

Historical Sites and Tourism Spots in Karnataka State

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Abstract:

Karnataka, a state in southern India, boasts a rich historical and cultural heritage that is reflected in its numerous ancient monuments, majestic temples, and well-preserved forts. This article explores some of the most significant historical sites and popular tourist destinations across the state, including UNESCO World Heritage Sites like Hampi and Pattadakal, the royal palaces of Mysuru, the architectural marvels of Belur and Halebidu, and the imposing hill forts such as Chitradurga and Bidar. The article also highlights natural attractions like Coorg, Gokarna, and the Western Ghats, which contribute to Karnataka's diverse tourism appeal. By examining the historical, cultural, and ecological significance of these sites, this article aims to provide insights into Karnataka's role as a key destination for heritage tourism in India.

Keywords: Heritage Tourism, Karnataka, Historical Monuments, UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Cultural Heritage, Tourist Attractions

1. Introduction to Karnataka's Heritage

Karnataka, a land of rich and varied heritage, blossomed in the 4th Century A.D. as the cradle of Karnataka culture and civilization. The Kannada speaking people have a long, rich and varied literature with an unbroken continuity of over 1500 years. The earliest literary work in Kannada is the inscription of the 5th Century A.D. carved on a stone pillar at Halimidi, near Hassan. The works of poets like Pampa, Ranna, Allama Prabhu and Akka Mahadevi of the 10th, 11th and 12th centuries, vividly express the cultural ethos of Karnataka. The Hoysalas, the Vijayanagar kings, the Badami Chalukyas and the Wadiyars were the patrons of art and architecture.

The stone chariots and temples on the rocky hills of Hampi, the exquisitely carved temples of Belur and Halebid, the temple at Mulbagal, the granite stone temples of Varadaraja and Bhoga Nandeeshwara at Nandi Hills, the rock-cut temples and sculptures of Early Chalukyas at Badami, famous for studies in the evolution of temple architecture in India, the temples in the deccan style at Aihole and Pattadakal, the forts like Chitradurga and Devaragudda, the Gothic churches of Bangalore and the elegant mausolea of Bijapur are all monuments of Karnataka's rich heritage. They testify the grandeur of temple architecture, the skills of the sculptors and the technical brilliance of the architects.

Because of drastic changes in the topography, climate and vegetation, the History and the Culture of the land have undergone tremendous metamorphosis. Steps have been taken for the protection of monuments and also taken up exploration and excavations in certain areas. The vast variety of archaeological remains in all parts of the state attest to art, architecture, sculpture, painting, inscriptions, coins, pottery, tools and other artefacts used in antiquity.

2. Major Historical Sites

Karnataka is known for its great architecture, splendid monuments, sculptures and inscriptions. These monuments are temples, palaces, fortresses, caves, tombs, etc., constructed often with stones, wood, brick, mud and stucco. They speak volumes of different elements that go to constitute heritage. The state is declared as the heritage state by the State Legislative Assembly and has been selected for the World Heritage City Programme. The well-known sites of Historical Importance in Karnataka are the world heritage sites, which were once the seat of political power and are now archaeological sites. Such sites reflect the grandeur of the erstwhile dynasties through their architectural masterpieces and sculpture.

Hampi is a village located in the northern part of Karnataka, State of India. It was the capital city of Vijayanagar Empire, which was one of the largest and grand empires in South India. The ruins of Vijayanagar can be found in and around this village, Hampi. These monuments are declared as World Heritage Sites. It is one of the most famous temple towns in Southern India and is known for its rich heritage and architecture.

Badami is a town in the Bagalkot district of Karnataka, India, formerly called Vatapi. Badami was the capital of the Early Chalukyas in the 6th century and is famous for its rock-cut temples. The Badami Chalukyas is the name given to the Chalukya dynasty that was founded in Badami. Badami is also famous for later temples built in the 7th–8th centuries, when the capital was moved to Aihole. Aihole also has some of the oldest temples, a topographic and archaeological complex with a history of more than a thousand years.

Aihole is a temple complex located in the southern part of India in Karnataka, India. Aihole showcases over 120 stone temples from ancient India. The temples in Aihole exhibit the architectural transitions occurred from early to classical. Aihole and Badami are among the earliest places in India where rock-cut caves were used for worship. Aihole is also a known place for its temples and Dravidian-style architecture. Aihole is a town of historic importance, situated about 5 km from Banashankari Temple, amidst rice fields and hills. It was the first capital of the Early Chalukyan king Pulakesin I. Aihole is better known as 'Aiyavolu' in Kannada literatures. Aihole is about 40 km from Badami in Bagalkot District and 200 km from Hubli by road.

Pattadakal is a village located in Bagalkote District of Karnataka, India. It is home to a collection of temples built during the early Western Chalukya dynasty, noted for their architectural refinements and a unique style known as "the Chalukya School". The group of monuments at Pattadakal was recognised as a World Heritage Site. Pattadakal is called as "Pattada Kallu", which means, "crown stone". The name refers to the great stone used as a coronation seat by early Chalukyan Kings. The place is renowned for its exquisite rock-cut temples and inscriptions that date back to the 4th century. The temples here showcase the intricate workmanship of the Chalukyan craftsmen who spent many hours chiseling the stone.

Srirangapatna is a town in the Mandya district of Karnataka, India, located near the city of Mysore. It is known for its historical significance as the capital of the Mysore Kingdom under the rule of the Wodeyar dynasty and later Tipu Sultan. It is located on an island formed by the river Cauvery and its subsidiary channel, known as the water town, Srirangapatna is well

known for its many significant temples and monuments. Srirangapatna is one of the most important historical places in the state. The fact that it is surrounded by river Cauvery makes it a beautiful town. It was an important town of Wadiyar dynasty. After the death of Krishnaraja Wadiyar II, it became a site of frequent power struggles, culminating in the final defeat of Tippu Sultan. Thereafter Srirangapatna was merged into the British Empire.

2.1. Hampi

Hampi, the erstwhile capital of the Vijayanagara Empire, is known for its glorious ruins. It is the second largest archaeological site in India and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The outer walls of Hampi city are a staggering 40 km long. The bouldered Hampi area contains more than 1,600 structures that an antique India is proud of. The Virupaksha Temple and the other temples in this district are all fine examples of the Dravidian style of architecture. Like other places of pilgrimage, Hampi attracted several dynasties who either conquered it or tried to capture it for the wealth and peace that abounded here. Thus, it flourished throughout the Vijayanagara period. Hampi's architectural splendor is legendary. It is dotted with temples, palaces, tank constructs, aqueducts, markets, and gigantic gateways illustrating the vigor of Vijayanagara architecture. Some temples in Hampi are in active use even today. Hampi is full of towering hills, valleys, wide-open spaces, lush green farmlands, and fast-flowing rivers creating poetic beauty. Hampi can be divided into two parts – sacred and royal. The sacred area consists of temples and sacred water tanks. The most important temple in this area is the sacred Virupaksha Temple. Crowning the enthroned image of the presiding deity is a large tower containing little stupas along with huge stucco elephants and monkeys, above which is a gilded figure of a bull. The western side of the temple is called Mantapa, a massive pillared hall and an intake room for devotees who would wait to see the deity. The hall pillars are exquisitely carved with gods, dancers, etc. The eastern entrance gate is hymned in the poems of some contemporary poets. The palatial complex has images and ruined structures. It is said that the area has subterranean chambers. The lotus Mahal is an eye-catching palace with beautiful arches and ceilings. The elephant stable is a huge structure composed of eleven domes of varying sizes. On the southern side of the royal enclosure is a large water tank linked to the palace area. On the northern side of the enclosure is a Ganesa temple. A small temple with exquisitely carved pillars is on the same road. Several kilometers away is the famous monument in the middle of a tank. A monolithic bull, a musical pillar, a machalinga, and a stone chariot dot the areas extending to a radius of 45 km. The monkey temple on top of a hill provides a panoramic view of the ruin. The major royal area has ruins on a broad belt and hilltop areas. The remarkable thing is that a unique patterned layer of fossilized natural rock is found here.

2.2. Badami

Badami, the capital of the erstwhile Badami Chalukyas, is known for its rock-cut temples. It is situated at the foot of the short but sheer reddish-brown hills which are referred to as 'Vatapi' in ancient inscriptions. The temples of Badami are hewn out of soft sandstone and were built during the rule of different Chalukya monarchs beginning from AD 540.

The Badami rock-cut temples are a group of four temples situated on a clifftop above the Agastya Lake. The temples belong to four religions: Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism. The historic rock-cut temples were devoutly dedicated to various forms of the Lord Vishnu, Lord Shiva, and Lord Bahubali. The temples were cut out from the hills around Badami, and it is believed that they were constructed around the 6th century AD. Earlier, Badami was called 'Vataapi', and it is said that the Vaataapi was killed here by Lord Agastya in the 6th century AD in accordance with a boon given to him by Lord Shiva.

The temple complex was at one time full of sculptural and decorative richness, with each surface of the stone hewn bearing stories and legends from the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Puranas, and Lord Krishna's childhood exploits. The temples were surrounded by beautiful sculptures of small animals, goddesses, and various deities. Exquisite sculptures in stone and laterite depict legends of the past, avatars, and various dance forms. But now much of the stonework is ruined or abrupt due to weathering and neglect. The ancient inscriptions detailing the majestic heroics and explorations of the ancient commanders of the kingdom are also well preserved around the hillocks. Historically, those were engraved on the temple walls and pillars, and the intact write-ups are a massive draw for historians.

2.3. Aihole

Located 29 kilometers from Badami, Aihole is a small but amazing village on the bank of the river Malaprabha. It is famous for rock-cut and structural temples, and also as a cradle of architecture. It is said that the Pallava king Narashimhavarman-I sent a competition to the Chalukya king, Pulkeshin-II, that he would anonymously build a temple here to rival the rock-cut temples in Mahabalipuram. The Chalukyan king challenged reciprocally and ordered Bhuta Vatesvara Verma, a great architect, to construct a temple in Aihole. The next day the temple was completed. In a fit of anger the Pallava king attacked Aihole. On seeing the unfinished temples, he was ashamed when he learnt that the builders were gods. After that, the temple was called Aihole or "ahalanjhi", meaning "to be ashamed" in Tamil.

Aihole is the site of over 125 temples, the earliest dating back to the 6th century AD. The temples of Aihole can be classified into three classes: rock-cut temples, temples taken from single rock and temples consisting of several stones. The rock-cut temples of Aihole are found mainly on the hills surrounding Aihole village. The most important rock-cut temple is the Ravana Phadi cave-having a Mahisha Mardini sculpture and a large Nataraja image. The rock-cut temples are of two kinds, having Shaiva and Vaishnava icons. The rock-cut temples consist of a garbhagriha, an antichamber, a naos and pillared verandah in some temples. Among the rock-cut temples, Chikki Dhangadi and Allama Mandappa are noteworthy. The structural temples here are very beautiful.

Although the temples are in ruins now, the beauty of the work still stands recorded. The temples of Aihole exhibit a simple beauty and a delightful variety. The earliest ekakuta temple of Aihole is the Lad Khan temple. It has exhibits of grand pillars adorned with various fine sculptures. The oldest temple of Aihole is the Durga temple. Here the vimana is in the shape of a peacock or eagle. The temple has a grand mandapa adjoined to the sanctum. The Mahishasura Mardini sculpture at one end of the mandapa is famous. The Aihole temples are

a fascinating record of the present change and the regular evolution of the Chalukyan empire from Badami's rule over 150 years.

