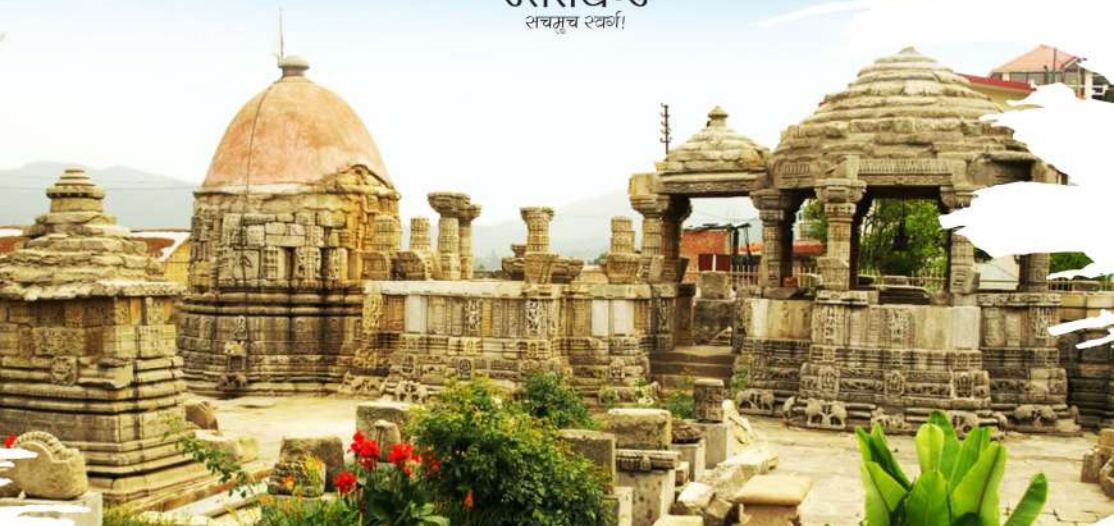




उत्तराखण्ड
सचमुच स्वर्ग!



HERITAGE SITES OF
Champawat



Baleshwar Temple

Located in Champawat city, three temples constitute Baleshwar Group of Temples Complex viz Baleshwar, Ratneshwar and Champawati Durga Temple. Baleshwar Group of Temples is a centrally protected heritage monument under ASI. These temples are believed to have been constructed between 10th & 14th century AD under the Chand Dynasty rule of Kumaon region, when Champawat was the capital of their kingdom. Majority of the Baleshwar Temple is devoted to Shiva, and it has shivlings in addition to other finely detailed stone sculptures of Hindu gods and goddesses. Mahashivratri is observed here with much fanfare.



Guru Gorakhnath Temple

Gorakhnath Dham is 40 kms from Champawat. This temple has uniquely distinct beliefs and rituals. Devotees have faith that, a "Dhuni" a "perpetual holy fire" burns here since satyuga. Gorakhnath, is considered as a protector of the revered cows in the area. First produce be it milk or local crops is first offered in the Dham. Every request of the devotee visiting this Dham is thought to be granted. People in the area believe that childless couples who spend the night at the temple are blessed with a child.



Golu Dev Temple

Golu Devta Temple is located 4 km from Champawat. Also called Gwal, Goril, or Goll Devta he is revered as a God of Justice, especially in the entire Kumaon region. According to folklore, Golu Devta was a prince born in Champawat, who was an incarnation of Gaur Bhairav (Shiva), known for his unwavering commitment to justice and fair play. Golu Devta of Kumaon is known for hearing devotees' prayers through letters hung at the temple and delivering justice. When their wishes are fulfilled, devotees offer a bell to the deity.



Nagnath Temple

Nagnath Temple is located next to the Champawat tehsil in Champawat. This temple is devoted to Lord Shiva, the serpent (means Nag) wearing Hindu deity.

Nagnath temple is the oldest Shiva temple in the region of Champawat. According to popular local belief, the famed Hindu sage Guru Gorakhnath and his followers established the Nagnath Temple in 10th century. The temple is renowned for its unique stone architecture, the jyotirlinga and intricately carved Kumaoni style architecture wooden doorway from the 18th century.



Meetha Reetha Sahib Gurdwara

Gurdwara Meetha Reetha Sahib is located at 72 km from Champawat. Reetha Sahib was built in 1960, based on the belief of Sikh devotees that Guru Nanak Dev Ji sought shelter beneath a reetha (soapnut) tree nearby, which later produced an extremely rare sweet reetha (its usually bitter). Meetha reetha is still served as prasad at the gurdwara, which is the reason for its unique name. On the day of Vaisakhi Purnima (Sikhs' Holy Day), Reetha Sahib hosts a fair attended by devotees from around the globe.

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Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati

Advaita Ashrama is located 20 km from Champawat, surrounded by lush forest cover with a picturesque view of Himalayas.

