



# 48 hours in Hyderabad

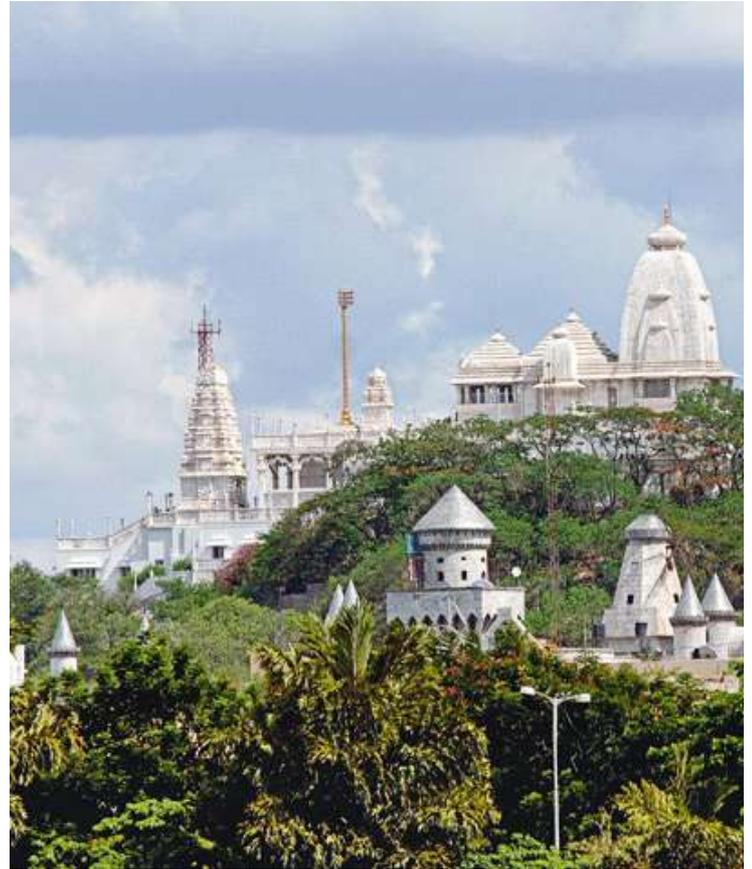
Telangana's capital is an alluring blend of the old and the new.

By **Neeharika Satyavada**

Long known as the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, Hyderabad, today, is probably better divided as the twin cities of Hyderabad and Cyberabad, the old and the new. One steeped in history and Islamic influence, the other a centre for dessert cafes and everything swanky and hip to cater to the burgeoning IT population. Home to one of the best international airports in the country, Hyderabad could well be on your itinerary as your next layover or that short business trip. So, here is a low down on what you could do if you find yourself in the city of pearls for 48 hours.

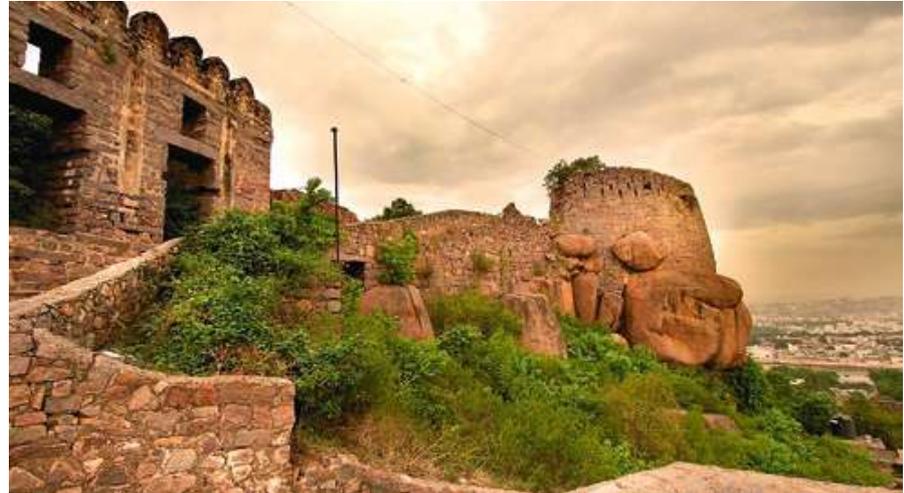
## Eat

If you want to eat like a local in Hyderabad, then it isn't just about the biryani or the haleem, you start your day with an Irani chai and a piece of Osmania Biscuits at Nimrah Cafe. Located bang opposite the Charminar, this landmark is the starting point for many a walk in the old city of Hyderabad, be it a photo walk or a food





CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: Golkonda Fort; the iconic Charminar; and the Birla Mandir



walk. Just as iconic are Paradise and Pista House – ‘world famous in Hyderabad’ as one would put it – the former famous for biryani and the latter for haleem. The city also boasts of eateries that grew from just a *bandi* (handcart) to full-fledged multi-storeyed cafes and restaurants. Amongst these are the Gokul Chaat Bhandar and Ram ki Bandi, both worth a visit, for their chaats and dosas. And if you are a vegetarian in Hyderabad, against popular belief, you needn’t despair. For you have an entire street that comes alive every evening and serves up everything from a dabeli or a vada pav to a fruit flavoured soda or a malai kulfi. But Sindhi Colony is such a hit among the youngsters for street food that within hours of opening most of these joints sell out. So be there by five any evening, if you want to try out everything.

### See

See the iconic Charminar by the evening lights of the fruit sellers, or on an early Sunday morning when it is at its atmospheric best, with the Jummaat Bazaar that pop ups en route. The four-hundred-and-twenty-six-year-old Charminar is a striking structure of balustrades and balconies, not just minarets and arches. One of the four minarets is open to public and one can take in the entire old city, the heart of Hyderabad from its balconies. Though they don’t rank high on

the typical tourist checklist, the Qutb Shahi Tombs are yet another must visit. Some of the areas of this expansive complex are undergoing restoration, in the hopes of bringing this mausoleum onto the coveted list of UNESCO Heritage Sites. There is also the Golkonda Fort, believed to be the strongest of the Deccan Forts and when one has had enough of ruins and tombs, then a visit to the Chowmahalla Palace is sure to refresh you with a peek into the erstwhile good life of the Nizams of Hyderabad.

### Shop

Traditional bazaars deliver a shopping experience that is very uniquely their own and nothing gives you the feel of a city like these. And when you say Hyderabad, it is the Laad Bazaar that immediately comes to mind. So much so that, even Ms. Ivanka Trump was whisked away to this two-kilometre stretch dedicated to bangles in the old city on her recent visit here for the Global Entrepreneurship Summit. While there, also check out the *ittars* or *attars* as they are called here. A legacy left behind by the Mughals, these strong scented natural perfumes aren’t just traditional fragrances but also double up as therapeutic aroma oils. As you leave behind the old and head to the new, stop by at Abids to shop up for Bidriware from the Government run Lepakashi or any of the local Bidri stores next to it. This art of



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Laad Bazaar is famous for bangles; the Hyderabad biryani, and the legendary Osmania biscuits



of the old city, happens every Sunday from 7:30 am to 9 am. There are four walks to choose from, to explore the architectural and historical splendour of the city, but the walk from Charminar to Chowmahalla Palace remains the most popular. The Sky Show at Birla Planetarium is popular across quite a few of the bigger cities in India, but here in Hyderabad where it is located, on one of the more popular hillocks of the City, the Naubat Pahad, it is worth a visit. Not just for the sweeping views of the Hussain Sagar and the pristine white Birla Mandir that it offers but also for its Science Museum. The interactive science section here at the Museum has been engaging children and adults alike in exploring the basic laws of Physics in a fun way for over 27 years now. And who hasn't seen pictures of the famous Buddha Statue of Hyderabad, believed to be the tallest monolith of the Gautama Buddha. Take an evening boat ride in the Hussain Sagar to the Buddha. This white granite statue was consecrated by the Dalai Lama himself.

silver inlay in black metal lives on today in the neighbouring town of Bidar. Once in the newer part of the city, head to Shilparam, the art and craft bazaar next to Hitech City. Set in a style that aims to recreate an artisan village complete with thatched roof hutments, it brings together handicrafts from across the Telugu states of Telangana and Hyderabad. But, how can one leave the city of pearls without some pearls! Shop at Sri Jagdamba Pearls if you are on a budget and if in the mood to splurge, head to Mangatrai, both traders have been around in the city for only slightly less than a century.

**Do**  
Go on a Heritage Walk. Conducted by the Telangana Tourism Department, this guided walk through the lanes

**Take Back**

The Fruit Biscuits from Karachi Bakery in their yellow boxes are now recognised anywhere to be Hyderabad. So if you still want to take back biscuits from the bakeries of Hyderabad, why not try the Osmania Biscuits from Subhan Bakery this time around.



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