2.4. Pattadakal

Situated about 22 km from Badami, Pattadakal is an ancient temple town on the banks of the river Malaprabha. Built during the Chalukyan period in the 7th and 8th centuries, it boasts a series of remarkable temples, most notably the Shivayogeshwara temple and the Sangameshwara temple, which are a testament to the artistic brilliance of the period. The temples are constructed mainly of sandstone with intricate carvings and sculptural works that are characterized by an impressive level of sophistication. The grandeur of the temples is enhanced by their beautiful architectural design, illustrating the heights of excellence achieved by the Chalukyan dynasty in structural engineering, sculpture, and artistic skill. The temples are a blend of various styles, a mixture of monumental figures with decorative motifs, vivid representation of architectural details in sculpture, and a large number of shrines and temples contributing to making it an exquisite assemblage. Pattadakal is classified as a World Heritage Site and is the only one of its kind in Karnataka and more so in India.

The temples are predominantly built of soft red sandstone quarried from the nearby hills, and available locally and not far off. They consist of shrine, hall, and hall with entrance gates. A number of shrines have supplementary structures such as bastions. The carved stone architecture is mainly composed of pillars, pilasters, brackets, lintels, parapets/sill slabs, and balustrades. Broadly, there are three styles found in the temples of Pattadakal – the Early Chalukyan style, partly in the Vesara order in a rustic way. The temples were built on classical post-and-lintel type of construction using weight-bearing arches, relatively few corbelled arches, and domes. The earliest of the temples, both in plan and elevation, is perhaps the Sangameshwara temple, which was inspired perhaps by the Mauryan, Gupta, and Dravidian modes. Hemakuta hill dominating the western flank of Pattadakal is dotted with simple shrines, which probably predate even the temples of the village and personified local terracotta and granite deities.

Temples situated on other banks of the river Malaprabha are the Galaganatha temple, the Jambulingeshwara temple, the Kadasiddheswara temple, and the Sangameshwara temple, which have, among others, sacrificed narrow long panels for broad-faced figures seated on ornamental thrones, and large figural groups crowded and jostling for space on the wall making it almost impossible to see the details of one figure without another altogether blocking the view. The most noteworthy carvings of the Pattadakal temples are to be found on the lintels of temple entrances, gopura, Mahavira, or saints in various postures, a rare representation of an antelope-dragon amalgam, strange winged, one-legged, and tiger-headed creatures squatting on female figures, floral-vase designs, cow panels milking, elephants with trunks coiling round a slender lady, and a plethora of animal-human hybrid forms along with metaphysical curiosity and whimsical portrayal of grotesques.

2.5. Srirangapatna

Srirangapatna is an island fortress and the capital of the Wadiyar kings, located near Mysuru in Karnataka province. It is associated with several historical figures, including the Vyasaraja

Swami, Tippu Sultan, and the Wadiyar kings of Mysuru. Fortunately, most of its historical sites are well preserved. Srirangapatna is also a town known for its temple dedicated to Sriranganathaswamy (the reclining form of Viṣṇu) and is a major pilgrimage site. Half a century prior to the arrival of Hyder Ali, the town rapidly grew due to a combination of religious and strategic factors. It is bounded to the north by the Kaveri River, to the south by its tributary, the Shimsha River, and to the west by the Santhamarahalli Kere. It is 126 kilometers from Bengaluru, 8.5 kilometers from Mysuru, and around 32 kilometers from Mandya. Tippu Sultan was the sultan of the Kingdom of Mysore from 1782 to 1799. He was the first ruler in Indian history to take on the British with the use of technology. Tippu Sultan earned the titles of “Sultan Fateh Ali Sahab Tipu,” “Shah-i-Tippu,” and “Tiger of Mysore.” He initiated the construction of many impressive edifices in Srirangapatna, including the Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple, Fort Gates, Secret Passage, Lal Mahal Palace, Tipu Sultan's Palace, Jama Masjid, Tomb of Tippu Sultan and Hyder Ali, and Gumbaz. The Srirangapatna Fort, built of sturdy granite and surrounded by bastions, is the most popular historical site. Significant structures inside the Fort include the Tombs of Tippu Sultan and Hyder Ali, Sriranganathaswamy Temple, Palace of Tippu Sultan, and the Elephant 'Rock.' Other tourist sites include Venkateshwara Temple, the Old Bridge, Nagamale, and the Secret Tunnel. The Srirangapatna Fort is considered the second most significant in South India. The town has extensive trade and commerce among the inhabitants.

3. Temples of Karnataka

Karnataka, home to many famous temples, displaying the architectural splendor of those times. In Karnataka, still many ancient temples, not just architectural marvels, but housing deities and historic importance. During his reign, Krishnadevaraya built prominent temples inside Hampi, dedicated to Shiva and various forms of Vishnu. The Virupaksha Temple at Hampi is a well-known temple location amidst ruins. Great Vijayanagar rulers, like Vikramaditya II, built the temple in 7th century CE, a Swamivaru shrine within the temple complex. A prominent temple built during the Vijayanagar Empire is the Mahabaleshwar Temple, worshipping the great Shaivite Linga of Lord Mahabaleshwara or ‘Shiva’. The temple is similar to the Virupaksha Temple of Hampi. The temple has beautifully sculpted pillars and a large Mandap. The Linga inside the temple complex can be taken out but during special occasions it is kept inside. Built in the 12th century, the Chennakesava Temple at Belur is built to propagate the star-shaped Vishnu Linga worshipped by Hoysala kings. Every inch of the temple is adorned with carvings of beautifully sculpted figurines and motifs. The temple compound houses temples of a celestial architect sculpted into stone and a temple for the Kunthaleshwara Linga carved from a single stone. Dedicated to Keshava, a form of Vishnu, built in a beautiful setting by the banks of the river Yagachi. Inside the temple complex stands a Nandi sculpted from black stone. The Keshava Linga was built originally in the 12th century, but it was not completed and some parts of the temple are yet unfinished. The temple was built to match the Chennakesava Temple of Belur with beautiful intricate carvings. The temple is built using sandstone like the other Hoysala temples.

3.1. Virupaksha Temple

Virupaksha Temple is a sacred Hindu temple located at Hampi in Karnataka, India. The temple's primary deity is Virupaksha, a form of the god Shiva. The temple has been declared a World Heritage Site. The temple architecture is grand and beautiful. The temple forms an important place on a vital Hindu pilgrimage circuit. The temple is one of the oldest structures in Hampi. The temple complex is huge with several smaller shrines within the premises. The temple has been built in Dravidian style during the reign of the Kalyana Chalukyas, who extensively contributed to its construction and embellishment.

Apart from smaller structures, there are several large halls, towers, corridors and larger enclosures which form a part of the temple complex. Entry is through several large towers adorned with beautiful sculptural friezes. A series of large mandapas or halls with exquisite carvings enclose the tower of the garbhagriha or sanctum sanctorum. At the entrance to the shrine of the principal deity is a Nandi or bull, beautifully carved out of stone and proportionately large. The temple also has a large, exquisitely carved lamp tower. Processions and mammoth celebrations are held here on festival days. The temple complex is also adorned with huge stone chariots, pillared halls with exquisitely carved pillars, and sacred water tanks and well-structured stepped pools. It is located at the confluence of the rivers Tungabhadra and Pampa. This place was historically known as Pampa Kshetra and subsequently as Rameshwara on the banks of the Pampa River.

The earliest mention of the temple is found in a 7th-century inscription in the Kannada language. Tamil inscriptions date back to the 9th century. There is an inscription about the temple in the Sanskrit language dating back to the reign of a ruler of the Vijayanagara Empire in the 16th century. Under the Vijayanagara Empire, the temple grew to be one of the richest temples in South India. The king's bountiful contributions to the temple and the rich endowments to the priestly hierarchies have been documented through a series of inscriptions. With the fall of the Vijayanagara Empire and the resulting decline in the temple's fortunes, the temple, subsequently by Kalikamba, a form of the goddess Parvati, was neglected leaving it to the wild.

3.2. Mahabaleshwar Temple

Among the many temples in Gokarna, the Mahabaleshwar Temple stands out as the most notable. This temple is situated on the coast of the Arabian Sea, about 10 km from Kumta, and can be reached by either a bus or auto rickshaw. Gokarna is well connected by road with most towns and cities near the coast of Karnataka. The temple complex consists of a tall pillared corridor surrounding the sanctum and containing several shrines. The holy deepa, or lamp, illuminating the image of Mahabaleshwar is placed in the central hall of the corridor. A sacred wooden horse is placed in the corridor near the shrines of Saraswati, Durga, and Lakshmi. The other smaller shrines belong to Ganapati, Siddhi Vinayaka, and the Navagraha. Near the outer wall of the corridor is a small shrine for the Parivar deity Bhadrakali. Close to this shrine is the entrance from which the idol of Mahabaleshwar, which is normally not visible, is taken out on the full-moon day of Aswaja, the day before Dussehra. The Narmada

river is held to flow between this temple and the one at Kashi, and it is said that if the water of that river is brought here, the stone idol will give way to the original living god.

The original image of Mahabaleshwar, made of black stone, is four-handed and 18 inches high. The figure has long hair flowing down, a snake around the neck as an ordination mark, and a matuta, or skull, on the head. An ancient legend narrates that Shankaracharya placed the Mahabaleshwar fixed stone linga brought from Kashi into the Gokarna deepa, and that it is he who concealed it into this Lingam, when his devotee, Ravana, the demon king of Ceylon, desired to take it to his island kingdom. In the morning, the Lingam was sunk into the earth amid the hum-blings churning of the earth. This image is a mysterious Shakti or Goddess of Power, exhibiting its powers to any individual who tries to bring it out. The crowded temple is the center of religious activities and celebrations in Gokarna, which lasts for more than a month. Famous festivals such as the Maha Shivaratri and the first night of the full moon in the month of Ashvaja are held here and the procession leaves this temple for the beach both times, lighting the whole town.

3.3. Chennakesava Temple

The Chennakesava Temple is a prime example of Hoysala architecture located in the town of Belur, Hassan district. This temple complex was built during the rule of king Vishnuvardhana in 1117AD. The beautiful sculptures, perfectly carved pillars, and dazzling artistry make this temple look indescribably phenomenal. It was the first temple dedicated to Chennakesava or Lord Vishnu, built by the Hoysala dynasty. The Chennakesava Temple is included in the UNESCO World Heritage Site list in 2000. The temple stands firmly on a raised star-shaped platform with intricate designs. On the magnificent outer surface of the temple are fascinating sculptures from various mythologies exquisitely placed. The temple is richly decorated and designed with great carvings, including different idols of various gods and goddesses. The stone-carved pillars are a marvel in themselves, and they also reflect the standard engineering and artistry of the Hoysala dynasty. The temple is an absolute delight for any traveler, an exemplification of Hoysala architecture, and a not-to-be-missed place for architecture lovers. The complexity and beauty of the Chennakesava Temple are beyond words. The play of light and shadow on the temple's sculptures and carvings needs to be seen in person to be believed. The Chennakesava Temple is a large temple complex containing several structures, including a sacred pond. The temples and shrines in the Chennakesava complex, within the same enclosure, are Chennakesava, Kappe Chennigaraya, and the other two small shrines, all in a line and present in the complex. Chennakesava is one of the largest Vishnu temples in the state, and the incredible richness of the temple makes it one of the most admired temples of the Hoysala architectural style. Perpendicular to the temple entrance is a sandstone tank, Kalyani, with a highly sculpted stone staircase leading into the water. The main temple structure is an auditorium-like hall, with a pillared hall, entrance, and sanctum at the back. The pillar banister bears dozens of elaborate relief sculptures, all highly varied in the patterns, arrangements, and themes of their images. The temple features a typical Hoysala layout on an elevated star-shaped platform, on which the temple rises in stages to a domed crowning finial. Each facet of the temple wall is delightfully arrayed with sculptural decoration in high relief, the best location for Kalyani.

