

Vaikom Mahadeva Temple

By

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This is a very big temple with an area of approximately eight acres. It is believed that Vaikathu Appan (God in Vaikom temple) has three different aspects. By saluting him in the morning, you get wisdom, by doing it at noon you get victory and by doing it at night you get happy life.

There is a story about the origin of this temple. It is believed that an Asura called Khara got three Shivalingas from Lord Shiva himself. He brought them to Kerala, holding one by his teeth and one each in his left and right hand. While the Lingam held by his teeth was consecrated in Kaduthurthi, the one held in his right hand was consecrated in Vaikom and the one held in his left hand was consecrated in Ethumanur. People believe that if we can visit all these temples on the same day, it is very propitious.

The 4-5 feet tall God stands on a two feet high pedestal. The Uthsava Vighraha is decorated with golden crescent, three eyes etc. The statue is normally decorated with Bilwa leaves and other flowers.

On the south of the temple, is the temple of Panachikkal Bhagawathy. She is considered as Vana Durga. There is no roof over her idol. It seems that after the temple was built, there were problems created by a Yakshi. So people went and requested for help from Vyagrapada Muni. He told them that one Gandharwa maiden had become Yakshi due to the curse of Agasthya. She can be saved only by an assistant of Ganapathi called Trishuli. So all the people prayed Lord Ganapathi. Then Lord Ganapathi sent Trishuli to remove the curse given to the Yakshi. Trishuli cut her in to three pieces and threw those pieces. The present temple of Panachikkatu Bhagawathi is in the place where her trunk fell. Where the head fell, there is a temple called Moothedethu Kavu and where the legs fell, there is a temple called Koodachelu Bhagawathi. It is believed that The Ganapathi statue in the north eastern portion of the temple is due to this incident.

The greatest offering in Vaikom is Annadhanam. Originally the feast was restricted only to Brahmins but now it is for everybody. It is believed that Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvathy partake in the Morning feast at Vaikom in the form of Brahmins. The prasada of the temple is the ash collected from the big main kitchen of the temple. Daily all that is prepared is offered to God, before offering it to others. It is believed by partaking in this morning feast all incurable diseases would be cured and wealth will accumulate in our house.

The Vaikathu Ashtami (dhanu month-November-December) which is celebrated for 12 days, is the biggest festival in this temple. There is a custom of sick people rolling on the leaves used to eat after the feast. People believe that one such leaf was used by Lord Shiva and if you happen to roll on it, all your diseases would be immediately cured. From the Subrahmanya temple of Udayanapuram, Lord Subrahmanya goes out to kill the Tharakasura and Soorapadma. It is believed that the Ashtami feast is given by Lord Shiva for the victory of his son. After the feat Lord Shiva waits outside the temple for his son in the east side of the temple. After his victorious son comes. Lord Shiva along with his son takes up seat in the east gate and great offerings are made to the father and son. The

Kaimal belonging to Karuga hose has the right to give the first offering. When he returns people shout at him and throw arecanut peals at him. The reason for this is not known.