

3N/4D Package of Dwarka – Somnath

Day 1: Ahmedabad – Dwarka

Arrival in Ahmedabad – a World Heritage City. Proceed towards Dwarka (450 kms/ 9 Hours). Reach Dwarka – one of the four Chardhams and the Saptarishis as per Hindu Religion. Visit:

Dwarkadhish Temple:

The famous Dwarkadhish Temple is located in the pilgrim district of Dwarka. The temple is dedicated to Hindu God Krishna and is also known as the Jagat Mandir. The Dwarkadhish Temple has two entrances on the north and south called the Moksha Dwar and SwargaDwar respectively. The various Aartis and Poojas that are done on a timely basis are very spiritual to watch. The temple structure is also a very important feature with its giant pillars and the 56 steps that leads to the Gomti River Banks on the face of the Arabian Sea. The Dwarkadhish Temple is a must visit tourist location in Gujarat worth a memorable trip. The temple receives great patrons of religious disciples and one can surely get allured by the grand reception around. It has a flag at the top which shows both the sun and the moon. The flag gets changed 5 times every day having the same symbol. The main temple is hugely built with 72 pillars supporting it.

Overnight at Dwarka.

Day 2: Dwarka

Today morning, visit:

Bet Dwarka:

Bet Dwarka is famously associated with ancient Vedas dating back to the Mahabharata. The small island also signifies proof in the ancient Indus Valley civilization. The Sri Krishna Temple here is known to feed Brahmins as the old belief continues of Lord Krishna being fed with rice at this spot by his friend Sudama. The devotees here follow the same practice by offering rice to Brahmins present there. The Lord Krishna idol that is worshipped here is considered to be crafted by Rukmini. Hindu sage Sri Vallabhacharya is credited with the establishment of the temple near to 500 years ago. Beyt Dwarka has been featured in the Mahabharata as well as SkandaPurana. As per Umashankar Joshi, Antardvipa who has been referred to as SabhaParva in Mahabharata identified as Yadava of Dwarka who used to travel by boats. . Beyt Dwarka derives its name from Shankhodhar which is an island full of conch shells. The archeological remains that are found below the sea also suggest that there was a settlement that existed during the times of Late Harrappan era. The period can be dated to the times of Maurya Empire and a part of the Okha Mandal or Kishdwip. In the inscription by Simhaditya in the 574 AD, Dwarka has also been mentioned.

Nageshwar Temple:

The Nageshwar Jyotirling temple of Dwarka is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas and a mentionable religious shrine that is marked in the Shiva Purana. The temple complex is compact and built to accommodate a fair share of pilgrims. The main idol of Shiva is worshipped with daily Aradhanas and Aartis and the idol and the idol is 25m in height. The self-existence of the Nageshwar Jyotirling goes back to the stories of how the temple got its name Darakavana from the deoghar trees. The followers believe that Lord Shiva appeared here from the ray of light giving it the name. Early religious sages believed that there are 64 Shiv Jyotirling among which the Nageshwar Jyoti is one. In the Hindu Purana of the Shiva the Nageshwar Jyotirlinga is one of the 12 Jyoti religious shrines. The Nageshwar Jyotirlinga Temple also is believed to be about the evil sprite called Daruka. Daruka attacked a follower of Shiva named Supriya and trapped him under the sea in Darukavana, where snakes and many other demons resided. Many other humans were also taken captive in the underwater demon land. Legends say the imprisoned people led by Supriya started praying to Lord Shiva chanting his name and the Lord actually appeared to free him off their plight.

Rukmani Temple:

The **Rukmini Devi Temple** is a temple in Dwarka, 2 kilometres (1.2 mi) away from Dwarka, India. It is dedicated to Rukmini, Krishna's chief queen. The temple is said to be 2,500 years old but in its present form it is inferred to belong to the 12th century. It is a richly carved temple decorated with sculptures of gods and goddesses on the exterior with the sanctum housing the main image of Rukmini. Carved naratharas (human figures) and carved gajatharas (elephants) are depicted in panels at the base of the tower. An interesting legend is narrated to justify separate dwelling temples, far away from each other, for Rukmini and her husband Krishna. It is said that at the request of sage Durvasa (who was renowned for his short temper and bestowing curses) Krishna and Rukmini pulled a chariot taking sage Durvasa to their house for dinner. On the way, when Rukmini asked for water to quench her thirst, Krishna drew Ganges water, by prodding the ground with his toe, for her to drink. Rukmini quenched her thirst with the Ganges water. But Durvasa felt insulted as Rukmini did not have the courtesy to offer him water to drink. He, therefore, cursed her that she would live separately from her husband.

