

MANGALORE GETAWAYS

The coastal town of Mangalore, often called the Gateway of Karnataka, serves as a wonderful base to explore many spiritual and cultural locations in the vicinity. **BY BINDU GOPAL RAO**

Here are some important places that are easily accessible by road from Mangalore.

KARKALA

Nestled in the backdrop of the Western Ghats and being a famed Jain pilgrim centre, Karkala is home to about 18 Jain temples or basadis including Mahaveera Basadi, Anekere Padmavathi Basadi, Chaturmukha Thirthankara Basadi and Hiriyangaddi Neminatha Basadi. The Chaturmukha Basadi has a whopping 108 pillars and has three life size images of Thirthankaras and smaller images of 24 other Thirthankaras and was built over 30 years. A recurring characteristic of this small town is the black stone that you will see everywhere that gives its name as Karkala is derived from Kari (black) and Kallu (stone) in Kannada. This place is also known for the monolithic statue of Bhagawan Bahubali at Gommateshwara betta that towers 42

feet high making it the second tallest one in Karnataka and was erected way back in 1432. An anointing ceremony or Mahamastakabhisheka happens once in 12 years and the next one is slated in 2026. While in Karkala, stop by the beautiful St. Lawrence church at Attur that has a rich history and also celebrates an annual feast when pilgrims throng the place. Karkala is also home to some old temples like Anantashayana, Venkataramana, Gopalakrishna and Veerabhadra. For some quiet time head to the Ramasamudra Lake that is not just scenic but is also known to be a perennial source of water.

Distance from Mangalore: 55 km.

UDUPI

The temple town of Udupi is as well known for its famed Krishna temple as it is for its delectable cuisine and lovely pristine beaches. At the heart of the town is the Sri Krishna Temple or the Udupi Krishna Math that was started by saint and philosopher Madhavacharya in the 13th century. A Dvaita philosophy center, the sanctum sanctorum houses a beautiful idol of Lord Krishna. An important element of this temple is the Kanakana Kindi a small window through which his ardent devotee, Kanakadasa could see Lord Krishna. The Ashta Mathas or eight temple trusts here are in charge of the administration of the temple in rotation. Close by at Yellur, you can also see the Lord Shiva temple said to be over 1000 years. Udupi is well known for its beaches Kaup, Malpe and St. Mary's Island. When in Udupi, sample its world renowned cuisine that evolved in the large kitchen of the Krishna Temple that serves meals every day to all devotees that visit the temple free of cost every day. One of the important festivals held here is the Paryaya that happens every alternate year that witnesses chariot processions, folk dances, cultural shows and religious hymns. The ancient Milagres Church, Maravanthe Beach, Kollur and Someshwara Wildlife Sanctuary are some places that are worth a visit from Udupi.

Distance from Mangalore: 65 km.

