



Badami Caves



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Badami Caves, Badami

Badami Caves are located in Badami town in which temples of Hindus and Jains exist. The caves and the temples were built on the basis of Badami Chalukya architecture. Badami was previously known as Vatapi and was ruled by Chalukyas most of the times.

This tutorial will let you know about the history of the caves along with the structures present inside. You will also get the information about the best time to visit it along with how to reach the caves.

Audience

This tutorial is designed for the people who would like to know about the history of Badami caves along with the interiors and design of the caves. The caves are visited by many people from India and abroad.

Prerequisites

This is a brief tutorial designed only for informational purpose. There are no prerequisites as such. All that you should have is a keen interest to explore new places and experience their charm.

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1. Badami Caves – Overview

Badami caves were constructed during the rule of **Chalukya dynasty** who ruled the town from 6th century. Badami was previously known as **Vatapi** and was the capital of Chalukyas. The Badami caves have many Hindu temples inside them. The caves are on the bank of an artificial lake. The temples in the caves are dedicated to different deities like Lord Vishnu, Lord Shiva, and their various incarnations.



Badami

Badami comes under **Bagalkot district** in Karnataka which is popular for rock-cut temples and caves. Badami was ruled by Chalukyas from 540 AD to 757AD. **Pulakeshin I** established the city in 540AD and made it his capital as the place was protected by sandstone cliffs on three sides. **Kirtivarman I** and **Mangalesha** constructed the cave temple. Kirtivarman was son and Mangalesha was the brother of Pulakeshin I.



Visiting Hours

The caves is opened for the tourists from 9:00am to 5:30pm on all days of the week including public holidays. It takes around two to three hours to visit all the caves as there are many temples and other structures which the tourists can visit.

Tickets

The tourists have to buy tickets in order to visit the caves. Indian tourists have to pay Rs. 10 per person while foreign tourists have to pay Rs. 100 per person. There is no entry fee for the children whose age is below 15 years.

Best time to visit

The period of October to March is the best time to visit the caves as the climate is very pleasant in these months. In the rest of the months, the temperature is quite high and is not suitable to visit the caves.

Where to Stay?

Badami is a very small town and there are only 12 hotels in the city which include one five-star, three three-stars, two budget, and six cheap hotels. The list of hotels in the town is as follows:

- **Five-Star Hotels**
 - Krishna Heritage located at Ramdurg Road
- **Three-Star Hotels**
 - Hotel Badami Court located at Station Road

- Clarks Inn Badami located at Veera Pulakeshi Circle
- Badami heritage Resort located at Station Road
- **Budget or Two-Star Hotels**
 - Hotel Rajsangam International located at Station Road
 - Hotel Mayura Chalukya located at Ramdurg Road
- **Cheap Hotels**
 - Heritage Resorts located at Station Road
 - Hotel Sanman Delux Lodge located near Bus Stand
 - Hotel Anand Delux located near Bus Stand
 - Hotel Mookambika Deluxe located opposite to KSRTC Bus Stand
 - Hotel Royal Deluxe Lodge located near Bus Stand
 - TG Stays Jamkhandi Road located at Jamkhandi Road

Bagalkot district is nearby Badami having the distance of around 30km. This place has around 21 hotels. The list of some of the hotels in this district is as follows:

- **Three Star-Hotels**
 - Hotel Heritage Resort located at Station Road
 - Homestay Inn and Guest House located at Akkimaradi Layout near Engineering College
- **Budget Hotels or Two-Star Hotels**
 - Hotel Priya International located opposite to APMC Yard
 - Hotel Anugraha Deluxe located near Bus Stand Station Road
 - Hotel Chalukya Deluxe located at Navanagar
- **Cheap Hotels**
 - Kanthi Resorts located at Gaddankeri near Seemikeri
 - Sarvodaya Deluxe Lodge located at VVS College Road
 - Shree Renuka Krupa Hotel located at Bijapur Road
 - Maharaja Guest House located opposite Bus Stand
 - Hotel Shiva Sangam Residency located near APMC cross
 - Hotel Akshay International located near DC Office and Navanagar Bus Stand

2. Badami Caves – History

Badami was ruled by many dynasties and Chalukya dynasty was the main as they ruled the place from 6th century AD to 8th century AD.