3.4. Keshava Temple

Keshava Temple at Somanathapura in Karnataka, known as the Keshava Devara Temple, is a 12th-century Hindu temple dedicated to Keshava or Lord Vishnu. It was built during the reign of the Hoysala Empire. The temple is located within a complex of smaller shrines and an elaborate entrance gateway, or gopura, and is surrounded by a low stone wall with a raised platform and numerous sculptures. Inside the temple, there are images of Keshava or Lord Vishnu, and there are also images of various deities and an icon of Bhudevi, the goddess of Earth, holding a lotus and a shield. The temple is surrounded by a number of smaller shrines for various Hindu deities.

The temple was built in a style known as "trikuta", which features three sanctums that are open to the sky and united by a common hall. This style is typically Hoysala. The temple was completed by document inscriptions in 1268 CE. The temple is surrounded by a wall that is partially buried and has a flower-shaped lotus motif. There is also a sculptural garden and intricately carved sculptures in the courtyard. The temple halls are decorated with many sculptures. The temple is surrounded by shrubbery, arched openings, and garland motifs. The temple has an unusual appearance with high roofs and overhanging eaves.

Vishnu and his incarnations as Varaha, Vamana, Rama, and Krishna are the chosen deities for worship. Keshava is a composite image of Vishnu and Nanda, and Keshava Devara was worshipped as Yashoda for Garuda's squawking. A number of festivals are celebrated, and Dasara is one of the important festivals after the annual Jatra. The temple has been used for 10 festivals since the 15th century. Many lights adorn the temple during festivals, and Raghavendra Swamy shifted to a new place with the temple image of Keshava. The sacred tank is an important feature with well-laid steps. It is surrounded by Gopalaswamy Anjaneya Devara and a cluster of small temples. The temple is illuminated with thousands of lamps at night during the festival. There is a centre for arranging cultural programs.

4. Fortifications and Palaces

"Bangalore Palace," famed as the most magnificent palace in the city, had British-style architecture. The great grandeur of the palace was overwhelming. One could see the entrance gate embellished with spikes resembling the ones in England. The overspread garden remaining green throughout the year had exotic flowers and delightful birds chirping. On entering the building, the main hall greeted visitors with shoes in a cubbyhole. The smooth surface of the floor, made from a rare species of wood, felt warm, and bare feet were like walking on silk. Along the walls, paintings of English kings and queens looked down on newcomers. The real crown of the Maharajas was preserved in the trust. Therefore, the children were warned to avoid touching anywhere in the building.

Mysore Palace, erstwhile palace of rulers of Mysore, was another remarkable palace. Built mostly in Indo-Saracenic style, with remarkable domes being its attractions, the palace gave a different taste to sights earlier seen. The intricate carving in stone and wood, and the painted ceiling attracted close examination. The august Durbar Hall was simply spectacular with its luster. The throne, made of gold, and placed on a grand platform, dazzled beholders with its brilliance. A photograph taken here took five minutes to develop. Immediately after, the

marvellous sunlight refracted through the chandelier-like crystalline glass broke upon the visitors and the palace was transformed into a castle of fairyland. Most of the visitors became beautiful gnomes in pastel costumes covered richly with precious stones.

The stout massive structure of Chitradurga Fort reflected the strength of its rulers and artists. Arts and architecture of Dravidian kind, shown in temples, are on the fort. Legends and stories are inscribed on rocks and stones, which are used as canvases depicting the history of the fort, like paintings on palaces. Sculptures are also embellished with spots for offerings. A score of gates, twisted paths winding up hills, rocks of different formations, lakes supplying water a little above ground level to the tallest buildings, have made the fort truly a marvel. Amidst these natural and manmade wonders, were two tear-shaped pools of creation having a divine touch. The water in them is of different colors resembling different skins.

Bidar Fort, built on an isolated hill, could even be called a city-fort, as it had mansions and palaces with artistic and musical architecture. The light laughing waters of the musical tanks brought coolness after the hard city day. Six cities and roads networked the fort which was also a treasure house of arts and crafts. Turban and jewelry moving mouths, were the historical wonders that changed tone and shape of places and stones enlightening the beholder. The splendour of the fort was enhanced by walls rising to forty feet height of stones quarry built into a mixture of plaster and powdered white stones. In short, the fort had the vastness of a city with fabulous wonders. Mega sights and natural beauty were swimming and dancing in a cool lake whose depth was several feet.

4.1. Bangalore Palace

The palace of Bangalore was built by the Wodeyars in 1887, before this, the Wodeyars of Mysore had used the old castle of Bangalore as their fort and as residence since 1673. The castle was built around 1536 by the Vijayanagar king Kempegowda. It is well fortified and situated in the heart of the city of Bangalore. Its walls are of granite, a few feet thick and flanked by bastions, dry and moated, and accessible through a massive gateway with pointed arches. It includes some old and picturesque temples of Shiva and Ganesa. Besides the old castle, there are scattered remains of the bastions and walls built by the Wodeyars round the town. The walls were of brick and are almost entirely in ruins. The western part of the town is now fortified by the artificially made and beautiful lake of Hassar.

The Bangalore palace was erected according to the English, but in the colonial part of the 19th century. It stands within a large, beautifully laid out grounds spread over an area of about 40 acres. It includes several rare species of plants, stands of Koil, and gets full credit for planting avenue trees in other public parks of the city. The original castle was a tried structure with walls, corridors, and staircases of rocks and red soil with wooden roofs. But modes of court building can't be exact copy. It has undergone many changes by retrofit and refurbishing, but however, in the Third Class it has preserved some of its original shape. In the most retouched part of the palace, two suites of bungalows (old and new) have been erected where the old structure stands concealed.

The palace was constructed by the son of Maharaja Chamaraja Wodeyar at a cost of 2.20 million in 1887. Later on, it was extensively refurbished during 1903-1905. It has beautiful

smashed myriad roofs, massive wooden framed and elegant high paneled doors that open into delightful large ball rooms, drawing and dining rooms. Most of the doors are with picolar hard wood. The drawing room is adorned with elagorns portrait painting. Some doors are captive with dawry and paint on is usually laid down in several butts. The richness of the door framed with brass, the gorgeous ceiling, splendid harpsichord and the exquisite floral designs on walls by a stroke of colors and tints are its other attractions.

4.2. Mysore Palace

The Mysore Palace, also known as the Amba Vilas Palace, is the official residence of the Wadiyar dynasty located in Mysore, Karnataka, India, and is one of the most visited tourist attractions in India. It is located in the city of Mysore, around 145 kilometers southwest of Bangalore. Mysore Palace is the second largest palace in the country. The Palace is designed with a luxurious Indo-Saracenic architecture, featuring domes, turrets, pillars, arches, and galleries with stained glass. The palace is decorated richly with mythological and historical painted glass and mirrors, chandeliers, timber roof works, inlaid with ivory and decorated with gold.

The Wadiyar family constructed a palace in Mysore in 1399 after defeating the local chieftain, a landmark establishing the city of Mysuru and the Kingdom of Mysore, and the Mysore Palace served as the seat of power for the Wadiyars until 1947 when they lost their ruling rights after independence. The structure built in stone between 1897 and 1912 was later renovated in 1940 after the roof tragically caught fire.

Timings: 6:00 AM to 5:30 PM every day, 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM on Sundays and public holidays. It is closed on 1st January and 5th February. For nights illuminated viewing, the time is from 7:00 PM to 7:45 PM. 25,000 to 48,000 people visit later at times. Fee: ₹160 (incr. 15 March & night viewing ₹100). There is one teacher or guide for every 20 visitors. Equipments borrowed from the office of the palace can be returned to the counter of the palace museum. The regular guides must be paid in advance at the regular rates prescribed at the enquiry center. Multipurpose cameras can be brought within the paying area on a fee of ₹50.

Light and sound: A show on 'The history and culture of Mysore' ₹75 (+ ₹5 service charge) per person. There is a discount of 50% to school children in uniform and educational institutions while booking 25 or more tickets. The show of 35 min commencing 7:00 PM, 8:00 PM, and 9:00 PM (Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday) and 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM, and 12:00 PM (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) at the foothills of Chamundi. The box office opens from 9 AM to 8 PM. The show may be cancelled due to bad weather and other reasons. Those seeking to come in chair carry should inform beforehand. Further details may be obtained from the executive director.

4.3. Chitradurga Fort

Chitradurga Fort, also known as Chitrakaldurga Fort, is a fortification situated in the town of Chitradurga, in the state of Karnataka, India. The fort is noted for its massive fortifications, large gates, numerous temples, and a palace complex. The word Chitradurga literally means "Picture Fort" in Kannada, and it derives its name from "Chitrakal Durg", meaning a beautiful

fort. The fort is known by various other names like Kalyan Durg, Chitrakaldurga, Chitrakald, and Chitradurg.

This fort has a glorious past dating back to the 4th century, and probably it was built around the 12th century by a local chieftain. Chitradurga Fort is remarkable for its storied history of nearly a thousand years. The town of Chitradurga as well as its fort came into prominence under the rule of the Ganga of Talkad and later the Chalukyas. The Hoysalas improved and enlarged the fortification. Chitradurga Fort extended its grandeur under the rule of Vijayanagara empire in the 13th century, continuing to the 17th century. The fort was strengthened further with the inception of the 70 additional temples, filling the outer perimeter of the fort wall. To this day, the fort holds 19 temples of which the famous ones include Kumara Pahuladevara temple, Anjanaharaya temple, Bhimeshwara temple, and Ganesh temple.

Chitradurga Fort is a well-fortified and planned citadel. The fort is built of stone with nearby lakes contributing to the fort's water supply. It was constructed on three hills and is spread over 150 km². Enclosed in rectangular walls, the fort has extensive walls to the west, north, and northeast but little remains of the walls on the southern side. The hill is crowned with a citadel, a huge seven-storey building pierced by the Mahadarwaza, Doddappa's gate, leading to the inner citadel. Two enormous granaries are a distinctive feature of the citadel, the largest of which is a vaulted structure in impressive masonry. It is lined with ridges for a depth of 10 m with air passages to preserve grain for five years.

