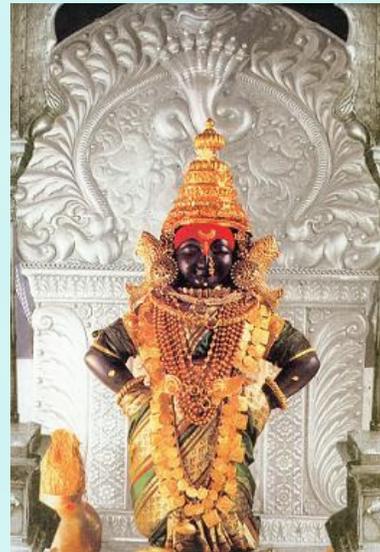


PANDHARPUR

Pandharpur is a holy place of Shri.Vitthal and Shri.Rukmini. It is also known as the Southern Kashi of India and Kuldaivat of Maharashtra State. It is located at a distance of 72 kms by road. from Solapur District headquarters. The Pandharpur Railway Station falls on the Miraj-Kurduwadi-Latur railway track.



Shri. Lord Vitthal is the Supreme God of the Universe with incarnation of Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu. Lord Vitthal is also known by the names Shri.Panduranga and Vithoba, Great Saints like Shri. Sant Dnyaneshwar, Shri. Sant Tukaram, Shri Sant Namdev, Shri. Sant Purandardas and others sung Abhangas in praise of Lord Vitthala.



'Padsparsha Darshan' is the unique feature of Vithoba Temple. Irrespective of the caste and creed every devotee can enter the Sanctum Sanctorium and can place his/her head on the feet of Lord Vitthala. This tradition is followed nowhere in India. The Bhagawat Dharma is being followed with full spirit in Pandharpur

The ancient temple of Shri.Vitthal was renovated in 1195 A.D. There are many other temples of Indian Dieties and Mathas (Dharmshalas) of many Saints. The Chandrabhaga (Bhima) river flows through the City. Large number of devotees from all over Maharashtra and surrounding States gather at Pandharpur mainly to celebrate the Aashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashis every year in addition to the regular rush of devotees everyday. The Palaquins (Palakhi) of various Saints originating from various locations gather at Wakhari, five kms. from Pandharpur for the Waari festival.

The various daily rituals like Kakda Aarati, Mahapooja, Mahanaivedhya, Poshakh, Dhooparati, Padyapooja, Shejarti etc are performed in the main temple of Lord.Vitthal.

The following are the temples inside the main temple as one enters from Namdev Payari and come out of Pachhim Dwar of the temple.

- Namdev Payari - In memory of Shri.Sant Namdev
- Ganesh Mandir
- Datta Mandir
- Garud Mandir
- Maruti Mandir
- Chowrangee Devi Mandir
- Garud Khamb
- Narsimha Mandir
- Ek-mukh Dattatraya Mandir
- Rameshwar Lingam Mandir

- Kala Bahirav Mandir
- Laxmi-Narayan Mandir
- Kashi-Vishwanath Mandir
- Satya-Bhama Mandir
- Radhika Mandir
- Siddhi-Vinayak Mandir
- Mahalakshmi Mandir
- Venkateshwar Mandir
- Kanhopatra Mandir
- Ambabai Mandir
- Shani-Dev Mandir
- Nagnath Mandir
- Guptaling Mandir
- Khandoba Mandir

TEMPLES IN AND AROUND PANDHARPUR



SN.	NAME OF THE TEMPLE	LOCATION
1	Padmavati Mandir	Railway Station Road
2	Lakhubai/Rukmini Mandir	Chinch Baag
3	Ambabai Mandir	Dagadi Bridge, Solapur Road
4	Gopalpur	2 kms. from Pandharpur
5	Vishnupad	2 kms. from Pandharpur
6	Pundalik Mandir	On Chandrabhaga River Bank
7	Namdev Mandir	Pradakshina Road
8	Dnyaneshwar Mandir	Naath Chowk
9	Tukaram Mandir	Pradakshina Road
10	Kala Maruti Mandir	Pradakshina Road
11	Tambada Maruti Mandir	Pradakshina Road
12	Vyas Narayan Mandir	Solapur Road
13	Yamai Tukai Mandir	Sangola Road
14	Gajana Maharaj Mandir	Shivaji Chowk
15	Takpeethya Vithoba	Near Mandi
16	Ram Baag	Solapur Road
17	Laxman Baag	Railway Station Road

PLACES OF IMPORTANCE IN PANDHARPUR

1. Sant Kaikadi Maharaj Math - It is on the north side of the town. It is a modern innovation depicting the ethoes of the epic Gods and Saints. It may take minimum two hours to see the entire Math.
2. Sant Tanapure Maharaj Math -

3. Gujarathi Devsthan - It is on the other side of the river Bhima. The pilgrims have to cross the river and visit the Shrinathji Temple.

MAJOR FESTIVALS OF PANDHARPUR

In Pandharpur, Wednesday is regarded as the auspicious day in the week and Ekadashi, the auspicious day in the month. The Aashadi, Kartiki, Magh and Chaitra Ekadashis are the four major festivals of the temple. Out of these four, the first two festivals attract a large crowd about 8 to 10 lakhs. Apart from these, festivals like Gudipadwa, Ramanavami, Dasara and Deepawali are also celebrated.

