

# Chamarajeshwara Temple

*Chamarajanagara - Karnataka*





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Indian Architecture is as old as the History itself and the corner stone to every architectural marvel has always been temples and religious structures. One such piece of architectural phenomena is Chamarajeshwara temple located in Chamarajanagar in Karnataka which is truly the most splendid depiction of the Dravidian architecture. Chamarajanagara shares its border with Tamilnadu and Kerala. The Temple was named 'Chamarajeshwara' which means containing the attributes of the King and God.

Carved out of deep sense of religious affiliation and desire to please god, 'Chamarajeshwara Temple' is an important identification of Indian culture and its people. The temple is supposed to be built in the 10th Century, has a Hoysala design architecture showcased in the 70 feet high five tier Rajagopuram (tower) with five scintillating brass Kalasha facing the east. The garbagriha (sanctum), the mukhamantapa (assembly hall) and the Nandi mandapa (pavilion) contain many carvings which showcase the Dravidian architecture. The monument contains various paintings with coloured adhesive sections showcasing stories of the past that transports the viewer to ancient India. These designs are quite mind-blowing which attracts thousands of devotees and art lovers to the temple. The temple is popular for its big courtyards with golden apex.

The temple trust and the care taker of the 'Chamarajeshwara' temple has dedicated yeomen services in maintaining the temple and have ensured that this religious legacy is preserved and handed over from one generation to another. Having seen the wear and tear of time and after undergoing various climatic changes, 'Chamrajeshwara Temple' looked completely out of shape in the year 2017 and was on the verge of colossal deterioration but with timely intervention of the Archaeology department of Karnataka, Temple's Charitable Trust, restoration work began in the year 2017 and was completed in the year 2018.

The task of restoration was humongous and the responsibility was bestowed upon 'Savani Heritage Conservation Pvt. Ltd. Being the recipient of 7 international awards and having the expertise and experience of restoring several heritage sites, the credentials were more than enough to entrust the responsibility for "Chamarajeshwara" temple. It is a matter of pride for the locals in Chamrajnagar and devotees across the country as the 'Chamrajeshwara Temple' that stands today is restored, revered as before and in regal state.



"Aerial View - Majestic Temple of Chamrajeshwara, a rare jewel of India blending art and culture of medieval times"





AFTER

The temple premises houses a nandi (bull) pavillion at the main entrance, facing the main shrine of the temple complex. The stone masonry was earlier lime washed and hence needed to be scraped off to retain its stone surface and later the roof was treated for waterproofing.

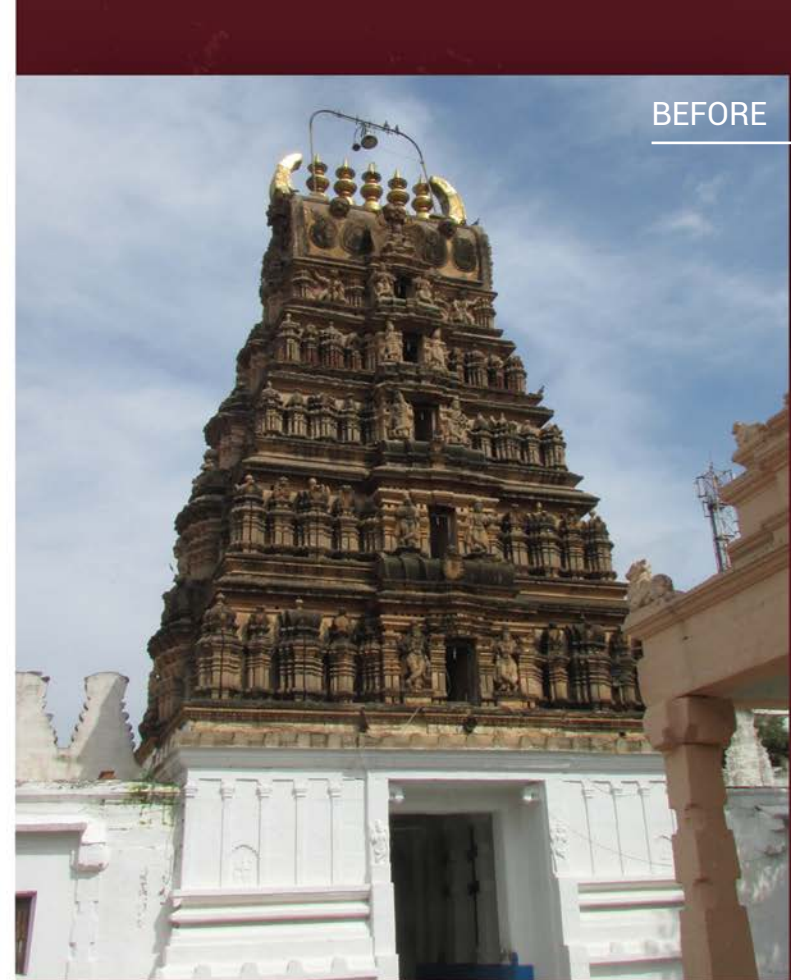
The art work of the prabhavalis was done in lime mortar, to restore its historic appearance which adds to the aesthetic character of the temple.



