

India

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Travel time: 03/07, 08/00, 05/98, 03/98

General Information

www.virtualtourist.com/travel/Asia/India

www.karnatakaturism.org

India is chaotic but very interesting. You will love or you will hate it.

If you know how to bargain you can live very cheap. You should discover the local prices before you bargain.

Be sure to have a reservation before you travel by train. It's better to stay till you have one. If you travel a longer distance take a 2nd class upstairs sleeper. That relates to all trains in India. Otherwise you have to travel sometimes in an overcrowded wagon or on the rooftop with is both an adventure. Food and tea is available on the train or at the platforms. Try it because it's very tasty but have some small change ready.

Trains have received a great improvement since my last travel in 1998:

- The almost non present dim lights where changed to modern fluorescent lamps which are emitting a bright light even when the train stops at a station.
- For some trains everyone needs a reservation ticket, so the train never gets crowded like in previous times.
- The old ventilators on the ceiling where exchanged to two non-oscillating ones. Now the upstairs sleeper is brighter but no cooling wind anymore.
- Ticket confirmation by telephone is easy and clearly understandable.

Agra (03/07)

Accommodation:

Shanti Lodge
Chowk Kagjiyan
South Gate
Taj Mahal
Tel.: 0562 - 2231973

shantilodge2000@yahoo.co.in

The Shanti Lodge has single rooms for 150 Rs with own [shower](#) and [double](#) for 250 Rs which are a little better maintained and have hot water 24 hours. Only the essential mosquito net is missing which is a big minus. The view from the rooftop restaurant is great even the name "waiter" is not the right word for this lovely chaos-team (If they have no change they may ask you to take three bottles of water instead ;-). To enjoy the [nice view](#) you must not stay in the lodge.

Sight Seeing:

Taj Mahal

The 750 Rs entrance fee includes one 500 ml bottle of water and a pair of shoe covers. Tourists can only enter at the east gate which is open from 6 AM. It's worth to come early because after 8 AM it's getting crowded. Video taping is not allowed

inside the main complex.

With the ticket you get 50 Rs discount by visiting the following sites at the same day: Agra Fort, Itimadud-Daula, Sikandra and Fatehpur Sikri.

Travel:

Bus to Fatehpur is 22 Rs and takes 1 hour.

At the railway station near the entrance for the "Unreserved II class booking office" is a "[Prepaid auto riksha](#)" booth, where you can book transfers to the most touristy places in Agra with fix prices.

Several trains running to New Delhi daily. The Kerala-Express leaves at 10 AM for 60 Rs unreserved 2nd class seat or 141 Rs for a sleeper. It's 6 hours.

[Up](#)

Amritsar (03/98)

Accommodation:

Stay next to the Golden Temple where the pilgrims are staying. There is a room only for foreigners. You should pay a donation as you want.

Sight Seeing:

The Golden Temple itself is very impressive and for free. Remove your shoes before you enter.

[Up](#)

Anjuna (03/07) [Map1](#) , [Map2](#)

Accommodation:

Ocean Pearl Guesthouse

Prais Vaddo

Tel: 2274451

Guesthouse Ocean Pearl has clean rooms with own bathroom and fan for 500 Rs without and 600 Rs with ocean view.

Friendly owner, nice garden, directly at the shore, silent, little overpriced. [Pic](#)

Recommendable.

Food:

Looda Restaurant

The bar / restaurant Looda is a little further down the beach and offers live music every Wednesday at 5 PM. It's [packed](#) with foreigners.

Useful:

For a swim you should walk from Ocean Pearl some 200 meters down to the Sunset / Shore bar where the beach has fewer rocks than in front of the guesthouse.

The beaches in [Anjuna](#) and [Vagator](#) are not that beautiful as around Palolem and more expensive too. Lots of foreigners seems to be at home and do not respect the Indian culture and laws here. Drug are offered and consumed everywhere,

topless sunbathing and many more are the dark side of the former "Hippie Hype".

At the south end of the beach is the spot for paraglider, banana riders and water skiers.

The huge market every Wednesday is definitely worth a visit. Find a large variety of garments, traditional styles, music, touristy gifts and useless souvenirs in one of the many alleys and be at Looda bar before 5 PM to grab a seat for the live music.

Travel:

MGM Travel at the main bus stop can arrange tickets for all kind of transportation. They charge 180 Rs for getting the train ticket from Mapusa. Do not trust their given information as everywhere in India because they could be wrong.

