



## WONDERFUL PLACES IN SATARA DISTRICT OF MAHARASHTRA: TOURISM POTENTIAL

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### **Abstract**

Satara is a District in the state of Maharashtra. The name is derived from the seven hills surrounding the town. Satara is famous for its "Satari Kandi Pedha". Satara has very importance in History. The famous fort Ajikyatara is in this city. The famous Hill Stations 'Panchgani' and 'Mahabaleshwar' are situated in the Satara District. It's also famous as two great rivers namely the Krishna and Koyna Rivers. The city is ornate with nature's blessings, a calm and quite peaceful place. Tourism in Satara reveals its importance as an ancient centre of cultural heritage. Several temples, forts, lake as well as bird sanctuary make the place a wonderful place of visit.

**Keywords-** Hill Station, blessings, quite, sanctuary, ornate

### **Objectives**

- i) To Know the potential for Tourism in Satara District
- ii) To Understand the Wonderful Places in Satara District

### **Data Collection and Methodology**

Present research article is informative. The various books, reports, news papers and some other Secondary sources are referred for the collection of information and data, like government gazette, District Hand book, District Census, Satara Bulletin

There are number of worth seeing places in Satara district. Satara district is culturally, historically and naturally prosperous district in Maharashtra state. Many tourists are frequently visiting to Satara and adjoining areas not only from India but also from across the country. Some Tourist places shortlisted below as follows.

#### **World famous Hill Station - Mahabaleshwar**

Mahabaleshwar is a hill station located in the Satara District in the Western Ghats range of Maharashtra, India. It reaches a height of 1438 m at its highest peak above sea level, known as Wilson/Sunrise Point. Mahabaleshwar, "The Queen of Hill Stations", served as the summer capital of Bombay province during the British Raj, and today is a popular holiday resort and honeymoon spot. The area is also an important pilgrimage site for Hindus, and is the site of the Mahabaleshwar Temple. Mahabaleshwar comprises three villages, Malcolm Peth, Old "Kshetra" Mahabaleshwar and part of the Shindola village. The first historical mention of Mahabaleshwar dates back to year 1215 when the King Singhan of Deogiri visited Old Mahabaleshwar. Present Mahabaleshwar came into existence in the year 1829-30 and from old records is mentioned as Malcolm Peth, but in practise today it is known as

Mahabaleshwar. More details are shown on the link mahabaleshwar in Excursion Category.

#### **Panchgani**

Panchgani is an idyllic mountain retreat in the Krishna Valley, tucked away in the Satara district of Maharashtra. Panchgani is well known hill station of Maharashtra on the highway to Mahabaleshwar from Pune. It is located amidst five small hills, from which it derives its name (Panch in Marathi means five). All these 5 hills are topped by a volcanic plateau which is the second highest in Asia after the Tibetan plateau. Situated at an altitude of 1,334m, the 18-km approach to the Panchgani is breathtaking, offering heart-stopping views of the River Krishna on one side and the coastal plains on the other. More details are shown on the link Panchgani in Excursion Category.

#### **Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary**

Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary is a wildlife sanctuary located in Satara district. The sanctuary is nested in the Western Ghats, covering an area of around 426.52 km<sup>2</sup> and with an altitude ranging from 600 to 1,100 meters (2,000 - 3,600 ft). It was notified in 1985 as a wildlife sanctuary. Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary has dense forests with three major sections, Vasota, Maharkhor and Indavli Met, and the sanctuary is endowed with natural protective boundaries - Shivasagar Lake on one side, and the slopes of the Western Ghats on both the sides. This protective cover has enabled the emergence of a diverse variety of flora and fauna in the sanctuary. The sanctuary has a diverse variety of fauna including tigers and panthers; gaurs and sambars; barking and mouse deers; pythons and cobras; common langurs and Indian Giant Squirrels. Many species of birds are found in the sanctuary including brown capped woodpecker; Asian Fairy Bluebird; and Crested Goshawk.

**Ajinkyatara Fort**

This fort located in the heart center of city town. It is 3,300 feet high on Ajinkyatra Mountain. The walls of the forts are 4 meter high, many water tanks are there on the fort and there is no scarcity of water. The beauty is Ajinkyatra fort can be observed from the hill of Yawateshwar. Tourist has a wonderful view of the city from Ajinkyatra Mountain. The Temple of Mangalai Devi is on the fort. Other temples are of Hanuman and Shiv. Apart from temple you can find Television and Radio broadcasting towers on this fort.

