

OPTION ONE: BANGALORE SIGHTSEEING

Lalbagh Gardens

Bangalore's other sprawling park is in the South of the city. The Lalbagh Gardens was laid out in the year 1760 by HyderAli. It covers an area of 240 acres. The Glass House, inspired by the Crystal Palace in London is a favourite spot in Lalbagh which hosts the famous Flower show during the month of August.

Cubbon Park

This beautiful park was laid out in 1864 by Lieutenant General Sir Mark Cubbon. Over 250 acres of this green park is just right for long walks and hosts a children's amusement park, a doll museum and a toy train for children. Children's parties can be arranged with cartoons characters etc. in the park. The Vijayranga Theater complex screens children's films and stage plays.

Visvesvaraya Industrial and Technological Museum

Named after the famous Sir M. Visveswaraya , a engineer par excellence who built many famous dams in Karnataka, this Science museum houses models of machines. It is a highly recommended spot for children.(Closed on Monday).

Bangalore Palace

The Bangalore Palace was built in the year 1887 by the Wodeyar dynasty. It is built similar to medieval castles in Normandy and England . It's interiors boasts of elegant wood carvings and Tudor -style architecture.

Tipu's Palace

The Palace was constructed first by Hyder Ali and completed by his son Tipu Sultan in the year 1791. Tipu called it as 'The Envy of Heaven'. It is constructed mainly in wood and has fine intricately sculpted arches surrounded by exquisite minarets.

Bull Temple :

At Basavangudi is one of Bangalore's oldest temples. Built for Nandi, the sacred Bull, the vehicle of Lord Shiva, this temple has a 4.6 meter tall carved statue of the sacred bull.

ISKCON Temple

The ISKCON provides much more for the soul, than those rituals. ISKCON are centers of spiritual learning through Godly association. Centers where a visitor is inspired to learn more about Spiritual life. There is a magnificent main temple hall which houses the altars of Their Lordships Sri Radha Krishna-Chandra, Sri Krishna Balarama & Sri Nitai Gouranga. Also one can see the Golden Chandelier that is shaped a inverted Lotus Flower.

OPTION TWO : BANGALORE / MYSORE / KABINI JUNGLE RESORTS / BANGALORE

DAY 01 BANGALORE / MYSORE.

AM Leave Bangalore to Mysore (Approx 145 Kms / 3 hours) enroute Srirangapatna:

Sriranganatha Temple

This is one of the largest temples in the State & is of great local importance. Its God has given the town His name. It consists of a Mahadwara with a huge tower & a pillared hall built in three or four different stages, Sukanasi & Garbhagriha. There are many other shrines inside the enclosure. Inside the Garbhagriha (Cell) is a colossal image of Vishnu reclining on the huge coils of the great snake Ananta.

Daria Daulat Bagh

Tipu Sultan's Summer palace built in 1784 was his favorite retreat. Made of teak, this Indo - Saracenic structure has ornate and beautiful frescoes. It is now a museum and tells eloquent stories of Tipu's valor and his losing battle with the British.

The Gumbaz

Here lie the bodies of Hyder, his wife & Tipu. It is an imposing structure in the midst of the lovely Lal-bagh garden, with a high rise platform & having a verandah of polished black basalt pillars all round. The other things of importance are the other dungeons, gates of the fort & flag-staff cavalier, Tipu's racket court etc.

Tippu's Palace

About 150 yards east of the Ranganatha Temple is now to be seen the mound & ruined walls of the Lal Mahal which was once a magnificent palace inhabited by Tippu.

Fort

It is from here that Tipu started his attack against the British. An obelisk in the fort marks the place where he fell - betrayed by his own men. The fort holds within it a mosque and the Ranganathaswamy Temple. Outside the fort is the Gumbaz, Tipu's tomb with splendid ebony door inlaid with ivory.

After sightseeing of the above place drive to Mysore (20 Kms / 30 minutes) Arrive Mysore check into hotel. After lunch sightseeing of Mysore

History

Mysore was the political capital of the Wodeyar dynasty which ruled the state of Karnataka for some 150 years till the independence of the country from the British. These kings were great patrons of art and culture and Mysore was the cultural capital of the south under the rule of the Wodeyars. The Wodeyars made the Dasara festival an event.