Anjuna to Mapusa by bus is 8 Rs running every half hour from the junction to Vagator.

Mapusa to Thivim Railway Station is 7 Rs with the bus from Mapusa bus terminal. No restaurant and only a few shops are present at the station itself but at the junction where you have to leave the bus and walk some 300 meters uphill to the station are two restaurants offering Indian style food for reasonable prices. The express train to Mumbai stops here (see Mumbai).

[Up](#)

Aurangabad (08.00)

Very relaxing city with a nice old bazaar area nearly without beggars. It has good shopping possibility for local products.

Accommodation:

WelcomHotel Rama International

Tel: 0240-4885441

Fax: 0240-484768

One of the most comfortable places to stay is the WelcomHotel Rama International. Brilliant rooms, helpful friendly staff and good breakfast buffet cost 1906Rs for a single including tax. Ask for the voucher either for dinner or drinks at happy hour per day of stay. They have free pickup service and if you are firm also back to the airport.

Sight Seeing:

The most reason to come here is Ajanta & Ellora. The world heritage listed Buddhist, Hindu and Jain cave temples of Ajanta & Ellora are some of India's greatest sights. Containing rock paintings and sculpture, they represent the culmination of Deccan rock-cut architecture. The masterpiece among the 34 caves is the astonishing Kailasha Temple which is the world's largest monolithic sculpture. All caves are free of charge except the Kailasha Temple which is 40Rs admission. Parking at the area is 10Rs extra.

[Up](#)

Bangalore (03/07)

Accommodation:

Royal Lodge

The Royal Lodge has reasonable double [rooms](#) with own [bath](#), TV and ventilator for 395 Rs ([Tarif](#)). Warm water is available form 6:30 AM to 9 PM but no left luggage room present. The rooms are clean and not very noisy if the diesel generator must not run because of power failures. It's a crowded but save place and the staff at the reception is very helpful. Check out time is check in time. At morning time between 8 and 9 someone will walk through the floors shouting "doobi dobi": It's the laundry man! The laundry will be returned around 5 PM. [Map](#)

Highly recommendable.

Food:

Restaurant Volga
41/42, S.C. Road
Tel: 22870040

The Volga offer tasty Indian dishes for reasonable prices in a clean atmosphere. The waiters are helpful by explaining the menu and the order comes quick. But best is at it's rooftop garden (as long as it's not raining :-). Its 50 meter down the road opposite Royal Lodge.
Very recommendable.

Indra Prastha Restaurant

It offers nice vegetarian food for reasonable prices in a clean environment. It's next to Hotel Adora.

Vasudev Adiga's Majestic
K. G. Road
Tel: 30928764

Nice food with self service or seated with a/c which is slightly more expensive. Always crowded and a little overprice compare to Volga Restaurant. Only the special offers like the "Lunch mini meal" are a bargain.

Chicken Corner

Its around the corner of the Royal Lodge is a quick and dirty self-restaurant were you can sit outside and watch the traffic and while you eat some unpleasant meal. It's located at 2nd Cross.
Not recommendable.

Sight Seeing:

The daily offered one day sight seeing tour from the official tourist office takes you to the following sights (extra fees in brackets):

- The Visvesvaraya Art Museum (4 Rs) was "suddenly closed" because of holiday purposes.
- Luckily the nearby Industrial & Technological museum was open. Four floors with engines, electronics and other industrial items where on display. Some movable sample where out of order or out of date. The 3-D-Show is 10 Rs extra.
Not recommendable.
- Tipu Sultans Palace (100 Rs): Old wooden house with a small exhibition of the Tipu Sultan. The nearby colourful Visnu Temple is only opened at night. Save money and just have a look over the fence to the Palace and Temple.
- Commercial store for silk saris (Mysore Silk Emporium): Have 40 minutes left to buy a sari.
- Lalbagh Botanical Garden (7 Rs): A large botanical area with huge trees and lovely flours. The glass houses and flower show was closed. Have an impressive view across the city from the rock at the front of the entrance.
- All other activities where cancelled because the bus broke down: No repair, no spare bus, no refund and no help to get anywhere.

If you like studying Indians on holiday this tour is highly recommendable. Otherwise ignore this offer.

