

Travel

GUIDE



CHITTORGARH

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INTRODUCTION

LAND OF COURAGE



Chittorgarh-A Journey Through Valor and Grandeur

Step into a realm where history whispers through ancient stones—Chittorgarh, Rajasthan's crown jewel of heritage. At its heart looms the majestic Chittorgarh Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, alive with tales of Maharana Pratap's fierce resistance and Rani Padmini's tragic sacrifice. Wander its sprawling courtyards and feel the pulse of courage that defines this land.

Marvel at architectural wonders: the towering Vijay Stambh, a nine-story victory monument etched with intricate carvings, and the elegant Kirti Stambh, a Jain masterpiece. Explore the haunting ruins of Rana Kumbha Palace, once a royal marvel, and the serene Padmini Palace, where history meets legend. Visit from October to March, when the desert sun softens, perfect for exploration. Don't miss the sound and light show at dusk—an enchanting retelling of the fort's saga. Savor Rajasthani delights like dal baati churma, and time your trip for the vibrant Meera Mahotsav, a celebration of devotion.



Beyond the fort, venture to the Bassi Wildlife Sanctuary or day-trip to Udaipur. Chittorgarh isn't just a destination—it's a journey through India's soul. Come, lose yourself in its timeless allure, and share your story with #ChittorgarhChronicles. Your adventure awaits!





THE FORTS

CHITTORGARH FORT

-A Saga of Stone and Sacrifice



Perched majestically on a 180-meter-high hill in Rajasthan, Chittorgarh Fort stands as one of India's largest and most iconic fortifications, spanning 700 acres and enclosed by 13-kilometer-long walls¹⁵¹. Founded in the 7th century CE by the Maurya ruler Chitrangada Mori, it later became the capital of the Mewar kingdom, embodying Rajput valor, resilience, and architectural grandeur¹¹¹.

The fort's history is etched with epic sieges and heroic resistance. In 1303, Sultan Alauddin Khilji attacked, driven by legend to possess Queen Padmini. Defeated Rajput warriors perished in battle (*saka*), while Padmini and thousands of women committed *jauhar* (self-immolation) to escape dishonor¹³⁵. This tragic pattern repeated in 1535 against Bahadur Shah and in 1567–1568 under Mughal Emperor Akbar, cementing Chittorgarh as a symbol of Rajput defiance¹⁵.

BAPPA RAWAL: FOUNDER OF MEWAR



BAPPA RAWAL (C. 713–810 CE), BORN KALBHOJ, WAS THE EIGHTH RULER OF THE GUHILA DYNASTY AND THE FOUNDATIONAL FORCE BEHIND THE MEWAR KINGDOM IN RAJASTHAN. HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TRANSFORMED CHITTORGARH AND THE REGION INTO A BASTION OF RAJPUT POWER AND CULTURE:

1. Founding of Mewar & Capture of Chittorgarh
 - In 734 CE, Bappa Rawal seized Chittorgarh Fort from the Mori Rajputs, establishing it as Mewar's capital 310.
 - Legends attribute his rise to divine intervention: Sage Harit Rishi initiated him into Shaivism, prophesying his kingship. After conquering Chittor, he renamed the realm "Mewar" (Land of Prosperity) 19.
2. Halting Arab Invasions
 - Bappa united Rajput clans (Ajmer, Jaisalmer) and the Rashtrakuta Empire to crush Arab incursions in the 738 CE Battle of Rajasthan 69.
 - He pursued Arab forces beyond Sindh, launching 15+ campaigns into Ghazni (Afghanistan), and established Rawalpindi (modern Pakistan) as a military outpost to secure India's northwest frontier 6. His victories deterred Arab invasions for 400 years 610.
3. Spiritual & Cultural Legacy
 - He built the Eklingji Temple in Nagda, declaring Lord Eklingji (Shiva) the divine ruler of Mewar. Future Sisodia kings ruled as the deity's "regents," blending governance with devotion 19.
 - His gold coins featured Shaivite symbols (trident, bull) and Lord Rama, reflecting his fusion of kingship with Hindu sacred iconography 1.

"Bappa not only defended Bharat's frontiers but expanded them, turning Mewar into an empire that echoed from Sindh to Iran."