There are three major events Ashadhi Ekadashi i.e immediately after onset of Monsoon season. All the farmers complete their pre monsoon farming works. All the Warkaris (pilgrims) visit Pandharpur Pilgrim Centre from allover India including Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu, and Andhra Pradesh. States. It is a very big long march of Warkaris (Pilgrims) from the various other pilgrim centre from Maharashtra as below.

About 2 lakh Warkaris marching from pilgrim Alandi of Sant Dnyaneshwara and from Dehu of Sant Tukaram's pilgrim centers and many other warakaris join this march on their way to this long route of Alandi-Dehu to Pandharpur. In all about 7 – 8 lakh devotees visit Pandharpur for Aashadi Ekadashi.

Katiki Ekadashi comes immediately after the monsoon season is over and many warakaris visit Pandharpur from Dehu, Alandi, Newasa etc. and other parts of Maharashtra. About 3 – 4 lakhs devotees visit Pandharpur.

Maghi Ekadashi comes in the initial period of summer season. About 2 lakh devotees visit Pandharpur.

Chaitri Ekadashi comes generally in the month of April. About 1 lakh devotees visit for this ekadashi.

THE MAIN TEMPLE

Vithoba Temple which is the main temple is situated in the central part of the town. The temple has eight entries. The main entrance is the eastern one known as Mahadwar which is also called as Namdev Payari, because one of the steps known as Namdev Payari is built up over the places where the remains of the great saint Namdev are believed to have been buried at his desire.

After Namdev Payari there are three small rooms called Mukti Mandap. After crossing the Mukti Mandap there is a quadrangle of about 120' x 60' with wooden pillars, presently called as Vithal Sabha Mandap. After crossing this sabha mandap one enters a hall known as Solkhamb, by reason of the fact that its superstructure rests on 16 pillars. One of the pillar is plated with Gold at the base and silver above it and is known as Garood Khamb. Near solkhamb there is a large stone slab with inscription of 1208 A.D.

Close to the Solkhamb mandap, towards the sanctum is a small hall called Chowkhambh as the superstructure rests on four pillars. From the chowkhambhi hall one is let into the shrine or Gabhara, a small room about 6' square consists of a platform of 3' height with silver canopy above and on this platform stands the idol of Shri. Vithoba which attracts millions every year. The idol is called by different names Vithoba, Pandurang, Pandhari, Vithal, Vithalnath etc.

Behind Vithoba temple in the north east corner of the temple, facing east is the temple of Rukmini, the consort of Vithoba. It has a Gabhara, entry / exit, outer hall and a sabha mandap.

PADSPARSHADARSHAN

Every devotee not only enters the sanctum irrespective of the dress/caste/creed, but even places his or her head on the feet of the deity actually touching it. And this is a privilege prized and exercised by all devotees. This Padsparsadarshan is unique and not found in most of the Hindu temples elsewhere.

For padsparsa Darshan it requires 2 to 3 hours on ordinary days, 4 to 5 hours on weekly holidays and Ekadashi day and upto 24 to 36 hours on Yatra days.

MOOKH DARSHAN

For the devotees who cannot spare long hours in queues for Padsparsadarshana one can have the Mookhdarshan. Bhakta or devotee can take darshan of Vitthal from the distance of about 25 metres and of Rukmini, from the distance of about 15 metres. It requires only 15 to 20 minutes for darshan.

Darshan in Pandharpur has a distinctive meaning valued sentimentally by all devotees which does not obtain in any other temples in India.

DAILY RITUALS IN THE TEMPLE

Sr.No.	Particulars	Timings.
1	Temple Door Opening	4.00 a.m.
2	Kakada Aarti	04.30 to 05.00 a.m.
3	Nitya Pooja (Regular Pooja)	05.00 a.m to 06.00.a.m.
4	Mahapuja by devotees	07.00 a.m. to 08.00.a.m.
5	Maha Naivedya	11.00 a.m. to 11.15 a.m.
6	Pshakh (dressing)	04.30 to 05.00 p.m.
7	Dhoop Aarati	07.00 to 07.30 p.m.
8	Padya pooja	10.00 to 10.30 p.m.
9	Shejarati	11.00 p.m.

SALE OF PRASAD AND PHOTOS

From 22.03.1985 onwards the Laddu Prasad was introduced and distributed inside the temple premises. Each Laddu is prepared in highly hygienic conditions and offered to Lord Vitthala and Rukmini as Naivedhya and thereafter they are sold as Prasad for the benefit of the devotees on the counters. From 01.05.1985, being a Silver Jubilee of Maharashtra Day, colour photos of Lord Vitthala and Rukmini are printed and sold at reasonable prices.

Shri. Vitthal-Rukmini Temple Committee is dedicated to the devotees warkaris, by providing facilities for easy and quick darshana and performing sevas and poojas.

OTHER PHOTOS OF PANDHARPUR ARE AS FOLLOWS.