Badami under Chalukyas

Pulakeshin I of Chalukya dynasty found the city in 540AD and made it his capital. His son Kirtivarman I succeeded him and constructed the cave temples. Kirtivarman has three sons named Pulkeshin II, Vishnuvardhana, and Buddhavarasa.



He was succeeded by his uncle Mangalesha who also constructed the cave temples. Mangalesha was assassinated by **Pulakeshin II** who ruled from 610 to 642AD. He was a great king of this dynasty as he defeated many kings including Pallavas.

Badami under Other Dynasties

Pallavas captured Badami in 642AD but were later defeated by **Vikramaditya I**, son of Pulakeshin II, in 654AD. After that Badami was captured and ruled by **Rashtrakutas** and **Hosayalas**. Then it was included in Vijayanagar empire. Later Mughals, Adil Shahis, Marathas and British ruled the city.

Badami Cave Temples

Badami Caves from one to four are numbered in order of their creation. Though exact date of the construction is not known but the inscription found in cave 3 shows that this cave was constructed by Mangalesha.



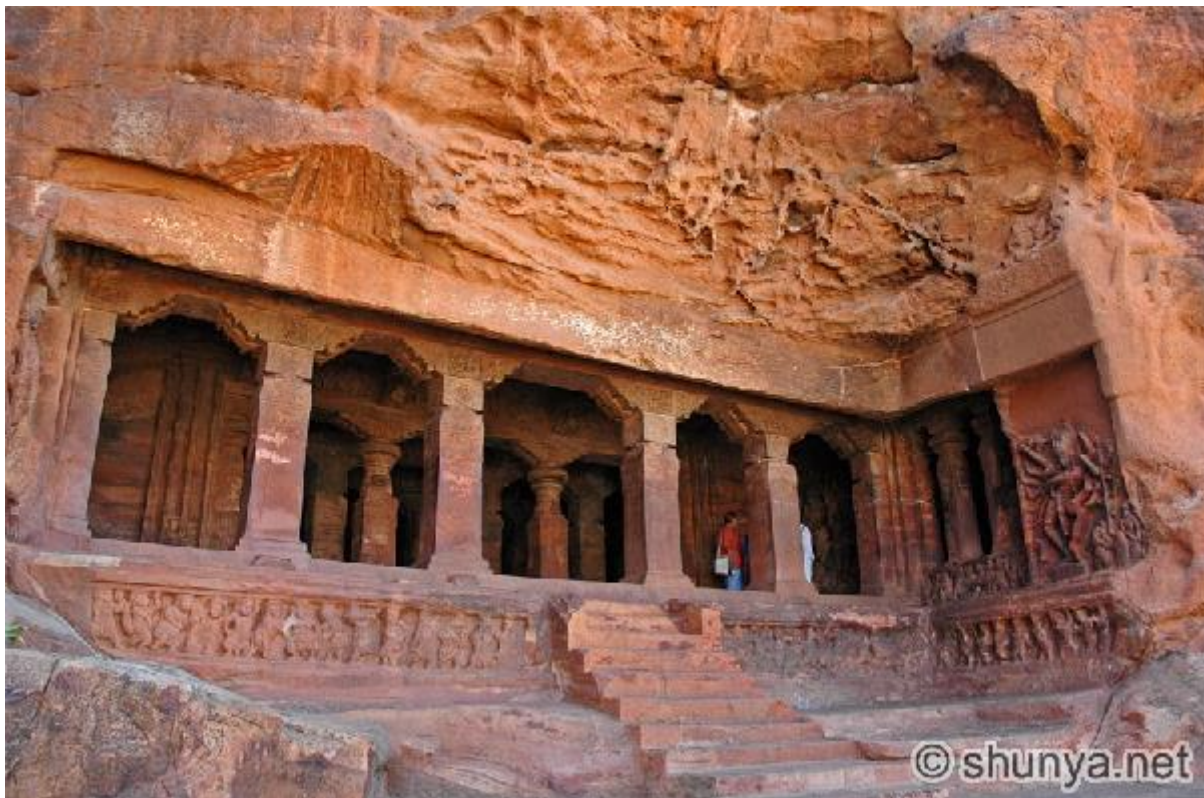
The construction of cave one and cave two has north Deccan style while cave three has the styles of **Nagara** and **Dravida**. Cave one, two, and three belong to Hindu deities while cave four belongs to Jains.