**Bhairavgad**

This fort is forest type fort. This fort is in the Satara District. The height of this fort is about 3000 feet and it lies in the Mahabaleshwar range. Durgvadi is the village which is at the base of fort. Temple is the main attraction of this fort due to its design and it shelters for 15-20 peoples. The temple is very beautiful. In temple there are three idols of Goddess which are about two to three feet in height. These idols are of Bheri, Tula, and Shree Vaghjai.

Chalkewadi, the plateau is about 100 sq. kms and average height is more than 3000 feet from sea level, is the ideal location for Wind Energy Projects. More than 500 towers has been erected for generation of electricity. This is also a sight to watch.

**Char Bhinti Hutatma Smarak**

Built in the memory of Martyr's of 1857 freedom movement. Recently renewed.

**Dhom Dam**

Built in 1978 on Krishna river, 13.50 TMC Dhom Dam is very beautiful spot to visit. Hydroelectric Project of 2 Mw. 44 Km from Satara City ( 9 Km from Wai ). Boat Club facility available here, which can be viewed from Table Land of Pachgani. Aqua culture activities are being taken up in this dam.

**Gove**

A small village on the bank of Krishna river, around 16 km north to the Satara city, attract many devotees due to famous Koteshwar temple. The temple of Lord Shiva is too old and classic example of 16th century architecture. Most of the villagers are farmers and it is nice to see farming in Western state of Maharashtra here. Chhatrapathi Shivaji Maharaj Museum, Charbhinti or Hutatma Smarak, Natraj Temple, Shri Kshetra Mahuli, Pedhyancha Bhairoba, Kuraneshwar or Khinditla Ganapati, Dholya Ganapati, Phutaka Talav or Talyatla Ganapati, Jawaharlal Neharu Udyan and Koyana Dam,

Priti Sangam Karad, Mayani, Mayani Bird Sanctuary is located in the Satara district of Maharashtra state in India.

**Kaas Lake**

Kaas Lake is situated on Kaas Plateau. Kaas Plateau is at height of above 3500 feet and built in 1844. It is about 26 km away from Satara city and accessible by road. Built in 1875 the lake provides most supply of drinking water to the old city. This is also a famous picnic spot for the rainy season.

**Kanher Dam**

Built in 1986 on Venna river, 10.10 TMC Kanher Dam is very beautiful spot to visit. Hydroelectric Project of 4 Mw. 8 Km from Satara City on Satara-Medha road. One can enjoy very scenic view of this dam from Yevteshwar Hill.

**Karad - Priti Sangam**

Karad is situated on the confluence of Krishna and Koyana river. Also the Samadhi of Late Yeshvantrao Chavan (the then Dy. Prime Minister of India) is built on the banks of river Krishna near the confluence. Some of the well known places are Krishnamai Temple, high minarets. The ancient Buddhist caves in the hills of Aagashiva are near karad.

**Koyana Dam**

One of the largest Dam in the state built on Koyana river, completed in 1963 with capacity 98.78 TMC. Hydroelectric Project of 1920 MW. 98 Kms from Satara, 20 Kms from Patan. Very beautiful picnic spot. Nehru garden near the Dam is also good place to visit.

**Kuraneshwar**

Temple of Lord Ganesh and Lord Shiva, situated on Old Satara-Kolhapur road, 1 km away from Satara City. It is a famous historical temple of 'Swyambhu Ganesh', the 'Gram daivat' of Satara.

**Maha Ganapati Temple, Wai**

Wai (the Dakshin kashi of India) is situated just 33 kms away from Satara. It is famous for its temples and ghats. "Maha Ganpati Temple" is here which is worshipped by many holy men and women all over the state. It is the important Pilgrim and Cultural Centre of Maharashtra. The office of Marathi Encyclopedia (Vishwa Kosha) is here. There is a Dam across the Krishna River at Dhom just 9 KM away from Wai.

### **Masjid and Minars of Karad**

Masjid and Minars of Karad are the prominent and historical religious places. Famous Masjid of Karad built by Ibrahim Khan, Sultan Ali Adil Shah of Bijapur before 1580. Minars of height 32.3 meter can be viewed from several miles.

