cave temples are labelled 1–4 in their ascending series; this numbering does not reflect the sequence of excavation. Official Address

Annapoorneshwari Temple, Horanadu, Karnataka

Annapoorneshwari Temple, Horanadu, Karnataka The Annapoorneshwari Temple is a Hindu temple dedicated to the goddess Annapoorneshwari (Annapoorna), located at Horanadu, India, 100 km from Chikmagalur in the thick forests and valleys of the Western Ghats of Karnataka. It is situated on the banks of river Bhadra. To reach the main temple complex, worshipers have to climb a flight of steps. The Gopuram (entrance) of the temple is adorned with several sculptures of Hindu deities. Mandapam is located on the left-hand side of the main temple entrance. Beautiful carvings can be found on the ceilings of the temple. Adi Sesha surrounds the main sanctum or the Garbhagriha of the temple and the Padma Peeta constitutes of Koorma, Ashtagaja and others. Adhishakthyathmaka Sri Annapoorneshwari Temple or the Horanadu Annapoorneshwari Temple is located on the banks of River Bhadra in Hornadu, in the Western Ghats of Karnataka. The town of Horanadu is also popular as “Sri Kshethra Horanadu” in respect of the Goddess. Sri Annapoorneshwari is the Goddess of food and nourishment. The word Annapoorna is a conjunction of two words- Anna meaning food or grains and Purna meaning complete and perfect. Further, she is praised and glorified in several ancient scriptures like Annapurnamantratsava, Maha Tripurasiddhanta, Annapurna Kavacha, Annapurnahavamti, Annapurnamalininaksatramalika, Bhairvahyantantra, Rudrayamala, and Sivarahasya. Even though people wildly worship her, only a few temples are there for her as the presiding deity. The other famous Temples dedicated to Sri Annapoorneshwari are the Annapoorna Devi mandir and the Kasi Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi. To visit the Horanadu Annapoorneshwari Temple, devotees have to climb a few steps to reach the main temple complex. The Gopuram of the Temple also has various sculptures of Gods and Goddesses. A mandapam is there on the left of the main entrance. A queue complex next to the Mandapam is also there for entry into the main hall where Annadanam takes place every day. Moreover, towards the back of the Horanadu Annapoorneshwari Temple, a commercial complex of four to five shops is present that sell Pooja materials as well as small toys and gifts from Horanadu. The ceilings of the temple also have wonderful carvings. The idol of the main deity of the Horanadu Annapoorneshwari Temple, Sri Annapoorneshwari consists of gold. The Goddess has a standing posture with four hands, each holding a Shanka, Chakra, Sri Chakra and Devi Gayathri. Hereditary Dharmakarharu priests started in this temple from past 400 years. The same family is serving and preserving the temple since then. Dharmakarharu have played an instrumental role in refurbishing the temple as well as in performing the rituals here. The temple premise was small and unknown to many till the fifth Dharmakarharu Sri D.B. Venkatasubba Jois repaired and revived the temple. The goddess icon was reestablished in 1973 on the auspicious day of Akshaya Tritiya. The temple is also known as Adhishakthyathmaka Sri Annapoorneshwari Ammanavara Temple or Sri Kshetra Horanadu Temple. It is believed that the sage Agastya in 8th century established the icon of the goddess here. As per legend, the god Shiva and his wife Parvati – the presiding goddess of food as Annapoorna, had an argument. Shiva declared everything in the world including food to be maya (illusion). To prove food is not illusion, Parvati disappeared resulting in the nature to become still. Neither climate changed nor plants grew, causing drought in the world. Taking pity on the world, Parvati appeared and distributed food to all. According to another tale, Shiva beheaded the god Brahma. Brahma's skull got stuck in Shiva's hand. He was cursed that till the skull is not full of food or grains, it will stick to his hands. Shiva went everywhere and asked for food but the skull was never full. So he finally went to this temple and Annapoorna filled the skull with grains and reversed Shiva's curse. Official Address

