



Ode to Divinity

If you look around carefully, you will find him everywhere. From bill boards, to temples, from reclining in cars to even as jewellery – we are talking about the omnipresent and most loved lord Ganesha.

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If you visit the coastline of Karnataka you can experience myriad forms of the elephant-headed God, as well as understand different legends associated with the temples. Here are some places that you can visit on your next trip.

Shri Vinayaka Temple, Aneugudde

Situated in Kumbhashi, Aneugudde, 100km from Mangalore, this tiny village has become popular because of the Shri Vinayaka temple. Also called Kumbhashi, the word Aneugudde comes from 'Aane' meaning 'elephant' and 'Gudde', meaning 'hillock'. Legend has it that when this place was hit by severe drought in the past, Sage Agasthya performed penance to appease the rain God and the demon Kumbhasura created trouble. This is when Bheema, one of the Pandavas, received a weapon from lord Ganesha to kill Kumbhasura. Hence, this place has a well-known temple dedicated to Lord Ganesha. The main idol here is a 12 feet

tall single stone that is self manifested and is believed to be growing every year.

Mahatobar Shri Siddi Vinayaka Temple, Idagunji

Located in Idagunji town of Honnavara taluk, in North Canara district in Karnataka, this ancient temple dates back to 1,500 years. It has a standing idol of Ganesha with two hands holding his favourite sweet 'modak' in one and a lotus in the other. It is believed that this location was earmarked by the Gods themselves where saints offered penance. Impressed with this, Ganesha decided to stay here.

Southadka Ganesha Temple

This temple is in the Belthangadi Taluk of Dakshina Kannada district. The idol of Ganesha is in the midst of an open field without a formal temple structure. It is believed that this idol was worshipped by the royal family ruling this place which was destroyed by enemies. Local cowherds found the idol and installed it in a cucumber field.

In fact, it is said that Ganesha appeared in the dreams of the farmers and asked them to keep him in the open and not inside a temple building. Incidentally the name of the place comes from 'Sowthe' meaning cucumber and 'Adka' meaning field as cowherds offered cucumber to the deity while praying to him. The temple is decorated with lot of bells offered by devotees who have special wishes.

Shri Siddivinayaka Temple, Chandaguli

Also known as the Ghante Ganesha Temple (Ghante means bell), it is located at Chandaguli around 18 km from Yellapur. The location is scenic and surrounded with lush paddy fields, areca nut and coconut plantations. The temple has several bells of all sizes depending on the kind of problem being faced. Usually devotees who pray here come back to offer their thanks once their wishes are fulfilled. The idol of Ganesha is beautiful and the sight of the bells all around is mesmerising.

Shri Mahaganapathi Temple, Sharavu

The coastal town of Mangalore is home to the Shri Sharavu Mahaganapati temple located in the heart of the city. With a history dating back to over 800 years, legend has it that when king Veerabahu was ruling here, he accidentally killed a cow while he was hunting. To absolve himself of the sin, he was advised by Sage Bharadhwaja to install a Shiva linga and build a temple here. It was much later that lord Ganesha, self-manifested on the southern wall of the temple along with Siddhilakshmi and it is believed that praying to this form will grant you what you wish for.

Batte Vinayaga Temple at Barkur

Located 16 km north of Udupi in Barkur, this is where you will see lord Ganesha facing towards north and leaning towards the west. The idol has a cloth (batte means cloth

THE COASTAL TOWN OF MANGALORE IS HOME TO THE SHRI SHARAVU MAHAGANAPATI TEMPLE LOCATED IN THE HEART OF THE CITY



in Kannada) around the waist and bells and plaited hair. There are five footprints in front of the temple that has a historical significance and is currently being preserved by the archaeological department.

Sri Siddivinayaka Temple at Hattiangadi

Located 8 km from Kundapur, the idol of the ancient Siddivinayaka temple is carved in a 2.5 feet high Saligrama stone and was built during the 8th century. The temple is situated on the bank of river Varahi and is the only temple where Ganesha sports matted locks locally called jata-hair and the curly hair is left loose at the back with the trunk bent towards the left. The Siddivinayaka School of Ancient Scriptures is housed here where various cultural events including the Yakshagana Kammata is held.

Guddattu Jaladhivasa Ganapathy Temple

A one-of-its-kind temple, this

is a place close to Udupi where Ganesha is resting on the foot of a granite rock in a cave that is always filled with water up to the neck level. Part of a natural rock formation, this idol of Ganesha is self-manifested and believed to be the only idol resting in water. Dating back to thousands of years, the three feet tall idol can be seen from a small opening in the wall when the arathi is being performed. The reason why the idol is immersed has an interesting legend. When fighting a demon Tripurasura, lord Shiva fired an arrow that missed him. Shiva felt that this was caused by Ganesha and fired another arrow at him. But the arrow could not harm Ganesha and took him to a sea called the Madhu Sagara. Ganesha drank the entire honey and blessed Shiva, who killed the demon. To help Ganesha, Shiva brought him to this place and said that those who immerse him in cool water will be blessed!

FUN FACTS



Shri Vinayaka Temple celebrates Sankastahara Chaturthi with pomp. On one of the special days, 18,000 'Kotte Kadbu' or idlis are cooked in jackfruit leaves.



Shri Sharavu Mahaganapati temple also sees cultural activities including dance and drama shows as well as the traditional dance forms like the Yakshagana.



One of the pujas at, Mahatobar Shri Siddi Vinayaka Temple, is called Appane Cheeti or permission (Appane) letter (Cheeti). You can place a letter on the right and left foot of the lord. If the letter on the right falls, it is considered a Yes and left is No.



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