Chittorgarh Fort, India's largest fortress and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is guarded by seven monumental gates (known as pols).

1. Padan Pol: The Threshold of Sacrifice

The outermost gate, adorned with lotus carvings, witnessed the first wave of invasions. Here, Rawat Bagh Singh fell defending against Bahadur Shah's siege in 1535 AD.

2. Bhairon Pol: The Fierce Guardian

Named after the wrathful deity Bhairon, this gate housed a statue believed to animate during attacks, embodying divine protection

3. Hanuman Pol: Strength Incarnate

Dedicated to Lord Hanuman, this gate featured a temple where warriors like Maharana Pratap prayed before battle 211.

4. Ganesh Pol: The Auspicious Gateway

Rajput kings passed through this gate—adorned with intricate carvings of Ganesha—seeking blessings before campaigns 11. Strategically, it anchored the fort's water management system: hidden aqueducts linked it to reservoirs like Gaumukh Kund, ensuring supply during sieges 38.

5. Jodla Pol: The Twin Defense

Often overlooked, this gate's elevated ramparts provided overlapping fields of fire with Bhairon Pol. Its name honors Jor and Lachhman, soldiers who fought a last stand here, their sacrifice immortalized in ballads 211.

6. Laxman Pol: The Final Stand

Named after Rama's loyal brother, this gate shielded the royal quarters. During Akbar's assault, Rajput warriors staged suicidal countercharges from here, buying time for women to perform jauhar 11. Its 45-degree slope forced enemies into exhausting climbs under a hail of projectiles 8.

7. Ram Pol: The Sovereign's Passage

The innermost gate, dedicated to Lord Rama, served as the ceremonial entrance. Here in 1568, the infant Udai Singh was smuggled out in a fruit basket by his nurse Panna Dai, preserving the Sisodia lineage and enabling Udaipur's founding 41. Its pointed arches and stone bastions—thick enough to resist cannon fire—epitomized Rajput ingenuity 38.



1st STOP

VIJAY STUMBH



Tower of victory

Rising 37.19 meters (122 feet) above Chittorgarh Fort, the Vijay Stambh (Tower of Victory) is a triumphant ode to Rajput courage. Commissioned in 1448 CE by Maharana Kumbha of Mewar, this nine-story colossus commemorated his victory over the combined armies of Malwa and Gujarat led by Sultan Mahmud Khilji. Crafted from red sandstone and white marble over a decade, it remains India's most imposing victory monument—visible from every corner of the city 1316.

2ND STOP

KIRTI STAMBH



Tower of Fame

Soaring 72 feet (22 m) within Chittorgarh Fort, the Kirti Stambh ("Tower of Fame") is a 12th-century Jain masterpiece dedicated to Adinath, the first Tirthankar (enlightened soul). Built by wealthy merchant Jijaji Rathod, it predates the fort's iconic Vijay Stambh by 300 years and stands as a serene counterpoint to Rajput tales of war.

Key Highlights:

- ✨ Architecture: Seven stories of intricate Solanki-style carvings – 600+ nude Digambara Jain saints and deities grace its red sandstone facade.
- 🏠 Sacred Ascent: A narrow 54-step staircase leads to the top, symbolizing the soul's climb toward enlightenment.
- ☀️ Spiritual Oasis: Amidst the fort's blood-soaked history, this tower embodied Jain values of ahimsa (non-violence) and inner peace.
- 📸 Visitor Tip: Capture its carvings at sunrise when golden light reveals hidden details. Entry: ₹50.

3rd STOP

RANA KUMBHA PALACE



Built in the 15th century by Maharana Kumbha, this sprawling palace was the epicenter of Mewar's power—and its darkest hour. As the oldest structure in Chittorgarh Fort, it witnessed legendary acts of defiance:

- 🔥 Padmini's Jauhar: Queen Padmini and 13,000 women performed mass self-immolation (jauhar) in its underground cellars to escape Alauddin Khilji's siege (1303 CE).
- ✝ Warrior Sacrifices: Maharana Kumbha's assassination by his son Udai Singh I unfolded here, staining its stones with betrayal.
- 🌙 Haunted Legacy: Locals swear chilling winds whisper in moonlit corridors—"Enter with respect, or the ghosts stir."

