The temples of Khajuraho 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 Chandela of the warrior Khajuraho 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 vivid race.

The name Khajuraho seems to have been derived from the word 'Khajura' meaning date-Palms 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 Khajuraho.

Khajuraho sculpture is sensuous and sublime. The popular theme is the beautiful woman: reflective, playful, amorous. The carvings depict griffins, nymphs, beasts, demons in revolt, Gods in cosmic evolution, mortals caught in the flux of human emotions like fear, desire, jealousy, anger love and consummate passion. According to some, the erotic sculptures 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 omphalos spire, culminating in the shrines of the Khajuraho Hindu Temple.

The temple of Khajuraho can be divided into three major geographical groups: southern, eastern and western. The western group comprises the famous Khajuraho Temple with its spectacular spires, the Lakshmana Temple, the only one which retains its complete form and which is perhaps the most important, the Chitragupta Temple emblazoning the image of the Sun-God: the Devi Jagnireshwari Temple and many others.

The eastern group consists of three Hindu and three Jain shrines, with a colonial statue of the God Hanuman dominating a temple of more recent origin. The southern group lies about 42 km from Khajuraho and comprises the famous Dara Dere and Chhanabagh shrines.

A quiet walk to the temples at sunset shows them bathed in a creamy glow, the swallows of the spires filling one upon the other symbolising men’s eternal yearning for a union with God.