



Mains Practice Question

Q. What are the characteristics of Hoysala architecture? Examine how is it distinct from Nagara and Dravidian architecture. (250 words)

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Hoysala architecture is the Hindu temple architecture which got developed in the region of Karnataka near Mysore. It developed in the period from 1050-1300 A.D with the prominent seats being Belur, Halebid and Sringeri.

Salient features of Hoysala Architecture

- Multiple shrines of different deities were built around a central pillared hall.
- **Stellate plan:** These shrines are established intricately in the design of a star.
- Soft soapstone was the main building material.
- Massive emphasis was laid on the decoration of the temple through sculptures.
 - Both the interior and exterior walls, even the pieces of jewellery worn by the deities were intricately carved.
- The temples were built on an upraised platform known as Jagati.
- The walls and stairs of the temple followed a zigzag pattern.

Hoysala temples are sometimes called hybrid or vesara as their unique style seems neither completely Dravida nor Nagara, but somewhere in between.

However, the major difference between the Nagara & Dravidian architecture and Hoysala architecture is that the temple premise of former was laid out in the panchayatan style (principal temple and four subsidiary shrines), whereas the latter is based on stellate plan (star shape layout of the temple).

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