3. Badami Caves – Architecture

Badami caves were built by using sandstone available on the hills in the town. The caves have entrance, a mukha mandapa or veranda, a hall, and a small shrine or garbha griha. The veranada is supported by a series of columns and brackets. The caves were built on the basis of Nagara and Dravida architecture. There are five caves in Badami out of which four are man-made and fifth is natural. Here is the description of all the five caves.

Cave 1

Cave 1 has the height of about 18m and can be entered through a staircase. Each step is carved with an attendant of **Lord Shiva** in different postures. There is a veranda having the dimensions of 21m x 20m and four columns each having an image of Lord Shiva in different dancing positions. The doorkeepers of the cave measure 1.879 feet.



There is an image of Lord Shiva with eighteen hands showing different gestures. Some of them have coiled snakes while some hold drums, axe, and trident. The image of his son Ganesh and Nandi bull are created by his side. One wall of the cave has the image of **Goddess Durga** who is killing **Mahishasura**.

The images of Lord Ganesh Kartikeya, Goddesses Lakshmi and Parvati can also be seen on the walls. Along with these, images of **Harihara** and **Ardhanarishwara** are also there. Harihara is the image of half Shiva and half Vishnu and its height is 2.36m. Ardhanarishwara is the combined image of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. The images of all the gods and goddesses have been decorated with birds and animals surrounding them.

Cave 2

Cave 2 was built in 6th century AD and is dedicated to Lord Vishnu. The cave can be reached through a staircase of 64 steps. At the entrance, there is a veranda having four pillars. The cave has a figure of Lord Vishnu in the form of **Trivikrama**. Another figure of Lord Vishnu is in the form of **Varaha** saving **Mother Earth**.



Avatars of **Lord Krishna** and texts from the **Puranas** can also be found in the cave. Two armed guards can be found at the entrance of the cave having flowers in their hands. The ceiling of the cave has a wheel which has sixteen fish spokes. Along with this, there are **swasikas** and **flying** couples which can also be found on the ceiling.

There is a hall in the cave having the dimensions of 10.16m x 7.188m x 3.45m. The hall has eight pillars in square shape and are arranged in two rows. The cave was built in Deccan style between 6th and 7th century.

Cave 3

Cave 3 is also dedicated to Lord Vishnu and is the largest cave among the five caves. There are many images in the cave which include **Trivikrama**, **Anantasayana**, **Paravasudeva**, **Bhuharaha**, **Harihara** and **Narsimha**. Cave 3 can be reached through a staircase of 60 steps. There is a veranda in the cave which measures 21m x 20m.

