



**DWARKA • SOMNATH • SASAN - GIR**

# DWARKA

## The Kingdom of Lord Krishna

Dwarka, the sacred kingdom of Lord Krishna, stands as one of India's most revered spiritual destinations. Home to the majestic Dwarkadhish Temple, dedicated to Lord Krishna, it is one of the four sacred pilgrimage sites known as the Char Dham, established by Adi Shankaracharya at the four corners of India. The temple, also called Jagat Mandir, was built by Raja Jagat Singh Rathore and continues to attract countless devotees who seek divine blessings.

Located at the mouth of the Gulf of Kutch, Dwarka lies on the western shore of the Okhamandal Peninsula, along the Gomti River.



The city now falls under the district of Devbhoomi Dwarka, facing the vast Arabian Sea. Once a bustling harbour until the 19th century, Dwarka's geographical location has made it both a spiritual and maritime landmark for centuries.

According to legend, Lord Krishna requested Samudra Dev, the ocean god, to grant him twelve yojanas (around 96 square kilometres) of land. With the divine craftsman Vishwakarma's help, Krishna built the glorious city of Dwarka, making it his earthly abode. However, after Lord Krishna's departure from the mortal world, the city was swallowed by the sea — turning it into a myth that lived through the ages.

Modern marine archaeology has revealed fascinating evidence supporting this legend. Underwater excavations have uncovered remnants of an ancient city dating back to 2000 BC, including stone anchors and artefacts that indicate Dwarka's role as a vital trade port linking India with Arabia between the 15th and 18th centuries. Thus, Dwarka stands at the intersection of mythology and history, symbolizing the harmony between faith and science.

The name "Dwarka" comes from Sanskrit — "Dwar" meaning "gateway" and "Ka" denoting the essence of Brahma — together signifying the "Gateway to Heaven." The city is also counted among India's seven most ancient religious centres (Sapta Puri) and is revered as the first capital of Gujarat.

Dwarka's story is more than myth — it is a timeless dialogue between belief and discovery. Beneath its waves lie echoes of divine civilization, reminding us that history, though sometimes submerged, always awaits rediscovery.

# MADHAVPUR

Golden Sands & Krishna's Legacy



Along Gujarat's pristine coastline lies Madhavpur Beach, one of the state's most serene and scenic beaches. Located about 58 km from Porbandar and 60 km from Somnath, Madhavpur is known for its golden sands, crystal-clear waters, and untouched tranquility. Fringed with lush coconut trees, it's a paradise for nature lovers, photographers, and those seeking peace away from city life. With its cleanliness and calm ambiance, Madhavpur stands out as one of the most beautiful stretches along the Arabian Sea.

Beyond its natural beauty, Madhavpur holds a deep spiritual and mythological significance. According to legend, it was here that Lord Krishna married Devi Rukmini after eloping from her home. When Rukmini's brother pursued them to challenge Krishna, the Lord avoided conflict — earning the name "Ranchod," meaning one who leaves the battlefield. This divine event made Madhavpur a sacred destination for Krishna devotees, blending mythology with the soothing rhythm of the sea.

To commemorate this celestial union, the Madhavpur Fair is celebrated every year starting from Ram- Navami and continuing for five days. The festival showcases a vibrant confluence of Gujarati and Assamese folk cultures, symbolizing unity and devotion.

At the heart of this legend stands the Madhavrai Temple in Madhavpur Ghed, believed to be the original site of Krishna and Rukmini's wedding. Though the ancient temple was destroyed by invaders, its ruins remain beside the newer structure built by the Rajmata of Porbandar. The idols of Lord Krishna, Lord Balaram, and Devi Rukmini are still worshipped here. The temple becomes especially vibrant during Janmashtami, Tulsi Vivah, and the Madhavpur Fair.

Madhavpur is not just a beach — it's an experience that combines nature, mythology, and culture. Whether it's the golden shorelines or the echoes of divine love, Madhavpur continues to captivate travelers with its timeless charm, symbolizing Gujarat's rich spiritual and coastal heritage.

