

TWO DAY TOUR

Day 1: AHMEDABAD- ADALAJ- AKSHARDHAM-MODHERA-PATAN.

Gandhi Ashram: Mahatma Gandhi, after coming back from South Africa had his first religious retreat built in Ahmedabad's Kochrab area in the year 1915 on 25th May. The ashram was later on shifted to one of the banks of the Sabarmati River on an open tract of land. Gandhiji named the retreat as 'Sabarmati Ashram' as it was located on the bank of the Sabarmati River that passes through Ahmedabad. The date of the shifting is recorded as 17th June 1917. He made this transfer because he had taken a resolve to lead life like a poor, rustic Indian who earned his livelihood through farming and farm-related activities. The ashram served as the nerve-centre for the nation's freedom struggle. It was from this ashram that Mahatma Gandhi launched the Satyagraha movement on 12th March in 1930 and journeyed all the way to Dandi Beach by foot covering a distance of more than 300kms that took about 24 days. Gandhi's office was located in 'Hridaya Kunj' which was actually a cottage that was eventually turned into a museum. Sabarmati Ashram is one of the most important monument in Indian Independence History and today it is the first thing for a tourist visiting Gujarat to visit.

Adalaj Stepwell: Adalaj Stepwell near Ahmedabad is one of the most beautiful Step-well in India with a perfect mixture of the Hindu and the Islamic architecture. Originally, it was being constructed by Rana Veer Singh but was completed by Sultan Mahmud Begada of Ahmedabad as he had killed the former to expand his kingdom. The stepwell was completed as the Queen of Veer Singh demanded its completion from Mahmud Begada who had proposed to marry her after his husband's demise. This resulted in the fusion of Indo-Islamic architecture in the stepwell. This 5 storey stepwell is constructed in such a way that sunlight cannot penetrate directly inside the stepwell which results in difference of 5 degrees Celsius in temperature from the normal temperature. The intricate carving on the columns and the windows of the stepwell is a treat to watch for any architectural lover.

Swaminarayan Temple Akshardham: One of the two Akshardham of the Bochasanwasi Aksharapurushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS), Akshardham in Gandhinagar was the first to be constructed and completed in 1991. Built in Pink Sandstone, this magnificent structure is a sight to behold. Thousands of people visit it every day for its beauty and also the exhibition halls and the first Spiritual Light and Sound Show in the world 'Sat-chit-anand'. This famous temple was attacked by the terrorists in 2002 where around 30 people lost their lives. The main deity of the temple is Lord Swaminarayan who is considered as an incarnation of Lord Krishna and have a ardent following in the state of Gujarat. Overnight at Ahmedabad.

Day 2: PATAN – MODHERA

Today morning, proceed towards Patan (140 kms/ 3 hours).

Rani Ki Vav: One of the most magnificent structures in India, Rani Ki Vav, a UNESCO World Heritage Site has been considered as the Queen among the stepwells in India. The Stepwell was constructed by Queen Udayamati in memory of his husband Bhimadev I of the Solanki Dynasty. Constructed primarily for storing water for the locals, the stepwell was submerged with silt and sand due to the floods in the nearby Saraswati River in the 13th Century which was then excavated in 1960s by the ASI when they found more than 500 God sculptors in Pristine Condition. The statues of Dashavatars, Yoginis and various Gods and Goddesses adorn the walls of the Stepwell. It surely will leave the tourists in awe with the kind of workmanship on the step well. The length of these historic stepwell is about 64 m, width about 20 m and the depth is about 27 m. It was included in the UNESCO World Heritage site list in 2014 and also has been inscribed on the new Rs. 100 Currency Note in India. Rani ki Vav will certainly impress the visitors not only for its architectural craftsmanship but also for its sculptural decoration that reflects the true artistic mastery of the nation during medieval period. The sculptures and the figurative motifs along with proportion of empty and filled spaces provide genuine aesthetic character of the step well.

Sun Temple: Sun Temple of Modhera is a beautiful intricately carved temple constructed by King Bhimadev I in 1026. A perfect example of Solanki Architecture, Sun temple of Modhera lies exactly on the Tropic of Cancer and has been constructed in such a way that the first rays of the Sun on the two equinoxes of the year fell exactly on the crown on the head of the deity's idol in the Garbha Griha. The Crown was stolen and the temple was destroyed considerably during the invasion of Alauddin Khilji in the 12th Century. The temple has 3 Parts: Surya Kund, Sabha Mandapa and the Maha Mandapa. The walls of the temple has beautiful statues of various Hindu Gods and Goddesses primarily Sun God as he is the presiding deity there. There are 52 pillars in the sabha mandapa symbolizing 52 weeks of the year each having stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata carved out on it. The temple revives the comparison with that of Konark Sun Temple of Odisha in terms of architectural styles and influence. The place where the temple has come up found its reference in scriptures of Brahma Purana and Skanda Purana. A perfect day excursion from Ahmedabad, the Sun Temple of Modhera has been attracting tourists with the majestic Rani Ki Vav as a complement. **Tour ends.**