Anegudde, Udupi, Karnataka

Anegudde, Udupi, Karnataka Ganesh Chaturthi is the main festival celebrated at Anegudde temple and Sankashta Chaturthi is also celebrated with great devotion. On the Chauthi / Chaturthi (the 4th day after the full moon) of every lunar month, special poojas are held at the temple. Devotees frequently perform several poojas and take prasadam at this temple. As myths run, a devotee (Vishweshwara Upadhyaya) was living here, regularly worshipping Lord Ganesha. One day, a Brahmin Vatu (young boy) appeared in his dream and said that he was hungry. Taking Upadhyaya with him, the Vatu disappeared near a stone in Nagachala. Getting surprised by this unusual dream, he started off on the next morning in search of the spot, where the Brahmin boy disappeared in his dream. It was his usual path, which led to a pond, where he used to take his bath, bring sacred water for Abhishekam and collect flowers for worshipping Lord Ganesha. Soon he found the same granite stone, which he witnessed in his dream and was covered by wild flowers giving it a divine appearance. Impressed by this sight, Upadhyaya hurriedly took his bath in the nearby pond and worshipped the deity and offered wild flowers and fruits. He continued to do so for a long time. One day, he saw a cow

standing there pouring in milk from her udder on the deity. After this incidence, his devotion became stagnant and worshiped his God with more devotion. People generously donated land on which a straw hut was constructed to enable Upadhyaya to continue his worship. Thus started a new tradition of worship at Kumbhashi, which did not stop at any stage. Kumbhashi is located on the NH-17 (now NH-66) at a distance of 96 km from Mangalore, 9 km from Kundapur, and 30 km from Udupi. Kumbhashi is located about 400 km from the state capital Bengaluru. Frequent bus service is available from Mangalore /Udupi /Kundapur to Kumbhashi. One can either walk from Kumbhashi bus stand using the stairs or hire an auto rickshaw to reach Anegudde temple at the top of the hill. The nearest airport is at Bajpe near Mangalore. The nearest railway station is at Barkur, near Kundapur. Official Address

Amrutesvara Temple, Amruthapura, Chikkamagaluru, Karnataka

Amrutesvara Temple, Amruthapura, Chikkamagaluru, Karnataka The Amruteshvara temple also spelt “Amrutesvara” or “Amruteshwara”, is located in the village of Amruthapura, 67 km north of Chikmagalur town in the Chikkamagaluru district of the Karnataka state, India. Located 110 km from Hassan and 35 km from Shimoga on NH 206, Amruthapura is known for the Amruteshvara temple . The temple was built in 1196 C.E. by Amruteshwara Dandanayaka (lit, “commander”) under Hoysala King Veera Ballala II. The temple is a built according to Hoysala architecture with a wide open mantapa (hall).The temple has an original outer wall with enique equally spaced circular carvings. The temple has one vimana (shrine and tower) and therefore is a ekakuta design,and has a closed mantapa (hall) that connects the sanctum to the large open mantapa. It is medium-sized Hoysala temple with certain vastu features similar to the Veera Narayana Temple, Belavadi in mantapa structure and size. The open mantapa has twenty nine bays,[3] and the closed mantapa has nine bays with a side porch that leads to a separate shrine on the south side. The shrine is square in shape has the original superstructure (shikhara) which is adorned with sculptures of Kirtimukhas (demon faces), miniature decorative towers (aedicule). Below the superstructure, the usually seen panel of Hindu deities is absent. The base of the wall has five mouldings which according to art critic Foekema is an “older Hoysala style”. [4] The sukanasi, the tower on top of the vestibule that connects the sanctum to the closed mantapa (the Sukanasi appears like the nose of the superstructure),has the original Hoysala emblem of “Sala” fighting the lion. The rows of shining lathe turned pillars that support the ceiling of the mantapa is a Hoysala-Chalukya decorative idiom. [8] The mantapa has many deeply domed inner ceiling structures adorned with floral designs. The outer parapet wall of the open mantapa has a total of hundred and forty panel sculptures with depictions from the Hindu epics. Unlike many Hoysala temples where the panels are small and carvings in miniature, these panels are comparatively larger. The Ramayana is sculpted on the south side wall on seventy panels, with the story proceeding quite unusually, in anti-clockwise direction. On the north side wall, all depictions are clockwise, a norm in Hoysala architectural articulation. Twenty five panels depict the life of the Hindu god Krishna and the remaining forty five panels depict scenes from the epic Mahabharata. Ruvvari Mallitamma, the well known sculptor and architect is known to have started his career here working on the domed ceilings in the main mantapa. The large stone inscription near the porch contains poems composed by medieval Kannada poet Janna who had the horofic Kavichakravarti (lit, “emperor among poets”) . The temple was constructed in the 12th century by the commander Amruteshwara Dandanayaka, during the rule of Veera Ballala II, the Hoysala King. The rise of the Hoysalas also coincided with the spread of this certain design philosophy which can to this day be seen across the state of Karnataka. One of Karnataka’s most famous sculptors was Mallitamma, and it is believed that he started his artistic career at Amruthapura, suggesting the beginning of a golden architectural age. The main deity of the temple is Lord Shiva and the shivalinga at the temple is a 300-year-old Trimurti brought from the River Kandikevale in Nepal. The idol of Sharadha Devi sits next to the shiva linga. Some of the important rituals performed at the Amrutesvara temple include Bilva Archane and Kumkuma Archane. Aksharbhyasam is also another ritual that can be performed at this temple. Devotees visit the temple for many reasons, including concerns related to wealth and diseases. It is also believed that those whose children are suffering in education can come and offer prayers here. Some of the thanksgiving gifts left at the temple include sarees. The temple is located in a quiet spot close to the reservoir of the Bhadra River. This 12thcentury structure was built following the many hallmark features of Hoysala architecture. Many experts describe this temple as part of the older Hoysala style of architecture. The oldest parts of the Amrutesvara Temple are the porch, garbhagriha, sukanasi and the navaranga, and as time progressed there were more additions and embellishments made. The wide hall or mantapa is one of the important parts of a Hoysala style temple. The mantapa of the Amrutesvara Temple has many impressive pillars, ornate and lathe-turned. The open and closed mantapas feature many inner-ceiling