Overnight at Dwarka.

Day 3: Dwarka – Porbandar – Somnath

Today morning, check out and proceed towards Somnath (250 kms/5 Hours). Visit Porbandar on the way:

Kirti Mandir – birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi:

The three-storied haveli or mansion having a striking blue color in which Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2nd October in the year 1869 was eventually turned into a shrine/memorial. This shrine which was named Kirti Mandir is actually a temple and symbolizes the harmonious integration of the world's six major religions namely Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Jainism, and Zoroastrianism. The haveli housing the Kirti Mandir used to be a one-storeyed house that was bought about two centuries back by Shri Harjivan Raidas Gandhi, great grandfather of M.K. Gandhi. The upper floors or stories were constructed later on and it is in this mansion that Gandhiji's grandfather, father, and uncle resided while serving as 'dewans' or prime ministers under the Jethwa Rajput kings. Kirti Mandir was constructed up to a height of 79 feet to correspond with Gandhiji's lifespan. The 'garba griha' or the sanctum sanctorum of the temple houses the Mahatma's and his wife Kasturba Gandhi's full-scale oil-paintings. Gandhi practiced 'non-violence' and always spoke 'the truth' throughout his life and the words are etched in front of their feet. Two rooms on the shrine's right, serve as memorials of Mahadev Desai and Maganlal Gandhi while the room on the temple's left is a museum containing exhibits.

Sudama Temple:

A temple dedicated to Sudama, a close friend of Lord Krishna and is a significant religious edifice built during the early years of the 20th century. The present, magnificent structure is built at the site, where an old temple of Sudama existed in the past.

Reach Somnath and visit:

Somnath Mahadev Temple:

The historic Somnath Temple is an epitome of religious devotion of Lord Shiva in Veraval, Saurashtra. The temple is worshipped widely as it is considered as one of the first of the Shiva Jyotirlingas as mentioned in the Puranas. The Shiva temple here is considered very pious due to its rich religious history. Somnath refers to the name given to Lord Shiva or the Almighty of the Soma. The temple has been built and renovated many times from the time of its inception due to wars between Hindu and Muslim kings. The temple is known as the Shrine of the Eternal for the Shiva Jyotirlingas. Every day, three pujas are done in the temple which attracts major tourist in huge numbers. The temple is built in proper Hindu architecture with pillars and a flag on the roof of the highest point. The legends about the temple revolve around the Moon God Soma who was believed to have taken a bath at this point of the river confluence. The Moon God was losing his shine owing to a curse and redeemed it back after the dip according to the Hindu mythology. The pilgrim spot of the Somnath Temple is at the mouth of the three mythological rivers of Saraswati, Hiran and Kapilla. The first stone of the temple is said to be built centuries ago. The Seuna kings that time had built another establishment of it at the same spot during the period of 649CE. The temple has been attacked many times by the Arabs in the past but was erected every time by the following Hindu

dynasties. The Somnath Temple is also believed to be first built from wooden structures but was raided soon after by foreign invaders. Solanki king Mularaja is said to have built the first temple at this changing the old outlook of it.

Feel the divinity in the evening arti and watch the Light and Sound Show to feel the grandeur of the Somnath Temple.

Overnight at Somnath.

Day 4: Somnath – Ahmedabad Drop

Today morning, after breakfast and checkout and visit:

BhalkaTirth:

The Bhalka Tirth is a historic religious place is located in the town of Veraval in the city of Saurashtra. It is famous for the mythological stories of Lord Krishna, who was struck with an arrow in this spot by Jara, who was a hunter in the Hindu Puranas. Lord Krishna is worshipped widely among the Hindu followers and the Bhalka Tirth is a famous mark on the epitome of his greatness. It is a popular place that is quite close to Somnath. As per stories and tales it is believed that Shri Krishna was resting at this place when a huntsman by the name of Jara shot an arrow. This arrow went on to pierce Shri Krishna. This temple is also known as Mahaprabhuji's Bethak which has a popular Peepal tree that signifies the place where Lord had succumbed to the injuries. A statue of Lord Krishna which is made from blue marble is located under the tree.. It is also known as the PrabhasKshetra.

Triveni Sangam:

Triveni Sangam is the confluence of three rivers: Hiran, Kapila and Saraswati. It is situated very near to the Somnath Mahadev temple. It is believed that the sages named Hiran and Kapila had done a penance at this very place and so Goddess Saraswati came to this place. As per Hindu tradition, Triveni Sangam is very holy and many puja related to the forefathers are done on its confluence.

Return to Ahmedabad (400 kms/8 Hours) and drop as per schedule.