Bull Temple

Discover a big black bull carved form the granite stone on which the temple was build fro. No entrance fee but a donation is expected. You have to leave you shoes at the gate (5 Rs). Nice waste of time.

Useful:

Opposite the Royal Loge is Internet (20 Rs/h), international phone and fax available at the basement.

Travel:

The train ticket reservation office is located at the left side of the railway station in a separate building at the first floor. As the helpful, English speaking Senior Officer for any assistance. His office is next to the staircase).

Train 6526 Kanyakumary-Express from Bangalor (9:45 PM) to Ernakulam (9:30 AM): You have to book the full journey up to Kanyakumari. 2nd class sleeper is 495 Rs.

[Up](#)

Bikaner (03/07)

Accommodation:

Hotel Harasar Haveli
Near Karni Singh Stadium
Tel.: 0151 2209891
www.harasar.com

After all the cheapies Hotel Harasar Haveli is a real oasis. Very clean, silent [rooms](#) with hot shower in the morning. Friendly staff, nice restaurant with reasonable prices. It starts at 400 Rs for a double and ends at 1200 Rs for the suite with TV. Highly recommendable.

Food:

Hotel Restaurant Laaji
Station Road
Tel.: 0151 2526570
www.hotellalji.com

Check out 24h

Restaurant Lalji close to the railway station has not only lots of sweets; it also has a self-service restaurant at the rear side where tasty Indian meals are available. Recommendable.

Sight Seeing:

Junagarh Fort

Entrance fee is 100 Rs, for cameras pay 30 Rs additional. Only guided tours are offered through the many rooms of the fort. Worth a visit.

Fort Museum

The museum next to the fort is not worth the 50 Rs entrance and 20 Rs camera fee. It's just a few rooms with traditional dresses, silverwork and ceramics.

Not recommendable.

Next to the museum is a nice chill out place with green grass, shadow spending trees and a coffee service. Only the snacks are not recommendable.

Karni-Mata-Temple

It's located at Deshnok, free of charge and a real curiosity. Rats and there leftovers everywhere (and you have to leave your shoes at the entrance :-). They may charge 20 Rs for use of the camera.

At the northeast side of the temple are two recommendable [restaurants](#) offering [Thali](#) for 30 Rs.

From Bikaner to the temple by bicycle is not very tricky but a long 60 km ride through the dessert: Take the road No. 89 from the railway station to the south. There are a few gasoline stations on the way to Deshnok as well as the village Palana at half of the way. Take loads of suncream with you.

Usefull:

Typical Indian style [bicycles](#) can be rented at the southwest corner of the fort. It's 15 Rs per day.

Travel:

To Jaipur several express busses are available for 200 Rs for a single couch. It takes 7.5 hours with some stops in between. They arrive at Ganpali Plaza at the MI Road.

[Up](#)

Calcutta (05.98)

Accommodation:

The "Solvation Army Hotel" at Sudder-Street is very cheap (9-bed-dorm 50Rs). It's basic and the beds are smelly but it is secure, laundry-service is available and they know where to get cheap flight tickets (one way to Yangoon with the unpredictable India Air for 5050Rs).

Sight Seeing:

A colorful flower market is at the east side of the Howrah-bridge near Armenian-Ghat.

Science City in the east of Calcutta is an amusement park. There you can see physical experiments but most of them are out of order and in the terrarium dead amphibians. In one building is a dinosaur show. The planetarium is very modern and worth to visit. Take the bus no. 523 or E2 from the bus terminal at the Esplanade.

Travel:

To the airport take the bus no. 46 from the bus terminal at the Esplanade (5Rs). It leaves every half hour and takes one hour.

[Up](#)

Darjiling (05/98)

Accommodation:

The "Tower View Hotel" has dorms for 40Rs.

If you search for tea the best place is at the bazaar near the bus terminal. Ask for "Radhika & Son, Chowk Bazaar, Darjeeling-734101, Phon: 0091-354-54660" south end (downhill) of the bazaar. Friendly English speaking staff who will mail your order for sure.

Sight Seeing:

Around Darjiling are a lot of very nice hikes! Ask the tourist-information for more details. The trek from Manebanjang to Rimbik over Sandakphu (5 to 6 days) is very impressive. You can find good, cheap accommodation with good food and the landscape is wonderful. It was more enjoyable than trekking in Nepal.

