

## Cultural and Heritage Tourism in Warangal - A Study

**Nimmala Rajesh**

*Research Scholar in Tourism, Dept. of History & TM, Kakatiya University, Warangal*

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**Abstract:** India has been amazing diversity and rich natural resources. Bounded by the Himalayan mountain range in the north and surrounded by three seas, India has been a stunning coastline. The rich in landscapes, beautiful historical sites and royal cities, beaches, misty mountain retreats, diverse people, rich cultures and festivals have been conducting. India could be offers you amazing destinations and experiences at any time of the year. In summer, when the subcontinent is sizzling, there are spectacular retreats amidst the heady beauty of the Himalayas or the lush green heights of the Western Ghats with cool trekking trails, tall peaks to conquer stretches of white water for the adventure seekers.

In the cool of an Indian winter, cities come alive with cultural feasts of music and dance. The balmy weather is an ideal time for you to visit India hopping through romantic cities studded with ancient and medieval forts and palaces. The sun-drenched beaches are inviting and wildlife sanctuaries with their abundance of flora and fauna are abuzz with the nurture of the young.

### Introduction

You can taste the delights of the Indian monsoon anywhere in the country-on a camel safari in the Rajasthan desert when nature comes alive and the peacocks dance, along the west coast where the relentless slant ingrain paints the countryside in brilliant greens or even trekking amidst the stark grandeur of mountain valleys lying in the rain shadow of the Himalayas.

Experience exotic India; live like a maharaja in the rich ambiance of royal forts and palaces that are now heritage hotels; luxuriate in the serene beauty of a coral island with its turquoise lagoon; participate in the exuberance of a village fair or a colourful festival; day dream on a house boat drifting down the palm - fringed backwaters; delight in the grace of dancer or shop till you drop buying exquisite silks, carved figurines, brass and silver ware, marble inlaid with semi-precious stones, finely crafted jewellery, miniature paintings, carpets.....at unbelievable prices.

As you travel across the length and breadth of this vast nation, you can see history unfold. You can see palaces, forts, temples, mosques and churches which have been witnesses to timeless pasts and which bring before you the glorious traditions, culture and richness which had made this sub-continent prime choice of destination for explorers down ages. India, always warm and inviting, is a place of infinite variety - one that favours you with a different facet of its fascination every time you come on a visit.

### *In the Telangana*

Telangana's rich cultural heritage, history and topography have endowed the state with a variety of tourist destinations, from waterfalls and hills to temples and forts. With affordable travel and stay, a unique albeit delicious blend of South-indian and Nizami cuisines, amusement and adventure parks, hospitality, lakes, historical attractions and medical tourism, Telangana has a little something for every visitor<sup>1</sup>.

### *Cultural Tourism in Warangal*

Cultural tourism is a rapidly growing segment within the global travel industry, catering to individuals seeking to immerse themselves in local populations' customs, traditions, and lifestyles. It combines the elements of leisure with an authentic experience of a destination's unique historical, architectural, artistic, and culinary aspects. As a result, this form of tourism allows travellers to gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of different societies and their cultural characteristics.<sup>2</sup>

In recent years, the demand for cultural tourism has been on the rise as more people are interested in exploring foreign customs and cultural experiences beyond the typical tourist attractions. This trend fosters cross-cultural connections and mutual understanding and creates positive economic and social impacts on local communities. By preserving and showcasing their traditions, local people have the opportunity to generate income and employment while maintaining a sense of pride in their cultural heritage.<sup>3</sup>

With the increasing focus on sustainability and responsible tourism practices, cultural tourism sets itself apart by emphasizing the importance of engaging with local communities, adhering to ethical standards and minimizing negative impacts on the environment. As such, it presents a viable option for tourists who wish to expand their horizons while also contributing positively to the places they visit.

Warangal has a heritage city and comes under the list of World Heritage Sites by UNESCO. Its architecture is affected by many different dynasties over the years of history and is mostly influenced by Kakatiyan Dynasty around the 12th Century. Most of the attractions of the Temples like Thousand Pillar Temple, Ramappa Temple, Ghanpur Group of Temple and Warangal Fort are of Kakatiyan period only. They were used to built monuments out of single rock hence the city was previously known as Orukallu meaning "carved out of single rock". Apart from Kakatiyan impact of Jainism and Chalukya Dynasty can also be seen on the city of Warangal.<sup>4</sup>

### *Importance of Cultural Tourism*

Cultural tourism plays a significant role in society as it helps preserve and promote the values, beliefs, traditions, and heritage that define a particular culture. It allows individuals and communities to exhibit unique perspectives on arts, rituals, folklore, music, literature, language, oral traditions, and other cultural elements. Cultural tourism serves as a bridge between societies, aiding in fostering mutual respect, tolerance, and understanding among various cultures.

