The Palitana temples of Jainism are located on Mount Shatrunjaya, by the city of Palitana, in Bhavnagar district, Gujarat, India. The city of the same name, known previously as Padliptapur, has been nicknamed "City of Temples". Along with Sammet Shikhar, earlier in Bihar state, now of Jharkhand, the two sites are considered the holiest of all pilgrimage places by the Jain community. As the temple-city was built to be an abode for the divine, no one is allowed to stay overnight, including the priests. Every Jain believes that a visit to this group of temples is essential once in a life time to achieve nirvana or salvation.[3]

The Jain's sacred site of Shatrunjay contains hundreds of Palitana temples. There are approximately 863 marble-carved temples on the hills.

It is said that 23 Tirthankara (a human being who helps in achieving liberation and enlightenment), except Neminath (a liberated soul which has destroyed all of its karma), sanctified the hill temples by their visits. The main temple is dedicated to the Rishabha, the first Tirthankara; it is the holiest shrine for the Svetambara Murtipujaka Jain sect who are worshipers of images of gods. The Digambara sect of Jainism has only one temple here.

The summit is situated at an elevation of 7,288 feet (2,221 m). Reaching it involves climbing over 3,750 stone steps. However, during the monsoon season the temples are closed for devotees.

It takes approximately two hours to make the 3.5 kilometres (2.2 mi) climb.

There are multiple routes. The shortest one goes around the outer walls of the temples on the hilltop and passes Angar Pir, the shrine of a Muslim saint who is reported to have protected the temples on during Muslim invasions.

A second route goes around the foot of the mountain. A large number of pilgrims take part in a third route in the month of Phalguna (February/March), which passes five sacred temple sites over a distance of 45 kilometres. Elderly pilgrims who cannot climb the stairs are carried on a doli (swing chair) carried by porters and charged based on the pilgrim's weight.

From the top of Shatrunjaya are views of the Gulf of Cambay and the rugged, drought-affected landscape. The narrow streets or lanes in the temple complex are similar to the ones found in the medieval cities of Europe. The high walls surrounding the temples give the appearance of a fort. Important features include the Ashok tree, the Chaitra tree, Jaytaleti, four-mouthed idol of Bhagawan
Mahavir, Hingraj Ambikadevi (known as Hinglaj Mata, the presiding deity of the hill), Kumarpal, Vimalshah and Samprati.

Palitana was a princely state of India till it merged with India after independence in August 1947. It was the capital of the Kingdom of Rajpipla and Gohil Rajput clan.

As a princely state, founded in 1194 (one of the major states in Saurashtra, where there were many smaller states, Palitana covered 777 km² and had 58,000 inhabitants (in 1921) in 91 villages, generating a 744,416 Rs revenue.

In 1656, Shah Jahan's son Murad Baksh (the then Governor of Gujarat) granted the village of Palitana to the prominent Jain merchant Shantidas Jhaveri. The management of the temples was assigned to the Anandji Kalyanji Trust in 1730.

Rishabha sanctified the hill where he delivered his first sermon. It was his grandson Pundarik, grandson of Rishabha who received salvation at Shatrunjay, hence the hill was originally known as "Pundarikgiri". Bharata, the father of Pundarik and half-brother of Bahubali, also came to Shatrunjaya many times; he is also credited with building a temple here.

The Palitana temples were built over a period of 900 years starting in the 11th century. They were destroyed by Turkish Muslims invaders in 1311 AD, when the saint Jinaprabhasuri, who was then 50 years old, presided over the temples. Two years later, the rebuilding began. While some temple building activity took place under Samara Shah, it was only two centuries later that it picked up momentum, when in 1593, Hiravijayasuri (Chief of Tapa Gaccha) organized a major pilgrimage to this location to attend the consecration ceremony of the temple built for Rishabha by Tej Pal Soni, a merchant. Following this, there was proliferation of temples here.

The most important temples are those of Adinath, Kumarpal, Sampratiraja, Vimal Shah, Sahasrakuta, Ashtapada and Chaumukh. Some of them are named after the wealthy patrons who paid for the construction. Most of them which are now present date to the 16th century. In 1656, Shah Jahan's son Murad Baksh (the then Governor of Gujarat) granted Palitana villages to the prominent Jain merchant Shantidas Jhaveri, a Svetambara Jain, in 1656, and subsequently when all taxes were also exempted that the temple town further prospered. It was brought under the control of the Anandji Kalyanji Trust in 1730 to manage not only Palitana temples but also many other temples of Svetambara Jains, since the Mughal period.

It is said that sculptors' skills and capacity to carve with abrasive chords (not tools) the intricate designs was paid on the basis of the marble dust that they had collected every evening after their hard labour. Kumarpal Solanki, a great Jain patron, probably built the earliest temples.
History also make a mention that Lunia Seth Tilokchand, a merchant from Ajmer led a very large contingent of pilgrims to the Shatrunjaya temples when he heard that there were some disturbances at the Angarshah Pir on the hills. But he continued his pilgrimage and pleased the Pir by his offerings. This tradition is followed to this day by his descendents by offering an expensive cloth to cover the dome of the shrine.

