a centre of learning in ancient India. Sandipani Ashram is where Krishna and his Brahmin friend Sudama are said to have received their early instruction from Guru Sandipani. The ashram exists to this day in the Ankpata area of Ujjain.

Kailadeh Palace : Away from the bustle of the city, outside its northern border lies the scenic Kailadeh Palace. The serene environs of this sprawling complex on the Shipra river gives the traveller a fair idea of what Ujjain might have looked like in the height of its glory.

Vikram Kirti Mandir : Vikram Kirti Mandir was established in 1944 to mark the second millennium of the Vikram era. It houses the Scindia Oriental Research Institute (SORI), an archaeological museum, an art gallery and an auditorium.

Heritage Walk : Ujjain has a number of monuments known for their architectural refinement. Heritage Walk on three routes have been developed to explore this aspect of Ujjain. Interested persons may please contact Hotel Shri Residency. Tel: 0734-2551495/96.

Sound & Light Show : The show mounted at Kothi Palace will take you to a summarized view of the eternal journey of Ujjaini through history. The Scindia’s built this palace in Ujjain which is a worth seeing Maratha construction of 19th century.

Kothi Palace

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The ancient city of Ujjain lies on the banks of river Kshipra. The number of temples in Ujjain, it is popularly held, is so large that if one comes here with two cartloads of grain and offers only one handful at each temple, one would still run short of offerings. Legend has it that Ujjain is one of the saptapuri, or the seven holy cities of India that grant moksha or liberation from the cycle of birth and death. Ujjain hosts the Simhasth, as the Kumbh Mela is known here, every 12 years, the latest of which was in 2004.

What to See

Ram Ghat: Flanking the eastern bank of the Shipra, Ram Ghat stretches for almost a kilometre from Pashupati Temple in the south to the road bridge across the river in the north. The wide promenade is dotted with temples, old and new and the air is full of the sound of temple bells and incantations. The best time to explore the ghat is early morning and late evening.

Mahakaleshwar Temple: One of the twelve jyotirlingas, Mahakaleshwar Temple, popularly referred to as Mahakal Temple, is one of the most sacred Shiva temples in India. Located at the heart of Ujjain, it is also the best place to start exploring this ageless town. The market around the temple is also Ujjain's commercial nerve centre.

Harsiddhi Temple: Harsiddhi Temple a major seat of the Shakti sect occupies a special place in the galaxy of temples in Ujjain. Seated between the idols of Mahalaxmi and Mahasarawati, Goddess Annapurna, the main deity worshipped in the temple, is painted a brilliant vermillion.

Gopal Mandir: Gopal Temple, one of the largest temples in Ujjain is located at the heart of the town’s main market, constructed in the mid-19th century by Bayajbai Scindia, wife of King Daulat Rao Scindia. It is a striking example of Maratha temple architecture. As in the Maratha tradition, the temple is enclosed by a high wall, pierced by an ornate gateway with the distinctive bangaldar roof. The deepstambha, the other hallmark of this style of architecture, is however, absent.

Gadkalika: Located 2 kms north of Mahakaleshwar is Gadkalika Temple. It is said that the duty enshrined in the temple, was once worshipped by Kalidas. The legend goes that Kalidas, whose verses were once quite ordinary, gained his literary genius, through the blessings of Gadkalika.

Pir Matsyendranath: The Shrine of Pir Matsyendranath is located on top of a hill, on the banks of the Shipra, close to the Gadkalika Temple and the Bharthrihari Caves. Matsyendranath also known as Pir Macchinder is said to be the founder of the Nath sect of Shaivism. It is said that he was given the name Matsyendranath because he was born from the stomach of a fish. Incidentally, a fish or matsya is one of Vishnu’s ten Avatars. Matsyendranath is one of the earliest and the most important of the Śivaite saints. His cult was propagated in the Śivaite movement by his disciple and a sīlvāsī Śivaite saint named Gangadhara Ganasākhd. The legend says that Matsyendranath granted māyā and absolved the sins of his disciples by giving them his boon of māyā. His disciples then believed that he was a ādiśiva who was born from the stomach of Matsya and hence was Matsya. The place where he was born is known as Matsya Pūrama.

Ram Janardan Temple: One of the most famous temples in Ujjain is the Ram Janardan Temple built in the 17th century by Aurangzeb’s close confidante Sawai Jai Singh, who as the governor of Ujjain also ruled the nearby city of Malwa. It is located on the Ujjain – Fatehabad road about 2 kms southwest of Mahakal Temple.

Jantar Mantar: Jantar Mantar is an observatory built in the 17th century by Raja Jai Singh (1688-1743). It is located on the Ujjain-Fatehabad Road, 2 kms from Mahakaleshwar Temple. Jai Singh also constructed similar observatories in Jaipur, Delhi and Varanasi.

Sandipani Ashram: Ujjain has enjoyed a position of pre-eminence as a centre of learning, especially in the field of Sanskrit. Mentioned in early Hindu literature, the city has a long history of being the centre of Vedic learning.

Sandipani Ashram is one of the best-known centres of Sanskrit education in the country. It was established by a group of modern scholars, with the intention of preserving and promoting the ancient Indian way of life. The ashram is located in a serene and peaceful environment, which is conducive to learning and meditation.

Ved Shala: Ved Shala is the observatory located on the Ujjain-Fatehabad Road about 2 kms from Mahakaleshwar Temple. It was built by Raja Jai Singh in the 17th century and is one of the largest observatories in India. It is a striking example of Maratha temple architecture. As in the Maratha tradition, the temple is enclosed by a high wall, pierced by an ornate gateway with the distinctive bangaldar roof. The deepstambha, the other hallmark of this style of architecture, is however, absent.

The shivalinga in the garbhagriha of Mahakaleshwar Temple

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