



PATAN



# Message from the Mayor



**Chiribabu Maharjan**  
MAYOR, LALITPUR

Welcome to Patan!

Dear Visitors,  
Lalitpur or Patan, the city of people accomplished in the arts and professions, which is like no other. Our temples, palaces, bylanes, *bahis* and *bahas* are steeped in a history that is also our present. The artisans of Lalitpur are bearers of a continuous tradition going back to early times. As a city of fine arts, Lalitpur is more than a collection of monuments; its ancient buildings are lived in, the temple deities are worshipped, and the traditions are yet alive.

Even as we adjust to the demands of a fast-changing

world, the people of Lalitpur seek to retain their customs and festivals and preserve their ancient architecture and accomplished urban high culture, I am glad to tell you that although buffered by change and modernization, Lalitpur cares for its cultural soul.

We welcome your interest because visitors provide an economic boost which helps us in the effort to preserve Lalitpur's heritage and architecture.

We wish you a pleasant time in Lalitpur.

Many Thanks.

# Message from the Deputy Mayor



**Manjali Shakya Bajracharya**  
DEPUTY MAYOR, LALITPUR

Lalitpur, our city, is renowned for its captivating tourist attractions, fascinating ancient culture, exquisite handicrafts, and exceptional culinary delights. It offers a captivating journey that seamlessly blends cultural traditions, natural beauty, and the rich heritage of handicrafts. One of the highlights of Lalitpur is the presence of skilled artisans who meticulously create intricate and beautiful handicrafts, showcasing the finest craftsmanship in metalwork, woodcarving, stonecarving, pottery, textiles, and more. The vibrant markets and handicraft workshops in Lalitpur are a treasure trove for those seeking unique and authentic handmade products.

As you explore the attractions of Lalitpur, you will be captivated by the historic Patan Durbar Square, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Additionally, the serene Ashoka Stupa, a

peaceful Buddhist monument, emanates a sense of serenity. While immersed in these remarkable sites, don't miss the opportunity to tantalize your taste buds with the city's gastronomic delights. The Newari khaja set, Samaybaji, Yomari, Choila, Bara, and Chatamari are a few local delights that will leave you craving for more. Lalitpur's rich cultural heritage and mouthwatering cuisine are joined to create an experience that appeals to both the senses and the soul. It invites you to explore the architectural marvels, immerse yourself in history, and savor the diverse flavors that make Lalitpur an unforgettable destination. So, as you embark on your journey through Lalitpur, be sure to indulge in the exceptional culinary offerings while exploring the remarkable sights that have bestowed fame upon our city.

## TABLE OF CONTENT

Welcome to Patan	4	Agnishala Temple	16
Patan Durbar Square Map	6	Haugal Bahal	17
Patan Museum Map	7	Rudra Varna Mahavihar	17
Patan Dhoka	8	Mahabaudha Temple	18
Pimbahal Pokhari	9	Guji Bahal	18
Nakabahil	9	Chapat Ganesh	19
Nagbahal	10	Rato chaitya	19
Kumbeshwar Temple	10	Terracotta Chaitya	20
Golden Temple	11	Akash Bhairav Temple	20
Bubahal	12	Balkumari Mandir	21
Padmavati Mahavihar	12	Guita	21
Purnachandi Temple	13	Bhinchhe Bahal	22
Hakha Bahal	13	Jaya Manohar Mahavihar	22
Momaru Galli	14	Bhindyo Lachhi	23
Minnath Temple	14	Yempi Vihar	23
Rato Machhindranath Temple	15	Jyapu Museum	24
Ikkhalakhu	16	Jagat Narayan Temple	24

# WELCOME TO PATAN



Patan is the second major city of Nepal, after the capital, Kathmandu, which is separated from Patan by the river Bagmati. The original dwellers of this territory are called Newars and their language is Newari, a member of the Tibeto-Burmese Language family.