Economic benefits are also apparent through cultural tourism. Visitors contribute to the local economy, supporting local businesses and sustaining host communities' cultural products and experiences. By engaging in cultural tourism, visitors gain an authentic understanding of indigenous and local cultures, empowering them to appreciate the rich diversity and uniqueness of the world.

Furthermore, cultural tourism helps preserve cultural heritage, vital for maintaining a sense of identity and continuity for future generations. This preservation and promotion of different cultures provide a sense of pride and belonging for people who are part of those traditions. In turn, this enhances cultural exchange, allowing individuals to learn about other ways of life while appreciating their values and beliefs.

Cultural tourism also supports the sustainability of performing arts and other creative industries. Through various interactions with artists and performers, visitors can develop an appreciation for a wide range of artistic expressions, contributing to the overall vitality of the art world.

Through the development of cultural tourism, a society can showcase its cultural heritage while contributing to its economic prosperity. By embracing the importance of cultural tourism, we can foster a greater understanding, appreciation, and celebration of the rich tapestry of customs, beliefs, and traditions that make up the world's diverse cultures.<sup>5</sup>

## **Types of Tourism**

### ***Adventure Tourism***

As a kind of tourism in India, adventure tourism has recently grown in India. This involves exploration of remote areas and exotic locales and engaging in various activities. For adventure tourism in India, tourists prefer to go for trekking to places like Ladakh, Sikkim, and Himalaya. Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir are popular for the skiing facilities they offer. Whitewater rafting is also catching on in India and tourists flock to places such as Uttranchal, Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh for this adrenalin-packed activity.

### ***Spiritual Tourism***

INDIA, where culture echoes, tradition speaks, beauty enthralls, and diversity delights. The astounding diversity of religions, cultures, and languages of India is unique and unparalleled. The country offers a plethora of spiritual destinations which should not be missed by anybody who is looking for an authentic Indian experience. From opulent mosques and temples to stunning churches, serene monasteries, and magnificent gurudwaras, India is truly a home to holiness. Thousands of years ago, a large part of the life of Gautam Buddha was spent in this area. The Buddha attained enlightenment in Bodh Gaya, travelled widely in Uttar Pradesh, spread his message and towards the end, attained mahaparinirvan in this region.

### ***Beach Tourism***

India's vast coastline and islands provides ample opportunities for fun packed tourism. Kerala, Goa, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep islands attract tourists in large numbers all around the year.

### ***Cultural Tourism***

India is known for its rich cultural heritage and an element of mysticism, which is why tourists come to India to experience it for themselves. The various fairs and festivals that tourists can visit in India are

the Pushkar fair (Rajasthan), Taj Mahotsav (Uttar Pradesh), and Suraj Kund mela (Haryana). Sites like Ajanta & Ellora caves (Maharashtra), Mahabalipuram (TamilNadu), Hampi (Karnataka), Taj Mahal (Uttar Pradesh), Hawa Mahal (Rajasthan).

### ***Eco Tourism***

Among the types of tourism in India, ecotourism have grown recently. Ecotourism entails the sustainable preservation of a naturally endowed area or region. This is becoming more and more significant for the ecological development of all regions that have tourist value. For ecotourism in India, tourists can go to places such as Kaziranga National Park (Assam), Gir National Park (Gujarat), and Kanha National Park (Madhya Pradesh).

### ***Medical tourism***

Tourists from all over the world have been thronging India to avail themselves of cost-effective but superior quality healthcare in terms of surgical procedures and general medical attention. There are several medical institutes in the country that cater to foreign patients and impart top-quality healthcare at a fraction of what it would have cost in developed nations such as USA and UK. The city of Chennai (Tamil Nadu) attracts around 45% of medical tourists from foreign countries.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Wildlife Tourism***

India has a rich forest cover which has some beautiful and exotic species of wildlife – some of which that are even endangered and very rare. This has boosted wildlife tourism in India. The places where a foreign tourist can go for wildlife tourism in India are the Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary, Keoladeo Ghana National Park (Rajasthan), and Corbett National Park (Uttarkhand).

For more details on different parts of India & Tourist sites,

### ***Historical and Heritage Tourism in Warangal***

Historical and Heritage Tourism is a one of the type of cultural tourism. This focuses on exploring sites related to a region's past, such as ancient archaeological sites, monuments, and museums. It can instil a sense of wonder and appreciation for past civilizations' achievements and teach travellers about the history of the places they visit.

