

# Imperial Grandeur of Hampi - Vijayanagara, the City of Victory

**Duration:** 5 Days, 4 Nights

**Departure from:** Bengaluru

**Interests:** History & Context

**Type:** Expert led

## Introduction

Travel to Hampi, the capital of one of the most glorious empires of India, the Vijayanagara empire, back in the sixteenth century. Hampi is supposed to be Kishkindha, the Vanara kingdom from Ramayana. Today, the temple town is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Hampi was witness to the glory days of the emperors of Vijayanagara, like Krishnadevaraya. It was also home to the witty Tenali Rama, who graced Krishnadevaraya's court. The town was renowned for its riches as well as the rich culture and played an important role in the history of Southern India for over two centuries. The place fell into despair after the fall of the Vijayanagara empire at the hands of Deccan sultanates in 1565. Today, Hampi is made up of the ruins from that glorious past. In terms of architecture, it is hard to top the splendor of rock-cut architecture of Hampi.

We will travel to sites of incredible historical importance guided by **Madhusudhanan Kalaichelvan**, one of the most well informed and scholarly subject matter experts. Madhusudhanan is the Chief Curator for Swarajya Heritage. He is an architect, conservationist, painter, epigraphist and has been conducting guided heritage tours through Road Access to Temples Heritage And Monuments (RATHAM).

## Itinerary

### Day 1 – Departure

We begin the journey late in the evening from Bengaluru. We will meet at the departure point and travel by overnight bus to reach Hospet early in the morning the next day.

### Day 2 – Let Hampi Amaze You

After checkin and breakfast, we leave for Hampi. We will make the short trip from Hospet to Hampi and meet our local guide for Hampi. As we hear the many stories of Hampi from our expert and guide, we will visit the amazing sights that Hampi offers.

Over the day, we will visit many monuments. Among them will be, the two different statues of *Lord Ganesha - Kadlekalu Ganesha & Sasivekalu Ganesha*, the splendid 'living' temple in Hampi - *Virupaksha Temple*, the *Krishna Temple & Bazaar*, the recently discovered underground Shiva temple, *Prasanna Virupaksha Temple*, the magnificent statue of *Ugra Narasimha* and the *Badavi Linga*.

We will end in the evening at the temples on *Hemakuta Hill* and weather helping, watching one of Hampi's famous sunsets.

Meals for the day: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. Stay: Hospet

### Day 3 – Experience the Glory

After an early breakfast, we leave for Hampi such that we are one of the first to enter the *Vijaya Vittala* temple complex before the crowds come in. We will need the time and space to enjoy the famous *Stone Chariot*, the musical pillars and dance halls of Vijaya Vittala.

After Vijaya Vittala, we will go see the *Kings Balance* and then take a walk along the Tungabhadra river banks from Vijaya Vittala to Virupaksha Temple. During the walk we will see the *Purandaradasa Mantapa*, *Sugreeva Cave*, *Narasimha Temple* opposite Sugreeva Cave (with stories of Ramayana). Those willing for a little adventure can jump over a few rocks on the bank to see the *Kotilinga - 108 Shivalingas* carved on a rock. We will also spend a little while on the serene banks of the Tungabhadra taking in the rocky terrain and see why this may very well be the Kishkindha of Ramayana. At the end of the walk we will see the monolithic bull, *Yeduru Basavanna* opposite Virupaksha temple at the other end of *Virupaksha Bazaar*.

We will end the day by watching one of the sunsets that Hampi is so famous for from either up on *Matanga Hill* or from the *Raghunatha temple on Malyavanta Hill*.

Meals for the day: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner. Stay: Hospet

### Day 4 – So much more at Hampi

After breakfast, we leave for Hampi. On the way in to Hampi, we will stop at *Ranganatha Temple*, which is a hidden gem and not everyone coming to Hampi would frequent. We then visit the *Pattabhirama Temple* and the *Hampi Museum* maintained by Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), before going on to see the royal side of Hampi where we will visit, among others, the *Zenana Enclosure*, *Lotus Mahal*, *Queen's Bath*, *Elephant stables*, *Mahanavami Dibba*, *Pushkarani* (stepwell). We will then return to the hotel in Hospet.

After freshening up, we will have dinner and then checkout and leave Hospet for our return journey to Bengaluru such that we reach Bengaluru early in the morning the next day.

Meals for the day: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner.

### Day 5 – Arrive Bangalore

Arrive Bangalore early in the Morning.

### Tour Highlights

- Our Expert
  - Dr Madhusudhanan Kalaichelvan. Dr. Madhusudhanan, is one of the most well informed and scholarly subject matter experts. An architect, conservationist, painter, epigraphist, he has been conducting guided heritage tours through Road Access to Temples Heritage And Monuments (RATHAM).
- Virupaksha Temple

- The sprawling Virupaksha Temple complex in the middle of Hampi Bazaar is probably the only place to have escaped the plunder of the invaders and left almost intact. It is a 'living' temple and continues to be a place of worship to this day.
- Vijaya Vittala Temple
  - The path leading to this temple housed the fabled Hampi Bazaar where precious gemstones were sold right in the open. Every nook and corner of this temple has a story to tell and is a witness to the grandeur of the Vijayanagara empire. The world-famous stone chariot is housed here.
- Tungabhadra river and terrain
  - The banks of the river are strewn with rocks and boulders. Ruins can be found all along the way. Lots of idols have been discarded here. This is supposed to be the place where sculptors and artisans practiced their skills before starting on the actual work!
- Sunset at Hampi
  - Just Google for "hampi sunset photos" and you will know why the sunset at Hampi, is a highlight of the tour you cannot afford to miss out on.

## Detailed Tour Logistics

**Departure from:** *Bengaluru*

**Exact Departure location:** *Cubbon Park Metro Station*

**Departure time:** *2100 hrs on date of departure*

**Drop location on return:** *Cubbon Park Metro Station*

**Drop time:** *Early morning. Expected to be between 0600 and 0800 hrs on Day 5.*

## Terms

### Inclusion

1. Transport from and to the departure point.
2. Stay at a three-star hotel or resort on twin-sharing basis
3. Vegetarian meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner)
4. Temple and monument entry fees (for Indian nationals only; foreign nationals will need to pay separately at some monuments)

### Exclusions

1. Photography and videography charges (need to be paid separately)
2. Additional refreshments like small eats, drinks
3. Any other aspect not mentioned in inclusions

### Payment and cancellation policy

1. Full payment to be made upfront
2. Full refund will be made if the tour is cancelled by the organizers.
3. 50% refund will be made if the customer cancels the booking within 20 days of departure.

## Things to note

1. The tour will involve enough walking outdoors in the day. Please ensure you carry your caps and sunglasses. Keep a bottle of water ready for you always to beat the heat.
2. Given the walking, we will be doing, ensure you get a good pair of walking shoes that you're comfortable with, for the tour.
3. We will be visiting a few living temples. We should accordingly respect the traditions, beliefs of the people who worship here.
4. If you need things like medication, keep it handy and ensure you bring it along with yourselves. Do not depend on being able to buy such locally.
5. If you have any allergies, be sure to check explicitly on the food that will be served to you.
6. Please ensure you have enough cash for miscellaneous expenses you may incur. Do not depend on ATMs etc. locally to provide for this.
7. Please note time of departures and be on time.
8. If you're not from the city where the tour leaves from and finishes at, please plan your travel accordingly.