The modern name, Patan is derived from Sanskrit, "pattan" which means

"city", whereas local Newari speakers call it Yala. Another name "Lalitpur" means "city of art". World Craft Council AISBL designated Lalitpur as a "World Craft City" in 2018. Moreover, Patan Durbar Square has been listed by UNESCO as a world heritage site.

David L. Snellgrove suggested that Patan may have originated well before



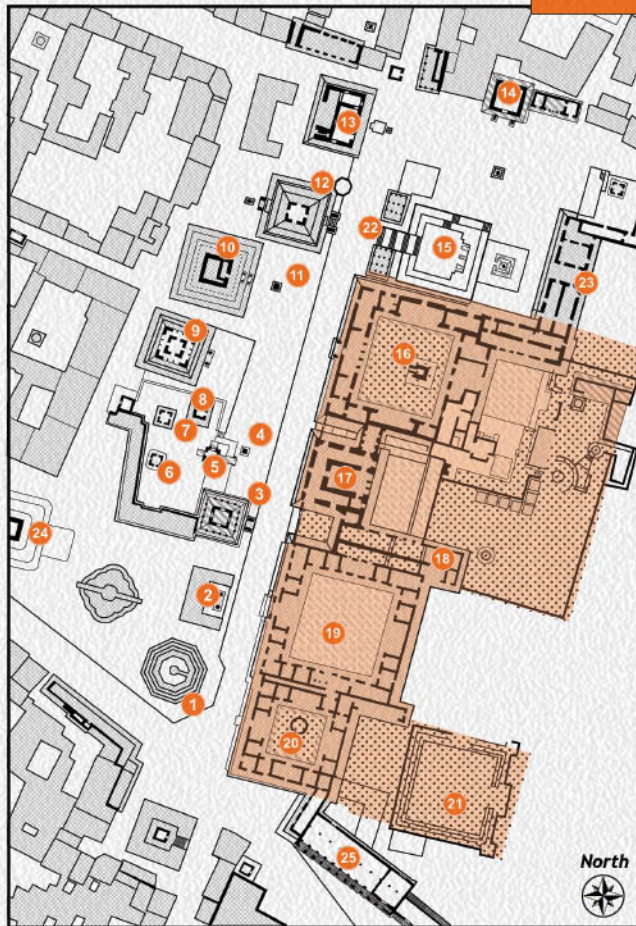
the beginning of the Christian era as a Buddhist community, comparable to such centers as Sravasti and Vaisali in North India. There is no doubt that Patan is one of the oldest inhabited areas of the Kathmandu Valley. The Newar Buddhist claim that the lord Buddha (6th century B.C.) and Emperor Ashok (250 B.C) of Magadh, India both visited Kathmandu

valley and Emperor Ashok built the 4 Thurs (big chaityas) in the periphery of Patan designing it as swastika shape.

Patan, as it is today, is essentially a creation of three kings, Siddhimarsingh (1619-1667), his son Shrinivas (1660-1684) and his son Yognarendra Malla (1684-1705).

The Durbar Square is the centre of the city of Patan, where former Royal Palace and a great numbers of city's main temples are located. Almost all the monuments were built in 16th to 18th centuries in dedication to gods and beautify the place area.

