**The Sacred Jyotirlingas**

**Compiled by Hindu Temple Ventura County**

 Let’s learn what a jyotirlinga is. A jyotirlinga is a representation of the Supreme Lord Shiva. It is a Sanskrit word that implies " Radiance". The Shiva Purana refers to 64 Jyotirlingas. Out of these 64, 12 Lord Shiva Lingams are called Mahajyotirlingam or the Great Jyotirlingas.

**Somnath :**  Announcing the dawn of the Dwadash Jyotirlinga pilgrimage, the site is conventionally deemed as the first pilgrimage site. It is noted down in history that the temple at this site was plundered 16 times but was rebuilt again.

**Mallikarjuna :**  Also called the Srisaila, the temple at this site is an architectural splendor and houses numerous [**sculptures**](https://www.exoticindiaart.com/sculptures/). It houses the Lord Shiva Lingam and Shakthipeetha together.

**Mahakaleshwar :** The Lord Shiva Lingam present here is deemed to be Swayambhu out of all the 12 Maha Jyotirlingas. It faces the South and is the only Lord Shiva in his linga form that has the Shri Rudra Yantra positioned upside down on the Garbhagriha’s ceiling. It houses the Lord Shiva Lingam and Shakthipeetha together.

**Omkareshwar :** Located on an island along the Narmada River, it is home to the Mahala temple that houses a Jyotirlinga shrine.

**Kedarnath :** Situated closest to Lord Shiva’s actual abode in the Kailasha mountains, this temple housing the Lord Shiva Lingam is an important site for Hindu’s Char Dham Yatra. This site can only be visited once every six months.

**Bhimashankar :**Located in Khed Taluka of Daakini country, the temple that houses the Lord Shiva Lingam here is called the Dakini Tmple.

**Vishweshwara :** This Lord Shiva lingam is located in Kashi, Varanasi. UP is supposed to be the home to Vishwanath Jyotirlinga sanctum. It is likewise one of the Padal petra stalam of Vada Naadu that has been referenced in Thevaaram. It is located on the western banks of the blessed river Ganga. Lord Shiva in the linga form present here is known as Vishwanath, the leader of the universe. Varanasi is perhaps the most ancient city in the world and thus the temple was built there.

**Trayambakeshwar :**This Jyotirlinga is located on the banks of the Godavari and the legend says that this temple represents the birth of the river also.

**Nageshwara :**This temple is located in Gujarat, close to Jamnagar, and is one of the 12 Jyotirlingas referenced in the [**Shiv Purana**](https://www.exoticindiaart.com/book/hindu/puranas/shiva/). This Lord Shiva Lingam is popularly called the Dvādaśa Jyotirliṅga Stotram.

**Baidyanath :** It is viewed as one of the holiest abode of Lord Shiva. It is situated in Deoghar in Santhal Parganas division of the province of Jharkhand. This is prevalently called Baba Baidyanath where the Jyotirlinga is introduced. There are additionally 21 different temples around here. According to the Hindu legends, Ravana revered Shiva here to acquire the aid of 10 heads.

**Rameshwaram :**The southernmost Jyotirlinga in India is located in Tamil Nadu.

**Grishneshwar :** This temple housing the Lord Shiva Lingam is alluded to as Ghushmeshwar temple in the Shiv Purana. It is one of the temples of Shiv referenced in the Shiv Purana.