FEATURE

On the Trail of the Bodhi Tree

When the Buddha attained enlightenment, he flew to the Bodhi tree and sat beneath its canopy. He then gave sermons and taught the first set of teachings. Over the centuries, the tree has become a source of inspiration and a symbol of the Buddha’s achievement. The tree is now a sacred site in India and is visited by millions of pilgrims each year. The Bodhi tree is a thousand years old and is still alive. It is located in Bodhgaya, a town in Bihar in north central India. It was here that Buddha was said to have stared for weeks at a pipal fig tree. The pipal fig (Ficus religiosa) is a sacred tree in many Asian cultures. It is used in various religious rituals and is believed to bring good fortune and protection. The tree is also known as the Bodhi tree, which means “enlightenment” in Pali.

According to the legend, the Buddha was sitting in meditation under a pipal fig tree when he attained enlightenment. He was then given a gilded Vesuva (a seated representation of the Buddha) by a retinue of decorated elephants. The tree is still alive nearly 2,300 years later and is surrounded by a large grove of trees. It is a popular spot for meditation and prayer, and is visited by millions of pilgrims each year. The tree is also a symbol of the Buddha’s teaching, and is the inspiration for the eightfold path. The tree is said to be the “tree of life” and is an important symbol in many ancient cultures. The Bodhi tree is a reminder of the Buddha’s journey from ignorance to enlightenment, and is a source of inspiration for all who seek to understand the nature of the self and the universe.