4.4. Bidar Fort

Shahji, the father of the great Maratha king Shivaji, built a fortress at Bidar in 1427 A.D. During the time of Ahmad Shah Wali or Ghazi Shah during the 4th Bahmani King, the fort was enlarged, and the palaces, mosques, gardens, tombs, and gateways were constructed. The bastions of the Bidar fort are built of a reddish porous stone which is found in the hills. Their height and width are more than many forts of the Deccan. The fort is surrounded by an 18-km long wall, and its base on the northern, western, and southern sides is laid at a height of 325 to 350 meters above sea level. It is 200 meters high from the base on the eastern side. This fort still stands as a masterpiece of Islamic architecture. The fort covers an area of 27.6 sq km, with a circumference of about 6.5 miles. It stands on a half-moon hill surrounded on three sides by a deep valley and a lake on the fourth side, on top of which is situated the Palace Enclosure. The fort included seven gateways, an enclosing wall, and towers to defend Bidar. The large and magnificent Gate of the fort is known as the Gumbad Gate built in 1579. The Darga of Hazrat Sheikh Noor Qurashi lies outside the fort at the entrance of the fort rum. This Darga is said to be a popular shrine and made a different style of architecture. On the hill is a lake called Miyan Ka Talab, constructed during the time of Ahmad Shah. There are two palaces at Bidar. The first is a portion built of large blocks of stone for the king, and the other is made of bricks for the use of the queens. The second palace is also Non-Muslim in character and is attached to the outer wall. It was probably here that the wives of the Deccan kings lived when their husbands were away from Bidar. Chand Bibi is said to have wept at this palace when her husband was defeated by the Mughals after the siege of 1591. Among the ruins of

the fort and palace, which are now thrown over a huge area, large number of relics of grand past is still standing.

5. Cultural and Natural Attractions

Karnataka boasts a myriad of captivating tourist destinations that encompass cultural and natural attractions, including hills, forests, waterfalls, lakes, rivers, national parks, religious spots, heritage sites, and more, making it one of India's most popular tourist states. Four prime tourism spots currently attracting tourists are among the finest places, satisfying the exploration for exciting destinations within Karnataka. These unique attractions cover most travel interests, including hill stations, wildlife experiences, tranquil lakes, and interesting national parks.

Coorg is a popular hospitality destination known for its green hills, thick forests, coffee plantations, and waterfalls. Popularly called the Scotland of India, Coorg is a getaway from city life, ideal for rejuvenating the mind and body in nature. Madikeri, the administrative headquarters known for its forts, is a key attraction. It is 125 km southwest of Mysore city. Abbey Falls, located near Madikeri, is a waterfall famous for its scenic beauty with a hanging bridge. The 85-ft rise waterfall is recommended for trekking and kayaking. The scenic view, sound of flowing water, and misty environment add to the excitement. Nearby is an old wooden hanging bridge offering a splendid view.

Kabini River, located 80km from Mysore, is one of the largest tributaries of the river Kaveri. The dam was built in 1974, creating the Kabini dam and Kabini reservoir, one of the largest lakes in Asia. The Kabini basin stretches over 2290 square kilometers. Kabini embraced tourism, with various hotels, resorts, and forest resorts established. Popularly called Kabini Forest Reserve, it is famous for wildlife sightings such as herds of elephants, samba deer, sloth bear, and leopards. Nature walk trails and elephant rides are also available. Boat and Jeep safaris offer safari rides, and food is provided in walnut gardens.

Jog Falls, located on the Sharavati River in a deep gorge, is one of India's highest waterfalls. It is 75 km from Shimoga, a small city in Karnataka, and a popular tourist spot. It falls from a height of 253 meters and is divided into four distinct channels named Raja, Rani, Rover, and Rocket. The waterfall is known for its powerful flow during heavy monsoons. A 360-degree view can be enjoyed from the nearby viewpoints. The picturesque view at sunrise, when the mist adds to the scenic beauty, is enchanting. A road leading to the mouth of the fall offers a stunning view.

Nagarhole is a wildlife sanctuary last explored by Mysore Maharajas and noted for its evergreen forest with many teak trees. It was declared a National Park in 1999. It is located between Coorg and Mysore and is part of Karnataka's popular wildlife sanctuaries. Nagarhole park derives its name from a small snake-like river, meaning "Snake River" in Kannada. The sanctuary has a variety of flora, fauna, and birds. It is home to various herbivorous animals and has one of the highest concentrations of tigers in the world. Other wildlife includes Indian elephants, venomous snakes, golden jackals, sloth bears, wild dogs, crocodiles, otters, wild boars, gaurs, black bucks, and many others. Twin rivers create several waterfalls. The dense

forests are home to reptiles and numerous birds, and cruise boats on the lake offer a rare chance to view wildlife.

5.1. Coorg

Coorg, officially known as Kodagu, is blessed with magnificent mountain ranges bedecked with luxuriant, evergreen jungles and curved coffee and pepper plantations. It is nestled in the Western Ghats of India. Famous for its varied flora and fauna, it has breathtakingly beautiful scenic views, which make it one of the popular tourist spots in Karnataka. Coorg is a perfect place for nature lovers, adventure enthusiasts, and history buffs. Coorg is an ideal vacation spot, with notable hill stations, coffee plantations, flower gardens, waterfalls, and temples, among other attractions. The district is inhabited by distinctly noted ethnic groups of Kodavas. The nearby areas, surrounded by forest, hills, and verdant landscapes, offer adventure activities such as white water rafting, elephant rides, rock climbing, ropes' course, and camping amidst nature. All season is good for visiting this tourist destination. Coorg is best accessed via the nearest airport and major railhead at Mysore. Other places, including Harangi, Sullivan, Dubare, and Bhagamandala, offer breathtaking beauty. A quaint village with beautiful scenery and lore is noted for its historical significance. Other notable places of tourist interest include the second highest waterfalls in the world, Iruppu Falls and Abbey Falls, Mullayo Falls situated near the Mull request of Kodagu, breathtakingly beautiful hill station, Talacauvery, residence of the river Cauvery, and Bam Navudus Fort in Kakkabe. Nearby areas are notable for the discovery of ancient inscriptions and rare bamboo fossil footstumps, 70 million years old. Several water bodies such as Kakkabe Kingdom, Hattihole, and Harangi Dam add exquisiteness to nature's bounty.

After the southwest monsoon, during October to February, is the best time to visit Coorg when the temperature is a pleasant 10 to 20 degrees. Various lodges, hotels, and resorts offer canoeing, rafting, camping, elephant rides, and other activities. The cuisine is particularly popular, with specialties such as Nedyaba, Pandi Curry, Akki Roti, and honey. The local culture has a rich tradition of folk, music, dance, and native sports. Popular festivals include the harvest festival of Puttari on a full moon in the month of Makara, the Kodagu Dasara, and other fairs on new moon days. Choices that display valour, yoga, wrestling, and rivalry are popular. Folk songs shed love and nature, and songs of plight are sung in funeral processions. Local dance forms include surface vein, created at dancing circles, and sand dance, similar to that of the worshippers. Diverse varieties of snakes and nature trails promote Eco-Tourism and academic recreational interests. A unique formula to curb greenhouse gases is being activated through the creation of medicinal mangroves. The start of the medical tourism industry, which helps in rehabilitating malnourished or chronically ill children, is another significant achievement. Government patronage helped enlist coffee, rice, and pepper among the GI.

5.2. Kabini River

The Kabini River, which flows through the state of Karnataka, is one of the most beautiful rivers in India. It is famous for its exceptionally beautiful and pristine environment. The Kabini Dam is an attraction and is situated at a distance of 80 km from Mysore City, and about 220 km from Bangalore City. The Dam site is built in a north to south direction on the Kabini River,

tributary of the Cauvery River. The waters of the Dam and the scenic beauty surrounding it make it one of the most beautiful places to visit in Mysore.

The Kabini River takes birth in the Wayanad hills of Kerala. It is also one of the tributaries of the River Cauvery. The Kabini River is joined by the river at a convergence of Village Mavinakatte in Thrissilumunda Forest Range of Wayanad district, after which it further flows into Karnataka. The river 2500 feet above M.S.L. flows through Kumara Dantaram and crosses the Karnataka border at Ballekatte. The river mainly flows in a westerly direction and joins the River Cauvery at 518 feet above M.S.L. near a place called in the Arkalgud taluk of Hassan district.

The Kabini River is one of the most beautiful rivers in India. This river is famous for its exceptionally beautiful and pristine environment of its eastward flow. This river originates from a small hill called a stone hillock in the Wayanad district of Kerala State at an altitude of about 2300 meters above the M.S.L. Kabini Dam is an attraction. This is situated at a distance of 80 km from Mysore City, and about 220 km from Bangalore City. The Dam site is built in a north to south direction on the Kabini River. The waters of the Dam and the scenic beauty surrounding it make it one of the most beautiful places to visit in Mysore.

The Kabini Backwaters presents opportunities for a number of adventure sports, like Water Glide, Speed Boat, Banana Ride, Kayak. Cruise at sunset is very charming. Wildlife visitation by boat is thrilling. At dawn, the emerald waters draped in mist offers an aura of serenity. Sun rise on Kabini is enchanting. The Vallamburi Resort in the forest reserve offers a magnificent view of the river. The Kabini River Lodge located at the confluence of the river with Wayanad hills is sure to charm every visitor. Nature walks, trekking to hilltop with jungle, bonfire in the evening, rafts on the backwaters, 4 wheel drives on wildlife safari are some of the activities. Experience with elephants is unique. Here you can see the elephants bathing, rides on elephants and washing them. Night safari in an open bus is thrilling. This is the best place to see the wild animals at close quarters along with their activities. This place is recommended for visit from October to May.

5.3. Jog Falls

The remarkable Jog Falls were named after the nearby Jog village, and they are also known as Gerusoppa Falls. The water from all four branches of the Sharavathi River pours over a rocky cliff that is 253 meters deep to form the Jog Falls. The nearby Jog village lies in the state of Karnataka. The falls are situated at 14° 1' 22" N, 74° 43' 47" E and 2,646 ft (807 m) above sea level. The Kasargod hill range

The Jog Falls, located in the Shimoga district and source of the Sharavathi River, originate in the Western Ghats and plunge down in four branches, namely, the Raja, Rani, Roarer, and Rocket Falls, forming a wonderful sight. While the river offers an enchanting view before it falls, it runs over a large expanse of flat rocks and drops over cliffs to produce falls that are regarded by many to be the best in India.

The Jog Falls are famous for their picturesque beauty and play an important role in the surrounding area's development. An ancient temple of Gangeshwar is located on its banks.

The river above the falls is said to be rich in edible fish. Champa, Hausa, and Honnala, along with other varieties of fish, are found in abundance. Fishing with nets and hooks is carried out here, and the fish is said to be very tasty.

An astounding sight of the Jog Falls can be enjoyed from one side of the hill. A magnificent garden and pathway through the jungles have been laid by the department of tourism and the electricity board. There is a huge interest among the tourists to see the Jog Falls as well as the ongoing work to generate power through this hydroelectric scheme. A visit to the magnificent Jog Falls will definitely be a well-spent day. Steep steps and a narrow pathway take one down to a stream coming down from the falls. The greenery all around is soothing and peaceful. One could get a closer view of the Jog Falls from here, and it is the most ideal place for taking photographs. It is suggested that the tourists visit the falls in the later half of the day to avoid the glaring rays of the sun cascading over the water.

5.4. Nagarhole National Park

Nagarhole National Park, scantily populated with no cultivable land, is known for its scenic beauty with river valleys, hills, and sal and teak forests. Apart from the rich fauna diversity, it is home to more than 250 species of birds. Arkalgud, 90 Kms from Mysore, is the nearest town. Nagarhole National Park is located near Hunsur. It was declared as a national park in 1988 and was part of the erstwhile Mysore Wodeyar and the Government of Karnataka's forest enclosure.