To showcase the rich culture and heritage of the town. Even to this date this celebration of the Dasara which is a 10 day celebration during the month of Oct/ Nov is a spectacular event to watch.

Mysore is a city of palaces, gardens, shady avenues and sacred temples and retains some of the charm of the old world with its many institutions that propagate Carnatic Classical music and dance.

The Mysore Palace

Once the residence of the Wodeyars, this structure is one of the largest of its kind in India. Built in 1912 in the Indo Saracenic style, this place exudes a grandeur that is unmatched. The Golden Royal Elephant Throne, the Durbar Hall, the Kalyana Mantap and the Gallery are the main attractions here.

The Jaganmohan Palace

This is a converted art gallery which houses paintings that date back to the late 19th century. Paintings of Raja Ravi Verma of Travancore and the Russian Painter Svetoslav Roerich are on display. Paintings in the traditional Mysore Golden leaf style can also be seen here.

Chamundi Hill

Perched atop a hill is a 12th century temple of Chamundershwari. About 13 Kms from Mysore by road there is also a 1000 step walking track for all those young at heart to try. The gigantic 4.8 meter tall monolith of Nandi the sacred vehicle of Lord Shiva is a marvel to watch. Also close to the temple stands a gigantic statue of the demon Mahishasura.

St. Philomena's Church

This beautiful Cathedral was built in 1956 and is one of the largest churches in the country. It has been built in the Gothic style with beautiful stained glass windows and lofty towers. The illuminated church in the evening is a wonderful site not to be missed.

The Mysore Zoo

One of the country's best zoos, this is famous for rare animals bred in captivity and is housed in lush green surroundings.

Brindavan Gardens

19 Kms north west of Mysore is the famous KRS dam. Built by the famous engineer Sir. M. Vishvesvariah this was one of the first multi purpose dams built in India. Adjacent to the dam is the beautiful Brindavan Garden. With lighting and musical fountains this place transforms itself into a fairy land in the evenings.

OVERNIGHT STAY IN MYSORE.

DAY 02 MYSORE / KABINI JUNGLE LODGES(85 KMS / 2.30 HRS)

AM after breakfast check out of Mysore hotel drive to Kabini Jungle Lodges. Arrive the resort during lunch time. Check into the resort. After lunch at the resort relax. Evening tea / coffee will be served in the resort. Later you will be taken to the jungle safari for about 3 hours. Return back to the resort. Evening there will be film show about the forest and dinner with bonfire. Over night stay in the resort.

DAY THREE KABINI / BANGALORE.

Early morning after coffee / tea you will be taken to the jungle safari to see the wildlife / boat ride in the Kabini river. Back to the resort for breakfast / checkout and drive to Bangalore.

OPTION THREE: BANGALORE / MYSORE / HASSAN(BELUR/HALEBID) HAMPI / BADAMI / GOA DROP.

DAY 01 BANGALORE / MYSORE.

AM Leave Bangalore to Mysore (Approx 145 Kms / 3 hours) enroute Srirangapatna:

Sriranganatha Temple

This is one of the largest temples in the State & is of great local importance. Its God has given the town His name. It consists of a Mahadwara with a huge tower & a pillared hall built in three or four different stages, Sukanasi & Garbhagriha. There are many other shrines inside the enclosure. Inside the Garbhagriha (Cell) is a colossal image of Vishnu reclining on the huge coils of the great snake Ananta.

Daria Daulat Bagh

Tipu Sultan's Summer palace built in 1784 was his favorite retreat. Made of teak, this Indo - Saracenic structure has ornate and beautiful frescoes. It is now a museum and tells eloquent stories of Tipu's valor and his losing battle with the British.

The Gumbaz

Here lie the bodies of Hyder, his wife & Tippu. It is an imposing structure in the midst of the lovely Lal-bagh garden, with a high rise platform & having a verandah of polished black basalt pillars all round. The other things of importance are the other dungeons, gates of the fort & flag-staff cavalier, Tippu's racket court etc.

Tippu's Palace

About 150 yards east of the Ranganatha Temple is now to be seen the mound & ruined walls of the Lal Mahal which was once a magnificent palace inhabited by Tippu.

