Chatrapati Shivaji Statue - India - Pune



Located in the city of Pune in India's Maharashtra state, this magnificent monument statue is dedicated to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj the founder of the Maratha Empire and one of the greatest warrior leaders in Indian history. Revered throughout India as a symbol of courage, justice, and the struggle for freedom, Shivaji Maharaj is an indispensable source of identity and pride not only for the people of Maharashtra but for the entire Indian nation. Rising at the heart of the city, this monument has become a must-visit stop for history enthusiasts and tourists exploring the region.

Construction and History of the Statue

The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue in Pune was designed and crafted by the renowned Indian sculptor Nanasaheb Karmarkar. The construction process went down in history as one of the greatest engineering achievements of its time; the statue was cast as a single piece on the night of June 1, 1928, at Mazgaon Docks by a team of 175 workers pouring molten bronze simultaneously marking the first large-scale single-piece bronze casting ever carried out in India. Transporting the approximately 16-ton statue from Mumbai to Pune was itself an epic undertaking; as it passed through the tunnel at Khandala, the head of the statue came within only a few centimeters of the tunnel ceiling, traffic was halted in both directions, and the journey was completed using a specially designed wagon. The statue was ceremonially unveiled on June 16, 1928, by the then Governor of Bombay, Sir Leslie Wilson. More recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled another Shivaji Maharaj statue on the grounds of the Pune Municipal Corporation on March 6, 2022 crafted from 1,850 kg of gunmetal and standing approximately 2.9 meters tall.

Features and Artistic Details of the Statue

The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj statue consists of a magnificent bronze figure depicted on horseback. This design portrays Shivaji Maharaj in a dynamic, powerful, and commanding stance, immortalizing him as a warrior leader. The figure is depicted in traditional Maratha battle attire, with his sword raised aloft. The dynamic posture of the horse and Shivaji Maharaj's determined gaze lend the work both artistic power and historical weight. The statue's pedestal bears inscriptions relating to Shivaji Maharaj's name and identity. The bronze equestrian statue presents a remarkably striking appearance right at the heart of the city's vibrant and bustling fabric.

The Surrounding Area

The statue is located in the Wadgaonsheri district of Pune, directly opposite the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Park. This area is one of the city's most lively and visitor-friendly spots, having transformed into a true open-air gathering place surrounded by green spaces, parks, and modern structures. The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Park, situated just beside the statue, allows visitors to soak in the historic atmosphere at their leisure. The cafes and shopping areas in the vicinity make a visit to the monument an even more enjoyable experience for both locals and tourists alike. Beyond this monument, the city of Pune with landmarks such as the Aga Khan Palace, Shaniwarwada Fort, and the Gandhi National Memorial stands as one of Maharashtra's most significant cultural destinations.

A Contested Legacy

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj went down in history as a legendary leader who, with a force of just a few thousand men, established an independent Maratha state against the great powers of his era most notably the Mughal Empire forever altering the course of South Asian history. However, his legacy is at times interpreted in vastly different ways by various communities and political circles, a fact that continues to make his historical identity a subject of debate to this day. Nevertheless, for the people of Pune and Maharashtra, Shivaji Maharaj is an uncontested symbol of pride, identity, and resistance. The area surrounding the statue transforms into a major gathering point during Shivaji Jayanti celebrations marking the warrior king's birthday, drawing tens of thousands of people together.

Visitor Information

The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Statue is located in the Wadgaonsheri district of Pune, in India's Maharashtra state, directly opposite the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Park. It is approximately 10 kilometers from Pune city center and around 8 kilometers from Pune International Airport. As the statue is located outdoors, it can be visited free of charge in any season; however, the winter and spring months stand out as the most suitable periods for exploring Pune. Other noteworthy sites in the city include Shaniwarwada Fort, Aga Khan Palace, and Parvati Hill.

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