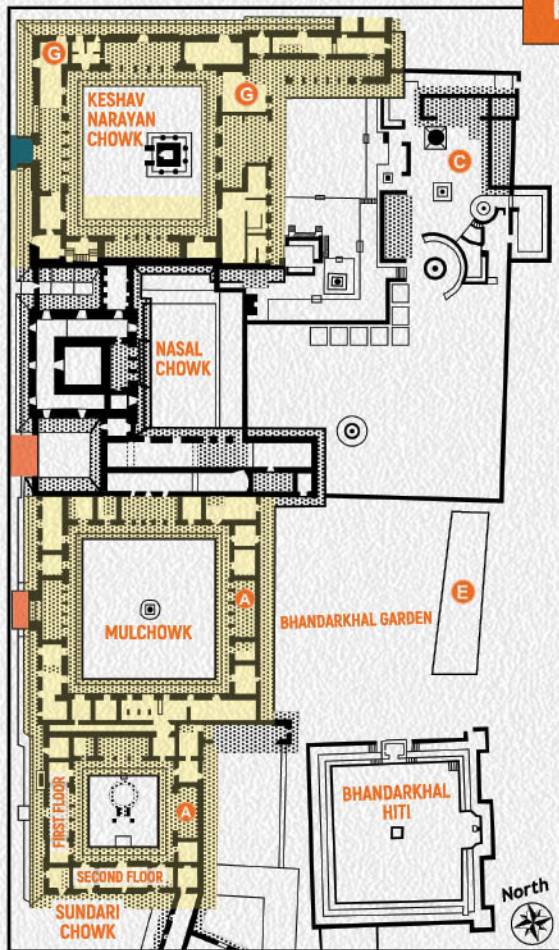
- 1.] Octagonal Chyasing Deval  
(Krishna Temple) 1723
- 2.] Big Bell  
(On a pedestal dedicated to Taleju) 1737
- 3.] Harishankara Temple: 1706
- 4.] King Yoganarendra Pillar: 1693
- 5.] Narsimha Temple: 1589
- 6.] Buddha Temple
- 7.] Krishna Temple
- 8.] Narayan Temple: 1652
- 9.] Char Narayan Temple: 1566
- 10.] Krishna Mandir: 1637
- 11.] Garuda Pillar: 1637
- 12.] Visvesvara Temple: 1627
- 13.] Bhimsen Temple: 1680
- 14.] Ganesh Temple: Rebuilt in 17th century
- 15.] Mangal Hiti: 6th century
- 16.] Keshav Narayan Chowk: 1734
- 17.] Degu Taleju Temple: 1661
- 18.] Taleju Temple: 1671
- 19.] Mulchowk: 1666
- 20.] Sundari Chowk: 1647
- 21.] Bhandarkhai Tank: 1647
- 22.] Manimandap: 1701
- 23.] Bahadur Shah Palace: 1792
- 24.] Bhai Dega: 1678
- 25.] Court Building: 1910





## PATAN MUSEUM

The Patan Museum, located in the Royal Palace of the former Malla kings of Patan, displays the traditional sacred arts. The exhibits cover a long span of Nepal's cultural history and explain the meaning and context of Nepal's living tradition of art. The Buddhist Gallery is its main attraction. The museum facilities include a cafe, a guest studio for artist, gift shops an open courtyard space which hosts cultural events.



### LEGEND

-  Entrance to Keshav Narayan Chowk
-  Entrance to Mulchowk and Sundari Chowk
-  Galleries
-  Gift Shop
-  Cafe
-  Architectural Gallery
-  Event Area



---

## PATAN DHOKA

---

Patan Dhoka is a historic gateway to enter the city of Patan, from Kathmandu. It is a magnificent structure that has stood the test of time and is a symbol of Nepal's rich cultural heritage. The word "Dhoka" means gate in Nepali, and the Patan Dhoka is one of the oldest and most well-preserved gates in the Kathmandu Valley. According to a book written in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in the Malla era, the gate was used specially by businessmen. The gate is a fine example of Nepali architecture with intricate carvings and detailed craftsmanship.



## JAGAMADU PUKHU, PIMBAHAL

According to the local legend, the pond was built by Lakhey (demi-god) by piling up stones one after another without any mortar or clay to please his wife. It is thus called, “Jagmadu Pukhu”. The pond was used to irrigate the agricultural land nearby. The locals believe, if the pond gets dry and the magical stone lying in the northeastern corner of the pond is exposed to the Sun, it will rain soon.



MAP C5 Patan Dhoka Route



## NAKABAHIL

Nakabahil, also known as Lokakirti Vihar, is an ancient Buddhist monastery and until recent times it was a well-preserved vihar structure. The vihar organises the Astamatrika dance, which begins during Ghatasthapana, the first day of the Dashain festival. No violence or sacrifices are performed at Nakabahil, as the monastery follows the principles of non-violence and compassion.

