Glossary

**Abhaya mudra**: Hand gesture of assurance or protection.

**Adhishthana**: Moulding basement (in South India, moulding below wall frieze).

**Agni**: The god of fire and guardian of the south-east point of compass.

**Amlaka**: Nyrobolan fruit; crowing member of Latina, Nagara temple.

**Anarpita**: With detached hara (South India).

**Anjali-mudra**: Attitude of offering.

**Apsaras**: Heavenly nymph.

**Ankusha**: 

**Antrala**: Space in front of sanctum door, vestibule.

**Apsara**: Heavenly nymph.

**Ardhmandapa**: Half-hall articulated with the vimana or mandapa (South India).

**Asana patta**: Seat side coming between the vedika and the sloping parapet.

**Avatara**: An incarnation of Vishnu.

**Bhadra**: Central off set (wall division).

**Bhairava**: The terrific form of Shiva

**Bhitta**: Foundation course, substructure.

**Bhuta**: Crowing atlas-like goblin represented as carrying the load of a structure.

**Brahma**: The first deity of Hindu trinity.

**Brahmani**: The shakti or female counterpart of Brahma.

**Chaitya**: Object that acts as the focus for worship; the term is sometimes used by itself for the hall housing the chaitya (chaitya-griha) or for a barrel-vaulted window motif based on that hall-type (chaitya-gavaksa).

**Chakra**: Wheel, discus, the emblems of Vishnu.

**Chandrasila**: Moon stone, semi-circular of half-moon shaped step before a shrine.

**Chandrika**: Architectural member between amalaka and crowing.

**Chauri**: Fly-whisk.

**Chitra**: Ornament, image, picture.
Darpan: Mirror, circular decorative motif.
Deva: A god.
Devi: A goddess.
Dikpalas: Eight guardians of the directions.
Durga: A name of Parvati.
Dvarapala: Door keeper.
Gada: Club or a mace carried by Vishnu.
Gaja: Elephant.
Gaja-Lakshmi: The goddess of Lakshmi as represented with two elephants, one on either side of her, pouring water upon her head from vessels in their trunks.
Gana: Shiva’s attendant generally represented as pot-bellied.
Ganesha: Elephant-headed god of wisdom and son of Shiva and Parvati.
Garuda: Vishnu vehicle, mythical bird.
Gauripatta: Base of phallus of Shiva with a projected panel for draining out the water used for anointing the phallus (Lingam).
Ghanta: Bell.
Gopuram: Monumental gate-way.
Grasapattika: An architectural frieze of ornamental lion faces known as grasa of kirttimukha.
Griva: Neck; recess between the shikhara and crowing amalaka.
Hamsa: Goose, gander (decorative motif).
Hara: Garland; balustrade or cloistered parapet.
Indra: The Lord of gods and guardian of east.
Indrani: The sakti, the female counterpart of Indra.
Jadya kumbha: A distinctive padma-like moulding of the jagati or adhishthana.
Jagati: Plinth, platform; basal moulding of adhishthana.
Jangha: Wall, wall frieze; elevation between vedibandha and shikhara.
Jata-mukuta: Crown of matted locks.
Kalasha: Pitcher; tours moulding, also pot-like finial of the spire of a temple.
Kali: The terrific form of female goddess.
Kama: Love or desire; also Hindu God of love, cupid.
Kamandalu: Water vessel
Kapili: Wall projecting in front of the sanctum framing a vestibule.
Kapota: Roll-cornice.
Karana-mukuta: Miniature square structure on corner of superstructure.
Kartikeya: Son of Shiva, a Hindu god of war.
Kati: Waist; wall (early synonyms for jangha).
Keyuras:
Khura: Lowest moulding of the adhishthana and man
Kirttimukha: Originally represented as a Lion’s face usually shown within a chaitya window.
Krishan-Lila: Sports of Krishana as described in the Hindu mythology.
Kubera: The god of wealth and guardian of south.
Kuberi: The sakti, the female counterpart of Kubera.
Kumara: Atlas; bharaputraka.
Kumbha: Pot; vedibandha moulding.
Kuta: Superstructure-type.
Lalatabimba: Crest figure, central symbol on door lintel.
Linga: Shiva’s phallic pillar.
Mahamandapa: Large enclosed hall in front of the main shrine.
Mahishasurmardini:
Makara: Mount of river goddess Ganga, a crocodile-shaped reptile, a sea monster.
Makara-torana: Torana arch emanating from makaras
Mala: Garland; decorative band.
Mandapa: Hall, generally with columns.
Mithuna: Auspicious couple
Moksha: Salvation of liberations from bonds of birth and death.
Mudras: Gestures.
Mukamandapa: Front hall, entry hall
Mukuta: Crown or kirtita over the head of a deity.
Nabhicchanda: Type of ornate ceiling with deep concentric bands
Naga: Cobra; snake
Nagara: Generic name for north Indian temple-type.
Nandi: Shiva’s bull
Nattraja: Dancing form of Shiva.
Nayika: A lady playing the heroine’s role.
Nirandhara: Without the ambulatory.
Padma: Lotus
Padmasana: Sitting on lotus.
Panchatatana: A temple with four subsidiary shrines.
Parasada: Shrine or palace.
Parvati: Consort of Shiva.
Patra: Leaf
Patta: Band, register
Pattika: Kampa; rectilinear fillet
Phamsana: Tiered, pyramidal roof-type
Pitha: Pedestal, platform
Pradakshinapatha: Circumbulatory path.
Prakriti: Primeval matter.
Rathika: Framed niche
Sala: Rectangular chamber
Salabhanjika: Lady sporting with a tree.
Sandhara: A temple with an andharika or covered inner ambulatory around garbhagariha.
Sardula: Lion monster
Shankha: Conch, shell
**Shankhapurusha:** Anthropomorphic from Vishnu’s conch.

**Shikhara:** Literally meaning head, the term stands for the principal spire or tower over the sanctum or garbha-gariha.

**Siras:** Sirsaka; pillar bracket.

**Sukanasika:** Pediment shaped roof over the antarala.

**Surasundari:** Celestial nymph.

**Tirthankara:** A Jain teacher.

**Tribhanga:** A standing posture with three bends of the body.

**Ursringa:** Miniature spire or turrets on a temple tower.

**Vahana:** Mount or vehicle.

**Vaikuntha:** A form of Vishnu or Hindu concept of heaven.

**Vaishnavi:** Consort of Vishnu.

**Vajra:** Thunderbolt (as weapon).

**Vamana:** Dwarf incarnation of Vishnu.

**Varaha:** Boar incarnation of Vishnu.

**Varahi:** Consort of Varaha.

**Vedibandha:** Basal wall, moulding, consisting primarily of khura, kumbha, kalasa, antarapatta and kapotapali.

**Vedika:** Railing, balustrade.

**Vimana:** Towered sanctuary having sanctum or cell, enshrining the main image of the deity.

**Vishnu:** Preserver, one of the Hindu trinity.

**Vitana:** Ceiling, covering under roof.

**Vyala:** Composite fantastic animal.

**Yajnopavita:**

**Yakshi:** Female yaksa.

**Yama:** God of death.

**Yogasana:** Meditations pose.