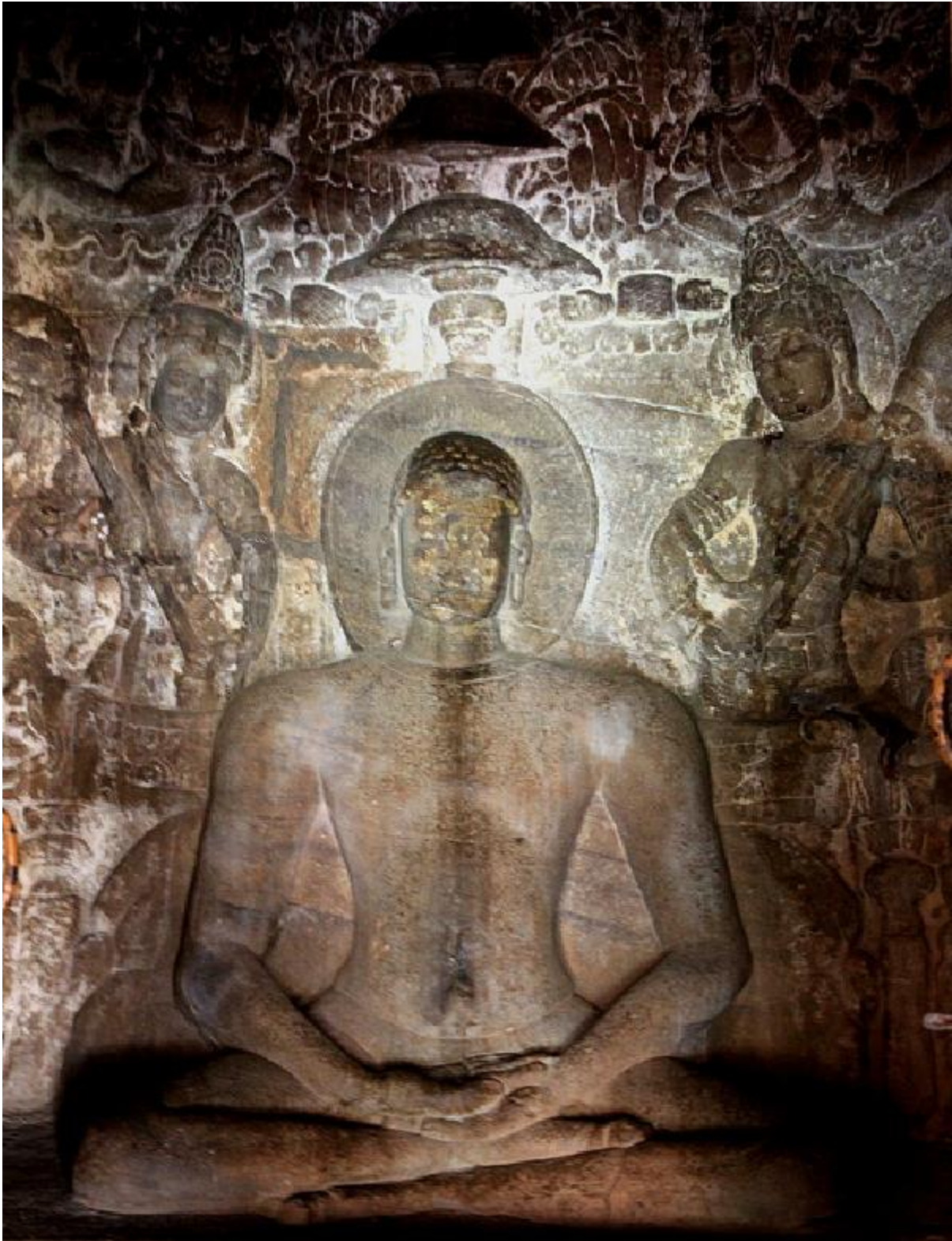


The veranda is separated from a hall by four carved pillars. There are six pillars that support the cave and each measures 0.23m². The cave also has columns, pilaster, and brackets and each bracket is carved with male and female mythological human figures.

The paintings on the ceiling of the cave have faded. The image of **Lord Brahma**, wedding of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati are also there. Along with these, different postures of Lord Vishnu can also be seen in the cave.