---

## NAGBAHAL

---

Nagbahal is a vibrant and historic Buddhist area in Lalitpur. The large courtyard of Nagbahal serves as a gathering place for the large icons of Dipankara Buddha during the Samyaka festival which is held every five years. This vihara is associated with the Golden Temple. It has a stone-spout that dates back to ancient times and a large bronze image of a bull, very much like a Nandi. According to the local legend, once Dipankar Buddha visited here and at that time the bull roared.

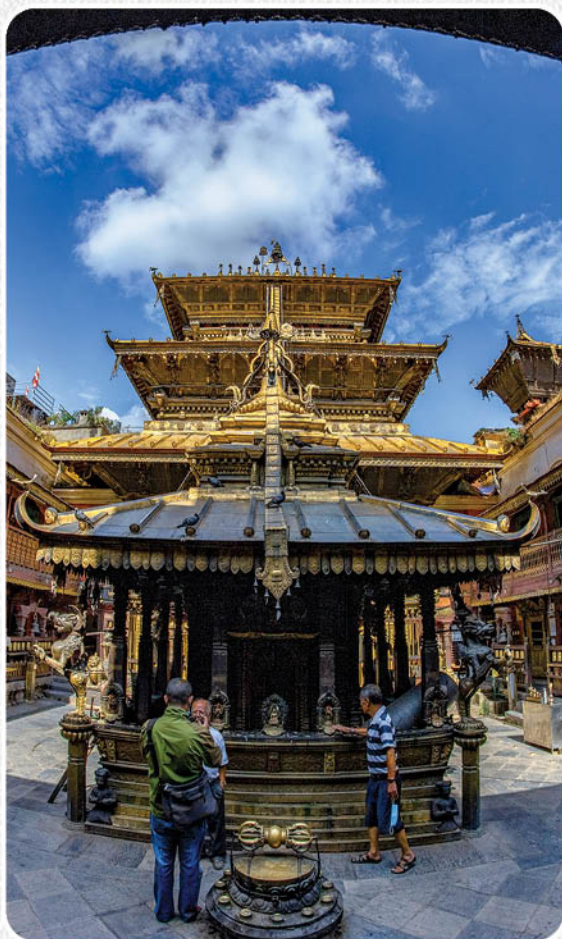


---

## KUMBHESHWAR TEMPLE

---

The five-storied pagoda, Kumbheshwar Temple was built in 1392 during the reign of King Jayasthiti Malla. It remains an essential part of the city's religious life. At Kumbheshwar in Patan, a richly decorated Lingam (Sarveshwara), the phallic symbol of Lord Shiva is placed on a raised platform in the middle of the Kumbheshwar pond to receive homage to Hindu, Buddhist and shamanists on the full moon day in August. The god is considered as the conqueror of death.



## GOLDEN TEMPLE

Hiranyavarna Mahavihara (literal meaning, Gold-coloured Great Monastery / The Golden Temple), locally known as Kwa Baha is a historical Buddhist monastery. This pagoda style monastery of Shakyamuni Buddha was built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century by King Bhaskar Varma and gold plated with donations offered by the local merchants who did trading with Tibet. According to a legend, Hiranyavarna Mahavihara was built at a location where a rat chased a cat. Rats are still being fed at the site.

The chaitya at the middle of the courtyard is worshipped as the lineage deity by the locals.



MAP D5 Pulchowk Route

## PADMAVATI MAHAVIHAR (NA BAHAL)

Na Bahal, also known as Padmavati Mahavihar, is a significant cultural and historical site. This monastery constructed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century is known for its unique wooden carved sculptures, a hallmark of Newari craftsmanship. The big bell in front of the Patan palace was made by the artisans of this monastery. The architecture of the temple is typical of the Newari style, with intricate wood carvings, and elaborate roof structures. One of the most notable features of Na Bahal is its wooden carvings and bell-making.

## BUBAHAL

This ancient Buddhist monastery also known as Yashodhar Mahavihar was built by a converted Brahman called Vidhyadhar which is situated in Gabahal area. There is a beautiful temple housing the Buddha's icon which is facing north in the large courtyard.