Mayavati Ashram was established in 1899 by pupils of Swami Vivekananda in order to teach, practise, and disseminate the Advaita philosophy. Swami Vivekananda stayed here for a fortnight, sanctifying the space. Mayavati Ashram attracts travellers from around the world seeking spiritual enlightenment. Advaita Ashram has a large library, publishing company, guest accommodation, meditation rooms, and lecture halls.



Vivekananda Ashram

Vivekananda Ashram is situated next to the beautiful natural lake, Shyاملatal - 58 km from Champawat. Vivekananda Ashram also called Shyاملatal Ashram was established in 1915 by Swami Virajananda, an illustrious pupil of Swami Vivekananda who travelled extensively in the region to promote the objectives and philosophy of Swami Vivekananda. The Ashram was founded as a spiritual retreat and meditation centre to promote and practice Swami Vivekananda's hindu philosophy and spirituality while organising welfare activities.



Ketwali Chabutara

As the name suggests, this is a square platform made of stone. With a length of 2.75m and 0.83m high, this platform is termed as Chomra or Chabutara by the locals. Similar type of architectures are found in the entire middle Himalayan region. Basis the evidence available, this platform used to be part of a larger architecture and most likely there used to be a grand canopy over it. While the actual usage of such platforms is unclear, there is a local belief that at this place the king would sit and hold court of justice.

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Rajbunga Fort

Rajbunga Fort is located in Champawat tehsil, and still resides the tehsil of Champawat. Rajbunga fort is an oval-shaped structure erected on a high mound, encircled by sturdy walls that range in height from 4 to 7 metres, and it offers unequivocal proof that the area formerly belonged to a formidable kingdom. Rajbunga Fort is considered to have been constructed by Raja SomChand at the advent of the Chand Dynasty in the 8th century. The remains of Rajbunga fort still contain traditional clay, pipes, naulas, and canals that point to a thriving city.



Naula or Spring in Baleshwar

Naula Or Covered Spring Attached Of The Baleshwar Temple is situated in the Baleshwar Mahadev Temple Complex in Champawat. Baleshwar Naula is a ASI protected heritage site. Baleshwar Naula was most likely constructed in the year 12th Century. This ancient naula is located towards the southern end entrance of Baleshwar Temple. Baleshwar Naula is a square shaped stone structure built in a depression to collect water. The Naula's walls are decorated with exquisite stone carvings and sculptures. Water of this naula is still offered to the Shivalinga inside the temple complex of Baleshwar.



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Banasur Fort

Banasur fort in Lohaghat of Champawat district echoes the architectural excellence from the medieval times. This place finds place in the Hindu scriptures as the residence of renowned king Banasura. According to the scriptures a fierce battle between Lord Krishna and Banasura is believed to have been fought here. Built on top of a hill and looking into the lush green valley of Kali Kumaon, the fort is located about 7 kms from Lohaghat on the Lohaghat-Devidhura road.



Ek Hathiya Naula

Ek Hathiya Ka Naula roughly translating to 'water reservoir of a one-handed man' is located at about 5 km from Champawat. The reservoir displays excellent carvings on the stone structure. This reservoir is famous because of the legend of a hand carved out of stone.

The locals believe that the entire structure was shaped by a single-handed craftsman in one night. This magnificent stone work was created during the era of Chand dynasty by Jagannath Mistry with the help of his daughter Kasturi. The carvings in Naula depict various scenes of folk life, dancers, instrumentalists, singers and working women.

Another speciality of this unique artifact of Kumaon is that it has been constructed only with stones without the use of mortar.



Panchayatana Shiv Temple

Panchayatana Shiv Temple is located in village Chaukuni Bora located approx. 8 km from Champawat. The Temple honours the Hindu deity Shiva, was constructed using the traditional panchayatana style (one larger shrine surrounded by four smaller subsidiary shrines). A holy shivling is located in the primary shrine of the temple. Evidence indicates, the temple was constructed in 12th century during the reign of Chand Dynasty. Stone carvings and sculptures of Hindu deities, animals and other relevant patterns decorate the temple's stonewalls. Panchayatana Shiv temple is a protected archaeological monument under Government of Uttarakhand.



Maneshwar Shiv Temple

Maneshwar Shiv Temple is an ancient Shiva temple located 7 km from Champawat on route to Lohaghat. King Nirbhaychand of the Chand Dynasty constructed the Maneshwar Temple. It is believed that the Pandavas erected a Shivling of Lord Shiva here during their exile, after Arjuna fired an arrow from his Gandiva bow to produce a water stream for a ritual. The water stream still exists in the temple and is known as Guptnuala; it is revered by locals. During the annual Ekadashi fair, thousands of people travel to the Maneshwar temple to offer prayers. fair.

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