Travel:

To Calcutta take the jeep/bus back to New Jalpaiguri and from here the train (2nd class sleeper for 195Rs). You can get the ticket and reservation at the railway station in Darjiling. Book as early as possible.

[Up](#)

Fatehpur (03/07)

Sight Seeing:

Jama Masjid Mosque

Just walk up the rubbish pile at the rear side of the bus terminal to reach the gate to the Jama Masjid Mosque. Free entrance but now shorts or skirts are allowed inside the building. Get free cover at the east gate if your wear is not proper.

Palace

The palace and pavilion next to the mosque are nicely restored and offer some interesting views. Its 250 Rs entrance fee, 10 Rs tourist tax and 25 Rs for video. Have a walk around the compound. Especially the northwest side towards the [tower](#) is very scenic and do not miss the great view of the gate when walking uphill from the tower back to the top.

[Up](#)

Hampi (03/07)

Accommodation:

Herrman's Guest House

Tel.: 08394 – 241393

Herman's Guest [House](#) offers shared rooms (not very clean) and small double bedrooms for 100 Rs with shared shower and toilet. [Larger](#) double (more clean) with own bathroom starting at 200 Rs including fan, mosquito net and are much better looking even when they are a little dark. Checkout is 10 AM but you can stay longer for half of the room charge. Laundry is 5 Rs per piece. Recommendable.

Sight Seeing:

Hampi is a very nice place where you can spend days to discover the ancient temples and other historical sides. Save the entrance fee at the Elephant Stable by turning left at the ticket office and follow the small river which brings you to a small opening between the Walls.

The temple at the main bazaar is a real [rip-off](#) if you bring a video camera. Also how they treat the pure elephant is not funny.

Useful:

Gopi Bicycle Shop

Main Road

Tel.: 08394 – 241695

They offer weak single speed [bikes](#) for 30 Rs a day. Most of them are in poor to very poor conditions and most of them have a saddle post which is much too short for non-Indians. Check them well before starting for a longer ride.

The repair of a punctured tube will be 10 Rs per puncture. Finding a repair shop is the biggest problem in the remote. One is between Monkey and Sadu temple.

If you go for the large circle which brings you to the most remote places you have to cross the river twice: At the construction site of the [bridge](#) with funny [ferries](#) the fare is 10 Rs per person + 10 Rs for the bike. Even they transfer scooters across the river. River [crossing](#) at Hampi is 5 Rs per person + 10 for the bike but NO scooters!!!

Carry lot of water and sun cream with you. Some snack might be also helpful.

A booklet with a useful map is available for 20 Rs in most tourist shops.

Internet @

Sree Rama Cyber Café

Door 181, 182

Internet available.

Hampi is also good for rock climbing. So bring your climbing shoes with and meet [here](#).

Travel:

Bus to Hospet is leaving every half hour at the parking next to Hampi main gate at quarter to and past full hour.

To Mapusa: The night [buses](#) are a 500 Rs night mare. Find yourself flying half a meter over your [seat](#) when the bus passes one of the many speed breakers on the way with travelling speed. Do not lean out the window at that time! Our bus was announced to leave at 6:30 PM in Hospet in front of a restaurant but started one hour later ;-) Next stop at 9 PM at a quick and dirty restaurant for 20 minutes. This is the last toilet break! At 4 AM some passengers where changing the bus to Gorkana. Around 6 AM passengers changing bus to Chennai. At 8:15 AM we reached Mapusa two minutes walk form the bus terminal without any sleep but lots of "air time" thanks to the speed breakers. On the other side we had a lot of talking and exchange of stories with other travellers.

It might be better to take the train which runs much smoother, has toilet available at any time, food and drinks are served and cost just half the bus ticket. You just have to change the train in Madgao.

From Madgao to Anjuna and Vagator the bus leaves the terminal every 30 minutes and is 10 Rs. It stops only at the main junction of the villages. From here its 15 minutes walk to the beach.

[Up](#)

Hospet (03/07)

Travel:

Bus from Hospet at 6:30 PM to Mapusa arriving 7:00 AM. Ordinary 450 Rs, Sleeper 500 Rs, AC 500 Rs, AC Sleeper 600 Rs.

Bus from Hospet at 5:30 PM to Mumbai arriving before 12 AM. Lower sleeper 705 Rs, upper sleeper 735 Rs.

Train from Hospet at 6:30 AM / 4:30 PM arriving at Margao at 1:45 PM / 12:00 PM.

