



Kuleshwar Mahadev Temple: Built at the holy confluence of the Pairi, Mahanadi and Sondur rivers this temple too is constructed on a Jagati. It is interesting to know that the height of the platform is 17ft and the shape is octagonal instead of rectangular. An epitome of architectural brilliance, the temple has been built in such a way so as to avoid harm from flooding by the rivers. The Kuleshwar Mahadev Temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and flaunts a sanctum and 26ft long Mandapa.

Ramchandra Temple: Another marvel of brick architecture is the Ramchandra Temple. What will amaze you here is that the idols installed are made from bricks. Built around 400 years back, the temple has many pillars that have life size statues. Like the Rajivlochan Temple this temple too flaunts artistically crafted idols of Ganga and Yamuna. The temple is divided into four parts, namely - Mahamandapa, Antraal, Garbha Griha and Pradakshinapath. Without visiting the Ramchandra Temple, the holy tour to Rajim is never complete.

Pancheshwar Mahadev Temple: Similar to the Ramchandra Temple, this temple too is made from bricks. Situated on the banks of the river, it has its own antique charm.

Rajim Telin Temple: Drawing similarities to Pancheshwar and Bhuteshwar Temples, this temple too flaunts the same architectural style. Located behind the Rajeshwar and Daneshwar Temples, the Rajim Telin Temple is another symbol of architectural brilliance.

Bhuteshwar Mahadev Temple: Crafted in ancient 'Viman Nagar' style, the Bhuteshwar Temple was built following the 'Kalchuri Kaleen' Vaastu tradition. Located next to the Pancheshwar Temple on the banks of the river, it also boasts of a Mandapa, Antraal and Garbha Griha.

Jaggannath Temple: A must see for the devotees on a holy tour, the Jaggannath Temple is located near the Narasimha Temple. The Jaggannath Temple too stands on a huge platform and is complete with the Mandapa, Antraal, Garbha Griha and Pradakshinapath.

Someshwar Mahadev Temple: Located away from the main town, this temple stands out due to its different architectural style that seems to be quite modern as compared to the other temples here. The ancient sculptures in the Mahamandapa are a reminder of the style used in the Rajivlochan Temple. It is equally beautiful and strikingly different.

True to its title, Rajim is undoubtedly the 'Town of Temples' and the crown of sanctity and purity rests proudly on its head. Gifted with God's own treasures and brilliant architectural marvels, Rajim is definitely worth a visit.

Accommodation: The PWD shelters and the Tourism Board's resort offer comfort and care to tourists. For those who want a more luxurious stay, Raipur has many hotels that can be booked easily.

How to reach:

By Air: Raipur is the nearest (45kms) airport well connected to Mumbai, Delhi, Nagpur, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Bengaluru, Vishakhapatnam and Chennai.

By Rail: Raipur is the nearest railway station on the Bombay - Howrah main line.

By Road: Rajim's bus and taxi services are available. These are well-connected to Raipur and Mahasamund.

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Rajim



Rajim

Located near the holy confluence of three rivers Mahanadi (Chitrotpala), Pauri and Sondur, Rajim is called the 'Mandiron Ki Nagri' or 'Town of Temples'. This confluence is popularly known as the 'Treveni Sangam', and gives Rajim the title of being the 'Prayag' of Chhattisgarh. Undoubtedly, the Mahanadi is the Ganges of Chhattisgarh.

A land of rich cultural heritage, Rajim has always been a spiritual and holy place that still retains its traditional touch. A blend of invaluable cultural sanctity, art and purity, Rajim not only allures devotees, but rouses the interest of historians, archeologists and art lovers. Here, it is believed that the holy 'Prayag' has the power to wash away all sins and the one who bathes in the pure waters achieves peace and enlightenment.

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Biggest Mahashivratri Festival: The Town of Temples begins its celebrations for the longest and best Mahashivratri festival ever celebrated from 'Magh Maas Pournima' till the Mahashivratri in 'Fagun Maas' (Krushnapaksha- Triyodashi). Millions of devotees flock together during this festival for the holy dip or Sneha-Sangam, later moving on to worship God Rajivlochan and Kuleshwar Mahadev. With pure hearts and a deep rooted love for the almighty, devotees complete the 'Jaggannathpuri Yatra' by visiting Rajim. They believe that their journey with God isn't complete until they visit the sacrosanct town of Rajim.

Temples of Rajim: A beautiful reflection of the Hindu culture and religious traditions, the temples of Rajim are historically and archeologically significant. The below described temples are a must see for every historian and travel enthusiast.

