

# KHAJURĀHO

*Sublime & Sensual*

The temples of Khajurāho represent some of the most exquisite specimens of Hindu architecture and sculpture in medieval India. Built between 950 AD and 1050 AD, only 22 temples out of 85 now survive. A thousand years ago, the robust Chandelās of the warrior Rājput clan lived and loved here, fought and triumphed and having reached the peak of their power, built temples to their Gods with all the religious fervour of a virile race.

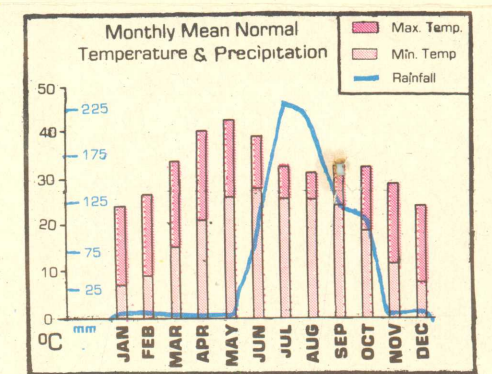
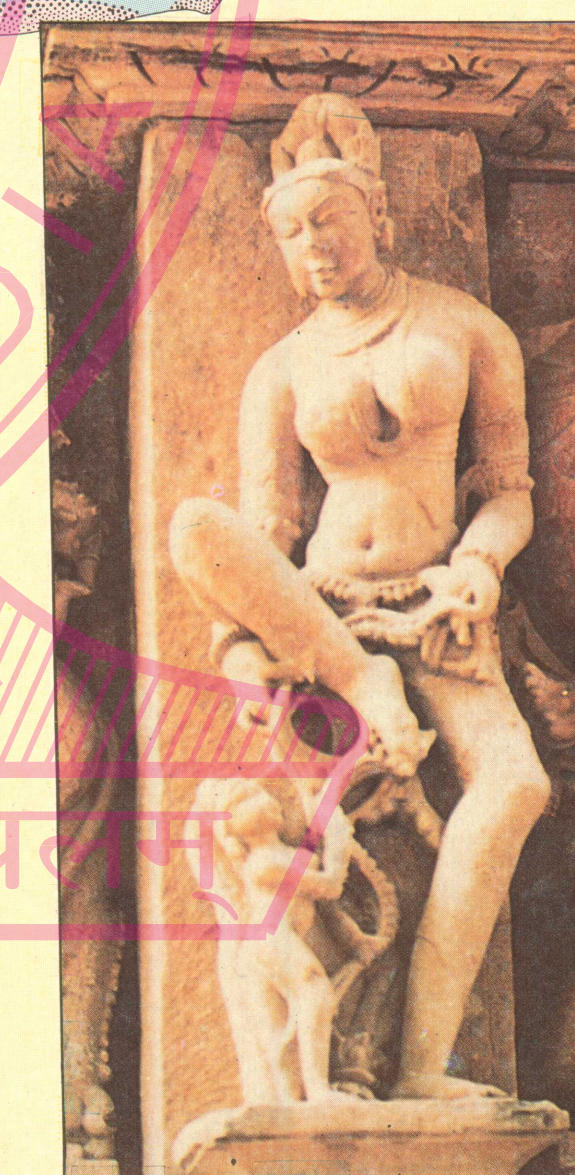
The name Khajurāho seems to have been derived from the word 'Khajura' meaning date Palm-trees bearing dates clustered around the town during the prosperous days of this royal city. According to popular belief two gold date palms used to adorn the city gates of Khajurāho.

Khajurāho sculpture is sensuous and sublime. The popular theme is the beautiful woman: reflective, playful, amorous. The carvings depict griffings, nymphs, beasts, demons in revolt, Gods in cosmic evolution, mortals caught in the fire of human emotions like fear, doubt, jealousy, ardent love and consummate passion. According to some, the erotic sculpture symbolises the ultimate union of the human soul with the divine. Others feel that they were the means to test the devotion of the pilgrims who used to come here to meditate. Yet another theory associates them with the fertility cult. Seen from a distance, these medieval temples appear like a range of hills rising spire upon ornate spire, culminating in the shikhara of the Kandāriya Mahādeo Temple.