# SOMNATH

## Somnath - The Sacred Land of Lord Shiva

The Somnath Temple, located at Prabhas Patan near Veraval in Gujarat, is revered as the first among the twelve Jyotirlingas of Lord Shiva.

According to legend, Chandra (the Moon God) was married to the 27 daughters of King Daksh, the son of Brahma. However, Chandra favoured only one - Rohini, neglecting the others. Enraged by this injustice, Daksh cursed Chandra to lose his radiance and waste away. The fading of the moon disturbed the balance of the three worlds, prompting the gods to seek help from Lord Brahma, who advised Chandra to perform penance and worship Lord Shiva at Prabhas Kshetra.



Chandra created a pond, Chandrakund, and meditated devotedly for months. Pleased with his prayers, Lord Shiva appeared and partially lifted the curse, blessing Chandra to wax and wane in cycles — symbolizing renewal and humility. Manifesting as Somnath Jyotirlinga, Lord Shiva became known as Someshwar, the Lord of the Moon. The very name Somnath thus means “Protector of the Moon”, while Prabhas denotes “lustre”, marking where the Moon regained its glow.

The Somnath temple's history reflects India's indomitable spirit. It is said to have been built and rebuilt multiple times: first in gold by Somraj (the Moon God), then in silver by Ravana, in sandalwood by Lord Krishna, and later in stone by King Bhimdev of Gujarat. Through the centuries, invaders like Mahmud of Ghazni destroyed it repeatedly, yet each time it rose again — earning its title as the “Temple that refuses to die.”

In modern history, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel initiated its reconstruction after India's independence, and the present structure was completed in 1951. Today's temple, facing the Arabian Sea, stands as a sublime example of Chalukyan architecture and a beacon of spiritual endurance.

Nearby, Bhalka Tirtha marks the spot where Lord Krishna is believed to have left his mortal body, linking Somnath to another profound chapter of India's sacred lore. Somnath is more than a temple — it is a symbol of divine light, devotion, and resilience. From ancient mythology to modern reconstruction, it continues to embody the timeless truth that faith may be tested, but never extinguished.

# **SASAN - GIR**

The Kingdom of the Asiatic Lion

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Nestled in the Gir Somnath district of Gujarat, Talala Gir is often hailed as the “Capital of Gir” — the gateway to the legendary Gir National Park, the last natural home of the Asiatic lion. This unique region stands as a proud symbol of India's wildlife heritage, where nature, history, and culture converge.

The Gir National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary, established in 1965, spans over 1,400 square kilometres of rugged hills, grasslands, and dry deciduous forests.

Once on the brink of extinction, the Asiatic lion was saved through tireless conservation efforts initiated by the Nawab of Junagadh and later sustained by the government of Gujarat. Today, Gir thrives as a living sanctuary where over 700 lions roam freely — a magnificent success story of wildlife revival.

For visitors, Talala serves as the perfect base for jeep safaris into the park, offering an unmatched opportunity to witness these majestic lions in their natural habitat. The experience of hearing a lion's distant roar echo through the forest is unforgettable. Alongside lions, the park shelters a thriving ecosystem — leopards, hyenas, chital, sambar, nilgai, wild boars, and more than 300 species of birds. The Kamleshwar Dam, located within the sanctuary, provides a vital water source and is also a major crocodile breeding site, adding to Gir's rich biodiversity.

While Talala's fame primarily rests on its lions, it is also known for the "Gir Kesar" mango, often called the Queen of Mangoes. Cultivated in the fertile lands surrounding the sanctuary, this mango variety has earned Geographical Indication (GI) status for its rich flavour and golden-orange hue — a symbol of the region's agricultural prosperity.

In essence, Talala Gir is not merely a destination — it is the living kingdom of the Asiatic lion, where the roar of the wild meets the warmth of Gujarat's heartland, preserving a legacy that is both natural and noble.

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