

Bhimashankar Temple

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About Bhimashankar Temple

- It is an ancient Hindu shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva.
- Location: It is located in the Sahyadri hills in the Pune District of Maharashtra.
- It is considered one of the 12 holy Jyotirlinga shrines in India.
- In recent times Bhimashankar has gained tremendous significance since it was declared as “Wildlife Sanctuary”. This sanctuary is a part of the Western Ghats.
- Bhimashankar is the source of the river Bhima.
- History:
 - It was built around the 13th century. It is a testament to the skills of the Vishwakarma sculptors.
 - Structures such as the shikhara (spires) were added by Maratha empire statesman, Nana Phadnavis, in the 18th century.

- The Maratha ruler, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, is also believed to have facilitated worship here through his endowments.
- Architecture:
 - It is a composite of old and new structures in the Nagara style of architecture.
 - The temple features huge court spaces, intricate carvings on walls, and colossal pillars.
 - The sanctum of the temple, called Garbhagriha, has been constructed at a lower level inside which the sacred Jyotirlinga is present.
 - The Swayambhoo or self-emanated Shiv Linga is precisely in the center of the floor of the Sanctum Sanctorum.
 - The massive pillars and doorframes of the temple are awash with exquisite mythological carvings of divine figures and holy symbols.
 - The temple also houses an ancient shrine of Lord Shani which is considered very auspicious by the devotees.
 - The statue of Nandi, the revered bull who's the vehicle of Shiva, is present right at the entrance of the temple.

What are Jyotirlingas?

- A Jyotirlinga is a shrine where Lord Shiva is worshipped in the form of a Jyotirlingam.
- There are currently 12 main Jyotirlingas in India.
- The 12 Jyotirlinga temples in India take the name of the presiding deity. Each considered a different manifestation of Lord Shiva.
- 12 Jyotirlingas in India are:
 - Somnath Jyotirlinga in Gir, Gujarat
 - Mallikarjuna Jyotirlinga in Srisailem, Andhra Pradesh
 - Mahakaleshwar Jyotirlinga in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh
 - Omkareshwar Jyotirlinga in Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh
 - Baidyanath Jyotirlinga in Deogarh, Jharkhand
 - Bhimashankar Jyotirlinga in Maharashtra
 - Ramanathaswamy Jyotirlinga in Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu
 - Nageshwar Jyotirlinga in Dwarka, Gujarat
 - Kashi Vishwanath Jyotirlinga in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh
 - Trimbakeshwar Jyotirlinga in Nashik, Maharashtra
 - Kedarnath Jyotirlinga in Rudrapur, Uttarakhand
 - Ghreshneshwar Jyotirlinga in Aurangabad, Maharashtra

Q1) What is the Nagara style of architecture?

Nagara is the style of temple architecture which became popular in Northern India. It is common here to build an entire temple on a stone platform with steps leading up to it. Unlike in south India, it doesn't usually have elaborate boundary walls or gateways. Earlier temples had only one shikhara (tower), but in the later periods, multiple shikharas came. The garbhagriha is always located directly under the tallest tower.

Source: [36 held after violent clash at Bhimashankar temple](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/bhimashankar-temple/>

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