Key Features:

- Escape Tunnel: A 5-km passage to Kundalpur village, used by royals during sieges.
- Meerabai Temple: Where the mystic-poet composed Krishna bhajans.
- Sound & Light Show: Nightly reenactments of Khilji's siege (₹100 entry).

Visitor Tip: Explore cellars with a guide; wear sturdy shoes for rubble-strewn paths.



PADMINI'S PALACE

- Built in the 13th century, this three-story white palace was the residence of Rani Padmini, queen of Rawal Ratan Singh of Mewar 611.
- Immortalized in Malik Muhammad Jayasi's epic poem Padmavat (1540 CE), it witnessed the 1303 siege by Alauddin Khilji, who attacked Chittor after glimpsing Padmini's reflection in the palace mirror—a moment that ignited his obsession 5115.
- Facing defeat, Rani Padmini led 13,000 Rajput women in jauhar (self-immolation) to evade capture, cementing her legacy as a symbol of honor 511.

- Design: Persian-inspired structure with jharokhas (carved windows), pavilions, and a central water moat encircling the palace —pioneering Rajasthan's Jal Mahal concept 711.
- Key Feature: The mirror chamber where Khilji viewed Padmini's reflection overlooks a lotus pool. Monsoon transforms this tank into a bloom of pink lotuses, amplifying its ethereal beauty 615.
- Fate of Gates: Bronze doors were looted by Akbar and installed in Agra Fort 7.



TEMPLES WITHIN FORTRESS



1. Kalika Mata Temple

Built in the 8th century as a Sun Temple, later dedicated to Goddess Kali after Muslim invasions. Features Solanki-style carvings and panoramic fort views.

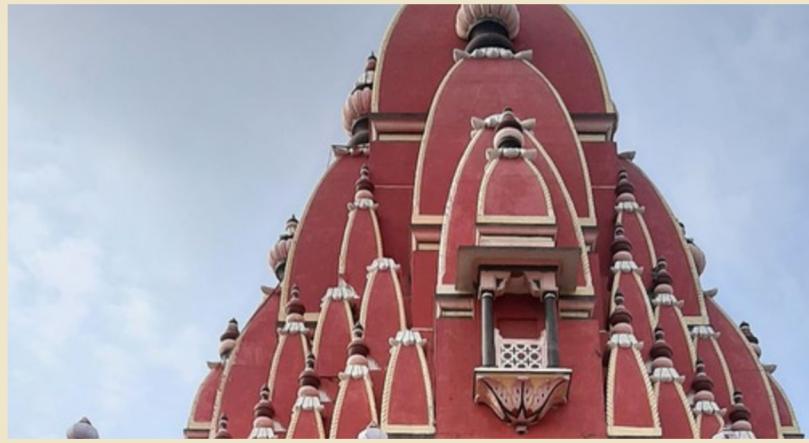
2. Meera Temple

Constructed by Maharana Kumbha (15th century), where mystic-poet Meera Bai composed Krishna bhajans. Blends Indo-Aryan arches with serene courtyards.



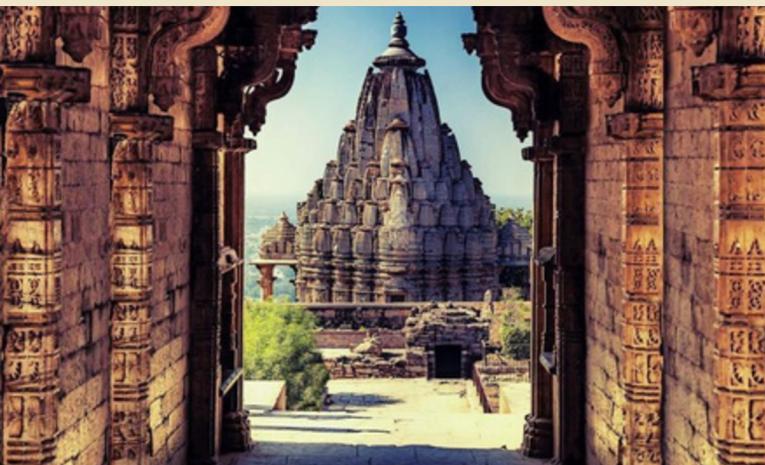
3. Shyama Temple (Kumbha Shyam)

Dedicated to Lord Vishnu's Varaha (boar) incarnation. Notable for its pyramidal tower and intricate Ramayana carvings.