Fort

It is from here that Tipu started his attack against the British. An obelisk in the fort marks the place where he fell - betrayed by his own men. The fort holds within it a mosque and the Ranganathaswamy Temple. Outside the fort is the Gumbaz, Tipu's tomb with splendid ebony door inlaid with ivory.

After sightseeing of the above place drive to Mysore (20 Kms / 30 minutes) Arrive Mysore check into hotel. After lunch sightseeing of Mysore

History

Mysore was the political capital of the Wodeyar dynasty which ruled the state of Karnataka for some 150 years till the independence of the country from the British. These kings were great patrons of art and culture and Mysore was the cultural capital of the south under the rule of the Wodeyars. The Wodeyars made the Dasara festival an event.

To showcase the rich culture and heritage of the town. Even to this date this celebration of the Dasara which is a 10 day celebration during the month of Oct/ Nov is a spectacular event to watch.

Mysore is a city of palaces, gardens, shady avenues and sacred temples and retains some of the charm of the old world with its many institutions that propagate Carnatic Classical music and dance.

The Mysore Palace

Once the residence of the Wodeyars, this structure is one of the largest of its kind in India. Built in 1912 in the Indo Saracenic style, this place exudes a grandeur that is unmatched. The Golden Royal Elephant Throne, the Durbar Hall, the Kalyana Mantap and the Gallery are the main attractions here.

The Jagannathan Palace

This is a converted art gallery which houses paintings that date back to the late 19th century. Paintings of Raja Ravi Verma of Travancore and the Russian Painter Svetoslav Roerich are on display. Paintings in the traditional Mysore Golden leaf style can also be seen here.

Chamundi Hill

Perched atop a hill is a 12th century temple of Chamundeshwari. About 13 Kms from Mysore by road there is also a 1000 step walking track for all those young at heart to try. The gigantic 4.8 meter tall monolith of Nandi the sacred vehicle of Lord Shiva is a marvel to watch. Also close to the temple stands a gigantic statue of the demon Mahishasura.

St. Philomena's Church

This beautiful Cathedral was built in 1956 and is one of the largest churches in the country. It has been built in the Gothic style with beautiful stained glass windows and lofty towers. The illuminated church in the evening is a wonderful site not to be missed.

The Mysore Zoo

One of the county's best zoo, this is famous for rare animals bred in captivity and is housed in lush green surroundings.

Brindavan Gardens

19 Kms north west of Mysore is the famous KRS dam. Built by the famous engineer Sir. M. Vishvesvariah this was one of the first multi purpose dams built in India. Adjacent to the dam is the beautiful Brindavan Garden. With lighting and musical fountains this place transforms itself into a fairy land in the evenings.

OVERNIGHT STAY IN MYSORE.

DAY TWO: BANGALORE / HASSAN (145 KMS / 3 HOURS)

A.M. checkout of hotel and drive to Hassan. Arrive Hassan and check into the hotel. After lunch we will proceed for the sightseeing of Belur and Halebid.

History (BELUR)

Belur is 222 Kms from Bangalore, 34 Kms from Hassan and 149 Kms from Mysore. This place is famous for its exquisite temples. Belur is known as Dakshina Varanasi or South Banaras for its temples. The serenity of Belur is attributed to the celebrated temple of Channakeshava, built by the Hoysala King Vishnuvardhana in 117 A. D. to commemorate his conversion from Jainism to Vaishnavism.

The main temple to be seen here is the Channakeshava temple. The main structure of the temple, which is star shaped, is a homogenous architectural unit on a raised platform. Everything is carved in blackstone looking like metal. Facing the temple, at the entrance, stands the winged figure of Garuda, Lord Vishnu's carrier.

The 650 charging elephants on the frieze around the walls outside are all different from each other. The exotic bracket figures (Madanikas) on the walls of the temple are serene, playful and amorous, enhancing the overall effect of this pinnacle of architectural excellence

Inside, even in the darkness you can see the hand-lathe-turned shining pillars, each unique in its splendor. On the smooth circular platform in front of the shrine you can see the beautiful Shantala Devi, queen of King Vishnuvardhana. The spotlight is on the famous bracket figures on the ornate ceiling. All these figures have been inspired by Shantala Devi's Voluptuous beauty.

