



## [Glory of Bharath](#) » Bharath Darshan

Dear Sai Brothers and Sisters,

This month our sojourn is to Nathdwara to see the charming Lord Krishna as Lord Shrinathji.

### Nathdwara



Shri Nathdwara (a pathway to Lord Shri Krishna) literally means the gateway to the Lord Shrinathji. This great Vaishnavite shrine was built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century on spot exactly identified by the Lord himself. Nathdwara is a town in Rajasthan state of western India. It is located in the Aravalli hills, on the banks of the Banas River in Rajsamand District, 48 kilometers north-east of Udaipur. This town is famous for its temple of Krishna which houses the idol of Shrinathji, a 14<sup>th</sup> century, 7-year old "infant" incarnation of Krishna. The idol was originally worshipped at Mathura and was shifted in the 1672 from Govardhan hill, near Mathura along holy river Yamuna after being retained at Agra for almost six months, in order to protect it from anti-Hindu fanatic iconoclastic Islamic policies of Mughal ruler Aurangzeb.

Nathdwara is a significant Vaishnavite shrine pertaining to the Pushti Marg or the Vallabh Sampradaya or the Shuddha Advaita founded by Vallabha Acharya, revered mainly by people of Gujarat and Rajasthan, among others. Vitthal Nathji, son of Vallabhacharya institutionalized the worship of Shrinathji at Nathdwara. Nathdwara town itself is popularly referred to as 'Shrinathji', after the presiding deity.

### Legend and History



The idol of Shrinathji is said to be self-manifested. The idol of the Lord Krishna was being transferred to a safer place from Vrindaban to protect it from the anti-Hindu, iconoclastic and barbarian destruction of the Mughal ruler Aurangzeb by a Goswami priest. When the idol reached the spot at village Sihad or Sinhad, the wheels of bullock cart in which the idol was being transported sank axle-deep in mud and could not be moved any farther. The accompanying priests realised that the particular place was the Lord's chosen spot and accordingly, a temple was built there under the rule and protection of the then Maharana Raj Singh of Mewar.

Shrinathji Temple is also known as 'Haveli of Shrinathji' (mansion). The temple was built by Goswami priests in 1672. Presently, Shrinathji is worshipped by priests from this kul (genealogical descendants) of Vallabhacharya, in all Havelis around the world, which have also been established exclusively by them. Economy and livelihoods in Nathdwara town revolve around the Haveli, the term used for the temple probably because it was situated in a fortified mansion, or Haveli, once a royal palace of the Sisodia Rajput rulers of Mewar.

- [History](#)
- [Aims](#)
- [Concept](#)
- [Parenting](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Training Programmes](#)
  - October 11
  - December 09
- [Expansion](#)
- [Development](#)
- [Syllabus](#)
- [Bal Vikas Administration](#)
- [Past Students](#)
  - [June 2010](#)
  - [September](#)
- [Home](#)

#### Activities from States

[At the Lotus Feet](#)

[Gurus Corner](#)

[Children's Corner](#)

[From the Annals of the World History](#)

[Special Page](#)

[Glory of Bharath](#)

### Structure and Design of the Temple

The temple has been designed in the lines of temple of Nanda Maharaj (Krishna's father), in Vrindavan. Therefore, it is also known as Nanda Bhavan or Nandalaya (the House of Nanda). Structurally, a kalasha on the sikhara marks the top of the temple, on which seven flags are flown along with the Sudarshana Chakra. The seven flags represent the clothes of the seven sakhis (Companions) of Krishna.

The temple is also popularly called Shrinathji ki Haveli (House of Shrinathji) because like a regular household it has a chariot for movement (In fact the original chariot in which Shrinathji was brought to Singhar), a store room for milk (Doodhghar), a store room for betel (Paanghar), a store room for sugar and sweetmeats (Mishrighar and Pedaghar), a store room for flowers (Phoolghar), a functional kitchen (Rasoighar), a jewellery chamber (Gahnaghar), a treasury (Kharcha bhandaar), a stable for horses of chariot (Ashvashala), a drawing room (Baithak), a gold and silver grinding wheel (Chakki). The Nathdwara temple has subsidiary temples dedicated to deity Madan Mohan and Naveet Priya, located in the main complex.



### Shrinathji

Shrinathji symbolizes a form of Krishna, when he lifted the Govardhan hill, with one arm raised. The image in the form of a single black marble, where the lord is revealed with his left hand raised and the right hand made into a fist resting at the waist, with a large diamond placed beneath the lips. The idol is carved in Bas-relief out of a monolithic black marble stone, with images of two cows, one lion, one snake, two peacocks and one parrot engraved on it and three sages placed near it. The iconography at the temple has given birth to Nathdwara Paintings.



### Festivals and Rituals at the Temple

Devotees throng to the shrine in large numbers during occasions of Janmashtami and other festivals, like Holi and Diwali. The deity is treated like a living image, and is attended with daily normal functions, like bathing, dressing, meals called "Prasad" and the resting times in regular intervals. Since, the deity is believed to be the infant Krishna, accordingly, special care is taken. The priests in all Havelis are believed to be from the kul (descendants) of Vallabhacharya, the founder of this deity's idol at Govardhan hill, near Mathura.

The main attractions are the Aartis and the Shringar, i.e. the dressing and beautifying of the idol of Shrinathji which changed seven times daily, treating it as a living person, adorning it with the appropriate dresses for the time of day or night. The intricately woven shaneels and silk clothe have original zari and embroidery work on them, along with large quantities of real precious jewellery. The formal prayers are offered with diya, incense sticks, flowers, fruit and other offerings, with local instruments and devotional songs of the Shrinathji, according to the demand of the time and occasion. The view of the idol after the parda (curtain) is removed is called jhakhi.

**Our sojourn continues next month...Till then Sai Ram**