4. Sathis Deori Temple

Cluster of 27 Jain temples (11th century) dedicated to Tirthankara Adinath. Famous for amplified acoustics and detailed Tirthankar idols.



5. Samadhisvara Temple

Houses a rare three-faced Shiva idol (Aghora form). Rebuilt in the 15th century; part of the Vijay Stambh complex.



6. Neelkanth Mahadev Temple

Believed 5,000 years old; features a massive Shiva Linga anointed with milk daily.

6th STOP

TEMPLES IN CITY

1.Sanwariyaji Temple (Mandafia)

- Location: 40 km from Chittorgarh (en route to Udaipur).
- Significance: Revered Krishna shrine; believed to bless devotees with prosperity.
- Architecture: Colorful paintings and a gold-plated sanctum. Timings: 5 AM–12 PM



2.Avari Mata Temple

Nestled in hills near waterfalls and a sacred pond. Dedicated to Goddess Avari, a local guardian deity.

3.Baroli Temple Complex

10th-century Gurjara-Pratihara temples 45 km from Chittorgarh. Showcases early Nagara-style shikharas and stolen/recovered Nataraja statue.

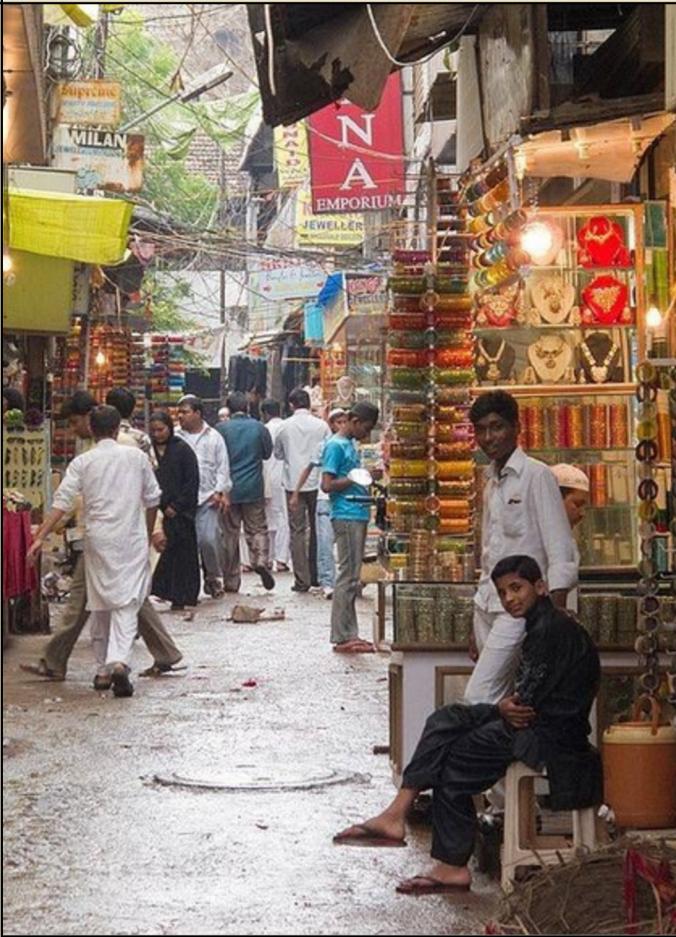


MARKETS



1. Rana Sanga Market

- Highlights:
 - Wooden toys from Bassi Village, hand-painted in vibrant colors 914.
 - Camel-leather jutis (shoes) embroidered with mirror work and gold thread 916.
 - Metalware souvenirs: Warrior miniatures, engraved trays, and traditional utensils 914.
- Tourist Perks:
 - Authentic Thewa jewelry (gold-filigree-on-glass) at fixed-price government emporiums 1316.
 - Bargaining-friendly for textiles and handicrafts (Pro tip: Start at 40% below quoted price!)