•Western Region: Kuleshwar and Pancheshwar (9th century), and Bhuteshwar Mahadev (14th Century) Temples. •Middle Region: Rajivlochan (7th century), Vaman, Varah, Narsimha, Badrinath, Jaggannath, Rajeshwar, Daneshwar and Rajim Telin Temple •Eastern Region: Ramchandra Temple (8th century). •Northern Region: Someshwar Mahadev Temple.

Rajivlochan Temple: Dedicated to Lord Vishnu, the Rajivlochan Temple is an example of architectural brilliance. Crafted in a rectangular shape, the temple has been built according to Vaastu. The temple is divided into the 'Mahamandapa' (shelter), Antraal (passage), Garbha-Griha (God's residence), and Pradakshinapath.

Grand Entrance: Strikingly beautiful, the western entrance of the temple is heavily carved. The entrance forms two chambers, both equally well-sculpted. Acrobatic figures entwined in creepers and different mudras carved with intense passion decorate the pillars of the entrance chambers. The center of the door lintel flaunts a breathtaking image of 'Sheshashai Vishnu'. It is a masterpiece in its own way as its



features point to the Gupta craftsmanship. One corner of the inner chamber displays a Buddha image too.

The Mahamandapa (Shelter): You will be amazed to know that construction of the Mandapa was a unique feature of architecture that belonged to the Maha-Kosala region. Oblong in shape, like the Mandapa of the Laxman Temple at Sirpur, the Rajiv Lochan Temple is built according to vaastu and divided into four forms believed to be best visions of heart. There are paintings on the Mahamandapa Dwara, depicting expressions and emotions of the idols. Like the famous Laxman Temple, this temple too is built on a platform called the Jagati. The biggest attractions of the temple are its majestically crafted pillars in the Mandapa. Supported by twelve pillars, it has two rows of six pillars each, and twelve pilasters - six on either side. Excellent craftsmanship will sweep you off your feet as you see the different statues on pilasters.

Starting from the south-west, on the southern wall is a male figure with a dagger at his waist. The figure has a bow and arrows on his shoulders. It is believed that this could be the statue of Lord Rama. Other statues in succession include a female standing on a lion pedestal with two flying kinnars on top, and an unusual couple where the female is taller than the accompanying male. Next in line are wonderfully rendered sculptures like that of Goddess Ganga standing over a 'Makara', accompanied with an attendant who is holding an umbrella. Then comes the statue of Narasimha, Dvarpala and on the Northern side is Varaha in incarnation. The statue of Yamuna standing over a tortoise is remarkable. There's an image of Goddess Durga exuding power with eight hands, mounted over a ferocious lion. Last in line is a statue of a male holding a dagger at his waist and riding a horse chariot of five horses, locals believe it could be Lord Surya. Such is the artistic mystery that shrouds this temple, making it a discovery of sorts.

Antraal (Passage): Connecting the Garbha Griha and the Mandapa is the passage. The Antraal also flaunts beautiful sculptures on the pillars. As you enter, the image of Kalpalata Abhikalpa on the first pillar will grab your attention. The second pillar flaunts sculptures with different emotions, mudras and attractive features. The third pillar is decorated with half-human and half-snake like figures that are a unique expression of the artist's imagination. On the sanctum door is a marvelous image of Lord Vishnu which proves that the temple is dedicated to him.

Garbha Griha (Sanctum): The main deity of the temple resides in the sanctum. Sculpted entirely in black stone, this idol of Lord Vishnu has four arms, holding a Shell, Chakra, Padma and Gada. This sacrosanct idol is worshiped as Lord Rajiv Lochan and radiates immense warmth.

Importance of the Rajiv Lochan Temple: The temple is of mythological importance and is the centre of all Hindu beliefs. Lord Jaggannath himself comes here to worship Lord Vishnu. With devotion and faith in their hearts, people come here to seek blessings and believe that all their wishes come true.

Rajeshwar Temple: Located just opposite the western entrance of the Rajivlochan Temple is the Rajeshwar Temple. Like most temples of Chhattisgarh, this temple too is constructed over a jagati which is 2 feet 8 inches high. It constitutes the Mandapa, Antraal and the Garbha Griha.

Daneshwar Temple: Located on the south of the Rajeshwar Temple, the Daneshwar Temple is a symbol of the artists love for symmetry as it is also built on a jagati that is 2 feet 8 inches high. It differentiates from the other temples with its Mandapa, Antraal, Nandi-Mandapa and Garbha Griha. The special arrangement of the Nandi-Mandapa is not seen in any other temple at Rajim and is extremely unique in nature.