



drishti

Ruins of the Church of St. Augustine

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The church was built between 1597 and 1602, and is **dedicated to Our Lady of Grace** by the **Order of Saint Augustine**.

- The church was abandoned in 1830s due to the repressive policies of the Portuguese government, which resulted in the eviction of many religious orders from Goa.
- In 1842, the **main vault of the church collapsed** after which the entire **structure collapsed in stages**.
- In 1931, the facade and half the tower fell down, followed by more sections leaving only half the tower that is seen today.
- This remnant, the renowned **St. Augustine's tower is all that remains** of what was once one of the largest buildings in Goa -The Augustinian Monastery.
- In **1986, UNESCO declared the ruins to be a World Heritage Site** which is also the site of the archaeological discovery of the **remains of Queen Ketevan**.
- In the late 1980s, archaeologists from the Soviet Union and Georgia began efforts to trace the relics of Ketevan the Martyr, a Georgian queen who had delivered herself as a hostage to Shah Abbas I and was martyred for refusing to deny her faith whose relics were believed to be in Goa.

Architecture

- Originally comprising of four towers **built of laterite and a massive vault**, the dimensions of the edifice **resembles the great imperial cathedrals of the Renaissance era**.
- The **whole structure being supported by soaring pillars**, the vestiges of which remain visible today. The **grey basalt columns provide a lovely contrast to the red laterite**.
- The altar of the church has beautiful multicoloured Italian tiles and remnants of red and blue paintings.
- The tower's huge bell was moved in 1871 to the Church of our Lady of the Immaculate Conception in Panjim.