### ***The Ramappa Temple at Palampeta***

The Ramappa Temple is located at Palampeta, a small village in Venkatapur Mandal of the Warangal district. It is situated about 75km North-West of Hanumakonda. It is near the bund of famous Ramappa Lake which was constructed in 13th century during the Kakatiya period. According to the inscription, setup in the temple, the Rudreswara temple which is popularly known as Ramappa Temple was built by the famous Kakatiya general Recherla Rudra, in 1213 A.D during the reign of Kakatiya Ganapatideva. He constructed a big tank and the temple of Rudreswara. He gifted two villages, named Upparapalli and Borlapalli, for the enjoyment of this god. He also constructed Kateswara and Kameswara temples on the either side of the Rudreswara Temple. Yazdani regards this magnificent temple as the brightest gem in the galaxy of medieval Deccan temples<sup>7</sup>.

### *The Thousand Pillar Temple at Hanamkonda*

The Thousand Pillar Temple is located in Hanamkonda town in Warangal Urban District. It was built by the Kakatiya king Rudra Deva-I (1158-1195 A.D) in the year 1163 A.D.<sup>1</sup> There are several pillars in the temple and also in the ‘Kalayanamandapa’ built in front of the main temple. Hence, the temple is popularly known as thousand pillar temple. The temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and it is also called as Rudreswara Temple. It was constructed as a trikuta temple (Trikutalayam)<sup>8</sup>.

### *The Swayambhu Sri Shambhu Lingeswara Swamy Temple at Warangal*

The Swayambhu Temple is located in Warangal Fort just beside the natural lake known as ‘Gundu Cheruvu’. This temple was built by King Prola-I (1052-1076 A.D)<sup>136</sup> of the Kakatiya dynasty, according to Prathaparudra Charitra and Siddeswara Charitra. The Warangal city was also known as ‘Shambhulinga Nagaram’ named after this temple. This temple has three gateways in eastern, northern and southern directions.<sup>9</sup>

### *Ghanapur Group of Temples at Ghanapur*

Ghanapur group of temples are located in Warangal (Jeyashankar Bhupalapally) district in the Telangana State. It is 80 km away from Warangal city and 20 km away to Bhupalapally Town. This temple is popular as “Ghanapeswaralayam”. There is one large temple surrounded by several other small temples “Upalayalu”. All these put together are known as Ghanapur group of temples. According to historical sources, these temples were constructed by King Ganapathi Deva (1199-1262) of the Kakatiya dynasty.<sup>10</sup>

### *Siddeswara Swamy Temple at Hanamkonda*

The Siddheshwara Temple is an ancient temple dedicated to Lord Shiva and is located very close to Hanamkonda in Warangal. The temple’s architecture is stunning and bears resemblance to the Chalukyan style of architecture. The temple pillars have been carved out beautifully with intricacy that leaves one fascinated.

This is an important Shivaite temple in Warangal. Devotees throng to this holy temple during the Maha Shivarathri festival. The temple has a majestic look and the surroundings are serene and secluded.<sup>11</sup>

**Badrakali Temple:** Goddess Bhadrakali is one of the ten great manifestations of the Supreme Goddess of Hindu mythology and the Bhadrakali temple at Warangal is devoted to the god of rage and fury and protector of the goodness from the darkness. The temple is in a real sense an ancient one – dating back to 625 AD to the era of the Chalukyan kings. Tourists love to have a glimpse of the Bhadrakali temple mainly because unlike most of the other temples of the Goddess and her various manifestations in South India, the deity of this temple does not have the calm and soothing ambience about it. The temple enshrines the Goddess Kali, the mother Goddess in Hindu mythology, adorned with weapons in all the eight arms and the statue of the Goddess is in the sitting posture with a crown in her head. The structure of the temple is in the amazing architectural style of Chalukyas. With its roots too deep into Indian history as well mythology, the Bhadrakali temple attracts thousands of devout visitors every year - those who want to have darshan of the Shakti manifestation as well as those who just want to explore a great architecturally and historically significant site.<sup>12</sup>

**Padmakshi Temple:** A temple, dedicated to Goddess Padmakshi, dating back to early 12th century houses instance of some exquisite architecture and a pillar that gather about itself much fascination by its visitors.<sup>13</sup>

## Conclusion

The culture and traditions of Warangal are an integral part of its identity. From its majestic forts to its vibrant festivals, from its delicious cuisine to its mesmerizing dance forms, Warangal offers a tapestry of experiences to visitors and locals alike. It is important to preserve and promote these cultural treasures, as they not only add to the charm of Warangal but also provide a sense of belonging and pride to its people. As you immerse yourself in the cultural richness of Warangal, you will come to appreciate the influence of its traditions on the city's unique identity.

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