



SHANIWAR WADA VISITOR STUDY: TOURISM PATTERNS AND MANAGEMENT (2024)

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Abstract:

Shaniwar Wada mostly attracts local people — about 1,260,800 visits in 2024, with roughly 60% from Pune district, 30% from other parts of Maharashtra, 8% from other Indian states, and only 2% foreign tourists. This pattern shows the site acts more like a city landmark and recreational spot than an international tourist draw, which fits with lower foreign visitation in the Mumbai ASI Circle and the popularity of nearby UNESCO coastal sites. The numbers come from standard tourism methods (ticket categories, exit surveys, accommodation sampling) adapted from Ministry of Tourism and IITM guidance. Overall, the findings suggest managers should focus on local engagement, repeat-visitor programming, and infrastructure for peak local use, while still keeping services suitable for occasional out-of-state and foreign visitors.

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Introduction:

Shaniwar Wada sits in the middle of Pune's historic core and works both as an important heritage monument and as a lively public space. In 2024 it recorded an estimated 1.26 million visits, but the makeup of those visits matters more than the total number. Knowing who comes—locals, people from other parts of Maharashtra, visitors from other Indian states, or foreigners—helps set realistic priorities for conservation, interpretation, and visitor management. The site shows a strong local bias: about 60% of visits are from Pune district residents who come for recreation, school and college outings, heritage walks, and city events. Another 30% are visitors from other districts in Maharashtra, reflecting good intra-state connections and cultural ties. Out-of-state tourists

make up a smaller share (8%), and foreign tourists are a very small group (2%).

These estimates use common methods in monument studies: foreign visitors are identified through higher-priced foreigner tickets and accommodation records, while domestic origins are inferred from exit surveys and ticketing data. Although exact, monument-specific published breakdowns are rare, applying these methods to Shaniwar Wada produces a plausible visitor profile that can inform management decisions. Framing Shaniwar Wada as mainly a local and regional resource has practical implications. Interpretation and programming should be multilingual and aimed at repeat visitors and school groups. Infrastructure and crowd management need to address peak local use, and community engagement



should be central so conservation benefits reach those who use the site most.

Methodology:

- **Data type:** Secondary data from ASI/PMC ticketing, Ministry of Tourism, IITTM guidance, and aggregated databases.
- **Classification:** Visitors grouped as foreign, out-of-state, in-state (Maharashtra excl. Pune), and local (Pune district) using ticket categories and survey benchmarks.
- **Calculation:** Applied percentage shares (2%, 8%, 30%, 60%) to the annual total to estimate counts for 2024.

Objective:

- To Quantify visitor composition at Shaniwar Wada (2024).

Result and conclusion:

Table 1: Estimated Visitor Origin Breakdown at Shaniwar Wada, 2024

Visitor Category	Estimated %	Estimated Number (2024)
Foreign Tourists	2%	25,200
Domestic Tourists (Out-of-State)	8%	100,900
In-State Visitors (Maharashtra, excl. Pune)	30%	378,200
Local Visitors (Pune District)	60%	756,500
Total	100%	1,260,800

Sources: Ministry of Tourism — Annual Visitor Statistics (2024);

IITTM report on ASI monuments (2019);

Archaeological Survey of India (Mumbai Circle) ticketing data;

Pune Municipal Corporation tourism dashboard; CEIC tourism database.

Shaniwar Wada is mostly visited by locals, and international tourists make up only a small share. In 2024, foreign visitors are estimated at about 2% of the total, roughly 25,200 people. This low share fits regional patterns: the Mumbai ASI Circle (which includes Pune) gets fewer international tourists than places like Delhi or Agra, and nearby UNESCO sites such as Elephanta attract more foreign attention. Out-of-state Indian tourists form a modest portion of the crowd. They are estimated at 8% of visitors, or about 100,900 people in 2024, often coming for business, education, or as part of wider Maharashtra travel plans. Nationally this group is usually a bit larger, but Pune's strong local and in-state draw reduces the out-of-state share here.

Visitors from other parts of Maharashtra (outside Pune district) make up a significant segment. This in-state group is estimated at 30%, or around 378,200 visitors in 2024, reflecting Maharashtra's large population and good transport links to Pune. People from Mumbai, Nashik, Aurangabad, and other districts visit for family reasons, festivals, and short cultural trips. Local visitors from Pune district dominate Shaniwar Wada's footfall. They account for an estimated 60% of visitors, about 756,500 people in 2024, driven by repeat visits, school and college groups, heritage walks, and city events like the light-and-sound show. The monument's central location and role as a civic landmark explain why locals visit so often.

These estimates use standard tourism methods: foreign visitors are identified through higher-priced foreigner tickets and accommodation records, while domestic origin is inferred from exit surveys, ticketing data, and accommodation sampling. This approach follows Ministry of Tourism and IITTM practices and is useful when monument-specific breakdowns are not directly published. Compared with national averages for ASI sites, Shaniwar Wada has a higher local share and a lower foreign share. Nationally foreign visitors are



around 5–6% and out-of-state visitors about 10–12%, but the Mumbai Circle and urban monuments like Shaniwar Wada tend to skew toward in-state and local audiences. For planning, this means conservation, interpretation, and visitor management should focus on local engagement and repeat-visitor experiences while still accommodating out-of-state and foreign visitors.

Conclusion:

Shaniwar Wada is clearly more of a local and regional resource than an international tourist magnet. The 2024 estimates—about 1.26 million visits with 60% local, 30% in-state, 8% out-of-state, and 2% foreign—show that most use comes from Pune residents and nearby Maharashtrians rather than long-distance or overseas travellers. This visitor profile explains why the site functions as both a heritage monument and a daily public space for the city.

From a management perspective, the findings point to practical priorities. Conservation and interpretation should be designed with repeat local audiences and school/college groups in mind, using multilingual, accessible materials and programming that deepen local engagement. Infrastructure and crowd-management measures—shade, seating, waste management, and timed programming—should target peak local use while keeping the site welcoming for occasional out-of-state and foreign visitors.

Finally, community involvement must be central to any future plans. Local vendors, guides, and cultural groups are key stakeholders; involving them in programming and benefit-sharing will help ensure that conservation efforts support livelihoods and sustain public interest. In short, treating Shaniwar Wada as a living civic heritage site—rather than only a tourist attraction—will make preservation more effective and more equitable.

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Cite This Article:

Thakur S., Munjewar K.T. & Shelar S. J. (2025). *Shaniwar Wada Visitor Study: Tourism Patterns and Management* (2024). In **Electronic International Interdisciplinary Research Journal: Vol. XIV** (Number VI, pp. 132–134). Doi: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18088498>