

## **Visit a Religious Place -Shegaon**

Come One! Come All!

### Location:

Shegaon is a famous place of pilgrimage situated in Maharashtra. People from all over India come here for the Darshan of Sant Gajanan Maharaj.

### How to reach:

Nearest Railway Stations: Shegaon and Akola. Trains running between Howrah to Mumbai stop here. State Transport Buses are available from major cities. Private buses are also available.

When to visit: Shegaon, being a pilgrimage attracts tourist all the year round. Thursday is the auspicious day.

Where to stay: Affordable and comfortable accommodation is provided by the Sansthan. 'BHAKTI NIWAS'. Private hotels are available.

What to see: Gajanan Maharaj Mandir, Gajanan Watika, College of Engineering.

Anything special: 'Anand Sagar' is one of the most beautiful place- 05 km from the Shegaon.

## **Visit a Hill Station -CHIKHALDARA**

Come One! Come All!

Location: Hill station Chikhaldara is situated in Satpura Range nearly 350 Kilometers away from Chandrapur.

How to reach :Nearest Railway Stations: Amravati and Akola. S.T. Buses and private luxuries are available at Amravati. From Paratwada a picturesque, windy road of 50 kilometer takes to this calm and quite hill station.

When to Visit: Best season is from Sept. to June. In July there are heavy rains here.

Where to stay: There are MTDC, tourist Quarters ranging from 150 to 250 Rs. per family suit. Luxurious private hotels are also there. Meals and breakfasts cost more.

What to see: Chikhaldara Darshan Bus takes you for sight seeing round of four hours.Places worth seeing are Fort, Devi point, Bhim Kund, Garden, Echo point, Hurricane point and Sunset point. Municipal Corporation has developed a beautiful garden and a swimming pool. Forest Training College and Museum provide information about wild life, nature, people and their customs.

## **Matheran**

Location:54 km from Mumbai

Attractions:Toy Train, Charlotte Lake, Panorama Point, Louisa Point, Hart Point, Paymaster Park and Panthers Caves

Best Time to Visit:October to March

Matheran is an eco-friendly hill station and attracts lakhs of tourists every year. Known as 'Maharashtra's Gift', Matheran, with its 38 peak points, is a great getaway from the pandemonium of city life. One of the closest hill-stations to Mumbai, Matheran is around two hours from Mumbai, by road. The hill station is tucked away at the base of the Sahayadri Mountains and is unpolluted. Since, vehicles are banned from entering this hill station limit, be prepared to be on foot once you get to this place! One of the finest hill stations in Maharashtra, Matheran is a beautiful tourist destination that offers stunning views of the Sahayadri ranges, a bird's eye view of the lights of Mumbai and chilly nights. A number of boarding and lodging facilities are available here to cater to the huge inflow of tourists. For those wanting to savor the delights of this scenic beauty, the 38 peaks offer the best views of the hill station; local vendors whipping out local delights to enjoy with the views is another highlight of this place. The Toy Train is also another popular tourist attraction of this hill station. If you are intrigued and want to know more, read on.

### **A Panoramic Hill Station**

#### **Places To See**

All the 38 look-out points of Matheran are worth a visit but some points are out of bounds for tourists due to safety reasons. Some of the best peaks and points in Matheran that offer the best views of the hill station are Panorama Point, King George Point, Louisa Point, Echo Point and the Charlotte Lake. The Paymaster Park and the Panthers Caves are also great places to visit for those wanting to witness wildlife. The cliffs of Matheran can be enjoyed and viewed from the tops of restaurants and even through hotel rooms. One of the most eco-sensitive regions, Matheran is best explored on foot or on mountain bikes. Apart from the usual sightseeing, Matheran also offers activities such as hiking, trekking, climbing etc. One of the biggest attractions here is the famous Toy Train. Trips from Matheran to Neral and back, take a thrilling 280 zigzag turns through the Sahayadri ranges, making it an exciting experience for all tourists.

#### **Shopping**

This charming hill station is also a popular shopping destination for tourists. Local Matheran Hats, sandals and sweet 'Chikki' are popular here. The honey available in Matheran is also considered to be very popular.

#### **Eating Out**

Fancy restaurants are not easily available in Matheran. Try the stalls, the food vendors and the dhabas, who promise authentic Maharashtrian and Punjabi food.

#### **Accommodation**

##### **Budget Hotel**

##### **Hotel Panorama**

Matheran, MH

022 2618 3411 Usha Ascot Hotel

Matheran, MH

022 22078292 Anandritz

Near Matheran Police Station, Raigarh District

Matheran

##### **Star Hotels**

##### **Horse land hotel and Mountain Spa**

Vithalrao Kotwal

Matheran Riviera Hotel

Kasturba Road, Taluk Karjat, Matheran, Raigarh Dist.

