

# Art and Architecture of Vijayanagar Empire

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## 1. Introduction

Harihara I taking advantages of the decline of the Hoysala Empire, successfully Established the Vijayanagar Kingdom in the year 1336 AD. There were Four Royal families successfully ruled by the Vijayanagar Namely Sangamas, Salvas, Tuluvas and Aravidu families. Which was declined in the Year 1565 AD in the famous Battle of Talikota. During the rule of three families Vijayanagar Kingdom reached its high Zenith in every field. The Kingdom was ruled by Many famous Kings among them were Harihar I, 1336-1355 Bukka I, 1355-1377 Harihar II, 1377-1404, Devaraya I 1406-1422, Devaraya II 1422-1446 and Krishnadevaraya 1509-1529. The Vijayanagar city was founded by Bukkaraya-I Which was one of the leading and attracted cities in the world

### The Centers

The Kings of the Vijayanagar had Constructed Many Magnificent Temples in the Different Parts of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh (undivided) and Tamil nadu The famous Centres of Art and Architectures were Hampi, Anegundi, srisailem, Tirumala, Tirupati, Penugonda Tadapatri, Lepakshi, Srirangam, Chidambaram, Kanchi, Rameswaram, Chandragiri, Kalahasti, Madurai and other Places.

Hampi was the Capital city of Vijayanagar Empire Situated on the Bank of river Tungabhadra which had yielded More than one hundred Monuments. It is surrounded by the chain of the Massive Granite hills. Numerous temples built with hard stones Quarried from the Local hills. The monuments can be divided into Temples and Non-Religious Structures. The temples building activities were started during the royal Patronage of Harihar and Bukka under the behest of their guru sage vidyananya. (1338) they used local reddish granite. During the Golden Days of the Vijayanagar Empire Great Foreign scholars and Travellers Domingo Pius, Abdul Razzack and Nuniz document its achievements for the Posterity. Robert Sewell who resurfaced the glory of this Empire

The temples are the most Significant Monument of Indian architecture it represents the subtle values of the Indian Culture and followed the firm Establishment of image worship and developed the rituals. Temples are the Matrix of Indian Culture. Temple Building was one of the conspicuous Practices of the Indians during the historical Period

### Patrons and the Grants

A Class of the different societies of the People Patronage the temple activities. The patronage activity consists of two stages, first one was the Construction of the Temple, and second one was mobilization of resources for the

maintenance of the Temples. Emperors, Royal Ladies Nobles Dandanayaks, Mahamandaleshwars Merchants and others involved in the Patronages Activities. The Vijayanagar Empire was Famous for Art, Architecture, and Sculptures. According to **Percy Brown** "Vijayanagar art as the supremely passionate flowering of the Dravidian style" The Vijayanagar Architector borrowed many architectural Features from the Cholas, Pandyas and the Hoysalas. The typical Vijayanagar temples have a high stone Enclosures around the temples with high Gopura on the gateway. it was made of granite and the Gopura was made of Bricks, wood and Stucco.

### Characteristic of Vijayanagar Architecture

- 1) **The Plan**-A typical Vijayanagar Temples are Big and Spacious. Consist of a Sanctum, an ante Chamber a pradakshinapatha, a navaranga, a Mukha mantapa, a kalyana matapa an Utsava mantapa and Parivara shrines. The whole Complex is enclosed by a high wall with Entrance marked by Gopuras. The Number of Entrance is depends on the size of the temple, Generally Temples face is situated toward East. Infant of the temple balli-pitha, dipa stamba and Dvaja stamba were situated.
- 2) **The Sanctum**-It was always in Square. Where the deity of the temple is dedicated. Temple of Rangatha or Anantasayana Possess rectangular Sanctum. It was called pitha where the Main deity was installed
- 3) **The Pradakshinapatha**- Balakrishna, Vithal and Hazaram Temples Possesses Pradakshinapatha around the Sanctum. In the Pre-Vijayanagar Period temples consists of Garbhagriha on the floor. Pradakshin Passage in the Vijayanagar Temple Does not touch with the Sanctum. There is gap between the Pradakshin and Sanctum
- 4) **The Navaranga**-The Navaranga is Squared houses Four Pillars. The Pillars are Located in the Four corners of the raised Platform built in the Centre of Navaranga. The Navaranga is generally has three Entrances as found in the Vithal, Hazaram and Virupaksha temples
- 5) **The Basement**-The Vijayanagar Temples Stands on a high Plinth made up of a series of mouldings The most Important Moulding is the bracelet Mouldings Another Moulding commonly found in the Basement is the Multi-faced Kamuda. The top most moulding is in the form of a kapota
- 6) **The walls**-Smaller Temples have Plain wall, where as Bigger Temples Possesses Decorative wall with niches, and Panjaras The niches which are Crowned by Salas Panjaras and tornas also found on the wall The outer wall decorated with the sculptures of deities,

- incidents from the Epics the Puranas, and the Mythological Accounts
- 7) **The Pillars**-Vijayanagar Architects used different types of Pillars for building Temples. There were two Types of Pillars were Prominent during the Vijayanagar Period. The first Type of Pillar is basically square, tall and Slender. The Pillar shaft is divided into three Square Sections each Separated by an octagonal and sixteen-sided band. The square Portion on the bottom has Naga-Bandhas. The Pillars Mainly Preferred forms the Schist.
  - 8) **The Ceiling**-Generally the ceilings are flat and plain. The central ceiling the Navaranga and Mukhamantapa are decorative. In the virupaksha temple, the ceiling of Rangamatapa is flat and spacious with Painted
  - 9) **Flight of Steps**-It was another important feature of Vijayanagar Temple. Flight of Steps Built at the Entrance into the Mukhamantapa. The steps are flanked by slabs depicting sural Yalis. The Elephants are adorned with ornaments of different kinds. Flights of steps with sural yalis can be seen in the temples of Balakrishna and Virupaksha
  - 10) **The Sikhara**-The Sikhara is built with Bricks and Mortar. These are less in height Compared with gopuras. The Sculptures are found on the Sikhara Prepared with the Stucco. For temple building they used granite. The Vijayanagar Monuments followed the traditions of Cholas and Pandyas. The layout of the Vijayanagar monuments is bigger than the Cholas and Pandyas.
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## 2. Conclusion

The Vijayanagar architects added their own touches as well –Virupaksha temple's entrance features a massive Gopura, a unique facet of South Indian temple architecture. The city is surrounded with seven fortifications wall. Its streets were wide enough for multiple chariots, and it was known that chariot festivals were popular during the Vijayanagar. Today, Vijayanagar represents the richest, surviving monument in South Indian architecture. Every one of its temples represents the confluence of the finest influences in India at their time of creation. The Vijayanagar Empire represented a magnificent epoch in the history of south India, Which cannot be forgotten. Paes quoted that Vijayanagar is the best provided city in the World

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