It lies between 12°03' to 12°15' North latitude and 76°32' to 76°00' East longitude in Kodagu and Mysore districts of Karnataka state and spreads over an area of 575 sq. km. The Park is bounded on the North and west by State Highway 85, which separates it from the Kakanakote forest Range, on the East by the Hunsur fire line, which separates it from the Wodeyar territories, and in the South, it is bounded by the Madikeri Division. The Park was formed in 1988 in the place of a wildlife sanctuary created in 1974 under the Wild Life (Protection) Act 1972. The entrance of the Park is about 70 KM from Mysore city. It is well connected by road as well as rail. The nearest railway stations are Mysore (70 KM), Kankanady (15 KM), and Gudaluapete (58 KM). Nachikuppalu village is located within the Park limits.

Drive around the picturesque water body and caravan to the Kabini backwaters; Nagarhole National Park is endowed with a unique beauty. What makes the experience more enjoyable is a stay at one of the luxury eco-resorts on the outskirts of the Nagarhole National Park. Activities like safari trips into the jungles begin at 6 AM and continue till 9. The animals return to the water bodies, fetching good sighting opportunities. The light and shadow dance at these times, making enchanting photographs. Animals grazing and drinking vindicates Darwin's survival of the fittest theory. Residents of the park include elephants, bison, spotted deer, barking deer, sambar, wild boar, the mighty Indian gaur, etc. The lucky ones get to spot the leopard, tiger, and other elusive beings. Wreathed Hornbills, Grey-headed Fish Eagles, Malabar Grey Hornbills, Kedah Hill Mynas, Great Stone Pigeons, etc., raise the ornithological complexion of the place. Animal sighting opportunity was so less in other national parks visited after Nagarhole. The inhabitants prefer to flaunt on the move rather than to be

tranquil. For instance, the four-leggeds in Bandipur boast their responsibility at the watering holes around sunset, thus losing prime sighting opportunities.

6. Festivals and Events

Among the many festivals and events celebrated in Karnataka, three festivals stand out for their sheer grandeur and historical significance. The most opulent of all is Dasara, celebrated in October/November, which marks the victory of the Goddess Chamundeswari over the demon king Mahishasura. The inauguration of Dasara at Mysore Fort is a grand spectacle featuring folk dances and cultural presentations, and is attended by the Chief Minister, the Maharaja of Mysore, and VVIPs from across the state. The actual festival begins with an elaborate 'nada habba' and culminates in Vijayadashami, when the idol of the Goddess is taken on top of a specially decorated elephant, accompanied by a grand parade featuring caparisoned elephants, folk dances, and a fireworks display. The Mysore Dasara is celebrated for ten days throughout the state with various cultural events.

Another significant festival is the Karaga, celebrated in Doddaballapura in the month of Chaitra. The festival commences at about midnight with the priests invoking the Goddess by reciting mantras, followed by the procession of the Karaga along with swaying devotees. The Karaga dance is performed by men wearing clay pots on their heads, and is a significant philanthropic activity observed by the Kotwals and their relatives. The Karaga is placed in the shrine of Draupadi after its procession. A Water Karaga, similar to the original Karaga but made of copper, is also worshiped by the scheduled castes.

The Hampi Utsav is another major festival celebrated at Hampi with great pomp and grandeur. Similar to the Dasara celebration in Mysore, this five-day festival involves competitions in various arts and cultural activities. The festival focuses mainly on dance and music, and in recent years has included an exhibition of handicrafts created by artisans from the state. The festival assumes a great significance with glorious processions of artists, musicians, dancers, and decorated elephants, camels, and horses. The unique feature of the Hampi festival is the celebration of Ramayana, which is faithfully enacted by the artists of a prominent theatre company.

6.1. Dasara Festival

Karnataka is famous for its colorful festivals which are celebrated with great pomp and grandeur. The Dasara Festival is the most important festival of all the festivals celebrated in Karnataka. This festival is celebrated for 10 days in the month of Ashwaja, which is also called the Dasara month, on the 10th day of the moonlit fortnight. The festival celebrates the victory of Goddess Chamundeswari over the demon Mahishasura, and symbolizes the victory of good over evil, like the Ramayana celebrating Lord Sri Ram's avenging of Ravana. The Dasara concern of the victory of Goddess Chamundeswari over the Mahishasura is unique to Mysore. The Mysore Dasara celebration is said to be one of India's most colorful festivals. The state government takes an active interest in organizing this festival. It commences with the auspicious Ganesha Chaturthi, with the tying of the national dolls in every house, and culminates in the brilliant procession celebrating the victory of the Goddess over the demon, which is the Navami. The day of the Navami-dasara is celebrated as the Vijayada Saptami even

in the historic Mysore. On the Dasara day, a full-sized idol of Goddess Chamundeshwari is taken in a gold-gilded silver chariot in a grand procession arranged by the Maharaja of Mysore, and is worshipped with great reverence by the public. The vivid and picturesque ceremony attracts spectators from all parts of the state and the neighboring shall hold a picture-perfect selection in two parts for this purpose. Artistes and musicians prepare and present cultural programs to please the audience. The festival is celebrated at Hampi with a variety of rites and rituals. In certain parts of southern Karnataka, the Navarathri festival reminds one of the cultural traditions of Karnataka. The days of the full moon are filled with full of gaiety and festivities. An important annual event is performed in honor of the goddess. The Dasara or Dussehra festival is a major event in Mysore, celebrated with an impressive procession of 50 decorated elephants, hundreds of camels and horses, along with several caparisoned bulls and cows with the Maharaja tiger-skin caparisoned elephant. Cultural programmes are staged in front of the Maharaja's palace during the nights of Dasara. In addition, the Bahadur Tub, Arabian horses, Non-dancing elephants, and gold swords and trappings gifted by the Amir of Afghanistan, all accompany the parade to the palace, where a great spectacle of fireworks is combined with the illumination of the palace and the city, with this event attracting thousands of tourists to Mysore.

6.2. Karaga Festival

Karnataka, being a land of diverse culture, religious practices, and various festivals, observes many local, regional, and national festivals. One of the prominent festivals celebrated in Karnataka is the Karaga festival. The festival is celebrated during the full moon of the Hindu month of Chaitra. During this time, a huge earthen pot, decorated with flowers and other offerings, is carried on the head of a priest. He is said to be possessed by a goddess and therefore dances madly about and disposes of one pot after another. All men, including top officers, ministers, etc., watch this with awe, and it is said that at the chosen moment, the intoxicated priest tends to move toward the boiling waters of a nearby tank and dives into it. All those present, terrified by this action, run to the tank in order to save him. Accordingly, immediately after he dives into the water, it becomes naturally brimming with foam. All of them retire to their places in helplessness. As is usual in Indian towns, this festival too was sullied by the untouchability curse for a long time. The local outcasts found joy in sending off the priest on the festival day celebrated at the temple of a deity made of an old stone by the local ryots some four centuries ago. The exercise entailed the priest producing and running uncontrollably like an intoxicated man through untouchable quarters. Some years ago, police shot dead some such innocent laymen, primarily because the temple housing the priest was claimed to be a tomb, and communal-commotion ensued. The Karaga festival, popularly known as the feast of the Karaga and held at the bandi of the local Raja, is a grand affair lasting ordinarily for three nights. In the very beginning of the procession, the Raja of Banga who is accorded due respect and the officer in charge of law and order assume two miniature postures of idols. The Karaga, carried over the head by a priest, is a huge earthen pot filled with flowers, arathi, and sandalwood powder, and it is, in fact, a trident, the implement of the goddess. The Karaga festival event is a unique one and is not found in any other part of India. In the Dussehra and other festivals of Dakshina Kannada, an elder male member of the

household carries the deity without fail on each festival day but in the case of Karaga nothing of this sort is observed.

6.3. Hampi Utsav

Hampi, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Karnataka, is renowned for its ancient temples and palaces showcasing exceptional architecture. The Hampi Utsav, a significant cultural event, takes place from January 6 to 8. The Karnataka government and the Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation host this grand festival, featuring a vibrant cultural extravaganza and organized events with the aim of preserving and propagating historical sites. Festival highlights include exhibitions, an orchestra, stage performances, and historical site visits. The 600-year-old Virupaksha temple in Hampi is a centerpiece of the festival.

The Hampi Utsav is celebrated with great enthusiasm and fanfare during the month of January every year. The celebrations include various programs relating to dance, drama, music, arts and crafts shops, circus, puppet shows, stalls of toys, etc. A procession celebrating Hampi's glorious past marks the beginning of the Utsav and Chennakeshava temple in Hampi will be the starting point of the procession. The procession will chiefly consist of folk dancers, flautists, and musicians. Various authorities such as the District administration, Archaeological Survey of India, and various government departments will prepare an exclusive plan to organize the Utsav. Dance, music and art workshops along with local cuisine exhibitions will also be organized during this time.

Apart from the above aspects, a large exhibition related to tourism spots will be organized at the temple premises along with a photography contest on non-archaeological monuments of Hampi. In addition to the above layout, cultural performances by various local and non-local artists both in the temple and non-temple premises along with light and sound shows will be conducted on all three days of the Utsav. Children's traditional folk games will be another major attraction. Various cultural organizations have come forward to present their art forms in an exclusive way. Popular musicians should be invited to perform during these three days. Art and craft stalls of local artisans should also be granted before or after the Utsav period.

7. Tourism Infrastructure

Karnataka is well-connected by all modes of transport such as air, rail, road, etc. Bengaluru, located in the southernmost part of the state, is the capital and acts as the nerve center of all transport systems in Karnataka. It is the airport city of India from where several domestic and international flights are operated. The most frequented tourist center Mysuru also has the functioning of domestic airlines. Belagavi, Hubballi, and Mangaluru have also been provided with bus and rail routes. The well-planned road routes can be travelled at safe and comfortable levels compared to the congested rail and airways. The smooth and fast travel has to an extent lessened the priority of airways and railways. It is only in the case of long-distance journeys that people opt for air travel and railways. However, all the three modes of transport are equally availed on account of unavailability of the preferred mode of transport.

Buses are the only means of public transport in cities. Taxis and four-wheeler rentals can help tourists take a tour of the significant spots in the city. Another option is the numerous auto-

rickshaws operating within the major cities of Karnataka as it is a cheap way to travel. The State Government has constituted the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation that operates City, Mofussil and express bus services for the travelling public. The inter-city long-distance buses trundle out of the magnificent Maharani's College Bus Stand. Halting here are the buses coming from and going to every nook and corner of Karnataka, the neighboring states. Apart from the KSRTC buses there are private buses to cities like Coorg, Mangaluru, Vellore and elsewhere. Luxury buses ply between important towns and cities. International travel is ensured by several domestic airlines which operate flights to major centers. Intra-city travel is well provided with a number of crown, shuttle services, and shuttles. The first air-conditioned bus service in India is provided in Bengaluru city.