### **Nandgiri or Kalyangad Fort**

It is 3,537 feet above sea level, stands at the end of a spur of the Mahadev range and about 14 miles north-east of Satara. It is separated from the rest of the spur by a small gorge or Khind and stands on a lower hill than the Candan Vandan range close to its north-west. The fort has two gateways the one below the other connected by steps. The first gate faces north, the path turning abruptly as it is reached. Within is a hollow used formerly for stores. From the inside facing east is another cave pond called the Gavi also full of good water. The entrance to it is protected by a wall. This cave pond is very difficult of access, the way being thickly blocked with prickly pear. The second gateway of mortared stone leads out into the plateau, which is about two hundred yards high by one hundred broad with many ruined buildings, and four chief ponds inside the second gate.

### **Natraj Mandir**

Natraj Mandir is located in Satara City, which lies on the way from the highway to the Satara railway station; the temple has four entrances in the four directions.

### **Pateshwar Hills**

Pateswar a peaked hill rising above the rest of the range about seven miles south-east of Satara, has on its north-west face close to the junction of the villages of Deganv, Nigdi and Bharatganv and within the limits of Deganv a series of cave temples. From Deganv a path strikes to the south-east and winds up to a khind or gorge from which by steps in places it proceeds at a very gentle incline for about three quarters of a mile along the hill side till the temples are reached.

### **Sajjangad Fort**

It has been said that during Chhatrapati Shivaji's Period Raigad was the capital of Shivshahi while Sajjangad was the spiritual Capital of it. Sajjangad (Fort) is situated just 9 kms away from Satara city where Samarth Ramdas took 'Samadhi'. There are 750 steps to enter into this Fort. Sajjangad is 3000 feet above sea level. There are 2 lakes onto the fort. Samarth Ramdas inspired Chhatrapati Shivaji in his fight

for Swaraj. He was the spiritual teacher (guru) of Chhatrapati Shivaji. On the day of Das Navami people gather here and take part in festival.

### **Sangam Mahuli**

Confluence of Venna and Krishna River is the Sangam Mahuli. It is 5 kms from Satara district on Koregaon Road. Two famous Rivers Krishna and Veena flow from Satara District. Veena River is also referred as Venna Lake.

### **Shikhar Shinganapur Temple**

Very ancient temple of lord 'Shiva' on the hill called Shikhar Shinganapur is about 89 Km from Satara on Satara-Akluj road. Huge gathering of devotees on eve of 'Mahashivratri' took place here every year. It has many historical references about visit of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

### **Shri Bhavani Museum, Aundh**

Late Shrimant Bhavanrao alias Balasaheb Maharaj Pantpratinidhi (Raja of Aundh State) was a good artist and lover of art. He had a good collection many paintings, statuary, sculptured pots, weapons and holy books and many more. He wanted to give the benefit of his collection to the peoples; he established Shri Bhavani Museum and Library in 1938. It has rich collection of articles of sandalwood and ivory, Indian miniature paintings, Bengali/Western paintings, coeval paintings etc. Strong room consists of very valuable ornaments and diamond collection.

Museum has more than 8,000 articles and 16,000 books including 3500 holy books. Shrimant Balasaheb Maharaj studied the science of museum and constructed the present building with the help of foreign architects, considering natural light, ventilation and protection. Its great wonder to see the huge one man collection in such a rural area of the district. The scenic building of the museum situated on the slope of Aundh Hill, famous 'Yamai Mandir' is located at the top of hill with height approx. 800 ft. Aundh is 43 Kms from Satara.

### **Shri Chhatrapati Shivaji Museum**

Satara the erstwhile Capital of Maratha Kingdom has a rich heritage. It has been ruled by successors of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj till 1839. Museums and historical places are the main inspirations to the people. The ground stone of this museum was laid in 1966 and was completed in 1970. The Museum was inaugurated by the then Home Minister of India

late Y.B.Chavan, with blessings from Shrimant Chatrapati Sumitraraje Bhosale.