Their Hindu relatives are still residing nearby Agnishala area helping each other in religion and social matters. This is a good example of religious harmony in Nepal, between the two great religions, Hindu and Buddhist. Their clan tree called Varuna briksa (*Creteva Religiosa*) of both clans are still preserved in their respective monasteries.





## PU RNACHANDI TEMPLE

Purnachandi Temple is located southwest of Patan Durbar Square. It is a three-storied temple with the three forms of the goddess Durga - in the morning Maneshwari (Goddess of honor), in the afternoon Siddhi Laxmi (Goddess of abundance and success) and in the evening Purnachandi (slayer of demons). The temple was consecrated in 1635 during the reign of King Siddhinarasingh Malla. The present structure dates from the last quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century after the original monument was destroyed by fire.

## HAKHA BAHAL

Hakha Bahal (Ratnakar Mahavihar) is located on the way to the Patan palace. Its current building was established during the reign of the Malla dynasty. The site houses the living goddess Kumari, who is the royal goddess of the Malla Kings. Thus, widely worshipped by the Hindus too. Kumari is believed to be the embodiment of the Hindu goddess Taleju and is a significant figure in Newar culture.



MAP D5 Pulchowk Route



## MOMARU GALLI

Momaru Galli is an alley located behind the Krishna temple of Patan Durbar Square. The alley is home to the temple of Goddess Chhinnamasta worshipped throughout the year.

The Chhinnamasta temple was once used for witchcraft, and according to a local story, a learner wanted to sacrifice her husband to acquire knowledge and power. But the husband was saved by his clever friend. The tantric goddess is seen as a protector of the area, warding off evil spirits and safeguarding the local people.

## MINNATH TEMPLE

Jeshthavarna Mahavihara is commonly known as Tanga Baha. Its Sanskrit name, Jeshthavarna Mahavihara, indicates its reputation as one of the oldest and principal viharas in Patan. This vihar was founded by Balarchana Deva at Tangel Tol, which is situated on the east of the road leading south from Mangal Bazaar. It is located just opposite Ta Baha of Karunamaya or Rato Machhindranath Temple. The principal deity of the Tanga Baha is a small and remarkable red image of Padmapani Lokesvara which is also revered as Jatadhari Lokesvara. Newar Buddhists call this deity Caku-baha-dya and Hindus call him Minnath.





## RATO MACHHINDRANATH TEMPLE

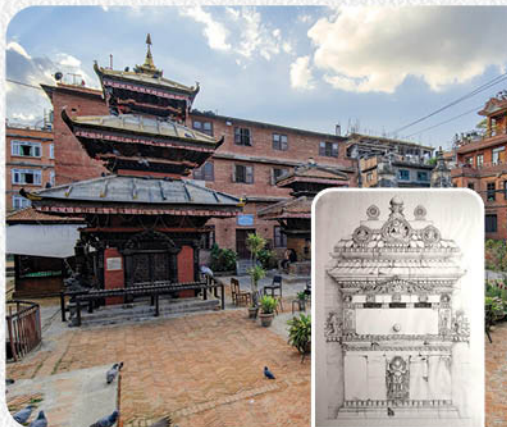
The Rato Machhindranath Temple stands about 400 meters south of Patan Durbar Square in a large courtyard known as Ta Baha, built-in 1673. The temple is a tall Newar-style pagoda with three tiers of diminishing roofs. It honors Machhindranath (also known as Matsyendranath), an influential early 10th-century yogi who credited the god Shiva as his teacher. In Nepal, in particular, Matsyendranath has come to be known as

a god of rain. Buddhists see the deity as an incarnation of Avalokitesvara, and Hindus as an incarnation of Shiva. In Lalitpur, in particular, the temple is one of two focal points of the Rato Machhindranath Jatra, a ceremony that honors the role of the deity (also called Bungadya) in bringing an end to droughts. The image of Bungadya is pulled in a tall chariot in April-May, built on Pulchowk Road.



