

QUICK GETAWAYS FROM AHMEDABAD

AHMEDABAD

Ahmedabad is a major city in Gujarat, a buzzing metropolis with a long history, remarkable architecture, a fascinating maze of an old quarter, excellent museums, fine restaurants and fabulous night markets. The city offers the traveler a unique style of architecture, which is a blend of Hindu and Islamic styles (Indo-Saracenic style of architecture). The monuments of Ahmedabad mainly date back to the 15th century. Ahmedabad has been known for its industry since medieval times. Presently it is famous for its textile mills and is often referred to as the 'Manchester of the East'.

AHMEDABAD SIGHTSEEING

Across the Sabarmati river is the Calico Museum of Textiles, undoubtedly one of the foremost textile museums and a celebrated institute in Indian textiles. Its remarkable collection of fabrics spanning varied and remote regions of India exemplifies handicraft textiles across five centuries. The Sidi Sayeed Mosque with its carved jaali windows have become a symbol of the city of Ahmedabad. Visit the Rani Rupmati Masjid, with its richly carved minarets. Named after the Hindu wife of Sultan Mohmed Beghara, Rani Rupmati's Masjid in Mirzapur was built between 1430 to 1440 A. D. Hussain Doshi's Gufa is also popularly known as Amdavad ni Gufa located at the Kasturbhai Lalbhai campus. It is a creative union of two of India's most imaginative minds, the celebrated architect B. V. Doshi and painter M. F. Hussain. The other popular sights to be seen are the Akshardham and ISCKON Temples, Kankaria Lake, the Adalaj step-well, Vintage Car Museum, Hathi Singh Jain temple, Swaminarayn Temple, Jama Masjid, Dara Harir Vav, and the many museums.



CALICO MUSEUM OF TEXTILES



KANKARIA LAKE



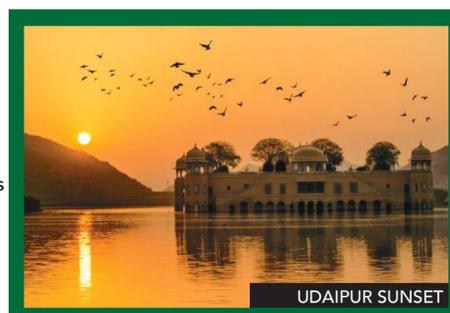
HATHI SINGH JAIN TEMPLE

UDAIPUR

Located in the Aravalli ranges of Rajasthan, the city of Udaipur a fascinating blend of sights, sounds and experiences. If Jaipur is a city in pink, Udaipur is a city in white. The city is famous for its palaces, lake, museums, temples, and gardens. The Picholia Lake, Udai Sagar, and Pratap Sagar are some of the most beautiful lakes in the state.

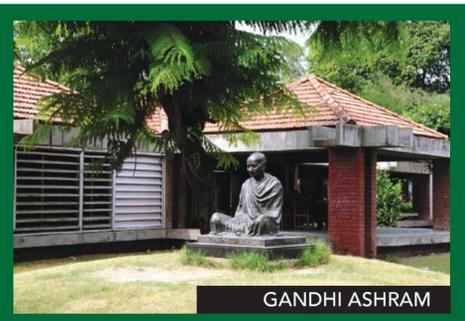
UDAIPUR SIGHTSEEING

Visit the City Palace, standing on the east bank of Lake Pichola. The complex is a massive series of palaces built at different times from 1559. The balconies of the palace provide panoramic views of the Lake Palace Hotel and Jag Mandir on one side, and the city of Udaipur on the other. The paintings, mosaics, intricately carved 'chhatris' and the architecturally brilliant facade all contribute to making your visit to the City Palace a truly memorable experience. Thereafter, visit a picturesque garden, Sahelion ki Bari. You can visit also visit Jagat Temple, which is dedicated to Goddess Ambika- a form of Goddess Durga. Built in 961 A.D, this temple is renowned for its intricate carvings in the exteriors. In the evening, enjoy a boat ride on Lake Pichola, which is an artificial fresh water lake, created in the year 1362 AD.



UDAIPUR SUNSET

GANDHI ASHRAM



GANDHI ASHRAM

The Gandhi Ashram was established by Mahatma Gandhi on a quiet stretch of the Sabarmati River in 1917. During the lifetime of Mahatma Gandhi it was known as Satyagraha Ashram and was the center of India's freedom movement. It was from here, in 1930, that the Mahatma began his famous "Dandi March" to the sea to protest against the Salt Tax imposed by the British. Over the years, the Ashram became home to the ideology that set India free. It aided countless other nations and people in their own battles against oppressive forces. 'Hridaya Kunj', the simple cottage where he lived, is preserved as a national monument.

A Gandhi Memorial Center, a library and a sound-and-light show offers an interesting display of the Mahatma's life and work.

Today, the Ashram serves as a source of inspiration and guidance, and stands as a monument to Gandhi's life mission and a testimony to others who have fought a similar struggle.