structures that have detailed floral designs. The square shrine sits below a super structure of shikhara. The shikhara of the Amrutesvara Temple is decorated with intricate carvings of demon faces and mini towers. On one of the temple towers, one can find the emblem of the Hoysalas, the Sala battling a lion. On the sukhanasi tower, visitors can also find an elaborate panel depicting Shiva slaying Gajasura. The wall reliefs of the temple give visitors a glance at the important Hindu beliefs and stories that defined the spiritual leanings of the Hoysala dynasty. One of the important pieces of sculptures on the temple can be found on the southern wall, a detailed depiction of events from the Ramayana, the story's linear timeline represented in an anti-clockwise direction, quite unusual. The north side has more panels depicting important Hindu mythology. One can find the events of the Mahabharata here depicted this time in a clockwise direction along with panels chronicling the life of Krishna. A stone inscription in the complex is considered a great example of old Kannada poetry, the work attributed to Janna, one of the most famous poets of the region. Kirtimukha sculptures on shikhara at Amrutesvara Temple. Image courtesy: Dineshkannambadi Apart from Chikmagalur, the nearest big towns are Shimoga (35 kilometres away) and Tarikere so these remain important transit points when travelling to Amruthapura. The closest airport by distance is in Mangalore, 220 kilometres away. However the route from Bangalore International Airport would take a similar time to cover despite being around 282 kilometres away, due to more open roads in long stretches. The nearest railway station to the temple is located 11 kilometres away in Tarikere. From the railway station it is a short 20 minute journey to the temple via NH206. Trains that ply between Shimoga and the cities of Bangalore and Mysore usually stop at Tarikere. From Bangalore city, the best route to reach the temple by road is via the NH79 and SH24, stops which include Tumkur. It is 260 kilometre journey and should take close to 5 hours to complete. One can also catch a direct bus to Shimoga and then find local transport that would take them to the temple. The Chikmagalur district is one of the most scenic in the beautiful state of Karnataka. Enjoy a visit to the Amrutesvara temple to witness its architectural glory in the backdrop of the serene landscape. Karnataka is a medley of cultures and belief-systems, moulded by a multi-layer history and there are many spiritual and historical sites to explore here, Amrutesvara Temple being on that list. Official Address

