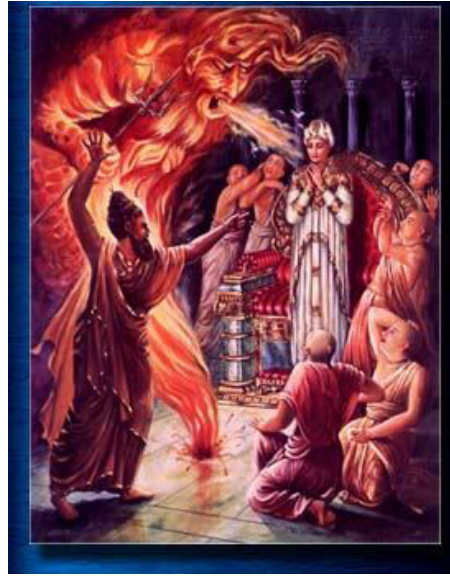


MADHUVAN (Maholi)



This is the first forest visited on Braja Mandala parikrama after leaving Mathura, Madhuvana forest is 5 km west of Mathura. Madhu means 'honey'. Krishna appeared in Madhuvana in all four yugas. In Satya-yuga He appeared before Dhruva Maharaja. In Treta-yuga He came as Satrugna and killed the demon Lavanasura. He came as Lord Krishna in Dwapara-yuga and as Lord Caitanya in Kali-yuga. Ambarish Maharaja performed meditation and austerities in the forest of Madhuvana in Satya-yuga. He made a vow to stay in Braja mandala for one year and strictly followed the Ekadasi Vrata, especially the maha-dvadasis.

How to Get Here: To get here from Vrindavana you get on the Mathura bypass road, the main road from Delhi to Agra, going south. You drive on this road for about 20 minutes until you come to a large domed temple. At this temple you make a right and drive for about eight minutes, until you come to the village of Madhuvana (Maholi).

Killing of Madhu and Lavanasura



In the Ramayana of Valmiki it is described that there was a demon named Madhu. This demon was always irreligious and demonic in nature. This demon wandered around and eventually came to Braja. He built himself a small kingdom here and called it Madhuvana. His family were also demoniac. They would not allow any sages or rishis to come and mediate in this area nor would they allow anyone to come and take bath in the Yamuna or to drink water from the Yamuna. They would harass the yogis and sages at every opportunity. These sages went to Ramachandra in Ayodhya and requested Him to help them. Lord Rama said he would go and slay the demons. Rama's younger brother Satrughna volunteered to kill the demon Madhu, his wife Mayadana and their son Lavanasura. At this time Shatrughna requested to bring with him the deity of Varahadeva to worship that Lord Rama had gotten after defeating Ravana at Lanka. Shatrughna was told by his counselors before leaving Ayodhya, that Lavanasura had many mystical weapons and if he had these weapons with him, then he would be almost unconquerable. When Satrughna arrived in Mathura he went into the forest to search for Lavanasura. He then saw a huge ferocious man, Lavanasura, who was carrying several tigers, a water buffalo, an elephant, a big fat snake and a crocodile. This was going to be his dinner. Satrughna challenged him to fight. Lavanasura told him to wait a few minutes and he would go get his weapons. Satrughna said you have a spear in your hand. Satrughna then killed Lavanasura after a great fight. He then killed Madhu and Mayadana. He then ruled Madhuvan and established Madhupuri (Mathura) as his capital.

Krishna-Kunda



Krishna-Kunda was made by Krishna striking His flute on the ground. Krishna would bring His cows to the bank of Krishna-Kunda and the cows would drink water here.

How to Get Here: When you reach the village of Madhuvana you continue through the village for a minute and you come to Krishna-Kunda on your left. It is on the outskirts of the village.

Balarama (Dauji) Temple



There is a Balarama (Dauji) temple right next to Krishna-Kunda. The village Deity is Balarama. His right hand is raised, and His complexion is black. It is said that Balarama is black, because he became so absorbed in chanting Krishna's name that he turned black.

How to Get Here: This temple is the first building to the left of Krishna-Kunda, on the road. From the outside this building does not look like a temple.

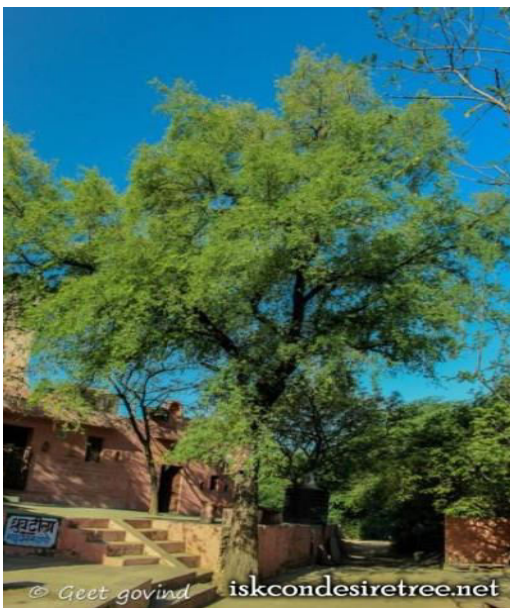
Satrugghna Temple



Satrugna, the brother of Lord Rama, made His capital in Madhuvana in Treta-yuga. There is a Deity of Satrugna said to date back to Treta-yuga in a temple next to Krishna-Kunda. The brahmanas in this area were being disturbed by Lavanasura, the son of demon Madhu. They prayed to Lord Ramachandra to help them. He sent his brother Satrugna here and He killed Lavanasura. He then made His capital here. There is a cave here in which the demon Lavanasura lived.

How to get Here: The ancient Deity of Satrugna is in a temple very near Krishna-Kunda. If you are facing the kunda, standing near the road, this temple is on your right hand side, down a side road. It is a few doors down the road on the left. From the outside you see that it is a temple. You enter the courtyard of this temple and go up the stairs on your left. When you go up the stairs, the Deity of Satrugna is on your right, in a room.

Dhruva-tila





In the Madhuvana forest, Dhruva Maharaja at the age of five, attained the darshan of Lord Vishnu, in His form as Prishnigarbha during Satya-yuga. On top of the hill here called Dhruva-tila is the Dhruva-Narayana Vishnu Temple. Dhruva-tila is where Dhruva Maharaja performed great austerities and where he had darshan of Lord Vishnu. On one altar in this temple is the Deity of Dhruva-Narayana and below Him is a deity of Dhruva Maharaja. On the right side of the altar are Narada Muni and Garuda. To the right of this altar on the side wall is another altar with the Deities of Lakshmi Narayana and Sri Nathji on it. Below the Deities of Lakshmi Narayana is a deity of Uddhava.



How to Get Here: Before you enter the village of Madhuvana you can see the Dhruva-Narayana temple on your left, on top of the Dhruva-tila hill. The hill is about 30 feet high. To get to this temple you have to either walk across the fields or walk through the village from the road.