Sculpted limbs undulated in lyrical lines. One sculpted beauty communicates with a pet parrot whose tail is like that of a peacock another wrings water from her long hair and you can see the drops collected on hair ends. The delicacy and attention to the finest details here are incredible.

History (HALEBID)

The great city of Dwarasamudra flourished as a Capital of the Hoysala Empire during the 12th & 13th centuries. During the reign of Veeraballala II, the grandson of Vishnuvardhana, it reached the greatness of its zenith. Veeraballala II extended his empire from sea to sea between the Cauvery & Krishna rivers.

On account of certain reasons this came to decadence stage. The renovation work was undertaken by the State Government about 30 years ago & the town as well as its area gradually improved. The climate is pleasant. There are buses running from Hassan, Arasikere & Belur. There is a big tank which feeds thousands of acres of land wherein sugarcane & paddy are grown.

The sculptural work of the temples is based on Shastras & importance. One can collect the information to his maximum desire.

Places of Interest

Halebid is 27 Kms north west of Hassan and 17Kms from Belur. This place is also called as Dwara Samudra, the wealthy capital of the Hoysala Kingdom. Halebid has several striking beautiful Hoysala temples and Jain Shrines.

Another famous temple is the Keddareshwara Temple where the sculptor's virtuosity seems to have surpassed even the goldsmith's skill in its sheer intricacy. One Kilometer from the Halebid temples is the Basti hills where there are Jain Bastis with gleaming black stone pillars.

The Hoysaleshwara temple, standing on platform like a casket, is a sculptural extravaganza, richly endowed with most finely detailed scroll work in stone. Outside there is a Nandi(the sacred bull, a vehicle of the Lord Shiva) and a hillock where a palace stood, connected to the temple by a passage. Inside its dark depths, the queen Shantala Devi beckons from an alcove.

The figure of mortals and immortals are larger compared to Belur and are beautifully chiseled in shining black stone. The walls of the temples are covered with variety of gods and goddesses, animals, birds and dancing girls. There is a museum on the lawns with 12-13th century sculptures and the gold coins in use at the time.

OVERNIGHT STAY IN HASSAN.

DAY THREE HASSAN / HOSPET (HAMPPI)

After checkout from the hotel drive to Hospet (350 Kms / 7 hours) Arrive hospet check into the hotel and rest of the free. Overnight in Hospet.

DAY FOUR: Full day sightseeing of Hampi ruins>

History (Hampi)

The Hampi the 14th century capital city of the Vijayanagara Empire lies in the Deccan heartland, in the state of Karnataka. Hampi is situated at 74 kms from the city Bellary and 13 km from Hospet city in Karnataka. The ruins of Vijayanagar Empire in and around the village of Hampi are spread over an area of more than 26 sq kms. They are one of the most fascinating historical sites in Southern India. The best time to visit Hampi is from October to March.

It is a thriving traveler's center. The area of Hampi is protected by the tempestuous river Tungabhadra in the north and by rocky granite stones on other three sides. There is a magical quality to the ruins of Hampi even 650 years after the empire of Krishna - devaraya disintegrated.

Hampi is famous for its ruins belonging to the erstwhile medieval Hindu kingdom of Vijaynagar and it is declared a World Heritage site. The monolithic sculptures and monuments along the temples are attractive because of their excellent workmanship. The architecture found at Hampi reflects the Hindu culture and splendor of the Vijaynagar Empire. The rugged landscape adds to the historic ambience of this site.

Places of interest in Hampi

- Virupaksha temple with its 50m high gopuram
- Hemakunta Hill with ruins of Jain temples and a monolithic Sculpture of Narasimha
- Vittala Temple
- Sule Bazar
- Achutaraya Temple
- Purandaradasa Mandapa
- Royal Center that has Lotus Mahal
- the queen's bath
- Elephant stables etc.

Vithala Temple :

The Vithala temple, which is also known as the most splendid monument of Hampi is situated on the Southern bank of the Tungabhadra River. It is a world heritage monument dating back to the 15th century and is known for its extensive sculptured work, ornate pillars and the carvings that decorate them. Built during the rule of King Devaraya (II), it shows the high perfection of the Vijayanagara style.