Cave 4

Cave 4 is dedicated to the Tirthankaras of Jainism. The entrance of the cave has a veranda having five bays with square-shaped four columns. There is a hall after crossing the veranda having four pillars out of which two are standalone and two are joined. The hall leads to the sanctuary which is 7.8m wide and 1.8m deep.



There is a figure of **Lord Mahavira** sitting on a **lion throne** and surrounded by attendants. The walls have the figure of **Parshvanath** and the height of the figure is 2.3m. The head of the deity is decorated with a cobra having many heads. Images of **Indrabhuti Gautama** and **Bahubali** are also present there.

Four snakes cover Indrabhuti Gautama and legs of Bahubali are surrounded with snakes. **Brahmi** and **Sundari**, daughters of Bahubali, are also sitting with him. The sanctuary in the cave has an image of Lord Mahavira.

Cave 5

Cave 5 is a natural cave which is very small. There is a statue but nobody knows to which deity the statue belongs. Some say that it belongs to Lord Vishnu and other say that it belongs to Buddha. It is also said that the statue belongs to some Jain deity. The statue sits on a throne and image of a tree, an elephant and a lion is there besides the statue.

4. Badami Caves – How to Reach?

Badami caves are located at Badami which is a small town but is well-connected by road and rail network to major cities of India. There is no airport in the town but **Belgaum** and **Hubli** are nearest airports from where flights frequently depart and arrive from major Indian cities.



The distance of some of the cities from Badami is as follows:

- **Badami to Mumbai**
 - By rail – 665km
 - By road – 595km
- **Badami to Solapur**
 - By rail – 234km
 - By road – 220km
- **Badami to Hubli**
 - By rail – 125km
 - By road – 105km
- **Badami to Hyderabad**
 - By rail – 491km

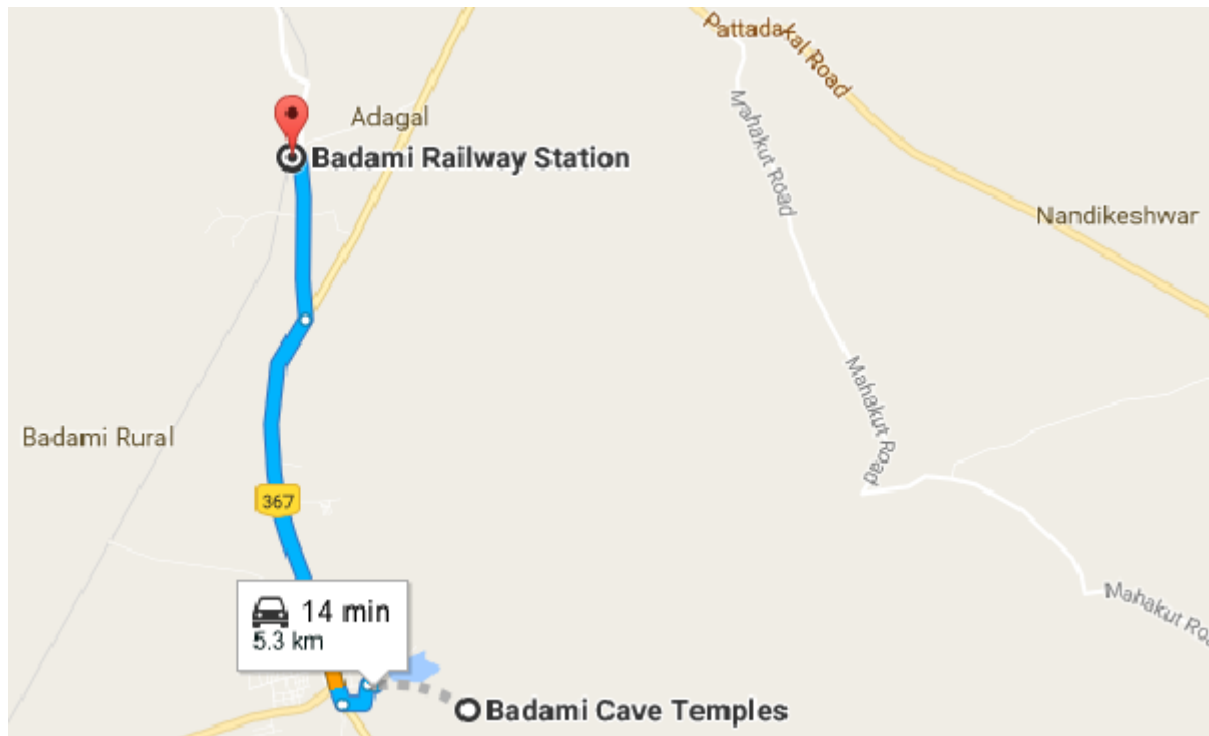
- By road – 424km
- **Badami to Dharwad**
 - By rail – 125km
 - By road – 101km
- **Badami to Bagalkot**
 - By rail – 26km
 - By road – 38km
- **Badami to Pune**
 - By rail – 496km
 - By road – 451km
- **Badami to Bijapur**
 - By rail – 128km
 - By road – 120km