Aihole, Bagalkot, Karnataka

Aihole, Bagalkot, Karnataka Aihole (pronounced "Eye-hoé"), also referred to as Aivalli, Ahivolal or Aryapura, is a historic site of ancient and medieval era Buddhist, Hindu and Jain monuments in north Karnataka (India) dated from the fourth century through the twelfth century CE. Located around an eponymous small village surrounded by farmlands and sandstone hills, Aihole is a major archaeological site featuring over one hundred and twenty stone and cave temples from this period, spread along the Malaprabha river valley, in Bagalakote district. Aihole is 22 miles (35 km) from Badami and about 6 miles (9.7 km) from Pattadakal, both of which are major centers of historically important Chalukya monuments. Aihole, along with nearby Badami (Vatapi), emerged by the 6th century as the cradle of experimentation with temple architecture, stone artwork, and construction techniques. This resulted in 16 types of free-standing temples and 4 types of rock-cut shrines. The experimentation in architecture and arts that began in Aihole yielded the group of monuments at Pattadakal, a UNESCO world heritage site. Over one hundred Aihole temples are Hindu, a few are Jain and one is Buddhist. These were built and coexisted in close proximity. The site is spread over about 5 square kilometres (1.9 sq mi). The Hindu temples are dedicated to Shiva, Vishnu, Durga, Surya and other Hindu deities. The Jain Basadi temples are dedicated to Mahavira, Parshvanatha, Neminatha and other Jain Tirthankaras. The Buddhist monument is a monastery. Both Hindu and Jain monuments include monasteries, as well as social utilities such as stepwellwater tanks with artistic carvings near major temples Aihole is referred to as Ayyavole and Aryapura in its inscriptions and Hindu texts from 4th to 12th century CE, as Aivalli and Ahivolal in colonial British era archaeological reports. Aihole has been a part of Hindu mythologies. It has a natural axe-shaped rock on the Malaprabha river bank north of the village, and a rock in the river show a footprint. Parashurama, the sixth Vishnu avatar, is stated in these legends to have washed his axe here after killing abusive Kshatriyas who were exploiting their military powers, giving the land its red color. A 19th-century local tradition believed that rock footprints in the river were those of Parashurama. A place near the Meguti hillocks show evidence of human settlement in prehistoric period. Aihole has historical significance and has been called a cradle of Hindu rock architecture.[20] The documented history of Aihole is traceable to the rise of the Early Chalukya dynasty in 6th century. It became, along with nearby Pattadakal and Badami, a major cultural center and religious site for innovations in architecture and experimentation of ideas. The Chalukyas sponsored artisans and built many temples in this region between the 6th and 8th centuries. Evidence of wooden and brick temples dating to 4th-century have been unearthed. Aihole started

the experimentations with other materials such as stone around the 5th century when the Indian subcontinent saw a period of political and cultural stability under the Gupta Empire rulers. Badami refined it in 6th and 7th centuries. The experimentations culminated in Pattadakal in the 7th and 8th centuries becoming a cradle of fusion of ideas from South India and North India. The Aihole fort rubble walls on Meguti hill enclosing the 5th-6th century Jain temple. After the Chalukyas, the region became a part of the Rashtrakuta kingdom who ruled in the 9th and 10th century from the capital of Manyakheta. In the 11th and 12th century, the Late Chalukyas (Western Chalukya Empire, Chalukyas of Kalyani) ruled over this region. Even though the area was not the capital or in immediate vicinity from 9th to 12th centuries, new temples and monasteries of Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism continued to be built in the region based on inscriptional, textual and stylistic evidence. This likely happened, states Michell, because the region was prosperous with a substantial population and surplus wealth. Aihole was fortified by Late Chalukya kings in the 11th and 12th centuries, in an approximate circle. This indicates the strategic and cultural importance of Aihole to the kings whose capital was far away. Aihole served as a hub of Hindu temple arts in this period with guild of artisans and merchants called the Ayyavole 500, celebrated for their talent and accomplishments in the historic texts of the Deccan region and South India. An 8th-century Shiva temple was renamed Lad Khan Temple after a Muslim commander of Bijapur Sultanate who briefly lived here. In the 13th century and thereafter, the Malprabha valley along with much of Deccan became a target of raids and plunder by the Delhi Sultanate armies devastating the region. From the ruins emerged the Vijayanagara Empire which built forts and protected the monuments, as evidenced by inscriptions in the fort at Badami. However, the region witnessed a series of wars between Vijayanagara Hindu kings and Bahmani Muslim sultans. After the collapse of Vijayanagara Empire in 1565, Aihole became a part of the Adil Shahi rule from Bijapur, with some of the Muslim commanders using the temples as residence and their compounds as garrison for storing weapons and supplies. A Hindu temple dedicated to Shiva came to be called Lad Khan temple, named after the Muslim commander who used it as his operational hub, and a name that has been used ever since. In late 17th-century, the Mughal Empire under Aurangzeb gained control of the region from Adil Shahis, after which Maratha Empire gained control of the region. It again changed hands with Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan conquering it in late 18th century, followed by the British that defeated Tipu Sultan and annexed the region. The monuments at Aihole-Badami-Pattadakal show the existence and a history of interaction between the early northern style and early southern style of Hindu arts. According to T. Richard Blurton, the history of temple arts in north India is unclear as the region was repeatedly sacked by invaders from Central Asia, particularly the Muslim incursion into the subcontinent from 11th-century onwards, and “warfare has greatly reduced the quantity of surviving examples”. The monuments in this region are amongst the earliest surviving evidence of these early religious arts and ideas. Archaeological site Aihole became a significant archaeological site and attracted scholarly attention after the British India officials identified and published their observations. The colonial era scholars hypothesized that the Apsidal shape Durga temple in Aihole may reflect the adoption by Hindus and Jains of the Buddhist Chaitya hall design and the influence of early Buddhist arts. They also identified historically significant 7th-century inscriptions. For much of the 20th-century, Aihole remained a neglected site. Until the 1990s, the site consisted of houses and sheds built up to and in some cases extending into the historical monuments. The walls of the ancient and medieval temples were shared by some of these homes. Investments in infrastructure, land acquisition and relocation of some residences has allowed limited excavations and created a few dedicated archaeological parks including one for the much studied Durga temple at Aihole. Excavated ancient and medieval era artifacts and broken temple pieces, including a complete life size nude Lajja Gauri in birthing position and with a lotus head, now resides in an ASI museum next to the Durga temple in Aihole. Many temples and monasteries continue to be set midst narrow streets and congested settlement. The Aihole site and artwork are a major source of empirical evidence and comparative studies of Indian religions and art history in the Indian subcontinent. The Aihole’s antiquity, along with four other major 5th to 9th century sites –