Matheran, MH  
02148 230804

#### How To Reach

##### By Road

Matheran is located 90 km from Mumbai and 120 km from Neral. One can reach Matheran via train or hired cabs from Neral. Once you reach Matheran, you can either choose to travel on foot, rent a bicycle or ride a horse at the hill station since vehicles are not allowed within city limits. Matheran is just on the Mumbai-Pune Expressway.

##### By Rail

Matheran is acclaimed for its rail services and operates over four toy trains. A train runs from Neral to Matheran and you can take a train from the Pune Central station or from CST to Neral, and from Neral you can opt for the Toy Train services to Matheran. Not only will it offer you breathtaking views, the experience of travelling in a Toy Train will definitely be a unique experience in itself.

Matheran is a beautiful hill station and tourists are drawn to this place every year because of the tranquility, the fresh air and the old-world charm, which the town still retains. It is best to visit Matheran during the end of the Monsoon season as the hill station springs to life then and offers you the best views of Mumbai and Matheran.

## Ajanta Ellora Caves

Location: 400 km from Mumbai and 104 km from Aurangabad

Attractions: Rock-cut caves, Kailasa Temple, Buddha's statues, paintings

Best Time To Visit: All through the year

A set of 29 caves, the Ajanta Ellora caves, inspired by Buddhist architecture, are among the finest examples of early Buddhist civilization. Paintings depicting the Jataka tales and other diverse stories of Buddha come to life in these caves. One of the most celebrated tourist destinations around the world, the caves at Ajanta and Ellora are examples of unmatched artistic and engineering excellence. Quiet and meditative, these caves also take you back in time and narrate the stories of a royal who, with his saint-like qualities, left all the riches behind to become Buddha. Elaborate sculptures, wall inscriptions, rock carvings, Viharas, Hindu/Jain monasteries and the Kailasa Temple are some of the most interesting things to see while at the caves. These caves have attracted pilgrims and tourists for decades and were declared as a 'World Heritage Site' by UNESCO in 1983. Amid the beautiful pictures and paintings that the Ajanta Ellora caves are famous for, are the multifarious sculptures and poses of Buddha—calm and contemplative. For more, scroll down.

### Places To See

Apart from the various caves at Ajanta and Ellora and the different Buddha sculptures, there are a variety of other places to see in and around the caves. The Kailasa Temple is one such excavation and is one of the largest monolithic structures in the world. This temple has continuously attracted pilgrims all year round, through the decades and to the present day. Once you have admired the Buddhist architecture and the beautiful paintings that adorn the cave walls, there are a few other places you could explore. The Bibi Ka Maqbara, the Daulatbad Fort and the Buddhist monasteries outside the cave complex are worth a visit. If you have the time to visit Aurangabad, which is only 104 km from Ajanta and Ellora, you could also pay a visit to the Aurangabad Caves, the Panchakki and the Aurangabad City Walls.

### Shopping

There are quite a number of souks outside both the Ajanta and Ellora caves. If you are looking for fabrics, silver, semi-precious stones, beads and local, hand-carved sculptures of Buddha, then this is the place to be! Ellora is slightly more shopper-friendly and offers a greater variety of products including apparel, footwear and accessories to name a few. Local images and paintings of various Hindu Gods along with Buddha, and even Jain, paintings can be found here.

### Eating Out

The walk from the Ajanta Caves to the Ellora Caves can be quite a task and can also make you very thirsty. Throughout the journey, there are local food stalls and counters where soft drinks, fresh juices and snacks are sold. If you are looking for restaurants, then both cave sites have MTDC restaurants and an MTDC resort that serves a delectable array of food, refreshments and drinks to get you prepped for the rest of the day.

### Accommodation

#### Budget Hotels

##### Ajanta Travellers Lodge

Near Ajanta Caves,  
Maharashtra - 431118 Ajanta T-Junction - MTDC run hotel

Near Ajanta Caves,  
Maharashtra - 431118 Padmapani Park

Near Ellora Caves,  
Maharashtra - 431118

#### Boutique Hotel

##### Hotel Kailas

Ellora Caves, Ellora District, Aurangabad  
+91 2437 244446

## How To Reach

### By Road

Aurangabad is only 100 km from Ajanta and 30 km from Ellora. You can hire a local taxi or travel by the state-run buses to reach the Ajanta Ellora Caves. The highway that connects Aurangabad to Mumbai is also well-connected to various parts of the country such as Delhi, Indore, Bijapur, Udaipur and Jaipur.

### By Rail

Aurangabad is well-connected to Mumbai and Pune by rail. The Jalgaon Station is the closest rail head to Ellora. If you disembark at this station, you can opt for local transport to tour the Ajanta and Ellora caves.

In order to make your holiday in Maharashtra a memorable one, you must visit the caves at Ajanta and Ellora at least once! One of the most outstanding specimens of ancient Indian architecture, the Ajanta Ellora caves display the artistry of the yore and still stand magnificently for the whole world to revel in their mythical and magical beauty. Built between the 2nd and 3rd century BC, these caves are some of the only remaining testaments of an obscure, Buddhist India.