The temple is built out of hard granite around an area of 500 by 300 feet. It has 56 pillars in the main hall, which produce musical notes when struck. In the courtyard is the life-size chariot carved out of granite with actually revolving wheels. The temple is famous for its beautifully carved gopurams and mandapas.

Some of the inner pillars in the Mandapa contain figures of women dancers and drummers and beautiful multi-petalled lotus carvings. This is one of the most ornate Vijaynagar temples built over a period of time. Here tapping certain stone pillars produces harmonics that can only be described as ethereal, and it's something that's quite impossible to imagine until you hear a tune being tapped out on a stone carving of a drum.

The stone chariot in this temple is very famous. Its stone wheels, each shaped in the form of a lotus, are capable of revolving. Temple chariots are often mobile reproductions of a temple. The stone chariot here is in turn a static version of the mobile temple chariot.

Virupaksha Temple :

The Virupaksha or the Pampapathi temple is the main center of pilgrimage at Hampi. This temple is in ruins but is still in worship and is dedicated to Lord Shiva, known here as Virupaksha or Pampapati, as his wife Pampa is associated with Tungabhadra River (daughter of Lord Brahma). It is situated in picturesque surroundings on the southern bank of the Tungabhadra river to the north of Hemkuta hill.

Virupaksha Temple

The temple has a 50 m tall, elaborately carved gateway and has been renovated in 1510 by Krishnadeva Raya. The temple has several mandaps and murals (statues). The eastern gateway is a marvel of engineering skill. The hall leading to the sanctorum has finely carved columns of animals and the ceiling is painted with scenes from mythology.

Huge pillared halls are the special and distinctive feature of this temple. Parts of the temple date back to the 6th century and the festival of Vijaynagar organised by the government of Karnataka is worth seeing.

OVERNIGHT STAY IN HOSPET.

DAY FIVE : HOSPET / BADAMI (200 KMS / 5 HOURS)

AM after breakfast checkout of the hotel and drive to Badami. Arrive Badami check into the hotel. PM sightseeing of Badami / Aihole / Pattadakal.

History (Badami)

Badami, the one time capital of the Chalukyas, is noted several temples, some structural & other rock-cut, of the 6th & 7th Centuries. The foundations of Badami, or Vatapi as it was called, were laid by Pulakeshi I (535 - 566 AD) his son Kirtivarman, the 1st (567 - 598 AD), beautified the town with temples & other buildings.

Mangalesha (598 - 610 AD) brother of Kiritavarman I completed the construction of the cave temples & endowed the temples with the village on the occasion of the installation of the image of Vishnu. The greatest ruler of the dynasty was Pulakeshi II (610-642 AD) who among others defeated the Pallava King Mahendra Verman I. The Pallava later captured & destroyed Badami to avenge their defeat Badami was also in the possession of the Vijayanagar Kings, The Adil Shahis, The Savanur Nawabs, The Marathas, Hyder Ali & finally the British who made it part of the Bombay Presidency.

History (Aihole)

Once the capital of the early Chalukyan dynasty (6th to 8th centuries), Aihole is a picturesque village on the banks of the Malaprabha river. Variouslly called Ayyavole & Aryapura in the inscriptions, Aihole is historically famous as the cradle of Hindu temple architecture. There are about 125 temples divided into 22 groups scattered all over the villages and nearby fields. Most of these temples were built between the 6th & 8th centuries and some even earlier.

Only mere traces of a fort dating from the 6th century can be seen today. A large number of prehistoric sites have been found in Morera Angadigalu, near the Meguti hillocks in Aihole. Excavations near some temples have yielded traces of antique pottery and bases of structures constructed with bricks of pre-Chalukyan times. More temples are being excavated every day bearing witness to the vigorous experimentation on temple architecture which went on at Aihole more than 14 centuries ago.

History (Pattadakal)

The tiny village of Pattadakal is situated on the banks of the Malaprabha river. Referred to as Petrigal by Ptolemy, Pattadakal was later known variously as Raktapura (Red Town) & Pattadakal Kisuvolal . This place reached its pinnacle of glory under the Chalukyas from the seventh to the ninth centuries functioning as a royal commemorative site. The group of about ten temples, surrounded by numerous minor shrines & plinths, represents the climax of early Western Chalukyan Architecture. King Vikramaditya II (734 - 745 AD) and his art loving queens Lokmahadevi & Trailkyamahadevi, brought sculptors from Kanchipuram to create fantasies in stone in Pattadakal.