Badami, Pattadakal, Mahakuteshvara and Alampur – is significant to scholarship relating to archaeology and religions. These, states George Michell, display a “meeting and fragmentation of different temple styles and the creation of local variants”. This fusion and exploration of arts and ideas later became a part of northern and southern Indian architectural repertoires. The Aihole monuments are located in the Indian state of Karnataka, about 190 kilometres (118 mi) southeast of Belgaum and 290 kilometres (180 mi) northeast from Goa. The monuments are about 14 miles (23 km) from Badami and about 6 miles (9.7 km) from Pattadakal, set midst rural villages, farms, sandstone hills and Malprabha river valley. The Aihole site preserves over 120 Hindu, Jain and Buddhist monuments from the 4th—12th century CE. The region is also a site for prehistoric dolmens and cave paintings. Aihole has no nearby airport, and is about 4 hours drive from Samba Belgaum Airport (IATA Code: IXG), with daily flights to Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai.[14] [15] Badami is the closest town connected by railway and highway network to major cities of Karnataka and

Goa.[6] It is a protected monument under the laws of the Indian government, and managed by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). Official Address

Mhatobar Ganesha Temple, Idagunji, Karnataka

This ancient temple dedicated to Lord Ganesha is located in the Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka. The temple receives around a million visitors annually. It is one of the six famous temples on the west coast of India called as the Ganesha Coast. The Deity here is two armed with a lotus bud in the right hand and modak sweet in the left hand standing on a stone slab. The temple is dated to be more than 1500 years old.

Architectural style: Dravidian architecture Major festivals: Ganesh chaturthi, Sankasta chaturthi, Angarika chaturthi Locale: Idagunji District: Uttara kannada/North kanara Date built: 4th-5th century CE The temple history is connected to events at the end of the Dwapara Yuga when Lord Krishna was about to end His leelas on earth and Kali Yuga was about to start. Many Sages led by Sage Valakhilya started doing penances and worship of Lord Krishna in Kunjavana, a forest on the banks of the Sharavathi river seeking the Lord's help in reducing the effects of the Kali Yuga. During the course of the worship, many obstacles were encountered and thus Sage Valakhilya sought the advice of Sage Narada who advised to seek the blessings of Lord Ganesha in removing all obstacles. Sage Narada selected a site in Kunjavana which the Devatas had visited earlier. The Devatas had even created two lakes called Chakra Tirtha and Brahma Tirtha. Sage Narada and the other Sages created a new lake called as Deva Tirtha. Sage Narada invited all the Devatas and requested Parvati Devi to send Lord Ganesha. Lord Ganesha was pleased with the fire sacrifice and rituals done to propitiate him and thus, agreed to be present in the forest always to prevent any obstacles in the worship of the Sages. One more lake was created now to get water for the worship of Lord Ganesha and was called Ganesha Tirtha.