The museum mainly constructed to reveal the varied culture of 17th and 18th Century. The museum is divided into 2 sections, exhibition articles and Maratha art Gallery. The Exhibition articles are mainly displayed in 4 sections. They are Weapon Sections, Inscription section, Painting Section, Textile. The museum has rich collection of weapons, textiles and many more. Each article in this museum is so preserved and presented that, it tells you the real story of valor of Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, his successors and the Golden era of Maratha Empire.

#### **Shri Ram Mandir, Chaphal**

Chaphal is a town in the Satara district. It is situated just 35 kms from Satara. There is the famous temple of "God Rama". Samarth Ramdas found idols of Shri Ram in the river near Angapur and built the temple at Chaphal. The temple is built in marble and is good example of architecture.

#### **Siddhanath Temple, Mhaswad**

Mhaswad is a town in the Satara district. It is situated 80 Kms from Satara district. Temple of Lord 'Siddhanath' built in 12th Century. Idols of Siddhanath and Jogubai in the form of Shiva/Parvati are here. Annual 'Rathayatra' is main function is being celebrated with Lacks of devotees. The temple is worth to see.

#### **Thoseghar Waterfall**

This waterfall is situated 36 kms away from Satara. It is a pleasant sight to watch in Rainy season. The people visiting here walk down the slippery falls, and have a good time with the splashing waters. Many people from different walks of like gather here to enjoy it.

#### **Vajrai Waterfall, Bhambavli**

Vajrai Waterfall, Bhambavli is the tallest waterfall of India. The height of this waterfall is 1840 feet and it falls from a straight cliff. The water for waterfall comes from the river Urmodi. It is origin of Urmodi. The lush green mountain and the flowers in nearby flower valley please your sense. This waterfall is a perfect weekend destination for all age groups.

#### **Valmiki Table Land**

On the west side of the Valmiki Temple at a distance of 1 km. is the table land. This table land is 3259 to 3500 feet above sea level. It is 20 kms. in length and 5 to 7 kms. wide. It stretches on the western side up to Chiplun and on the southern side it touches Sangameshwar and

Devrukh. The view from the table land is fascinating. Upto the horizon you can see only black flat stone. From the southern side of the table land, the Chandoli Dam is visible, whereas on the northern side Koyna abhayaranya is seen. In the monsoon season the table land is enveloped with mist and fog. The area is bloomed with colorful flowers. But the climate in this region keeps varying in the monsoon season.

#### **Yamai Devi Temple, Aundh**

Aundh is a town in the Satara district. It is 30 kms away from Satara. It is famous for the Yamai Devi Temple and the Museum. This temple is oldest in the Aundh town. The sculptures and the carving on the temple are captivating.

#### **Yevateshwar Temple**

This temple is of Lord Shiva. It is very ancient and has historical references. On the day of 'Mahashivratri' and in 'Shravan' people visit this temple with great holy spirit. The ghat starts just from the Satara City and temple is situated 5 kms away and is at the height above 2500 feet above sea level. The lush green area from this temple to Kaas is fastly growing up as a Tourist Place.

#### **Yuvteshwar**

It is a small village on the plateau, situated 2 miles west of Satara. Yuvteshwar is 1100 feet above the plains thus one can expect this place too pleasantly and cool all times. The plateau is reached by a good bridal bath branching off from the tunnel at Satara or by the steps which climb straight up the hillsides.

#### **Mayani Bird Sanctuary**

Mayani is one of the most prominent bird sanctuaries from India! The bird sanctuary is globally reckoned for its gigantic range of species for migratory birds and local birds. According to 2005 census, there were more than 400 species of the birds over here. Mayani is located in the west India that is pretty near to Vaduj area of Satara district of Maharashtra state. Mayani is bestowed with phenomenal beauty and that is why is extensively toured by visitors, ornithologists belonging to all the corners of the globe. People come here several reasons, few for studying nature, few for passing leisure, few for bird-watching and so on; the ambience of the sanctuary is really great.

If you are a bird lover, then Mayani is not less than a heaven for you. There are more than 400 different species of birds in Mayani that is quite

larger to any other bird sanctuary in India. Whether be migratory birds like Brahminy Ducks, Coot, Common Spoon bills, Painted storks, Black Ibis, or other birds like the Stork, Northern Shoveler, and Kingfisher; you get them in plenty. Flamingoes that are water birds can also be located on the banks of Mayani. Presence of Flamingoes means plenty of insects, fishes and crabs as they are its prime foods.

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