

Design Resource

## Hindu Temples - Kalpa

Kinnauri Architecture

by

Abhey Singh Grewal

IDC, IIT Bombay

Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/hindu-temples-kalpa>

1. Introduction

2. Place

3. Temple

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Source:

<http://www.dsource.in/resource/hindu-temples-kalpa/introduction>

## Introduction

Kalpa is a small town, situated in the eastern Himachal, in the district of Kinnaur. The entire district of Kinnaur exhibits this beautiful amalgamation of Hinduism and Buddhism. The Hindu temples in the region are largely dedicated to different goddesses, often considered as avatars of Goddess Durga. Kalpa is a slight exception on this matter, as it has temples dedicated to more popular Gods like Vishnu and Shiva.



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## Place

Kalpa is situated at a height of 2960m, on the west of river Sutlej. It was once the district headquarter of Kinnaur which was later shifted to Reckong Peo due to its good connectivity and extreme weather conditions of Kalpa. Kalpa gives you opportunity to witness amazing views of Kinner-Kailash, mythically considered as the winter home of Lord Shiva. The Kinner-Kailash range is famous for its 79 feet high stone, resembling a Shivaling, which changes colours through the day. As the entire administration has been shifted to Reckong Peo, the atmosphere at Kalpa is peaceful and laid back. The region is full of apple orchards, woods, picturesque villages and hamlets.



Kalpa village with apple orchards and deodhar trees.

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Apple trees.



Road leading to Roghi village.

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Bus stand at Kalpa village.



Town center of Kalpa village.

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Local women.



Kalpa town.



Dogs sleeping on a roof.



Kalpa town center at night.

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## Temple

The temples at Kalpa are made of locally available materials, stone, and wood. They are constructed in the Kath-Khuni style, involving empirical building technique, using stone and wood. The Kath-Khuni technique adapts well to the local climatic and seismic conditions. A typical house in Kinnauri architecture style has two levels. The lower level is used for cattle, and the upper level for residing, storing, and kitchen. The temples are almost same with a higher foundation, making them feel like watch-towers.

The temples at Kalpa are not so high, when compared to their counterparts in surrounding villages. They show detailed woodwork involving visuals of cows, local wildlife and local symbols. The first temple has two wooden carved snakes on its gate. The temples are often called by the name of Narayan-Naagin temple.



Hindu temple at Kalpa.

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Wood-work done on the gate of hindu temple.



Metal work in gold on the gate of temple.



Wood-work in the hindu temples at Kalpa.



Wood-work in the hindu temples at Kalpa.

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Temple with photograph of Devi hanging outside.



Wood-work in the hindu temples at Kalpa.



Wood-work in the hindu temples at Kalpa.



Wood-work in the hindu temples at Kalpa.



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Wooden sculpture of tigers outside the gate.

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Wooden sculpture of Vishnu.



Wooden sculpture of Shiva.



Metal-work on the gate.



Metal-work showing Goddess Kali.

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Metal-work with snakes.



Temple against the backdrop of Kinner-Kailash range.



Gate of the temple.



Wooden tiger outside the temple.

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Roof of slates.

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Tiger carved out of wood.



Snake/dragon carved out of wood.



Snake/dragon carved out of wood.



Temple area.

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Temple area.

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## Contact Details

This documentation was done by Abhey Singh Grewal at **IDC, IIT Bombay**.

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