**Make a Trip to the Fascinating City of Ajmer**

Ajmer got the name from ‘Ajaya Meru’, which means invincible hill. Being a pilgrimage center to both Hindus and Muslims, Ajmer has retained its virtue as one of the popular tourist attractions. Not only home to many places to visit, but Ajmer also represents the diversity of the Indian culture and ethics, with a perfect blend of religion, community and culture existing and prospering in harmony.

The city of Ajmer was founded by Raja Ajaypal Chouhan of the Chouhan Dynasty in the 7th century. After the defeat of king Prithviraj Chouhan by Ghori, it was home to many dynasties, and many years later, the Mughal emperors took it over. It remained as the epicenter till the 12th century.

**Some of the famous places of interest in Ajmer**

**Ajmer Sharif Dargah & shrines of Sufi saints**

The Ajmer Sharif Dargah, the shrine which people of all faiths worship, was built in the 13th century, encloses the grave, Maqbara of Garib Nawaz, the Sufi Saint, Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti. People visiting here believe that their prayers have been answered. It is open for visitors, and sacred and delicious food is served to the devotees with three gates. Devotees gather in mass to be blessed. Buland Darwaza, Nizam gate and the Shah Jahan Gates are three openings.

**Temples in Ajmer**

Ajmer Jain temple or Soniji ki Nasiyan, a Jain temple, was constructed in the 19th century to worship Adinath, the first Tirthankara. One can see a red stone staircase at the entrance followed by marbled ones inside engraved with images of these Tirthankaras. Jains worship Tirthankaras for their omniscient teaching of righteousness. Considered as one of the embellished architectural richest temples, Ajmer temple has a central chamber, Swarna Nagari (City of Gold), housing many gold-plated wooden figures within the walls. There is a mention of this temple even in a freelance writer, Kurt Titze’s book, ‘Jainism: A Pictorial Guide to the Religion of Non-Violence.’

Also known as the Shri Gyandoaya Tirth Kshetra, Nareli Jain temple is located on the outskirts of Ajmer on Jaipur National Highway. It reflects the perfect blend of traditional and contemporary styles of architecture with the modern skyscraper. About 24 miniature temples surrounding it represent all the Tirthankaras, called Jainalaya, play an essential point of pilgrimage for Digambara Jains.

**Places and monuments**

Adhai Din ka Jhopda was initially constructed to spread Sanskrit Language and literature, but in 1198 AD, it was converted into a Mosque by Sultan Ghori. It has an impressive Indo-Islamic style of architecture, which Sultan Iltutmish further beautifies. Urs or fair was held every year for two-and-half days during the 18th century, hence the name.

One of India’s oldest independent boarding schools, founded in 1875, named after Richard Bourke, the 6th Earl of Mayo, to provide education to scions of princely states similar to the one supplied by Eton college of Britain was Mayo College. It has an Indo-Saracenic style of construction.

Anasagar Lake was built between 1135 AD and 1150 AD, under the guidance of King Arnoraj Chouhan, popularly known as Anaji. The lake has a garden nearby, called Daulat Bagh, added by Emperor Jahangir and five pavilions or Baradari between Garden and Lake, contributed by Shah Jahan. This Baradari, in Mughal style, boasts a rich history of Mughal emperors’ pleasure garden, which were later doubled as an office in British rule. One can see these pavilions restored, along with ‘Hamam,’ a royal bath. By visiting this place, one feels peace at heart due to the calm lake and surroundings.

Lake Foy Sagar, in 1892 when the country was facing famine, a British Engineer came out with a plan to provide famine relief by giving jobs to local people that solved their water problem and employment by constructing this artificial, flat and beautiful lake.

**Forts & Memorials**

Taragarh Fort, built on a crest of a hill, has a Gateway that imposes as the main gate. There are two colossal bastions on both sides of the gate with solid guard rooms, while elephant sculptures adorning the gateway. The magnificent Rani Mahal, with strained windows and murals, Garbh Gunjam (thunder from the womb), a cannon on Bhim Burj, a water reservoir, Dargah of Hazrat Miran Sayyed Hussain Khanswar are the main attractions of the Rajputana architectural fort.

Kishangarh Fort is located in Kishangarh, Rajasthan and houses jails, granaries, armories, etc. The Durbar Hall, where daily official meetings were held, is the attractive main building with splendid artwork gloriously displaying the Rathore clan Kings, murals and frescos adorning the walls. Few lakes like Gundu Lav tab Hamgir Sagar lie alongside the fort posing an excellent picnic spot with a glimpse of history.

Pragya Shikhar Todgarh is another Jain community temple built in 2005 in memory of Jain Acharya Tulasi, made out of black granite only in Todgarh village. Fame being Dr.APJ Abdul kalam inaugurated it, and an NGO erected it.

Shahid Smarak, being a princely state Rajasthan, has always maintained the practice of paying homage to great warriors martyrs by constructing structures and memorials around the main cities. In Ajmer also, we can see Shahid Smarak commemorating the sacrifices of brave souls with colorful lights, fountains, flowers.