## IKHALAKHU

Ikhalkhu is a traditional Newari settlement in Patan. The settlement boasts a unique blend of ancient architecture and culture. The locality is home to nine temples, each with its distinctive style and significance. One of the highlights of Ikhalkhu is the Jarun, a traditional stone water storage and supply system that dates back to medieval times. Ikhalkhu also features nine patis-communal rest houses that serve as gathering places for the people. The square is considered one of the most important squares of Patan after the Durbar Square. Many festivals and events are held in Ikhalkhu throughout the year.



*(Pencil on paper, Bijay Basukala)*

## AGNISHALA TEMPLE

A holy fire has been burning continuously at the Agnishala Temple since ancient times. Two important ritual festivals can be observed in full moon days of lunar month of Magh (January-February) and Baisakh (April-May). Priests perform a ritual in which offerings are made to the holy fire for celestial deities. The Agnishala Temple in Patan is known for its fire altars-Vishnu Kunda, Brahma Kunda, Shiva Kunda, Surya Kunda, and Savya Kunda. The Vishnu Kunda always has the perpetual fire burning, while fires are lit on the rest of kundas during the daily worship in the morning and evening. The Agnishala Temple is considered unique for having five kundas.

Several meters to the north of this temple one can find a semi-circle well called Baga Tun and Ganesh temple.

---

## HAUGAL BAHAL

---

Haugal Bahal is a historic community located near Patan Durbar Square. It is home to the Rajkarnikar clan, who are believed to have been brought from Kannauj, India by the Malla kings to make sweets for them. The Rajkarnikars have a rich culinary tradition, and their sweets and snacks are still popular throughout Nepal. The bahal has a Buddha shrine. The inner chowk is dedicated to Harati, a goddess worshipped in both Hindu and Buddhist traditions. The icon is from the early Licchavi period.



MAP E6 Lagankhel Route



MAP E6 Mahabaudha Route

---

## RUDRA VARNA MAHAVIHAR

---

Rudra Varna Mahavihar is a historic landmark in Patan. It was built in the 7<sup>th</sup> century by Licchavi King Shiva Dev and was completed by Rudra Dev. It is said that the Rudra Varna Mahavihar once served as a royal courtyard for King Rudra Dev. One of the most unique aspects of the Rudra Varna Mahavihar is its association with the recitation of the *Namasangiti*. This ancient prayer is said to have the power to remove the eight great fears, or Asta Maha Bhaya, from the minds of those who recite it. Rudra Varna Mahavihar remains a vibrant and active center of Nepalese culture and spirituality.



## MAHABAUDHA TEMPLE

Mahabaudha temple is dedicated to Lord Baudha. The temple is often called the Temple of a Thousand Buddhas because a Buddha image is engraved on every brick. The temple dates back to 1585 and it was rebuilt after the 1934 earthquake. Mahabaudha's design is based on the Mahabodhi Temple of Bodhi Gaya, as the founder of the temple Abhayaraj visited there. The Mahabodhi temple in Bodhi Gaya has long been an inspiration to the Buddhist community all over the world.



## GUJI BAHAL

Guji Bahal, also known as Vaisha Varna Mahavihar, is a historic Buddhist temple located near Sundhara of Patan. The temple was built in the Medieval period. The temple features a pagoda-style structure. The main shrine is dedicated to Shakyamuni Buddha and there are several smaller shrines and prayer halls within the temple complex. Trailokya Vijayadevi, brought from Tibet is one of the important icons of this monastery.

---

## CHAPAT GANESH

---

Chapat Ganesh is a revered deity, particularly, among the Newar community. It is located east of Patan Durbar Square. This unique and rare form of Lord Ganesh is known for his association with the Betal, a vampire-like spirit, which serves as his vehicle. It is believed that worshipping Chapat Ganesh can bring good fortune and help in the retrieval of lost items. One of the most fascinating aspects of Chapat Ganesh is the story of Lord Shiva's visit to the deity. Lord Shiva visited the Chapat Ganesh temple, which led to the installation of Nandi, the bull of Shiva, in front of the temple. This has become a significant feature of the temple and adds to its spiritual significance. The temple's architecture is reminiscent of the traditional Newar style, with intricate wood and stone carvings that adorn the walls and roof.



