Architecture of Karnataka and Goa
15 Days/14 Nights

Overnight

Activities

Day 1 Fly U.S. to Bangalore.   Bangalore

Day 2 Morning visit to Lalbagh Botanical Garden, which was commissioned by Haider Ali, the ruler of Mysore, in 1740. This complex was initially designed in the Mughal style, but now incorporates diverse features such as a Topiary Garden, a Bonsai Garden, and the Glass House, which was based on the Crystal Palace in London. We will next tour Tipu Sultan's Palace, which dates from the late 1700s and served as a summer retreat for this dynamic ruler. Tipu Sultan, known as the "Tiger of Mysore," was the son of Haider Ali and a plant and garden lover like his father. Afternoon visit to Bangalore Palace, which was built in 1880 by the Wodeyar dynasty for a cost of one million rupees. It was modeled after Windsor Palace, and incorporates fortified towers, turreted parapets and a small formal garden. On our way to the Palace, we will drive through Cubbon Park, which was laid out in 1864 and combines natural rock formations with formal tree allées, massive bamboo plants and numerous statues of important historical figures.   Bangalore

Day 3 Morning drive to Mysore. Afternoon visit to Amba Vilas Palace, a remarkable Indo-Saracenic structure built from grey granite and pink marble by the Wodeyar dynasty. The current building, which was designed by Henry Irwin in 1897, replaces a number of previous structures which were destroyed by fire. This will be followed by a walk through the Devaraja flower and vegetable market, where we will see intricate floral garlands being created for weddings and temple offerings by local florists.   Mysore

Day 4 Morning visit to Brindavan Gardens, a Mughal-style terrace garden completed in 1932 and modeled after the Shalimar Gardens of Kashmir. These gardens were conceived by Sir Mirza Ismail, Chief Financial Officer of Mysore, to beautify the adjacent Krishnaraja Sagar dam. Afternoon excursion to Somnathpur, home to the Keshava Temple, which is one of the best examples of Hoysala architecture in India. The Hoysala kings ruled much of Karnataka between the 10th and 14th centuries, and their temples are known for their star-shaped ground plans and their intricately-carved wall panels and ceiling brackets. The Keshava Temple was built in 1268 by Somnatha, a general of King Narasimha III, and it contains three star-shaped shrines leading away from a heavily-pillared central hall.   Mysore

Day 5	Morning visit to Srirangapattana, an island fortress in the Kaveri river that was the site of numerous battles between the British and Tipu Sultan. It was here that Tipu Sultan was killed in 1799, allowing the British to consolidate their rule in South India. We will tour the Jami Masjid, erected by Tipu Sultan in 1787, as well as his summer palace and gardens, the Daria Daulat Bagh, which how houses a museum of Tipu memorabilia. We will also visit the Gumbaz, the tiger-striped tombs of Haider Ali and Tipu Sultan. After lunch we will visit Sravana Belgola, the most important Jain pilgrimage site in South India. Here we will view the colossal statue of Gommateshvara (aka Bahubali), son of the first Jain *tirthankara* or spiritual teacher. The statue dates to 981 AD, and is one of the largest stone monoliths in the world. We will also visit several fascinating Jain temples in Sravana Belgola, including the Matha, the Neminatha Basti and the Chandragupta Basti.	Hassan
Day 6	Full day exploration of the magnificent Hoysala dynasty temples at Belur and Halebid. In Belur, we will admire the Chennakeshava Temple, which was built in 1117 by Emperor Vishnuvardhana to commemorate the Hoysala's victory over the invading Cholas from Tamil Nadu. In nearby Halebid, capital of the Hoysala empire in the 12th and 13th centuries, we will visit the Hoysaleshvara Temple. This temple is dedicated to Shiva, and contains outstanding carvings of the deity, as well as of mythological animals and scenes from the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*.	Hassan
Day 7	Morning departure for Chikmagalur, a town at the foothills of the Mullayanagiri mountain range. This afternoon you will have the option of relaxing at your hotel, or taking a brisk trek in the forest and hills around Mullayanagiri. The forests of Karnataka are home to the fragrant and rare Indian sandalwood tree. Today we will visit an outlet that sells local sandalwood items, including carvings, soaps, essential oils and incense.	Chikmagalur
Day 8	This morning we will begin driving to Hospet, our base for the next three nights. En route we will stop for lunch at Chitradurga, home to an impressive granite fort that rises above the town and is filled with the ruins of ancient temples, granaries, houses and water reservoirs. Arrive in Hospet in time for dinner.	Hospet
Day 9	Full day sightseeing of Hampi, a UNESCO World Heritage site which contains the ruins of Vijayanagar, the "City of Victory." Spread over eight square miles, Vijayanagar served as the capital of three generations of Hindu rulers in the 15th and 16th centuries. In the city's Sacred Centre, we will visit the Virupaksha Temple, dedicated to the goddess Pampa and her consort Pampapati (aka Virupaksha or Shiva). We will also visit the magnificent Vitthala Temple, which contains a massive *mahamandapa*, or great hall, with beautifully carved pillars and friezes. An irrigated valley stretches down the center of Vijayanagar, and across this valley lies the city's Royal Centre. Here we will view the Queen's Bath, the Lotus Mahal, and a magnificent carved stable which once housed the royal elephants.	Hospet
Day 10	Full day sightseeing of the Lambani villages around Hospet. The Lambani are related to the nomadic Banjara tribe of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Pakistan, and share many aesthetic characteristics with this group. For example, Lambani women are known for their colorful and heavily-embroidered	Hospet