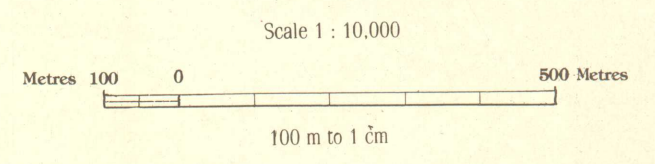
The temple of Khajurāho can be divided into three main geographical groups: southern, eastern and western. The western group comprises the famous Kandāriya Mahādeo Temple with its spectacular spire, the Lakshman Temple, the only one which retains its complete form and which is perhaps the most important, the Chitrāgupta Temple enshrining the image of the Sun God: the Devi Jagdāmbi Temple and many others.

The eastern group consists of three Hindu and three Jain shrines, with a colossal statue of the God Hanumān dominating a temple of more recent origin. The southern group lies about 4 km from Khajurāho and comprises the famous Dufādeo and Chaturbhuj shrines.

A quiet walk to the temples at sunset shows them haloed by a crimson sky, the subtlety of the spires rising one upon the other symbolising men's eternal yearning for a union with God.

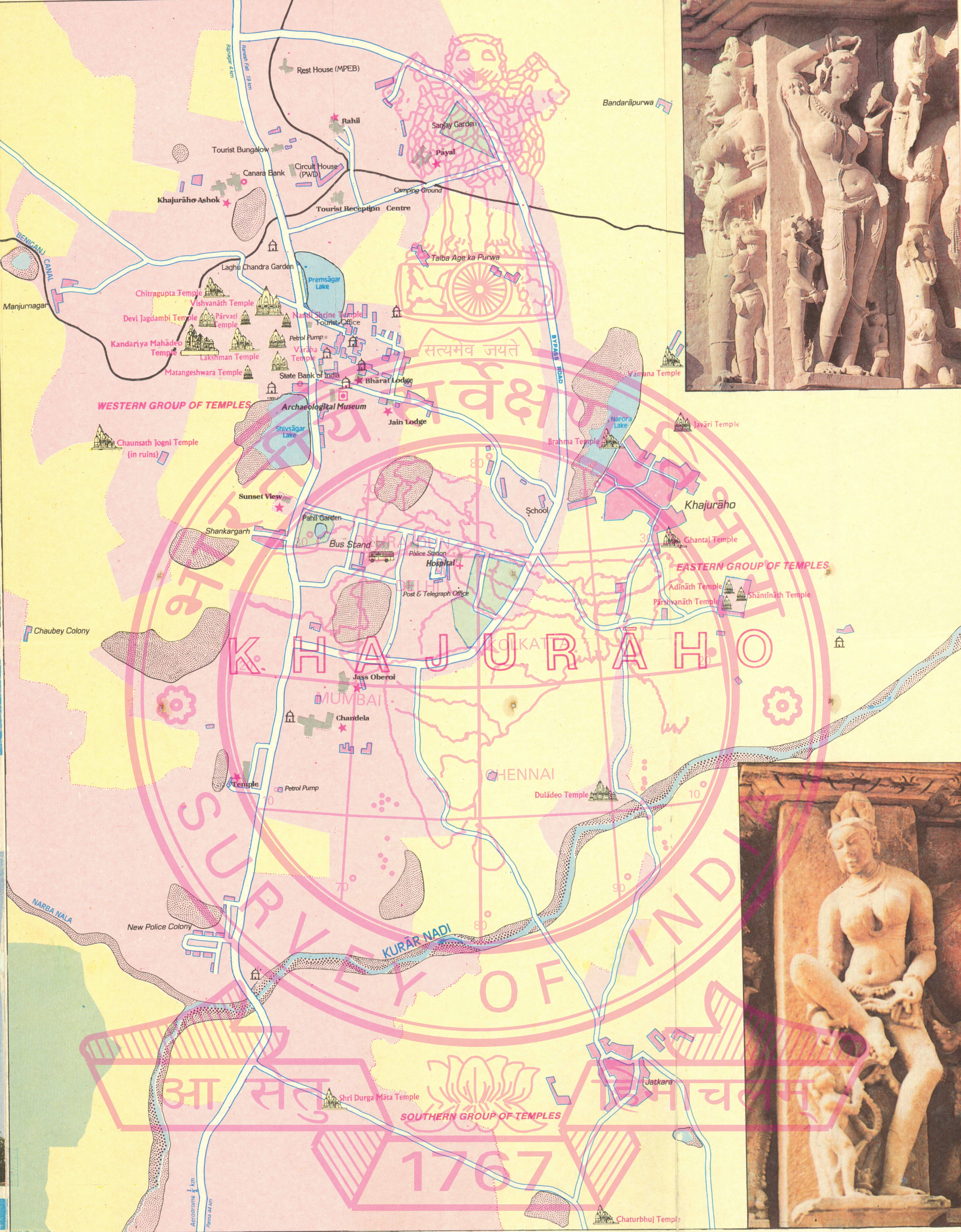
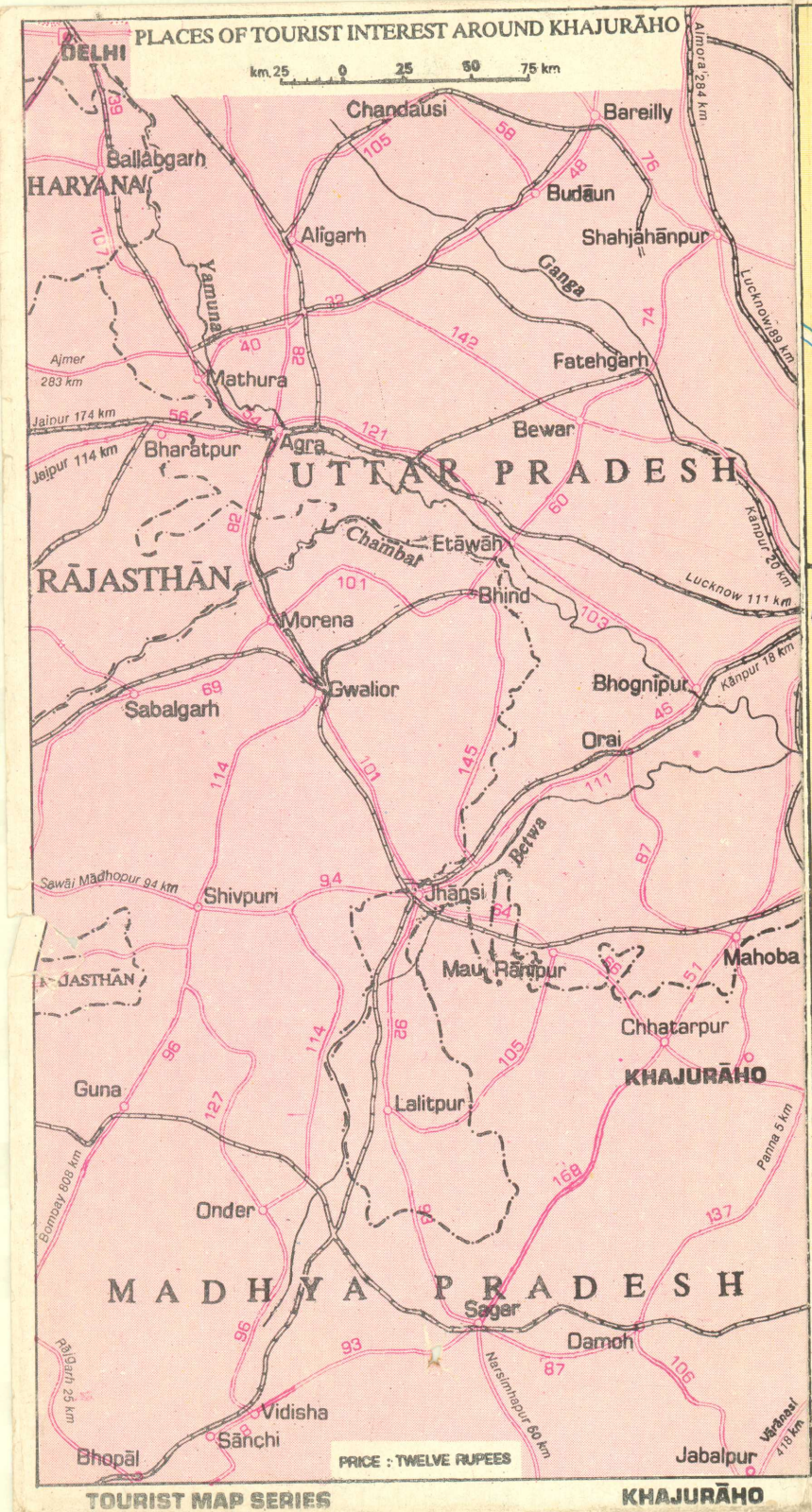


AVERAGE HEIGHT ABOVE MEAN SEA LEVEL 215 METRES



## LEGEND

- Roads: main, other:
- River, Stream, Tank:
- Cultivated area, Built-up area, Park:
- Names: temple, village other:
- Temples: historical, other:
- Police station, Important building:
- Museum, Bank, Hospital, Hotel:



# TOURIST MAP SERIES

# Khajurāho



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