

A report on shirdi tourism essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Shirdi

Shirdi is a small town located in the Ahmednagar district in the western Indian state of Maharashtra and is a religious destination of universal appeal - Shirdi is perhaps one of those revered destinations that attracts devotees across all religions.

Significance

Unlike other holy cities in India that can trace their origins to thousands of years back, some cities were known places of religious importance as early as the pre Christian era, Shirdi's rise to reverence and as a religious destination is quite recent.

Shirdi has been home to Shri Sai Baba, one of India's most revered saints. It is believed that Shri Sai Baba lived and gained spiritual awakening in Shirdi. Some devotees believe that he was an incarnation of Lord Shiva or Lord Dattatreya. His teachings combined the religious teachings of Hinduism and Islam and thousands of devotees converge on Shirdi each year to seek his blessings.

Attractions

The Sai Baba Temple: The Sai Baba temple is the principal attraction in Shirdi and is thronged by thousands of devotees each year, irrespective of religion, caste and creed. The temple, built to commemorate Sai Baba, is built at the spot where Sai Baba is said to have taken his Samadhi.

The temple is professionally managed by the Shri Sai Baba Sansthan and devotees can offer puja services throughout the day and can also see the aarti ritual which happens five times every day. The most calming and

spiritually awakening ritual is the 'Kakad Aarti' that happens every morning with the opening of the temple. The penultimate aarti ritual is called the 'Shej Aarti' and signals the end of the day. The temple remains open overnight only on Gurupoornima, Dassera and Ramnavami.

The temple also has a massive hall that can accommodate around 600 visitors. Within the mandir one can also find a personal museum of Sai Baba that showcases the things that Sai Baba used in his lifetime.

Samadhi Mandir: This is another, smaller shrine that marks the exact spot of Sai Baba's Samadhi that is built with white marble. The Samadhi is enclosed with decorated marble railings and is watched over by a statue of Sai Baba carved from white Italian marble.

Dwarkamai: History records that Sai Baba left Shirdi for some years but eventually returned to Shirdi with a marriage procession and stayed at Dwarkamai, a mosque situated on the right of the entrance to the Samadhi mandir. The main attraction of Dwarkamai is the oil painting of Sai Baba sitting in a carved wooden shrine.

How to Reach

Shirdi is well connected by rail and road to the rest of India. The nearest airport is at Nasik, 75 km away. Shirdi is also slated to have its own airport by 2012. Shirdi also has a rail station and is connected by rail to other cities in India. A dedicated train service is available from Mumbai. Shirdi, given its religious importance, is also well connected by road with the other cities in India.