


KAPIL HOMES
 ATCHUTAPURAM

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travelogue

Gateway to spiritual getaway

The temple town of Alampur in the Mahabubnagar district, Telangana, is popular for its Jogulamba Temple, where the Mother Goddess takes her "Rudra Roopam". However, there is more to this sleepy little town that is only a few hours away from Hyderabad

NEEHARIKA SATYAVADA

Believed to be the western gateway to Srisailem, which is one of the important pilgrimage centres for Shaivites in the country, Alampur has more to it than the famous Ashtadasa Shakti Peetham, Jogulamba Temple.

Tucked away, just around the corner from the main town, is a cluster of 24 temples, the Papanasi Group of Temples, the majority of which are shrines dedicated to Lord Shiva housing Lingas in numerous forms. The locals say that there are Shiva Lingas everywhere in and around the area waiting to be found. Little wonder then Alampur has earned the moniker "Dakshina Kasi" implying

it is South India's own Kasi, the abode of Lord Shiva and the Hindus' City of Moksha.

Alampur also goes by the name of



Sangameswara Temple



Carvings in the Navabramha Temple Complex

Navabramha Theertham. Every temple here seems to somehow signify the importance of the holy confluence of the rivers Krishna and Tungabhadra. To begin with the most prominent one, the Navabramha Temple Complex together with "theertham" meaning holy water give the town this name. Also here is this temple that comes next in terms of popularity but is just as beautiful if not more striking - standing stoically in its solitude - the Sangameswara Temple. Yet another name hinting at the holy confluence or Sangam that only leaves us to wonder just how important were these rivers once spiritually!

The Sangameswara Temple was moved stone by stone from the

banks of the river to where it is now, during the construction of the Srisailem Dam in the 1970s.

The Navabramha Temple complex is home to Jogulamba and the Navabramhas, the nine forms of Lord Shiva manifest here. Legend has it that the 6th-century saint, Rasa Siddha had created a tantric Siddha Rasarnavam here at the Navabramha temples built by the then Chalukya King Pulakesi II, using which he could create gold from mercury using the herbs after which the nine deities here are named. While the Jogulamba Temple is one of the 18 main Shakti Peetams listed by Adi Shankaracharya, here the goddess takes the "Rudra Roopam" or the form of fury, which is why there is a moat around the temple. They say that it cools the atmosphere and makes it easy for us mere mortals to pray to this 'Mother of Yogis'.

Both the principal deities of this temple come power packed with legends and beliefs! Also, this temple complex has clearly witnessed a lot of mankind's history for within the original walls amidst all the temples sits a dargah speaking volumes of the time that this temple was invaded by the Bahamani sultans in the 14th century.

Fact File: Alampur is around 215 km from Hyderabad and a three-hour drive along the Hyderabad-Bangalore Highway gets you there. To save on time, plan your day trip so that you are not stuck in the city traffic during peak hours.

LOOK OUT



Chocolaty Trails

Antwerp, Ghent, Brussels all stand out as one of the world's most chocolaty destinations. The cities have recently added some extensions to provide a memorable time in Flanders.

Chocolate demos, workshops & tastings

Carolien Krijnen, a chocolate enthusiast, opened her own professional chocolate studio exclusively designed for tasting, workshops and chocolaty fun in a cozy Sint-Andries quarter in Antwerp. After a cup of coffee and a brief explanation of working around with chocolate, visitors can create their own chocolate and practice for 2-2.5 hours.

Chocovibes

It is another organiser that has initiated tastings and workshops in the chocolate bar Quetzal in the city centre. During the tasting session, visitors can taste different chocolate blends with different chocolate percentages while finding out more about the history of chocolate in the different countries producing the chocolate.

Choco Story

Choco Story, the chocolate museum of Bruges conducts workshops for all kinds of audiences. There are specialised workshops for kids between 9-12 year olds where they learn to draw and colour using chocolates.

TRAVEL BUZZ

FOR A TASTY RIDE

San Francisco is filled with great food and the restaurants that serve them. Some dining experiences are more unique than others. Here are five unique places to eat that offer plenty of atmosphere, from the funky to the fantastic.

Forbes Island

This restaurant is on an island and you'll even be picked up on a

little boat for a quick jaunt to the island. The main dining room is underwater and there are a few port-holes where you can see the water.

Farallon

The Jellyfish Lounge is a playfully designed place to come by for happy hour and oysters from the raw bar, while the dining room is high on drama, but still elegant. The

menu highlights seafood and also features the best of what's in season.

Lazy Bear

Lazy Bear sells tickets to their dinner, much like a concert. Each month, tickets for two seated diners per night go on sale and are usually scooped up quickly. Diners don't know what they'll be eating until they arrive as the menu changes by meal.

Opaque

Dining in the dark is literal at Opaque. Diners eat in the pitch black, totally abandoning one of their five senses so they can focus more on the sounds, smells, tastes and feels of the experience. Servers at Opaque are visually impaired or blind and have been trained to serve these meals in complete darkness.