Hotels catering to the needs of low, middle, and high classes are available in large numbers in all the cities of Karnataka. All the hotels are affiliated to the Department of Tourism. The most important among such hotels is the Ashoka Hotel, Bengaluru which is considered to be the first five-star hotel in Asia. The most prestigious hotels of five-star category are also in the name of Ashoka Hotels in places like Dharwad, Mysuru, Udipi, etc. Most of such hotels possess modern amenities furnished with luxury and comfort keeping in view the international standards. Hydel power is tapped to ensure uninterrupted power supply which is a rarity in India. Upon public request, the facilities of KSRTC buses are utilized for sightseeing at a reasonable fare. However, the tourists prefer to avail of the services of travel agencies as they ensure enjoyable travel without bothering about the inconveniences. There are several travel agencies in Karnataka that assist tourists. They cater to the needs of tourists by providing services such as transport, accommodation, guides, itineraries and permits. Furthermore, to help tourists, the Tourist Officer of the Department of Tourism provides assistance. Tourists can approach the Travel Information Centers.

7.1. Transportation Options

Most of Karnataka is well-connected by rail and road. The state has a network of motorable roads that surpass 50,000 kilometers. There are 12 national highways connecting Karnataka to the rest of India. To travel within Karnataka, several state and private buses travel to various cities. The KSRTC buses have an advanced reservation system. Various types of buses, including sleeper and semi-sleeper, operate in addition to regular buses. Taxis, autorickshaws, and cycle rickshaws are available for hire as public transportation options in urban areas, whereas in rural locations buses are the main mode of public transportation. The majority of tourist destinations in Karnataka can be reached by state and private buses from state capitals and important railway stations, such as Bangalore, Hubli, and Mysore. All stations have waiting areas and restrooms. Many stations with large passenger volumes have booking counters, cart rentals, and food services. Reservations can be made in any station regardless of originating station. Trains in India have five classes of accommodation—AC first class, AC second class, sleeper class, second class, and unreserved class. AC coaches are air-conditioned with better amenities and are considerably more expensive. The state railway corporation conducts several tours to tourist attractions. Foreign tourists wishing to travel on Indian Railways may contact the NRI cell in Bangalore. The Indian Railways offer an online reservation system. Children under the age of five are not ticketed, and children aged five and older have to pay

half price for tickets. Tickets are available at many railway stations. Anyone can ask the railway police for assistance in case of trouble. State buses run every 30 minutes on highways and every hour in other directions. Bus service to many destinations is available all day and night. All buses have a "clean bus" sign. There are two classes of seats—ordinary and semi-deluxe. Seats are not reserved in ordinary buses, but semi-deluxe buses must be booked in advance. Each bus station has a waiting area and restrooms. Long-distance travel via state buses is not advisable, as the journey may be quite tiring. Buses can be hired for groups of over 20 passengers. A dozen urban centers have a city bus service. There are two classes of buses—ordinary and deluxe. Tickets can be purchased from conductors. Most cities have night service buses that carry passengers to railway stations and airports. In Bangalore, a bi-hourly service is provided. In Mysore, a number of buses travel into the city from bus stations on the edges of the city.

7.2. Accommodation Facilities

Karnataka boasts an extensive range of accommodation options near its historical landmarks and tourist spots. The choice of accommodation generally depends on the town's distance from Bangalore, as most tourists typically stay overnight near their points of interest in Karnataka after visiting sites in the daytime. Tourist accommodation options range from palatial hotels to resorts with contemporary facilities to budget hostels adjacent to main tourist sites. Further details of some of the accommodation options in Karnataka's main tourist towns are given below.

Mysore offers a wide variety of accommodation options, from five-star hotels to budget hotels. The Palace view and heritage hotels are considered the best options in Mysore, offering excellent views of the Mysore Palace and the old city around it. Budget and mid-range accommodations can also be found in the form of hotels, lodges, and service apartments. The major hotels in Mysore include the Lalitha Mahal Palace Hotel, Fortune JP Palace, Hotel Regalis, Hotel Sandesh The Prince, Hotel Southern Star, and many others.

Travelers from Bangalore can take day trips to Tirupati, Chikballapur to visit Bhoga Nandeeshwara Temple, Nandi Hills, or Srirangapatna Temple at Mysore. Mysore is the best option as a base for visiting the nearby tourist spots of Somnathpur, Srirangapatna, and the wildlife sanctuaries of Bandipur and Nagarhole. Badami, reputed for its rock-cut temples, Hampi, known for its monolithic temples and historical ruins, and Coorg also offer a host of luxury, mid-range, and budget accommodation options. Visitors coming from Mumbai do not need accommodation in Karnataka since Belgaum and Karwar are the first points of entry into Karnataka.

Hubli can also be considered a breathing stopover, especially for every traveler coming from Bangalore to explore the forts and temples of north Karnataka. The best option, however, would be staying at Hampi, which offers beautiful scenery, tranquility, and affordable bed-and-breakfast accommodation.

7.3. Tourist Information Centers

Karnataka has several tourist information centers scattered across the major cities of the state, such as Bangalore, Mysore, etc. In Bangalore, there are two major information centers, one located at M.G. Road, next to Brigade Road, while the other one is situated at the Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath Bus Stop, near Palace Grounds. The information center located at M.G. Road provides brochures and pamphlets about the tourist places of the state. Various tour operators' brochures are also provided for finding information regarding travel options. The most important places to visit in Bangalore are selected by the tourism department, and they arrange a half-day and full-day tour even at a short notice. They also provide pamphlets for informed tourists. A number of popular Karnataka cuisines are available at the center. The adjoining restaurant opens at 9 A.M. and closes at 11 P.M. The center at the Chitrakala Parishath Bus Stop provides information regarding the finer details about the places of interest in Karnataka. Taxi service and accommodation services in Bangalore and throughout Karnataka are also provided as part of the tourist information facilities. Trains and bus timings, fares, and seat availability are provided to the tourists there.

In Mysore, there is an information center adjacent to the railway station. Information regarding the tourist spots within Mysore and outside are provided. Additionally, the center arranges for flower garlands for visiting religious places. Likewise, there are information centers in other cities and towns, such as Hampi, Halebidu, and Allow. Each information center has its own pamphlets and brochures regarding various tourist spots of consideration. The centers at the heritage sites can also provide trained guides fluent in English and other languages. Usage of the facilities at the information centers not only helps the tourists visit the tourist spots in the most appropriate way, but also helps them to know the cultural heritage and historical importance of Karnataka.

8. Impact of Tourism on Local Communities

Karnataka is a vast land of diversified natural beauty and has grown as a popular tourist destination in the past few years. She is rich in wildlife, several rivers, springs, mountains, and hills (Kumar, 2012). There are different communities in Karnataka from various states; Konkan in the west, Gouds/Chettis in the north, Aryans in the east and Kannadigas in the middle make their homeland here. In the south of Karnataka, the communities like Adigaras, Vakkaligas, Lingayats, Dhangars, Muslims, Nadavas, etc are well settled in the land of unique "Hoysala" temples. These communities together with the pre-existing tribal inhabitants are thriving successfully in Karnataka. Karnataka State is rich in Archaeological & Architectural and cultural heritage. Out of 405 archaeological monuments declared as protected, 100 monuments are classified as World Heritage Sites. Hampi is one such magnificent ruin that was once the capital for 185 years of the mighty Vijayanagara Empire. One of the most magnificent capitals in history, Hampi was mentioned by a decadent Jesuit Missionary as "one of the most noble and great city in the world". Today Hampi is a vast collage of ruins spread all over an area of 26-Sq. Kms. A place of exquisite beauty, Hampi was an indomitable fortress in its time. A seat of Art, Architecture, Religion and Commerce, Hampi's monuments reflects splendor and elegance. Queen's bath, Elephant's stable, Archeological museum, 400-year-old Virupaksha temple, massive stone chariot, Lotus Mahal, Talanarasimha, relaxed Basavanna, Malyavantha

Raghunatha and Big Ganesh are magnificent ruins in Hampi. Education and preservation of ruins is the two main steps that are required to carry forward a three-dimensional relic that wall fell into disuse bringing problems for all involved in its upkeep.

8.1. Economic Benefits

Among the key areas of activity that have slowly but steadily grown in Karnataka is the tourism sector. Apart from being commonly perceived as a sunny and cherishing land with Indian well-known music and Kannada poets, Karnataka has a multitude of temples, forts, palaces, and monuments. These historical sites are endowed by nature as well as by the creative energies of men and all these provide and inspire great enthusiasm and travel potential among those who love to peep into the past. For many places presently within the State boundaries and those earlier outside but few miles away are associated with glories, great deeds, occupations, and contributions well documented in Indian epics, ancient texts, and folklore. Hence, temples, forts, palaces, and monuments with integral parts of Karnataka State are major tourist attraction points and they are also the main sources of revenue generation. The number of Historic Monuments in Karnataka is around 30,000 and includes ancient temples, Jain temples, and monuments and forts and palaces built during DLL and other dynasties. Hampi is the most famous tourist center in Karnataka and is a World Heritage Site. Other places where historical monuments are located and attracting tourists are Badami, Pattadakal, Belur, Halebidu, Aihole, Bidar, Gulbarga, Srirangapattana, Mysore, etc. (Kumar, 2012). The temples in Karnataka constructed in stone are a special feature distinguishing them from temples in other States, which are mostly constructed of brick or wood. Stone sculpture, carving, and masonry have accomplished peaks of excellence in these temples. They are detailed and intricate and the sculptures seem to be drawn to life including minute details. Talarigenahalli, Melukote, and other places are devoted to Kadu Malleshwara or Karanji Kadu Malleshwara and are famous for temple tanks. Badami, in this sense, needs a special mention. Historical as well as religious monuments and temples constructed at Badami are carved out of rocks themselves. Temples carved on the rocks are the main tourist attractions. Though a Buddhist center, the caves at Badami are more write-ups than the temples. Aihole, in terms of percentage, has more temples compared to the area and other places in India. The rock-cut as well as free-standing temples here are distinguished and exclusive as Kohinoor of Sarva Shilpagala in stone sculpture. The municipal Council of Aihole has sent a proposal to UNESCO for including Aihole monuments to the World Heritage Site. Architectures on these temples are under different developmental civilization and religion but everybody are in the same class, giving brilliancy bounds to a historic city on the plateau.

8.2. Cultural Preservation

The impact of tourism extends beyond economic benefits. It is also necessary to broaden the perspective of tourism beyond the mushrooming of tourism facilities and the construction of large hotels or entertainment events. Attempts at virtually any cost to maximize the income generated from tourism can lead to excesses and significant side effects that not only ruin the very attraction that brought tourists in the first place but also destroy the physical and social environment surrounding the tourism destination. However, tourism can also be a means for local communities to promote their own way of life and to decide how they want to live. It is

essential to try to understand what is fundamentally at stake in tourism by drawing on experiences outside the West.

The Greater India peninsula is home to some of the oldest traces of human activity in the world - rock art and stone tools in caves and an excellent record of early village agriculture. With its own local traditions this region has developed some of the most exquisite temple architecture on the Indian subcontinent. Besides architecture, a unique wooden chariot tradition has been faithfully upheld by the communities involved. But for many outside India the history of the region has been obscured and historic sites have become recognized tourist attractions only recently. With increasing tourism, both national and international, linked to economic development, the time has come to reflect on how to preserve what is truly of value in this region.

The question of preserving and enlarging the tangible and intangible heritage of the region is critical, given the possibilities for tourism to contribute to maintenance and presentation in ways that are beneficial both to local communities and national net income through foreign currency. Also the question of the privileges and responsibilities of the nation-states in large federations in which the heritage has been preserved in colonial times and post-colonial times emerges. Although it is often supposed that the local populations of the region can be causes for the deterioration of the sites, fantastic financial means in national and international currency go yearly into the establishment in places instrumentally able to cope with this local image. How to prevent this, is another question this text will address.