MAP D, E6 Mahabaudha Route



---

## RATO CHAITYA

---

Rato Chaitya of Patan is unique for its round pedestal and its color, while most of the chaityas in the area are white or golden. This chaitya, which was founded about 200 years ago, is significant due to the locals' practice of snake worship there. This unique feature has made it a popular destination for visitors who are drawn to its beauty and uniqueness.

MAP D7 Mahabaudha Route



## TERRACOTTA CHAITYA

The Terracotta Chaitya of the Lolha area or Tyaga Macha is a small, hidden gem in Patan. It is said that after the completion of Mahabaudha temple, the remaining bricks were used to build this chaitya. The Terracotta Chaitya is a beautiful example of Newari architecture and a reminder of the importance of skilled craftsmanship in traditional building practices.

MAP D6, 7 Mahabaudha Route

## AKASH BHAIRAV TEMPLE

Akash Bhairav is located in the northeast of Patan. It is also called Maha Bhairava, the god of terror. Maha Bhairava is a particularly fierce manifestation of Shiva. Here, the deity is in painted form. The temple is laid out in a multi-story rectangular plan. The two-level main shrine faces west and has a pair of lions. The temple has numerous pots and pans-likely, the gifts of newlyweds to ensure a successful marriage.





---

## BALKUMARI MANDIR

---

Balkumari Temple is located on the eastern side of Patan. The present shape of the temple was built in the 17th century during the time of King Siddhinarsingh Malla. The Patan city is surrounded and protected by the Eight-mother goddesses, including Balkumari. Her icon is worshipped from the front and back sides of the temple throughout the year. The Balkumari temple was once used for witchcraft.

---

## GUITA

---

Guita Buddhist monastery is in Patan. The temple, which is said to be named after the number nine, is a fascinating place that is shrouded in mystery and symbolism. It is said that nine nagas or serpent deities performed their *sadhana* or spiritual practice here. This is why, the temple is considered to be a powerful place of worship. There are nine chaityas or Buddhist stupas surrounding the temple. Another interesting feature of the temple is the nine water spouts that are located near the entrance. These spouts are believed to have been built during the Malla period and are said to represent the nine planets of the solar system.



MAP E7 Balkumari Route



## BHINCHE BAHAL

Bhinchhe Bahal, also known as Mayur Varna Mahavihar, is a Buddhist monastery on the eastern side of Patan Durbar Square. This ancient monastery is known for its stunning architecture, intricate wood carvings, and ancient artifacts. The name Mayur Varna translates to “peacock-coloured” in Sanskrit. The monastery houses several rare texts and teachings, including the *Prajnaparamita*, one of the most important Buddhist texts, which dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It is the home to many stone carvers who have made stone sculptures in the past. Visitors still can witness the stone carvers at work.

MAP E7 **Balkumari Route**

## JAYA MANOHAR MAHAVIHAR (SU BAHAL)

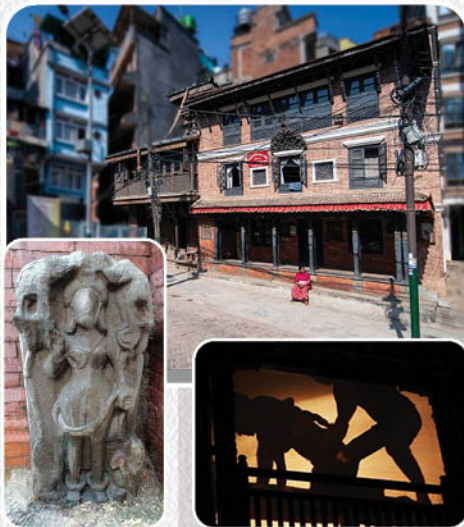
Su Bahal, also known as Jaya Manohar Mahavihar, was built over 1000 years ago by King Indra Dev. The temple of the monastery was said to have been constructed by removing a cremation ground that previously stood in the area. Thus, on the ninth day of Dashain, a main Hindu festival, people offer a tiny piece of their flesh to Mahakal, a deity believed to reside in the cremation ground to pay homage to the deity and ask for blessing.