BEFORE



AFTER



BEFORE

The plastered layer of the Padavarga & Adhistana below the Vimana was de-plastered to expose its original carved layer. While the vimana is adorned with heavy art work which was majorly soiled. This intricate art work was redone with an addition of ochre yellow dye into the lime plaster to match the original one.

The human sculptures at different levels of the vimana were lime plastered in white to create a contrast and break the monotony of yellow shade throughout.





AFTER



AFTER

The art work in the crevices over the roof appeared to be soiled and dampened. The layers gathered over the Dravidian style columns were scrapped off and were lime washed to facilitate the polished look. The removal of lime paint led to the crystallized display of the carvings on the column and on the stone surface.

The art work was covered with waterproofing layer while the merlons were lime plastered. The plinth of the temple structure too was cleared off the lime layer.



BEFORE



BEFORE

The shrine of the ancillary temple in the premises was severely stained. The layer of plaster at the slab level was flaked and were scraped off and re-plastered.

The finial was cleaned and polished. However, some part of the wall was plastered while other left exposed to follow an alternating pattern an of stone and plaster.





AFTER



AFTER

The prabhavali (the ornamental circular or oval ring) houses the sculpture of god and goddesses. The temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and Goddesses Parvati and their sculptures hold a special significance and therefore its restoration was fundamental to the cause.

The sculptures were discolored due to water ingress and had developed a soiled layer and presented a disintegrated look hence the same was plastered in white lime to give a distinct standing from frame like prabhavali.



BEFORE

BEFORE



The various Prabhavalis (framed art work) at the parapet layer are the characteristic elements of the temple and hence its repair was crucial. Moreover, it required delicate repair of the artwork making the task extremely challenging.

The process required meticulous cleaning and correcting of the disfigured sculptures. These sculptures are an identity of the Dravidian temples and therefore needed an extra efforts to be saved from water ingress.





AFTER



AFTER

Faces of the sculptures has a special significance as they are mythological figures and showcase stories from the mythology. The art work included various floral, animal and human figures.

The brick base over which the these sculptures are carved seemed damp with rain water ingress. The sculptures were cleaned and restored back to original state.



BEFORE



BEFORE

The Mukhamantapa displayed beautiful fresco works but was in highly deteriorated state due to dampness and negligence. These paintings were completed from the leftover traces of the paintings done previously.

The fresco paintings and the intricate art work restoration was carried out by specialised artists. The painting work was a delicate one but was successfully restored with utmost attention and care.





The corridor runs throughout the temple precincts and houses smaller shrines. The interior of these shrines were lime washed to maintain balance of the colours in contrast to the idols in black colour.