8.3. Challenges Faced by Locals

Contrasting perspectives often emerge concerning the challenges that grow with tourism. While tourists thrive, delighting in carnival-like festivities at various sites, locals bemoan negative consequences, at times even rebel. On a crowded platform at Mysore's newly established railway station, an elderly mother reprimands her son. "Shah, I will not allow others in the house," she retorts, recalling last month's burst of noise at 5 a.m. when tourists arrived for a 6 a.m. lucky draw ominously proclaiming "New Year." Indeed, today, this station leaves hotel owners and residents with sleepless nights. Many have razed homes or set up barriers, incurring significant expenses, as those around the platform dare to hope for the mighty M.B.B.S. in exchange for a dream of fortune and prosperity.

Traffic volume and composition increase, congestion prevails in prime zones with nighttime disturbances. In the vicinity of prominent temples, midday nap time vanishes along with steady income. Emotions flow freely among Karnataka's temples, palaces, and churches, yet they are susceptible to change overnight and misinterpretation. Many have branded prominent deviations as "mini-Palani," prompting the Chief Minister to seek reconsideration of Shanidevaras or previously welcoming places for the new 'Shanidhar' in Karnataka.

With temple towns undergoing beautification processes, natural rivers and wooded hills face shameful vanishing acts, yielding to bulldozers and mixers. Temple idols lie abandoned near roads as if experiencing allures of glory created by muggers. A festival during which the naked eye cannot see the idol of 'Vishnu' on hill-Krishna goes uncelebrated, leaving its beauty a mere story. Closed to sunrise on 'Goverdhan' hill, poojas cease at locations considered venues for

women, non-vegetarians, and the westernized. As temples become hotels, umbrellas accommodate floods of visitors.

In architectural temples, prayers to idols facing west prove futile. Voyagers remain hill-climb-constrained, even paralyzed, if exaggerated by political exploitation, bodyguarded ministers, or ill-fate. The mystery, miraculous prayers in fervor, and hotel range intrinsically associated with bright city-lit foothills fall victim to political indulgence. Irrespective of attendant fall sizes and disagreements, active tourism bears countless taxing concerns.

9. Sustainable Tourism Practices

Sustainable tourism is vital for the preservation of sites and their surrounding locations, which provide tokens of authenticity and, in specific, the reproduction of “nature” and history. The degradation caused by overexploitation has led to the realization of the need for tourism sustainability. Ever-increasing global pollution and climate change are putting the future of both industry and humanity at risk. In light of climate change, the biodiversity and cultural heritage of a location are often the nightmare of the development of road or rail systems or of increasing tourist numbers. From the view of the people in public or within government institutions, the industry remains seen as a cash cow to be milked as long as possible. Nevertheless, there are increasing numbers of individuals and organizations across the world, who want to take environmental and social safeguards and see tourism as an opportunity for growth and enhancement (R Naik & B C, 2012). For sustainable tourism, particularly within active management plans, it means that there will be realistic development strategies, built on ongoing consultation processes. Outside of the industry, tour operators could offer their clients the possibility of purchasing carbon offsetting certificates or of investing voluntarily into sustainability projects in other countries. Information-holders and managements of nature conservation areas must be aware of sustainable tourism demands and look after their interests. For operators, sustainability means accountability, a synopsis that is as agreeable as it is ambitious. There is increasing pressure on the tour operators to address sustainability issues, but it remains an awkward responsibility to comment on something that no one fully understands (Kumar, 2012). It is crucial that progress be made to increase the understanding of the new topic, and shed light on the risks, opportunities and to deliver requirements to ensure a level playing field throughout the industry. Only then will the potential of sustainability in tourism be fully supported, protected and realized.

9.1. Eco-Friendly Initiatives

While Waterloo has its own attractions to showcase, there are priorities for eco-friendliness and sustainable tourism development to be considered and researched to ensure that all enjoy the relevant benefits as development progresses. i. Eco-Friendly Initiatives by Hotels: Hotels are stakeholders that have a large role to play in the sustainable tourism development plan. There are already a number of hotels that have undertaken eco-friendly initiatives either voluntarily or through pressure from relevant stakeholders. These eco-friendly initiatives that hotels are undertaking could be documented for institutions or think-tanks that focus on the environment or tourism. These findings could then be disseminated to all hotels encouraging them to consider adopting similar initiatives. In addition, given that there are now two key

players in eco-tourism who have developed at least two eco-friendly lodges, these players could be promoted to the tourism market through marketing tools. This could involve education tools like brochures or descriptions of how these lodges were developed sustainably and eco-friendly measures that have been put into place. ii. Eco-Friendly Initiatives by Industries: Similar to the initiatives taken by hotels, this aspect could document different measures adopted by various industries with a potential view to disseminate to other industries encouraging them to adopt similar initiatives. One viewpoint shared by a tourism stakeholder on other stakeholders not doing more on the aspect of eco-tourism was that industries should take the responsibility to manage the waste that they produce rather than asking the government to do so. Such sentiments of tourism stakeholders could be heard and collected to generate advocacy materials that could be disseminated to industries. iii. Eco-Friendly Initiatives by Other Stakeholders: a portion of eco-friendly initiatives taken by either voluntary or enforced on the other stakeholders could be researched, which could then translate into written documents or audio-visual tools encouraging the other stakeholders to follow suit. From the hotel's viewpoint on the difficulty of developing tourism in an eco-friendly manner in an area where big players are entering seeking short-term gains and maximizing their profits, suggestions could be generated on how to preserve and promote what is still priceless being larger and better than anything else in the surrounding area.

9.2. Community-Based Tourism

Community-Based Tourism (CBT) seeks to address the inequities associated with conventional tourism development. It builds on the notion that, in developing countries, multinational corporations are the primary actors in the tourist industry, which tends to benefit foreign countries. As a result, when people or organizations in developing countries decide to develop tourism, they want to do so in a way that will have a significant flow of benefits into their communities. Decisions concerning CBT include the type of tourist development to undertake as well as the eventual goals concerning benefits. As a result, CBT no longer refers exclusively to community ownership and management but also to efforts to augment local benefits. CBT also has to do with "responsible travel to natural areas, that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people" (Kumar, 2012). Community-based tourism is therefore an alternative form of tourism development that can directly benefit local income, employment, and access to tourism activities.

Community-based tourism can directly benefit local communities in three ways. First, local communities can establish their own tourism-related businesses, which become viable sources of income, facilities, and employment. Second, communities can more effectively negotiate for tranquil access to resources by forming associations, which can permit the sustainable extraction of resources for events and facilities. When operated at the community level, tourism can create nearby job opportunities attracting high-spending workers and commuters. Third, population change can occur as resorts develop in remote areas, converting land into monetary value and in-migrants converting development fees into wealth. Generally, tourism can generate income within local communities, producing a more equitable distribution of benefits compared to other tourism development options.

Community-based tourism can have significant economic impacts on employment, income, and public sector revenues. Jobs can be created directly and indirectly in tourism jobs, construction and maintenance jobs, and upstream provision of goods and services from agriculture, handicrafts, and other traditional areas. Income multipliers can benefit both residents and neighbouring regions as tourists purchase goods and services, as well as indirectly for local businesses that provide working supplies, infrastructure, and equipment. When considering construction and other non-traded sectors, it can provide work within communities and the wider region.

9.3. Responsible Travel Tips

In recent years, greater attention has been paid to the hosting of responsible trips. The tourism industry has been undergoing significant changes as a result of the rapid expansion of the internet and social media. In order to promote responsible travel, a great many facts and practical advice are sought, dealt with, and researched. Travelers should adopt the following practices to top their travel recommendations.

First of all, prior to travelling, actions of responsible travel standards in the travel destinations should be studied. By paying attention to and following responsible travel standards, misunderstandings and offense based on ignorance can be avoided. In addition, the positions of hosts and travelers are different, and while many tourists are in favor of local customs and ceremonies, they often view their actions from local viewpoints. Their actions must therefore be measured according to a response to it based on locals, so that the problem between travelers and hosts may be handled well.

Also, when consumers plan their travel destination, it should be ensured that a reasonable price is paid, such as purchasing from sustainable tourism organizations. Sustainable tourism organizations charge a reasonable price. It is crucial to avoid organizations that sell cheap travel packages. Cheap packages often involve severe damage to the environment and disadvantages for locals.

While exploring the new destinations, locals should be regarded not as a commodity but as humans, like the individuals from travelers' hometowns. Travelers must be conscious of locals as individuals, not just sightseeing. In addition, when visiting villages, respect for the old buildings and historical places should be paid and the insistence on taking charge of any potential fines if something is lost, broken, or damaged should be adhered to. This allows stewardship of environment preservation.

Finally, while using roads and paths to various destinations, the avoidance of shortcuts into gardens, crops, or homes must be ensured. If tourists have pets, their hind stains must be cleaned and returned to the titled road soon. A rapid return should be made in the case of continuous barking. As responsible travel standards, restrictions of noise and access should be followed in churches or temples; walking barefoot should be practiced in some religious places; and reasonable photograph requests should be made.

10. Future of Tourism in Karnataka

Karnataka is endowed with one of the richest and varied tourism resources in the country. The success of tourism in Karnataka gives overwhelming opportunities for economic development of the area, with probable impact on employment generation, ranching scale business opportunities and development of infrastructure and facilities within the area. The objectives of the study are to examine the tourism infrastructure trends in Karnataka, to analyze the tourism-related policies and development plans, to assess the historic and cultural sites, tourist spots and conveniences in Commission of Archaeological Sites, Regional Offices and National Units and Arch Cards across Karnataka. This study is based mainly on primary data collected from tourism officials, stakeholder questionnaires, personal interviews and field work for the tourist destinations along with secondary data. Karnataka is regarded as the cradle of cultural wealth of the country.

The number of archaeological sites and monuments is 126, of which 41 are of world heritage status and the highest in the country. The boundary limits of ASI protected sites are being demarcated in co-ordination with the State Forest Department and the Government Revenue Department. Protection and maintenance of all archaeological sites and monuments is given high priority, as it is the constitutional obligation of the State to protect, conserve and preserve the cultural heritage. Construction work within the prohibited limits of all centrally protected monuments is strictly regulated. Construction within the regulated limits is viewed only after prior approval from the ASI and Development Planning Permission as per the Karnataka Heritage Commission Act, 2010. The union budget allocation of the ASI is too low to meet the expectations of the citizens. All the measures and notifications of the Central and State Government are applicable in tourism development initiatives also. The further steps to improve tourism and related incomes in the State are ensuring safety for tourists at summer camps and steps for waste management in tourist spots.

10.1. Emerging Trends

The tourism industry of Karnataka state is emerging on various fronts. One of the key reasons for this has been the growth of the state capital of Bangalore as one of the most important global technology hubs. The state contributes around one third of the total IT / ITES exports from India, while Bangalore contributes to more than 90% of the state exports. The state of Karnataka has an area of 191,791 sq.km., which is around 5.83 % of the geographical area in India. The state has about 2,554 km long road network and 39,000 km long canals. The state has various tourism assets such as beaches, hill stations, heritage monuments, national parks, wildlife sanctuaries etc. It can boast of ancient temples, forts, palaces, churches, mosques, gardens etc, the architectural elegance and beauty of which exceed national boundaries and have been declared by UNESCO as World Heritage sites. Karnataka contains several Biosphere Reserves and a large variety of flora and fauna, which constitute major ecotourism assets. The state has thousands of ancient temples built from stone, which were once prime centers of learning and culture. The temples built in the Dravidian style are rich in culture, architecture and history (Kumar, 2012).