By Air

Badami is a small town and does not have an airport. The nearest domestic airports are Hubli and Belgaum and nearest international airports are Bangalore and Hyderabad. From these cities tourists can come to Badami through road or rail transport.

By Train

Badami has a railway station but very few trains pass through the town. But still the town is connected to Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Solapur and some other cities. Belgaum and Hubli are nearby cities and are well-connected by railway network.



By Road

Badami is well-connected to nearby cities through road transport. Tourists can catch government and private buses from Badami to reach these cities. National highway 4 and national highway 218 pass through the town which connects it to nearby cities.

Local Transport

Tourists can move in and around Badami town by using local transport which include taxis, auto rickshaws and tongas. Along with these, bicycles on rent are also available to move around.

5. Badami Caves – Nearby Places

There are many places which the tourists can visit besides the caves and cave temples. Here is the description of some of those places.

Agastya Lake

Agastya lake is 1 km away from Badami station. It is a very big lake and surrounds the caves. It is believed that the water of the lake is holy due to its healing capabilities. Bhutanatha group of temples are located at the east while caves exist at the southwest of the lake. The place is crowded for washing clothes and taking bath.



Badami Fort

Badami fort lies opposite to the Badami caves and was built by the rulers of Chalukya dynasty. The fort is surrounded by double walls and was built on the basis of Chalukya architecture. Pallavas plundered the fort in 642AD. Tipu Sultan rebuilt the fort during his reign and added more structures to it.



Bhutanatha Group of Temples

Bhutanath Group of Temples includes two temples. One temple is on the eastern side of the lake and is called Bhutanatha temple and other is on northeast side and is called Malikarjuna temple. Bhutanatha temple has a hall which extends to the lake. There are two mandapas in the temple out of which the inner one was built by Badami Chaliukyas and the outer one was built by Kalyani Chalukyas.



Aihole Group of Temples

The temples in Aihole were built during the period of Chalukyas. It has 125 temples which belong to the followers of Hinduism and Jainism. The village has not yet been listed in the UNESCO World Heritage sites. Many tourists come to visit the temples and view different gods and goddesses established in the temples. Aihole is around 35km from Badami.



Pattadakal

Pattadakal is around 22km away from Badami caves. It is a village where people can see Chalukya monuments. Since the place was considered as holy, the coronation ceremony of the Chalukya kings were held here. The first ruler to be coroneted here was **Vijayaditya**. Chalukyas made the place their capital and built many temples here.



The list of some of them include

- Jain Narayana Temple
- Virupaksha Temple
- Sangameshwara Temple

- Chandrashekhara Temple
- Mallikarjuna Temple
- Kashi Vishwanath Temple

The architectural styles used in the construction of temples were **Rekha**, **Nagara**, **Prasada**, and **Dravida Vimana**.