



(Top and above) The rooms faced a little pond that was located in the rear part of the resort, which was visible through the rooms too, bringing outdoors inside. With plenty activities available inside the resort like archery, kite flying and bullock cart ride, one can easily spend the day taking in all the resort has to offer.

LOOKING AROUND

Discovering the hidden gems that this place has, however, is what makes this holiday really special. Hassan is in close proximity to Belur and Halebid (home to the best Hoysala architecture temples) and Shravanabelagola (which has the single largest monolith statue in the world and a Jain pilgrim centre). However Stay Simple Riverdale is very easily accessible to some hidden gems too, like Ramanathpur, Gorur Dam, Shettyhalli Church, Mosale Hoysala Temples and Sri Ramadevara Hill. The resort has a 24/7 travel desk that you can contact for any assistance related to travelling as they can help you arrange both excursion packages and also assist you with car reservations if required. In

fact, a river trek along the banks of river Hemavathi, with a picnic lunch is a great way to soak in the local sights and sounds. However, if you want to discover something new, head to Mosale. This is a twin temple structure and the Chennakeshava and Nageshwara temples are built in Hoysala architecture with intricate details. It is widely believed that this was the prototype of the Belur and Halebid temples and the magnificent architecture of these temples is sure to leave you mesmerised. Also a must-see is the Shettyhalli Church, said to have been built about 450 years ago with Gothic architecture. It is in ruins today and in urgent need of restoration, but the remnants still reek of history and there is a strange aura

that has to be experienced. It is said that the church actually gets submerged by the the Hemavathi River backwaters in the monsoons. If you have the time, also head to the Ramanathpur Temples known as 'Dakshin Kashi' and visit the five temples in close proximity on the banks of the river. And yes, you will pass through several villages that will get you up-close with rural lifestyles, so make sure you stop by and check out the cotton plants and visit a jaggery processing centre. As I was driving back, I was rewarded with not one but two beautiful peacocks that crossed my car and I knew this was a trip that I would cherish in more ways than one! ■

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HOW TO GET THERE

Hassan can be reached via road and rail from Bengaluru which is a part of Air Costa's network. For Air Costa flight details and timings, please refer to the 'Flight Schedule' pages at the end of this magazine.



Bindu Gopal Rao is a freelance writer and photographer. A cost accountant with an MBA, she believes that writing gives her an opportunity to meet a variety of people and explore new places, which makes the journey very fulfilling.