

Ballaleshwar

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Ganesha is believed to have saved this boy-devotee, Ballala, who was beaten by local villagers and his father (Kalyani-seth) for his single-minded devotion to him.

Shri Ballaleshwar, Pali

The original wooden temple was reconstructed in to a stone temple by Nana Phadanavis in 1760. There are two small lakes constructed on two sides of the temple. One of them is reserved for the puja (worship) of the Deity.

This Temple faces the east and has two sanctums. The inner one houses the murti and has a Mushika (Ganesha's mouse vahana) with modaka in his forepaws in front of it. The hall, supported by eight exquisitely carved pillars demands as much attention as the idol, sitting on throne carved like a Cyprus tree. The eight pillars depict the eight directions. Inner sanctum is 15 feet tall and outer one is 12 feet tall. The temple is constructed in such a way that after the winter (dakshinayan : southward movement of the sun) solstice, the sun rays fall on the Ganesha murti at sunrise. The temple is built with stones which are stuck together very tight using melted lead.

Like a few other murtis, this one has diamonds embedded in the eyes and navel, and with His trunk pointing to the left.

One speciality of this temple is that the prasad offered to this Ganapati at Pali is Besan Laadu instead of Modak that is normally offered to other Ganapatis.

The shape of the idol itself bears a striking semblance with the mountain which forms the backdrop of this temple. This is more prominently felt if one views the photograph of the mountain and then sees the idol.

The temple is located in the town of Pali, off the Mumbai-Pune highway, about 11 km before Nagothane on the Mumbai-Goa highway. This is located 30 km to the

South-West of Karjat Railway Station. Mumbai-Panvel-Khopoli-Pali is 124 km.
Pune-Lonavla-Khopoli-Pali is 111 km.

Behind this temple is the temple of Shri Dhundi-Vinayak which is West facing. This is a very rare idol which is facing the West. The story says that this idol was the same one which was thrown by Ballala's father (Kalyani-seth) while Ballala was worshipping it.

Another legend goes that Dhundi Vinayak is the elder brother of Ballal Vinayak and hence it seems that the devotees first worship Shri Dhundi-Vinayak and then Shri Ballaleshwar.