Bangalore, the state capital, is known as the Garden City, due to the presence of gardens like Lalbagh, Cubbon Park, and others. Cubbon Park is the pride of the Garden City, which was laid out according to the contours of the land. The park supports numerous rare species of flora, which were brought from all over the world years ago. The species known to one and all and spread over 300 acres of land are Currency Tree, teak, rubber, Cassia, etc. In addition to the above, the park runs several education programs for children on various occasions. Lalbagh, the second pride of Bangalore, is popularly known as the Botanical Garden due to the presence of innumerable varieties of flora. It has an area of around 240 acres and was initially laid out by the placement of the Meyor, Lord Mcaulay, and was further extended by Tipu Sultan. The entire garden is fenced with trees, which were planted during the British rule, and supports innumerable birds during the season. The garden has a famous glass house bought from London, where biannual horticulture shows are being conducted from time to time.

Bangalore has several small lakes, which form an intrinsic part of the culture of the city. The lakes are connected to one another by drains. The lakes were the main source of drinking water before the advent of water from the river. The clouds are the major barren land in the city, where trees and shrubs are densely covered. The clouds support innumerable birds, flowers and insects, which are fast dwindling and require protection. There are other parks and gardens in the city, such as San Jay Gandhi Park, Vikas Soudha Lawn, Indira Nagar park, Shanti Nagar park, and Cubbon Park, where deference of flower shows and classical music concerts are conducted during the month of January every year.

10.2. Government Initiatives

The development of the tourism industry has become one of the major emphases of the ninth five-year plan. Initiatives have been taken to link foreign currency with infrastructure growth in hotels, tourism centers, and railways. The Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation is the major nucleus organization responsible for developing and implementing the tourism development program. Mansions have been constructed at focal tourist sites. Statutory bodies are setup to handle the Corporation's finances. The standard of the hotels has risen and accommodations have improved in the erstwhile uglier towns of Mysore, Bijapur, and Hasan. The appointments of the State Minister for Tourism have helped to activate a moribund industry. The booming growth of tourism has had its positive fallout in terms of the diverse markets it attracts and in terms of significant investments in transport, hotels, tourist amenities, services, and the infusion of new technology. The tourism brochure is colorful, glossy, and informative, though it is also somewhat deceptive. Karnataka has not yet been marketed in terms comparable to the overall investment that has gone in.

The Karnataka method of attracting tourism has other important drawbacks. No one has bothered to try to assess the costs (known and intangible) that are incurred in returning tourism. In Karnataka, too, there are complaints of the disadvantages of tourism from the environmental and sociocultural aspects. Nevertheless, one cannot blame the Government for all the failings of the backward Karnataka tourism industry. There have been tangible economic benefits to the State from the liberalized growth of tourism (Kumar, 2012).

10.3. Potential Areas for Development

The Karnataka Department of Tourism has identified various potential areas for tourism development in the State in the last few years. There are at least ten areas, which should be developed as tourist spots, in addition to the already popular places, are suggested below:

1. Savanadurga Hill at Dobbaspeth: The Savanadurga Hill is about 15 km away from Dobbaspeth, on the Bangalore – Tumkur Highway. Savanadurga is a colossal hill formed with huge boulders of black granite and rises to a height of 1226 m above the sea level and is surrounded by dense vegetation. This hill acts as a crown jewel to the landscape around it. Two temples, dedicated to Lakshmi Narasimha and Bhimeshwara, built in the 19th century are situated on the hill slopes. The temples have intricate carvings resembling the Hoysala style architecture. The place is good for trekking, rock climbing, and other adventure activities. Since the hill is the largest monolithic rock in Asia and has many eco-sensitive zones, a proper eco-friendly scheme of development needs to be worked out to create tourist facilities involving local entrepreneurs.

2. Bheemeshwari: Bheemeshwari is located on the banks of the river Cauvery, which is a popular spot for angling. The place is near Kollegal, as well as only about 20 km away from Kanakapura. Angling on the course of cleaner waters has become popular. A variety of other activities are available here. Proper public warning is necessary to avoid any accidents.

3. Kabbaladurga Hill Fort: Kabbaladurga is situated about 10 feet high on a hillock, which is 14 km away from Tumkur. King Kantharaya built a fort on the hill and it has an idol of Goddess Kabbalamma. There is an old Jain temple with stone carvings. There are many temples at the base of the hill. It is a famous pilgrim center. The view from the hill fort is breathtaking. During season months or on weekends, hundreds of people hike to Kabbaladurga Hill. Good trekking routes of all difficulties exist. More than hundred rock climbing boulders were discovered and scaled for the first time by professional climbers. Bouldering can also be done at different sites. Better eco-tourism options can be created. During the rainy season, the whole area becomes a paradise.

4. Horse Trekking: The oldest colony at Yelahanka, which is 48 sq. kms. is a major hub for horse riding in Bangalore. Trained horses are available and the rides can be organized for about four to eight hours at various scales. The horses can be hired with riders. Off roading around the village tank, golf course, riding into the mango orchid and on other scenic routes can be organized. Villages around Kstdlibkuli, B Rajendra Nagi tank, Chira Kere are among the better locations for horse trekking. Healthy horses are also an added advantage.

5. Forts Near Lonavala: Except for the places where more eco-friendly schemes of development are already undertaken, many other forts in the Western Ghats preserve remnants of considerable historical importance. Most of the forts are left untouched. They can be a great alternative to the overcrowded and polluted hill stations and nature spots.

6. Mullayyanagiri: Mullayyanagiri, which is about 140 km away from Mangalore, is the highest peak in Karnataka, being at an elevation of about 6300 ft. The peak has gained fame for its natural beauty. The steep hill rock and the magnificent view from the hilltop, and the crystal

clear view of the western coastline from the hills are going to be its only investments for the advent of tourists. There is no alternative to develop any kind of tourism activity or to exploit or spoil this pristine gift of nature. Eco-tourism may be taken up for the protection of Mullayyanagiri.

7. Kalasa River: Kalasa River on the western side of Mullayyanagiri joins the Bhadra River on the eastern side, creating a beautiful location. This would be a tourist attraction along with Mullayyanagiri. It is possible to combine Mullayyanagiri visit with Kalasa River for one-day tourism from Mangalore or Chikmagalur.

8. Teerthahalli: Teerthahalli is around 120 km away from Mysore and is on the fringes of Thirthahalli forests, which in turn is connected to Wayanad forests in Kerala. Even though Wayanad is a well established hill station with major tourist interaction, Thirthahalli remains largely unexplored. The numerous streams around the place give the name for Thirthahalli. Tourist activity is limited to a few resorts on the banks of river Bhadra and hunting is the main tourist activity here at the time of season.

9. Kadamakanahalli: This is a tomb cluster of 5 tumuli laid over a circular enclosure of granite stone. It is believed that the owners/gift receivers belonged to upper strata of society to build such a complex structure. Further inquiry reveals that soon after the construction of them the relics were either covertly removed or the tombs were destroyed. Thirthahalli is situated 30 km away from the tank clusters.

10. Unsharanahalli Tank: This tank is about 15 km away from P.G.Halli and is an area attractive for tourists. It is also home to a large population of wetlands and wet grassland birds, making it good for bird watching.

11. Conclusion

A state forming the southern part of India, Karnataka, is a land of many diversities. The land has a rich variety of historical monuments and museums with a wealth of exotic places, which speak volumes for its culture, heritage, and traditions that have survived the onslaught of time. The Gateway to Southern India, Karnataka, was once the cradle of southern dynasties like the Mauryas, Rashtrakutas, Chalukyas, and Hoysalas. The glory and grandeur of its past have been beautifully conformulated in its temples, their exquisitely sculptured towers and massive gateways. Most of these temples built centuries ago are still in use, visited daily by thousands of worshippers and tourists, who marvel at the fineness of the carvings and sculptures. Karnataka is endowed with several attractive tourist spots ranging from historical and archaeological importance to beautiful landscapes and hill stations. The state of Karnataka has a rich historical and cultural background engaged in preserving and promoting its heritage. The tourism sector in Karnataka is one of the major and fastest-growing sectors in the state, which contributes to its economy. Karnataka ranks 4th in the country in terms of income from state tourism and 5th in employment generation. Karnataka, with its rich cultural heritage and progressive outlook, is a hub for cultural tourism in India. Karnataka is home to some of the most magnificent temples, palaces, forts, and other structures that exhibit the skills of master sculptors and architects. It is a place to see temples built in several architectural styles of temples and forts built of stone and mud.

Visitors can explore the 3 iconic World heritage sites at Hampi, Pattadakal, and the Western Ghats, which are recognized for their flora and fauna. The state boasts of various beautiful natural parks, landmarks, palaces and museums, and colorful festivals that exhibit the age-old rich traditions of the state. Several development boards and departments under the government, NGOs, and educational institutions are engaged in promoting cultural tourism in the state. In the near future, the promotion of cultural tourism is expected to be more shoulder-borne with the pro-active participation of tourism stakeholders and effective planning.

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Uncited References:

Books on Karnataka's History and Heritage

1. "History of Karnataka" by R. R. Diwakar

- A comprehensive overview of Karnataka's political and cultural history.
- Covers dynasties like the Chalukyas, Hoysalas, and Vijayanagara Empire.

2. "Art and Architecture of Karnataka" by C. Sivaramamurti

- A detailed study of Karnataka's temple architecture and sculpture traditions.

3. "The Architecture of the Indian Subcontinent" by Takeo Kamiya

- Includes descriptions of Karnataka's historical architecture like Hampi, Badami, and Pattadakal.

4. "A Concise History of Karnataka" by Suryanath U. Kamath

- Ideal for beginners; concise and readable introduction to Karnataka's historical evolution.

5. "Hampi: Discover the Splendours of Vijayanagar" by John M. Fritz and George Michell

- In-depth exploration of Hampi, with visuals and reconstructions of monuments.



Travel and Guidebooks

6. Lonely Planet South India & Kerala (Includes Karnataka)

- Excellent for tourists; includes practical travel information, maps, and cultural tips.

7. Footprint India Handbook

- Covers off-the-beaten-track locations in Karnataka with good historical context.

8. Rough Guide to South India

- Insightful background on heritage sites, temples, and food culture.

Online and Scholarly Resources

9. Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) – Karnataka Circle

- Website
- Details on protected monuments, excavation reports, and heritage conservation in Karnataka.

10. Karnataka Tourism Official Website

- [Website](#)
- Practical travel details, itineraries, and festival information.

11. Digital South Asia Library (University of Chicago)

- Website
- Access to maps, census data, and historical texts relating to Karnataka.

Books on Culture, Language, and Folklore

12. “Karnataka Folk Culture” by H.M. Nayak

- A look into the rich folk traditions of the state—music, dance, and storytelling.

13. “Kannada Literature Through the Ages” by G.S. Shivarudrappa

- A literary history for those interested in the Kannada language and its contributions.