OVERNIGHT STAY IN BADAMI.

DAY SIX: BADAMI / GOA (450 KMS / 7 HOURS)

AM after breakfast drive to Goa either to take flight for the onward destination or can stay in Goa.

OPTION FOUR : BANGALORE / MYSORE / BELUR – HALEBID / BANGALORE.

DAY 01 BANGALORE / MYSORE.

AM Leave Bangalore to Mysore (Approx 145 Kms / 3 hours) enroute Srirangapatna:

Sriranganatha Temple

This is one of the largest temples in the State & is of great local importance. Its God has given the town His name. It consists of a Mahadwara with a huge tower & a pillared hall built in three or four different stages, Sukanasi & Garbhagriha. There are many other shrines inside the enclosure. Inside the Garbhagriha (Cell) is a colossal image of Vishnu reclining on the huge coils of the great snake Ananta.

Daria Daulat Bagh

Tipu Sultan's Summer palace built in 1784 was his favorite retreat. Made of teak, this Indo - Saracenic structure has ornate and beautiful frescoes. It is now a museum and tells eloquent stories of Tipu's valor and his losing battle with the British.

The Gumbaz

Here lie the bodies of Hyder, his wife & Tippu. It is an imposing structure in the midst of the lovely Lal-bagh garden, with a high rise platform & having a verandah of polished black basalt pillars all round. The other things of importance are the other dungeons, gates of the fort & flag-staff cavalier, Tippu's racket court etc.

Tippu's Palace

About 150 yards east of the Ranganatha Temple is now to be seen the mound & ruined walls of the Lal Mahal which was once a magnificent palace inhabited by Tippu.

Fort

It is from here that Tipu started his attack against the British. An obelisk in the fort marks the place where he fell - betrayed by his own men. The fort holds within it a mosque and the Ranganathaswamy Temple. Outside the fort is the Gumbaz, Tipu's tomb with splendid ebony door inlaid with ivory.

After sightseeing of the above place drive to Mysore (20 Kms / 30 minutes) Arrive Mysore check into hotel. After lunch sightseeing of Mysore

History

Mysore was the political capital of the Wodeyar dynasty which ruled the state of Karnataka for some 150 years till the independence of the country from the British. These kings were great patrons of art and culture and Mysore was the cultural capital of the south under the rule of the Wodeyars. The Wodeyars made the Dasara festival an event.

To showcase the rich culture and heritage of the town. Even to this date this celebration of the Dasara which is a 10 day celebration during the month of Oct/ Nov is a spectacular event to watch.

Mysore is a city of palaces, gardens, shady avenues and sacred temples and retains some of the charm of the old world with its many institutions that propagate Carnatic Classical music and dance.

The Mysore Palace

Once the residence of the Wodeyars, this structure is one of the largest of its kind in India. Built in 1912 in the Indo Saracenic style, this place exudes a grandeur that is unmatched. The Golden Royal Elephant Throne, the Durbar Hall, the Kalyana Mantap and the Gallery are the main attractions here.

The Jaganmohan Palace

This is a converted art gallery which houses paintings that date back to the late 19th century. Paintings of Raja Ravi Verma of Travancore and the Russian Painter Svetoslav Roerich are on display. Paintings in the traditional Mysore Golden leaf style can also be seen here.

Chamundi Hill

Perched atop a hill is a 12th century temple of Chamundershwari. About 13 Kms from Mysore by road there is also a 1000 step walking track for all those young at heart to try. The gigantic 4.8 meter tall monolith of Nandi the sacred vehicle of Lord Shiva is a marvel to watch. Also close to the temple stands a gigantic statue of the demon Mahishasura.

St. Philomena's Church

This beautiful Cathedral was built in 1956 and is one of the largest churches in the country. It has been built in the Gothic style with beautiful stained glass windows and lofty towers. The illuminated church in the evening is a wonderful site not to be missed.

The Mysore Zoo

One of the country's best zoos, this is famous for rare animals bred in captivity and is housed in lush green surroundings.