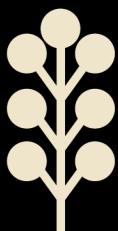
2. Sadar Bazaar

- Must-Buys:
 - Akola fabrics: Cotton/linen dupattas block-printed with vegetable dyes 814.
 - Rajasthani puppets dressed in traditional attire (₹150–500) 1316.
 - Lac bangles in neon hues, sold in sets of 12 1316.
- Cultural Touch:
 - Watch artisans craft marble deity statues on-site 8.
 - Snack on spicy bhujia (mothal snacks) from confectionery stalls 8.



3. Gandhi Chowk

- Fashion Hub:
 - Embroidered lehengas and Bandhani sarees at wholesale rates 1416.
 - Victorian-style silver jewelry with Rajputana engravings 816.
- Hidden Gem:
 - Puppet shows staged by shop owners to demonstrate traditional puppet artistry 14.



INSIDER TIPS

1. Timing is Everything

- Best Months: Oct–Mar (days: 18–28°C, nights: 8–15°C). Avoid May–Jun (scorching 45°C+).
- Ideal Schedule:
 - Sunrise at Vijay Stambh (opens 6 AM) for crowd-free photos.
 - Fort Exploration: 7–11 AM or 3:30–6 PM (escape midday heat!).
- Festivals: Plan around Jauhar Mela (Jan/Feb) for processions, but book hotels 6 months ahead.

2. Conquer the Fort Like a Pro

- Tickets: ₹40 Indians / ₹600 foreigners (covers all monuments). Buy online via [ASI portal](#) to skip queues.
- Navigation:
 - Rent e-bikes at Ram Pol Gate (₹150/hr) – the fort spans 13 km!
 - Must-Hire Guide: Dinesh Rawat (+91 98290 20111) for untold jauhar stories (₹800/3hrs).
- Survival Kit: Water (2L+), electrolytes, hat, sunscreen, and protein bars – limited cafes inside!

3. Temple & Market Hacks

- Temple Timings:
 - Kalika Mata: 6–10 AM for aarti.
 - Meera Temple: Evenings for bhajans.
- Shopping Smarts:
 - Thewa Jewelry: Govt-approved shops at Rana Sanga Market (look for Rajasthan Tourism seal).
 - Bargain Rule: Start at 40% of quoted price.
 - Mondays: Many artisans rest – avoid for handicrafts.

4. Beat the Logistics

- Getting In:
 - Air: Udaipur (90km) → prepaid taxi ₹2500 (book via Chittor Taxi Union: +91 98290 43210).
 - Train: Palace on Wheels (luxury) or Delhi-Chittor SF Express (#20467).
- Local Transport: Auto-rickshaws charge ₹30/km. Insider tip: Rent a scooter (₹300/day) for freedom.

5. Stay & Feast Like Royalty

- Heritage Stays:
 - Castle Bijaipur (16th-century fort, ₹6,000/night) – 30 mins from city.
 - Padmini Haveli: Rooftop dinners with fort views (try laal maas + bajra roti).
- Food Safety: Stick to hot, cooked meals – avoid street dairy/ice. Must-try: Mohanlal's kachori near Bhairon Pol.

6. Avoid These Mistakes!

- ✗ Ignoring footwear: Fort paths are rocky – wear sturdy sneakers.
- ✗ Underestimating distances: Udaipur day trips need *12+ hours*.
- ✗ Temple taboos: Cover shoulders/knees; remove shoes before shrines.
- ✗ Monkey menace: No loose food in fort – they snatch bags!

7. Secret Photo Spots

- Padmini's Palace: 4 PM for lotus-pool reflections.
- Gaumukh Reservoir: Sunrise lighting the cow-mouth spring.
- Kirti Stambh stairwell: Light shafts at noon create dramatic carvings.

"Chittorgarh rewards the prepared. Bring courage for climbs, curiosity for legends – and leave only footprints." ✨

Emergency Contacts:

- Tourist Police: +91 98290 11234
- Medical: Jawahar Hospital (Fort Rd): +91 1472 241 227



THANK YOU

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