Prithvi Raj Smarak, in the memory of the last Chouhan ruler Prithviraj Chouhan III, ruled over the twin capitals of Ajmer and Delhi in the 12th century. The statue of the king, regarded as the epitome of courage and devotion, is seated on his horse. It is posed as if charging forward with one of its hooves up. The memorial stands atop a hill with Aravalli range surrounding it. Tourists can sit and relax, enjoying the panoramic view of the city.

Being another prime tourist destination of Ajmer, Ajmer Government Museum houses the magnificent fortified palace of Emperor Akbar built in 1570 AD. Also known as ‘Bharatpur,’ exhibits a rich collection of stone scriptures, inscriptions, armors and archeological artifacts, and the finest paintings of previous kings of Bharatpur.

Victoria Clock Tower, one of the British-era architectural buildings, displays its legacy. Located just opposite the City Railway Station, the monument, Victoria Jubilee Clock Tower, has a clock tower built back in 1887 AD, reminding the onlookers of a variant of famous Big Ben.

**Places of shopping in Ajmer**

Tourists of all communities visit Ajmer due to its rich religious background, and it turns, it has turned out to be a shopaholic center for them.

Dargah Bazaar, located near Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti Shariff Dargha, attracts visitors with many items like jewelry, flowers, Paintings, garments and many more.

Nala Bazaar, miniature artwork, wooden, metal works, silver items, and garments are sold.

Chudi Bazaar, as the name suggests, one gets various varieties of bangles and bracelets that are bright in color and match any outfit. Nose rings, earrings, crews are also sold here.

Mahila Mandi is a market full of colorful bindis, garments, dupattas, and many jewels and accessories. The world-famous Rajasthani tie-n-dye Odhnis match Indian and Western outfits with numerous bright colors.

At Urban Haat Bazaar, the craftsmanship in the articles is surprising. Almost all kinds of items are sold at different shops at affordable rates.

Naya Bazaar, people can visit to buy traditional perfume, miniature painting, handicraft of Rajasthan including antique jewelry. Purani Mandi serves gift items as well as different fabrics. People who want traditional ethnic costumes can try at Kasturi Silk palace.

Madar Gate has many outlets that sell silver ornaments and Bandhani attires, traditional flat shoes etc.

Along with these old Bazars, many new malls like Cine Mall, Vega Mall, and others have sprung up in Ajmer.

Ajaymeru Udyog Crafts Mela is a place of the exhibition where one finds Ajmer’s art and craft influence history, tradition and modernity.

**Some famous foods of Ajmer**

Ajmer is a popular tourist destination of Rajasthan, along with a delightful foodies’ corner with many varieties of lip-smacking delicacies. The visitors can test whether foods of veg and non-veg type, from rich and spicy veg preparations to crunchy kebabs.

Traditional Rajasthani food like Dal Bati Choorma, Gatte ki Sabzi, Ker Sangri, Ghevar, Rabdi, Pyaaz Kachori with tangy sauce and Doodh Boondhi are worth trying. For non-veg lovers, Chicken Biryani prepared with aromatic spices gives an authentic taste that pulls the person to have more and more. The use of locally grown species and red pepper makes traditionally prepared Mutton curry of lambs taste very intense. One can love it when eaten with roti or rice.

Highly nutritious Bajra is consumed in the form of roti, prepared with a small amount of wheat, along with curries and Lehsun chutney. This Lehsun chutney is a specialty of Marwari food and goes well with almost all food varieties. Authentically prepared Gatte is substituted for chicken, along with soya chunks and other vegetables in the Biryani for veggie lovers, generally prepared on the festival days when white rice is not ready and served with Kadhi or curds.

Coming to the sweets of Rajasthan, Ghevar and Rabdi are dominant, but Ajmer is famous for Sohan Halwa, prepared from flour, milk and sugar. Halwa is topped with dry fruits and cardamom powder with a paste-like consistency. Gajak is another sweet prepared with jaggery and sesame seeds in the form of barfi. Moong Dal ka halwa, a hot dessert consumed after a meal in winter, is delicious and healthy.

**How to reach Ajmer**

One can visit Ajmer, Rajasthan any time of the year but preferably between September to March for the best experience.

Tourists can reach Ajmer by road, rail or flight.

Ajmer falls on the Golden Quadrilateral Highway 8, midway between Delhi and Mumbai, making it convenient to travel there by bus or cabs to visit Ajmer. Many buses connect to Ajmer from nearby cities like Delhi, Jodhpur, Jaipur Jaisalmer, etc.

The Ajmer Junction railway station connects many major cities of North, West and East India and hence various express, superfast, passenger and mail trains arrive and depart from the city.

Flyers from different places can reach Ajmer, alighting either from Sanganer Airport at 13km from Jaipur or Kishangarh Airport, 27 km from Ajmer and by train or bus.