Gokarna, Uttara Kannada, Karnataka

Gokarna, Uttara Kannada, Karnataka Gokarna is a small temple town on the western coast of India in the Kumta taluk of Uttara Kannada district of the state of Karnataka. The main temple and deity is Lord Shiva, who is also known as Mahabaleshwara. This temple houses what is believed to be original image of Lord Shiva's linga (Atmalinga). There are many other temples all over this small town. Ankola and Kumta on NH66 are the main towns near Gokarna and Bhatkal and Karwar are the main cities near Gokarna where almost all trains stop. Gokarna is known as one of the seven important Hindu pilgrimage centers. It is on what was once an unspoiled beach near the estuary of the river Aghanashini. Recently, due to the influx of tourists, the character of the town has changed; it is no longer just a centre of pilgrimage, though large numbers of devotees visit to offer prayers and worship to Lord Shiva. Due to its laid-back, unspoiled and rustic nature many younger western tourists started visiting Gokarna about a decade ago. The beaches around Gokarna were hardly used by the locals until these mainly western tourists started coming. Enterprising locals started stores and restaurants, and now the resorts also cater to wealthier tourists.

The earliest history of the city is in Tretayuga, Ravana (Demon/Asura King of Lanka) reaches Kailasa and performed rigorous penance to get the "Atma Linga" from Lord Shiva, as Ravana's mother expressed a keen desire to worship the atmalinga of Lord Shiva.[5][6] After a long penance, Shiva gave the Atma linga to Ravana as a boon and instructs Ravana to carry it home by walk, that he should never place it on the earth even for a short while failing which the linga would get eternally embedded at the place where he broke his commands. Lord Maha Vishnu learned that Ravana will become all powerful by worshipping the 'Atma Linga' and menace to the world and Ravana's conviction that nobody could defeat him, once he acquired the very power of Shiva. Maha vishnu devised a plan to install the linga somewhere and as he thought that Lord Ganapati was alone capable of doing it, he along with all the gods pleased Ganapati to execute the plan. Lord Ganapati accepts and reaches Gokarna as a Brahmin boy. As Ravana was nearing Gokarna, Maha Vishnu who had known well that Ravana was punctual in performing his periodical rites (Sandyavandhana), hides sun with his Sudarshana Chakra (Wheel). Thinking that it was time to perform the evening rites, Ravana finds a Brahmin boy and asked him to hold the Atmalinga in his hand till he came back after finishing the rites. Ganapati agreed to hold the linga on one condition that he would do so till he would be able to bear the weight of linga and that thereafter he would call Ravana three times and if failed to come to him by then he would place the linga on the earth. Ganapati calls Ravana three times when he was performing his rites and places the linga on the earth and he vanished. The Atmalinga at once got firmly entrenched in the earth. Ravana learned that he had been tricked by the Gods. The depressed demon king Ravana was deeply agitated and tried to pull up the linga, but the linga did not budge a little. It resulted in his throwing the coverings of

the Linga to Dhareshwara, Gunavanteshwara, Murudeshwara and Shejjeshwar temples. Ravana was unable to lift the linga from the ground again and called the Shiva linga as Mahabala, one with great strength, and ever since, the linga illustrious as Mahabaleshwara. Shiva learned all these from Vayu Deva, the god of wind, and came on to Earth with Goddess Parvathi devi and his train of Gods, he visited these five places and worshipped the linga which had now taken five forms. He acknowledged that these five places would be his “Pancha Kshetras” (Five Holy Places) A sect of Brahmins fled from the Gomantak to escape forcible conversions by the Portuguese and British and settled in and around Gokarna in the 15th century. It was part of the Sodhe and Vijayanagar kingdoms. When the Konkan region — including Goa — was occupied by the Portuguese, it became part of their rule. A few temples were destroyed by the Portuguese in 1714, rebuilt in the 18th century, and under the supervision of Guru H. H. Shrimad Anandashram Swamiji in 1928. Official Address