Our City, The City of Palaces, and much more …

140 Kms from Bangalore lies the abode of untold grandeur and glory. Mysore, the capital city of the Wodeyars has always enchanted its admirers with its quaint charm, rich heritage, magnificent palaces, beautifully laid-out gardens, imposing buildings, broad shady avenues and sacred temples. There’s an old world charm about the city that reaches out and leaves no one untouched. Mysore or Mahishur as it was called then, traces its history back to the mythical past, when Goddess Chamundeshwari of Chamundi Hills killed the wicked buffalo-headed demon, Mahishasura. Mysore Dasara is the celebration of this victory of good over evil. Mysore also has associations with the Mahabharata and King Ashoka of the 3rd century B.C.

Up to 1947, Mysore was the capital of the Kingdom of Mysore which was ruled by the Wodeyar dynasty. Mysore has earned the sobriquet Cultural capital of Karnataka. Mysore also lends its name to the Mysore style of painting, Mysore Pak sweet and Mysore silk saree. While tourism is the major industry in Mysore, the last few years have seen a significant growth in the information technology related industry, making it the second largest software exporter in the state of Karnataka, next to Bangalore. Though lacking an airport, Mysore is connected to other parts of India by railways and road transport. The All India Radio had its beginnings here. Its grand and imposing palaces, majestic temples, gardens leave an ever-lasting impression on the visitor. Let us explore the places of tourist interests in Mysore, its Business and Education

PLACES OF TOURIST INTEREST

Mysore is a tourism hot spot within the state of Karnataka. The city receives the maximum number of tourists during the period of the Dasara festival when festivities take place for a period of 10 days. One of the most visited monuments in India, the Ambavilas Palace (also known as Mysore Palace), acts as the epicenter of the Dasara festivities. Jaganmohana Palace, Jayalakshmi Vilas and Lalitha Mahal are some of the other palaces in the city. Chamundeshwari Temple, atop the Chamundi Hills and St. Philomena’s Church are popular religious places in Mysore.

The Mysore Zoo, established in 1892 and the Karanj and Kukkarahalli lakes are also a popular spot for tourists. Mysore has a number of museums including, the Regional Museum of Natural History, the Folk Lore Museum, the Railway Museum and the Oriental Research Institute. In recent years, Mysore has seen a growth in yoga related health tourism which attracts lot of foreign visitors as well. A short distance from Mysore city is the Krishnarajasagar Dam and the adjoining Brindavan Gardens where a musical fountain show in the evening. Places of historic importance lying close to Mysore are Srirangapatna, Somanathpura and Talakad. The hills, B R Hills and Gopalaswamy Hills and the hill stations of Ooty and Madikeri are all near Mysore. Popular destinations for wildlife enthusiasts near Mysore include the National Parks at Bandipur and Nagarhole, the wildlife sanctuaries at Melkote and B.R. Hills and the bird
sanctuaries at Ranganathittu and Kokkare Bellur. Other tourist spots near Mysore include the religious locations of Nanjangud and Bylakuppe and the waterfalls at Shivasamudra.

BUSINESS AND ECONOMY

Traditionally, Mysore has been home to industries such as weaving, sandalwood carving, bronzework and the production of lime and salt. The planned industrial growth of the city and the state was first envisaged in the Mysore economic conference, held in 1911. This led to the establishment of few industries such as the Mysore Sandalwood Oil Factory in 1917 and the Sri Krishnarajendra Mills in 1920.

In a survey conducted in 2001 by Business Today, the business-arm of India Today, Mysore was ranked as the 5th best city in India to conduct business. In recent years, Mysore is termed as the yoga capital and attracts many health tourists, mainly from outside of India. For the industrial development of the city, Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) has established four industrial areas in and around Mysore. These are located at Belagola, Belawadi, Hebbal (Electronic City) and Hootagalli areas. Today, the major industries located in Mysore include AT&S, Nestle, BEML, J. K. Tyres, Wipro, Falcon Tyres, L&T and Infosys. In recent years, the information technology companies have been creating bases in Mysore, with the city contributing Rs. 760 crores to Karnataka’s Rs. 48,700 crore IT exports in the year 2006-2007. Infosys established in Mysore one of the largest technical training centres in the world and Wipro has established its Global Service Management Center (GSMC) at Mysore.

EDUCATION

The modern education saw its beginning in Mysore when a free English school was established here in 1833. The first college to be set up for higher education in Mysore was the Maharaja’s College which was founded in 1864. In 1881, a high school exclusively for girls was established and this was later converted into the Maharani’s Women’s College. In 1892, the Industrial School, the first institute to impart technical education in the city was started and this was followed by the Chamarajendra Technical Institute in 1913. While the modern system of education was making inroads into the city, some colleges like the Mysore Sanskrit college, which was established in 1876, continued to provide Vedic education.

The education system in Mysore received further impetus when the Mysore University was established here in 1916. This was the sixth university to be established in the whole of India. The university currently caters to the 4 districts in Karnataka. Around 127 colleges are affiliated to the university. Education in the field of engineering was started in Mysore with the establishment of the National Institute of Engineering in 1946; a college whose alumni includes N R Narayana Murthy, the founder of Information Technology bell weather Infosys. Currently, the city has five engineering colleges, including the GSSS Institute of Technology and Engineering for Women, which is the only women’s engineering college in the state of Karnataka. Medical education started in the city in 1930 when the Mysore Medical College was transferred from Bangalore to Mysore. Apart from this college, the Mysore city has the privately-owned J.S.S Medical College.

Mysore boasts of many important central institutes like the Central Food and Technological Research Institute (CFTRI), Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) and the All India Institute of Speech and Hearing (AllISH).