GIR NATIONAL PARK

The Gir National Park lies in the Gujarat peninsula in South-Western India. Gir Sanctuary is the last and only home of the critically endangered Asiatic Lion. The only place in India to see this animal, this park can take legitimate pride in saving an endangered species, which was at the threshold of extinction in the start of the twenty-first century, by providing it a more secured habitat. Gir National Park is around 55 km from Junagadh City, the most common base for making a visit, and 348 km from Ahmedabad

GIR SIGHTSEEING

Safaris into Gir offer an unparalleled opportunity to spot the rare Asiatic Lion, along with thousands of other elusive wild animals like the Asiatic wild ass, hyenas, Gir foxes, pygmy woodpecker, brown fish owl and black buck. Along with the famous lions, who number around 350, the park is also home to other wild cats. There are around 300 leopards, though they are nocturnal and thus harder to spot. The exotic flora of Gir National Park gives shelter to more than 200 species of birds and moreover the sanctuary has been declared an important bird area by the Indian Bird Conservation Network.



ASIATIC GIR LION

DIU



DIU FORT

Like Daman and Goa, Diu was a Portuguese colony until taken over by India in 1961. Daman and Diu are still governed from Delhi as a Union Territory. The town of Diu lies at the eastern end of Diu Island, and is known for its fortress and old Portuguese Cathedral. It is also a fishing town.

DIU SIGHTSEEING

Start with a visit to Diu Fort, a spacious and commanding edifice. Constructed during 1535-1541 AD, the fort stands testimony to the strategic alliance between the Portuguese and the Sultan of Gujarat. Presently, it houses the Diu Jail and a massive Light House. St. Paul's Church is dedicated to our Lady of Immaculate Conception, and the magnificent woodcarving found here is considered to be the most elaborate among all the Portuguese churches in India. Nearby is the old St. Thomas's Church that has now been converted into the Diu Museum, displaying idols, wooden carvings, shadow clocks, statues and various other artifacts. Later, visit Nagoa beach, the biggest in Diu. The branching palm trees (hoka) are a unique feature of the beach - they were originally imported from Africa by the Portuguese 400 years ago.

RANN UTSAV – THE DESERT FESTIVAL

The Great Rann of Kutch in Gujarat is known not only for its awe-inspiring landscape, but also for its 3-month long desert festival, the Rann Utsav that glorifies the colorful culture and traditions, aesthetic art and crafts and generous Kutch hospitality of the region. This carnival of music, dance and folklore offers an excellent opportunity to indulge in leisure, pleasure and merriment.

THINGS TO DO AT THE FESTIVAL:

The picturesque "White Desert" is waiting to welcome you. On a full moon night during Rann Utsav, the region wakes to an endless cycle of dance, and where century old traditions are revived in a celebration. This festival provides an exclusive opportunity to witness the creative ingenuity of the artisans and craftspeople, assorted array of folk music and performances, mixed representation of culture and communities, along with a vast diversity in ecology. A cradle of craftsmanship, Kutch is known for its exquisite variety of weaving, patchwork, block-printing, bandhani, tie-and-dye, rogan-art and other ethnic styles of embroidery, pottery, wood-carving, metal-crafts and shell-work. The variety emerges from the enchanting terrain that provides a perfect backdrop to an extra ordinary fair. Perhaps because the landscape is so white and ochre, even a hint of colour adds a fascinating element to the rustic life of Rann.



RANN UTSAV

PALITANA



PALITANA TEMPLES

The Palitana Jain Temples are located on Shatrunjaya hill by the city of Palitana in Bhavnagar district, Gujarat. The city of the same name, known previously as Padliptapur, has been dubbed "City of Temples". These temples are considered one of the holiest of all pilgrimage places by the Jain community. As the temple-city was built to be an abode for the divine, no one is allowed to stay overnight, including the priests. Jains believe that a visit to this group of temples is essential as a once in a life time chance to achieve nirvana or salvation.

PALITANA SIGHTSEEING

The entire summit of majestic mount Shatrunjaya is crowned with about 900 temples, each rivaling the other for beauty and magnificence, presenting an awe-inspiring spectacle to devotees and visitors. The temples are exquisitely carved in marble, veritable prayers in stone. To an observer, these appear to be ivory miniatures when seen from a distance. The most famous temples are those of Adinath, Kumarpal, Vimalshah, Samprati Raja and the Chomukh which is the highest. Besides there are temples dedicated to Hindu gods and goddesses like Saraswati, Shivji, Hanumanji, etc. The Saraswati temple is near the foot of the hill. Angar Pir's shrine is situated at the top of the hill. The temple chain starts with the shrine constructed by Babu Dhanpatsinh of Murshidabad at the foot of the hill. The pilgrims have to ascend 3745 steps to reach the 1800 feet hill. It takes between one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half hours to reach the summit.



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