

PLACES OF HISTORICAL, RELIGIOUS AND TOURIST IMPORTANCE

RAJKOT



The town of Rajkot was founded by Thakur Saheb Vibbaji Ajoji Jadeja of the Jadeja clan and Raju Sandhi in 1612 A.D. Rajkot was conquered by Masum Khan in 1720 A.D. and its name was also changed to Masumabad. Later on Masumabad was annexed by the Jadeja clan and its name was once again restored to Rajkot. Under the Rajput clan, Darbargadh palace was built and two lakes namely Lalpari & Randarda were also constructed. Under British rule many imposing colonial buildings and educational institutions, like Connaught Hall & the Rajkumar College were constructed. After Indian independence, Rajkot became capital of the State of Saurashtra, which was headed by the chief minister U.N Dhebar. The state was merged with Gujarat when the states were reorganized in 1960. Today Rajkot is a famous center for trade & commerce and also an important Tourist Gateway.

WANKANER

About 38kms from Rajkot, it is another princely state. The ruling family of Wankaner represents the senior branch of the Jhala clan of Rajputs, who ruled at Halvad. The 19th century Ranjit Vilas Palace, the 19th Century Residency, the residence of the British resident of Wankaner and the 12th century Royal Oasis, the former European guesthouse are the places of tourist importance.



MORBI

Morbi was the capital of the formerly princely state of Morbi, ruled by the Jadeja Rajput clan. The house of Morbi claimed seniority over the Jadejas of Jamnagar and Kachchh. The beautiful town of Morbi is located on the banks of the Machchhu River. Floods devastated Morbi in 1979 AD, when Machchhu dam burst during heavy rains. The prosperous city state of Morbi and much of its built heritage and town planning is attributed to the efficient administration of Sir Waghji, who came to the throne in 1879 AD and ruled till 1948 AD. Sir Waghji acted as a ruler, manager, patron and policeman of the state with great authority, always keeping the citizens' interests in mind. Sir Waghji, like other contemporary rulers of Saurashtra, built roads, railway





network of seventy miles connecting Wadhwan and Morbi and two small ports of Navlakhi and Vavania for exporting the state's production of salt and cloth.

DWARKA

Dwarka is one of the Chardham yatras of Hinduism, the others being Puri, Badrinath-Kedarnath and Rameshwaram. Dwarka was the home of Lord Krishna, who moved to this pretty coastal town with the entire Yaduvanshi clan to set up the capital. Dwarka was a major sea port. The ancient Dwarkadhish temple has often been renovated, and the carvings outside date from around the 16th century and the walls about the 12th century. A highlight of the temple is the 19th century shikara tower. The multi-pillared sabha mandapa leads to a 60 pillared sanctum sanctorum dated by scriptures as 2500 years old. Incredibly detailed sculpture decorates the entire temple.

NAGESHWAR

Nageshwar is one of the 12 Jyotirlinga Shrines of Shiva. It is located between Dwarka and the **Bet Dwarka** Island, on the coast of Saurashtra in Gujarat. **Legend** has it that once while rowing a boat, a devotee by the name of Supriya, was attacked by a demon **Daaruka**, and imprisoned him along with several others at his capital **Daarukaavana**, where he resided with his wife Daaruki. Once again, Lord Shiva appeared in the form of a **Jyotirlingam** and vanquished the demon with the **Paasupata** Astram. Two other sites in India, one at Aundha Nagnath near Purna in Maharashtra and another near **Almora** in Uttar Pradesh also enshrine temples to Nageswara Jyotirlingam.



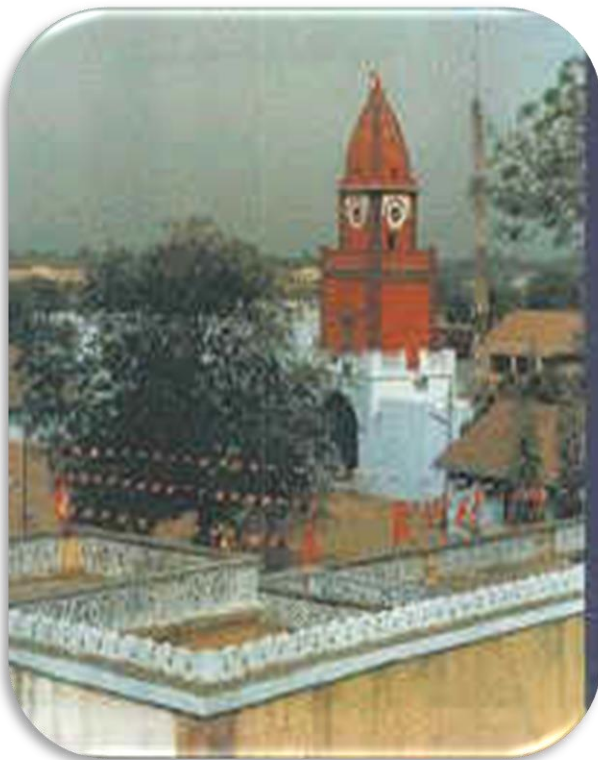
OKHA BET DWARKA

It is said that Shri Lord Krishna had killed one demon named 'Shankh' and hence it is known as 'Shankhoddhar Dweep'. The meeting of Shri Sudama and Shri Krishna also took place at this place, hence the name 'Bhet Dwarka'. Bet Dwarka is about 3 KMS from Okha port. It is surrounded by sea. Had it been possible to remove all the water by some means, the remains of Golden buildings can be seen. On the Island there are 23 Shivalays, 20 Vaishnav Temples, 9 Hanuman Temples, 6 Devi Temples including other many temples. Bet Dwarka,

due to the immersion in seawater and cyclones, has disappeared/Vanished many times, therefore the population here is very small.

MARINE NATIONAL PARK AT NARARA ISLAND (JAMNAGAR)

Narara Island or Marine National Park is a must visit in Jamnagar in the mornings. Inundated by temperamental seawaters twice a day, the Marine National Park stands as a vanguard to a very fragile ecosystem, which is as good as any underwater forest ecosystem. The protected area has a great diversity of habitats ranging from coral reefs, mangroves, mudflats, creeks, estuaries, sandy strands to saline grasslands, marshy areas and rocky shores. It is a treasure trove of colorful corals and sponges, giant sea anemone, jellyfish, sea horse, octopus, pearl oyster, starfish, and many more varieties of underwater creatures and plants. One is required to take a permit and visit it around low tide times when the island is abuzz with a variety of marine life. It's a 2 km walk and takes 1.5-2 hours.



TANKARA (BIRTH PLACE OF SWAMI DAYANAND SARASWATI, FOUNDER OF ARYA SAMAJ)

It is the birth place of Swami Dayanand, situated 44 Km. from Rajkot on Rajkot-Morbi Bus route. Swami Dayanand was one of the greatest social reformers and spiritual leaders of the 19th century. The sweep of Swamiji's knowledge and his versatility are outstanding.

To propagate his idea about social reforms, Swami Dayanand founded an organization known as Arya Samaj, which would work with great zeal in the spirit of selfless service to eradicate the maladies and to bring out the best in man. In addition to social reforms, Arya Samaj contributed considerably to free India from the British yoke.