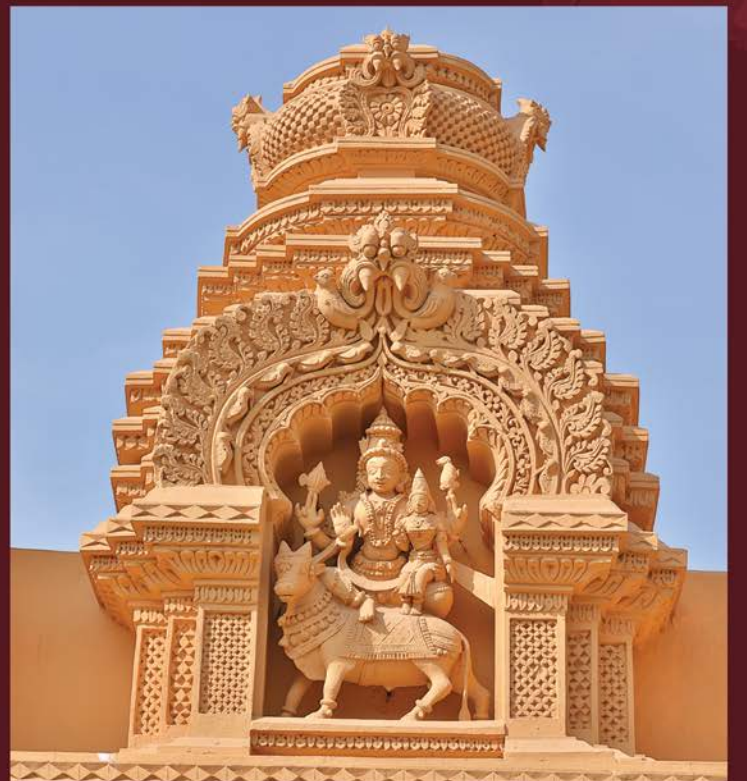
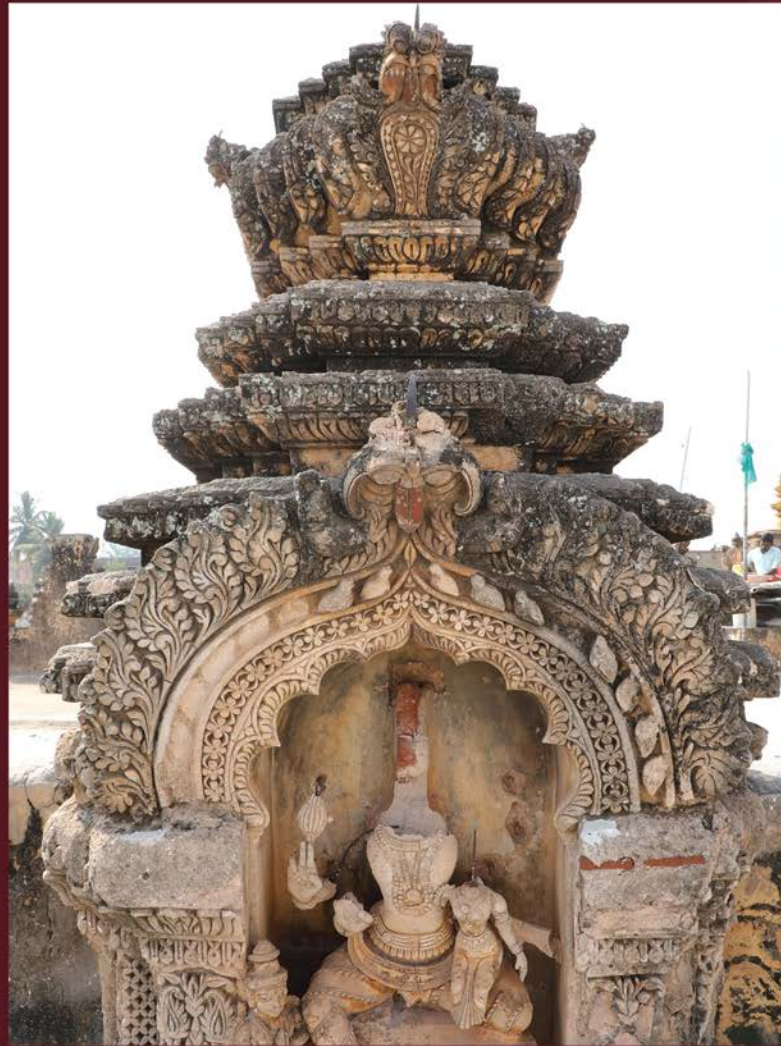
The joints were re-pointed, the flooring of the corridor and the channel running along the sides were cleared of accumulated dusts.



The running corridors are typical characters of Dravidian architecture. These corridors were throughout lime plastered previously which covered the stone carvings. Later, at the time of restoration, the lime plaster was cleared off from the structural members.

An alternating pattern of lime plaster and stone finish was adopted. The series of columns display a trabeate structural system of beams and columns which are typical of temple style of architecture.









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