blouses and skirts which often incorporate tiny mirrors and coins. They also wear thick bangles on their arms and elaborate ornaments in the hair around both ears. They further have a wonderful tattooing tradition, and today we will meet many women with striking designs on their faces, arms and hands.

Day 11	Early morning departure for Badami, capital of the Chalukya kings during the 6th and 7th centuries AD. The remarkable cave temples of Badami are built into cliffs of red sandstone overlooking a lake, and contain a number of important carvings of Hindu and Jain deities. Other Chalukya architectural marvels to be visited today include the 8th century temple complex of Pattadakal, which contains an interesting mix of North Indian and South Indian temples, and the semi-circular Durga Temple in nearby Aihole. Continue driving to Hubli for dinner and overnight.	Hubli
Day 12	Today we will drive from Hubli to the beautiful beaches of Goa, passing through endless acres of cotton and peanut plantations. Arrive in Goa in the afternoon. Goa was a Portuguese colony for more than 400 years before becoming part of independent India, and its arts, music, architecture and cuisine all strongly reflect this European past.	Goa beach resort
Day 13	*North Goa* - We will begin our day in Old Goa, capital of Portuguese India until the mid-18th century. Originally built by the Bijapur Sultanate in the 15th century, the town is now filled with ornate churches and monasteries designed by Portuguese and Italian architects. Sé Cathedral, one of the largest churches in Asia, contains an enormous, gilded high altar dedicated to St. Catherine of Alexandria. The Basilica de Bom Jesus, which was built by the Jesuits in 1594, houses the remains of Francis Xavier, Goa's patron saint. Lunch will be in Panaji, Goa's capital, located at the mouth of the Mandovi river. This afternoon you will be free to wander through Panaji's Old Town, which is filled with brightly painted houses and cafes; many Old Town residents still speak Portuguese.	Goa beach resort
Day 14	*South Goa* - Our first stop today will be Ponda, a town surrounded by Hindu temples built in the 17th and 18th centuries by priests fleeing the invading Portuguese. These structures are a fascinating mix of Islamic, Hindu and Baroque architectural styles, and many feature soaring octagonal lamp towers, an element unique to Goan temples. In Loutolim, we will see stunning country mansions built in the 18th and 19th centuries by wealthy Goan landowners, such as Salvador da Costa House, Roque Caetan Miranda House, Figueiredo House and Casa dos Mirandas. Lunch will be in Margao, the administrative capital of South Goa and a major trading port for fish and produce. The city's Latin Quarter contains many colonial mansions and town houses, including Sat Burnzam Gor ("Seven Gables"), which boasts window shutters made almost entirely out of oyster shells. We will end our day with a visit to Braganza House, Goa's most spectacular colonial mansion; the Braganza family still occupies this 17th century structure, which contains a ballroom, a chapel and a library with the best private book collection in Goa.	Goa beach resort
Day 15	The morning is at your leisure to prepare for your return to the U.S. or your departure for other destinations in India.	Flight to U.S.

Suggested Extensions: The Caves of Ajanta and Ellora (pre-trip); Nasik – The Wine Capital of India (pre-trip); Hyderabad (post-trip)

Trip Timing - For the best weather conditions, this trip should ideally be taken between October and March. In all of our tours, we concentrate our sightseeing in the morning and afternoon hours, avoiding the hot mid-day sun as much as possible.

Note: Not all of the sites mentioned in these itineraries can be viewed from the inside, as some of them are in protected government compounds, while others are private residences or heritage sites that only permit visitor access within certain areas. If there are certain buildings in particular that you would like to view from the inside, please let us know and we will make best efforts to secure the required access if we have not already done so.