Brindavan Gardens

19 Kms north west of Mysore is the famous KRS dam. Built by the famous engineer Sir. M. Vishvesvariah this was one of the first multi purpose dams built in India. Adjacent to the dam is the beautiful Brindavan Garden. With lighting and musical fountains this place transforms itself into a fairy land in the evenings.

OVERNIGHT STAY IN MYSORE.

DAY TWO: BANGALORE / HASSAN (145 KMS / 3 HOURS)

A.M. checkout of hotel and drive to Hassan. Arrive Hassan and check into the hotel. After lunch we will proceed for the sightseeing of Belur and Halebid.

History (BELUR)

Belur is 222 Kms from Bangalore, 34 Kms from Hassan and 149 Kms from Mysore. This place is famous for its exquisite temples. Belur is known as Dakshina Varanasi or South Banaras for its temples. The serenity of Belur is attributed to the celebrated temple of Channakeshava, built by the Hoysala King Vishnuvardhana in 117 A. D. to commemorate his conversion from Jainism to Vaishnavism.

The main temple to be seen here is the Channakeshava temple. The main structure of the temple, which is star shaped, is a homogenous architectural unit on a raised platform. Everything is carved in blackstone looking like metal. Facing the temple, at the entrance, stands the winged figure of Garuda, Lord Vishnu's carrier.

The 650 charging elephants on the frieze around the walls outside are all different from each other. The exotic bracket figures (Madanikas) on the walls of the temple are serene, playful and amorous, enhancing the overall effect of this pinnacle of architectural excellence

Inside, even in the darkness you can see the hand-lathe-turned shining pillars, each unique in its splendor. On the smooth circular platform in front of the shrine you can see the beautiful Shantala Devi, queen of King Vishnuvardhana. The spotlight is on the famous bracket figures on the ornate ceiling. All these figures have been inspired by Shantala Devi's Voluptuous beauty.

Sculpted limbs undulated in lyrical lines. One sculpted beauty communicates with a pet parrot whose tail is like that of a peacock another wrings water from her long hair and you can see the drops collected on hair ends. The delicacy and attention to the finest details here are incredible.

History (HALEBID)

The great city of Dwarasamudra flourished as a Capital of the Hoysala Empire during the 12th & 13th centuries. During the reign of Veeraballala II, the grandson of Vishnuvardhana, it reached the greatness of its zenith. Veeraballala II extended his empire from sea to sea between the Cauvery & Krishna rivers.

On account of certain reasons this came to decadence stage. The renovation work was undertaken by the State Government about 30 years ago & the town as well as its area gradually improved. The climate is pleasant. There are buses running from Hassan, Arasikere & Belur. There is a big tank which feeds thousands of acres of land wherein sugarcane & paddy are grown.

The sculptural work of the temples is based on Shastras & importance. One can collect the information to his maximum desire.

Places of Interest

Halebid is 27 Kms north west of Hassan and 17Kms from Belur. This place is also called as Dwara Samudra, the wealthy capital of the Hoysala Kingdom. Halebid has several striking beautiful Hoysala temples and Jain Shrines.

Another famous temple is the Keddareshwara Temple where the sculptor's virtuosity seems to have surpassed even the goldsmith's skill in its sheer intricacy. One Kilometer from the Halebid temples is the Basti hills where there are Jain Bastis with gleaming black stone pillars.

The Hoysaleshwara temple, standing on platform like a casket, is a sculptural extravaganza, richly endowed with most finely detailed scroll work in stone. Outside there is a Nandi(the sacred bull, a vehicle of the Lord Shiva) and a hillock where a palace stood, connected to the temple by a passage. Inside its dark depths., the queen Shantala Devi beckons from an alcove.

The figure of mortals and immortals are larger compared to Belur and are beautifully chiseled in shining black stone. The walls of the temples are covered with variety of gods and goddesses, animals, birds and dancing girls. There is a museum on the lawns with 12-13th century sculptures and the gold coins in use at the time.

OVERNIGHT STAY IN HASSAN.

DAY THREE HASSAN / BANGALORE

AM checkout of the hotel and drive to Bangalore for onward journey or overnight stay in Bangalore.