Renovations

There have been frequent renovations and many of them are dated to the 16th century. New temples continue to be built here. Renovations occurred at least 16 times during the avasarpinikala (the descending half of the wheel of time):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Renovation</th>
<th>Renovator</th>
<th>Times</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Chakravarti Bharat</td>
<td>Adinath</td>
<td>son of Adinath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>King Dandavirya</td>
<td></td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Ishaneshvar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Indra of Upper World</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Mahendra</td>
<td>interim period between Adinath and Ajitnath</td>
<td>Indra of fourth upper world (dev-lok)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Brahmendra</td>
<td></td>
<td>Indra of fifth upper world (dev-lok)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>Chamarendra</td>
<td></td>
<td>Indra of Bhavanapatis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>Sagar Chakravarti</td>
<td>Ajitnath</td>
<td>second Chakravarti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>Vyantarendra</td>
<td>Abhinandannath</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>King Chandrayasha</td>
<td>Chandraprabha</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Chakrayuddha</td>
<td>Shantinath</td>
<td>son of Shantinath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th</td>
<td>Ram and Lakshaman</td>
<td>Munisuvrata</td>
<td>Ramayana Kings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th</td>
<td>5 Pandava</td>
<td>Neminatha</td>
<td>Mahabharta Kings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th</td>
<td>Javed Shah of Mahuva</td>
<td>Vikram Samvat 108</td>
<td>He spent a million gold coins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th</td>
<td>advisor Bahud</td>
<td>Vikram Samvat 1213</td>
<td>Times of Kumarpal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th</td>
<td>Samara Shah Oswal</td>
<td>Vikram Samvat 1371</td>
<td>spent 2770000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th</td>
<td>Karama Shah of Chitod</td>
<td>Vikram Samvat 1587</td>
<td>on 6th day of the dark half of Vaisakh</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is believed that Vimalvahan shall do the 17th renovation during the period of Duppasahsuri in future.
THE PALITANA HILLS
IS PLACE FROM WHERE MILLIONS OF SOULS
ARE BELIEVED
TO HAVE ACHIEVED NIRAVANA OR ULTIMATE AND EVERLASTING LIBERATION
WITH
INFINITE KNOWLEDGE, INFINITE PERCEPTION, INFINITE ENERGY
AND
INFINITE SPIRITUAL HAPPINESS.
PALITANA IS A CITY IN BHAVANGAR DISTRICT OF STATE OF GUJARAT, IN INDIA. IT IS SITUATED ABOUT FIFTY KILOMETERS SOUTHWEST OF BHAVNAGAR CITY.
THE TEMPLE COMPLEX OF PALITANA IS THE WORLD’S LARGEST AND CONSIDERED THE MOST SACRED PILGRIMAGE PLACE BY THE JAINS ALL OVER THE WORLD. THERE ARE SOME 3000 EXQUISITE TEMPLES WITH MARVELLOUS ART ON SHATRUNJAY HILLS.

THE FIRST TIRTHANKAR LORD ADINATHA

OR RISHABHDEVA

HAS THE MOST PRONOUNCED PLACEMENT.
ON TOP OF THE SHATRUNJAYA HILL IS A CLUSTER OF JAIN TEMPLES BUILT OVER SOME 900 YEARS BY GENERATIONS OF JAINS STARTING FROM 11TH CENTURY
FROM THE FOOT OF THE HILL TO THE TOP

THERE ARE MORE THAN

3,800 STONE STEPS

CARVED OUT FROM ROCKS

TO FACILITATE CLIMBING IN 13TH CENTURY
THE TEMPLES ARE EXQUISITELY CARVED IN MARBLE RESEMBLING IVORY IN LOOK.

THE LEADING TEMPLE IS OF LORD ADISHWAR.
THIS TEMPLE HAS A FABULOUS COLLECTION OF EXPENSIVE JEWELS

DEDICATED BY RICH JAIN PATRONS.
THE TEMPLES DATE FROM 11th TO THE 20th CENTURY
[10]

THE DAY OF THE FAGUN SUD 13th FALLING SOMEWHERE IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH

IS THE MOST VISITED AND CROWDED DAY
A JAIN ASPIRES
TO CLimb TO THE TOP OF MOUNTAIN
ONCE IN HIS LIFE TIME
MOTI SHAH TOONK (TEMPLE)
AT THE TOP OF THE SIDDHACHA HILLS
[13]
THE CLIMB MUST BEGIN IN EARLY MORNING
AND RETURN DESCENT MUST BE COMPLETED IN EVENING.
NO STAYING OVERNIGHT
SOME FACTS ABOUT PALITANA.

SHETRUNJAY TEMPLES; STEPS TO CLIMB: 3364

HEIGHT: 2000 FEET. WALKING: 7.5 MILES.

PRATIMA OR IDOLS ARE 27007 IN JINMANDIR

OR TEMPLES TOTALLING 3507
THERE ARE MORE THAN 27000 IDOLS OF JAIN GODS ON THIS MOUNTAIN ALONE
OVERNIGHT STAY IS FORBIDDEN FOR ALL HUMANS
AS IT IS PEACEFUL RESTING PLACE FOR GODS
THERE ARE TWO SUMMITS WITH 900 TEMPLES WITH EXTRAORDINARY ART AND SCULPTURE
ADINATH

AT

PALITAANAA