## BHINDYO LACHHI

The locality is named after the Hindu god Bhimsen, a heroic figure in Hindu mythology, the *Mahabharata*. The bell and Tayo, a traditional Newari necklace made for gods, suggest that the temple was built in 1667. An erotic shadow play connected to this temple is shown at the window of a rest house nearby on the evening of the fourteenth day of the bright fortnight of the lunar month of Bhadra (Sept.). This was introduced during the time of King Yognarendra Malla (1685-1705). Several meters to the east of this temple one can find the 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century Gajalaxmi icon, one of the oldest icons of the Kathmandu Valley.



## YEMPI VIHAR

Yempi Vihar, locally known as IBahi is a heritage site near the Kumbeshwar Temple. It is said that the vihara was once visited by Guru Padmasambhava, who is believed to have stayed there for six months and went to Tibet to spread the teachings of Buddhism.

Yempi Vihar also plays a vital role in the annual Rato Machhindranath Jatra, a popular festival that takes place in Patan. The Jatra is believed to bring good luck and prosperity to the city, and it is said that any work related to the Jatra must first begin at Yempi Vihar.



MAP C6.7 Balkumari Route



MAP D7 Balkumari Route

## JYAPU MUSEUM

The Jyapu Museum in Lalitpur offers visitors a glimpse into the daily lives of the Jyapu community, a prominent indigenous group in the Kathmandu Valley. The museum is dedicated to preserving and showcasing the household objects and tools used by the Jyapu community throughout the history. From farming equipment to kitchen utensils, visitors can explore a vast collection of artifacts that tell the story of the Jyapu people and their way of life. Visitors can also learn about the traditional festivals and rituals, which are important parts of their cultural heritage. The museum hosts regular events and demonstrations, where visitors can see traditional dances, music, and other cultural practices.

## JAGAT NARAYAN TEMPLE

Jagat Narayan Temple is an example of Newari architecture located in Shankhamul, Patan. The temple was built by Commander-in-chief Jagat Shumsher Rana (1877-1879) and is dedicated to Lord Vishnu. The temple's wood carvings and painted murals are a testament to the skill and craftsmanship of Nepali artisans. The temple serves as a center for learning the Sanskrit language.



MAP C6, 7 Balkumari Route



## SATYA MOHAN JOSHI MEMORIAL HOUSE

---

Satya Mohan Joshi's (1920-2022) memorial house was the residence of a man widely known as Nepal's Man of the Century. Late Joshi was a renowned historian, cultural researcher, and a great literary figure. This house, located at Bakhumbahal in Patan has become a symbol of his commitment to preserving the cultural heritage of Nepal, which is now known as the Lok Sahitya Parishad.

A more than a century-old house consists of a coins museum and Maya Devi (Gautam Buddha's mother) temple within its premises. The large-scale painting of Chakrasamvara, the Buddhist esoteric tantric deity, is painted on the wall of the house by the famous artist Lok Chitrakar and his team.



## Lalitpur Metropolitan City

**Industry, Tourism and  
Culture Conservation Committee**

Pulchowk, Lalitpur, Nepal  
Tel.: 01 5422563 / 5440906  
Email: [info@lmc.gov.np](mailto:info@lmc.gov.np)  
[www.lmc.gov.np](http://www.lmc.gov.np)

CONCEPT BY:



## Lalitpur Chamber of Commerce & Industry

**Tourism and Culture Promotion Committee**  
Mangal Bazaar, Patan Durbar Square  
Lalitpur, Nepal  
Tel.: 01 5421740, 5430663  
Email: [info@lcci.org.np](mailto:info@lcci.org.np) / [lcci@ntc.net.np](mailto:lcci@ntc.net.np)



The Lichhavi Period Chaitya of Om Bahal:  
A jewel of Patan