[Up](#)

Jaipur (03/07) [Map](#)

Accommodation:

Hotel Pink Sun
Chameliwala Market
Opp. G.P.O.
M.I. Road
Tel.: 2361507
Checkout 10 am

The Hotel Pink Sun is next to the Evergreen (called Neverclean) Guesthouse has small, basic [rooms](#) with shared very basic [shower](#) for 150 Rs for a single. It's silent.

The Tourist [Hotel](#) has clean but rundown [rooms](#) without window and very basic [bathroom](#) for 200 Rs of single and 300 Rs for double beds.
Not recommendable.

Food:

At the junction Bhagwan Dass Road to MI Road is a McDonald restaurant.

Sight Seeing:

A full day tourist [tour](#) is 160Rs, starting 9am till 6pm and can be booked at the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation. Tel.: 2200778

The full day tour includes:

- Amber Fort Jaigarh (nice place with lots of aisle. Pay 25 Rs Jeep ride, 50 Rs Camera)
- City Palace (not very interesting. Pay 180 Rs for [entry](#) & camera, no pics inside allowed :-)

www.royalfamilyjaipur.com

- Observatory (nice for scientists. Pay 10 + 50 Rs for entry & camera)
- Hawa Mahal
- Jal Mahal
- Shopping 3 pm (1h)
- Gaitore Maharaja's Cenetophs
- Naharagarh Fort
- Jaigarh Fort (pay 60 Rs)
- Kaxminarayan Temple
- Kanak Virmdavan (pay 8 Rs)
- Birla Planetarium

Very chaotic, not all seen. Recommendable if you don't care about waiting for all group members and endless discussions about the quality of the tour by the Indian tourists with the guide. They may run two busses. A [minibus](#) with 35 and a [topless](#) with 23 seats. Take the topless for better photo shooting and less group waiting.

Travel:

To Pushka many busses are available every day. Travel agency Jai Ambay runs a minibus at 9:30 AM via Ajmer with lunch break in between. Its 3.5 hours ride and cost 60 to 150 Rs depending on the goodwill of the owner.

[Up](#)

Jaisalmer (03/07) [Map](#)

Accommodation:

Hotel Peacock
Cainpura Street
Tel.: 02992 250039

amincamelman@yahoo.com

Peacock Guesthouse has clean rooms with own shower and toilet for 100 Rs with fan. Call them before and they pick you up from the bus stop for free, even when you choose another place to stay. They have a rooftop breakfast place, laundry service for 10 Rs per piece and push you for a camel safari like all other guesthouses too. Manager Armin is a bit too friendly.

Recommendable.

Sight Seeing:

Fort Jaisalmer

It's free of charge and worth a visit. Find inside the fort the Jainstemple ([20 Rs](#)) and 7 other temples. The entrance fee for the palace is 250 Rs and includes nicely prepared information via audio guide.

Travel:

[Timetable](#)

To Bikaner the express bus starts 2 PM, cost 140 Rs and 7 hours time. Two coffee breaks at the pleasant trip.

[Up](#)

Jodhpur (03/07)

Accommodation:

Heaven Guest House
Manak Chowk Road
Tel.: 0291 – 2639283
nishajjain@yahoo.com

Heaven Guesthouse is a little home stay in the old part of the city with nice, clean rooms with own toilet and hot shower in the morning for 200 to 350 Rs for a double dependent of the room size. The housewife Nisha is very friendly and teaches you on request how to prepare nice vegetarian meals. Great view from the rooftop restaurant to the fort. A little [tricky](#) to find.

[Map](#)

Highly recommendable.

Hill-View Guesthouse

It seems to be very recommendable according to other travellers. Starting with 125 Rs for a clean single, has a rooftop restaurant with fort view and is organized by a very dedicated female owner.

It's located at the start of the footpath to the fort at the east side of the hill.

Acharya Guest House
Killi Khana, Kile Ki Ghati
Tel.: 09928 - 44924

The Acharya [Guesthouse](#) is next to the Hill-View Guesthouse. Very authentic with friendly owner, rooftop restaurant with great view to the fort. 125 Rs for a double bed room. The mother is responsible for the "all you can eat" Thali.

Highly recommendable.

Govind Hotel
Station Road
Tel.: 0291 - 2622758

www.govindhotel.com

Govind Hotel is just 3 minutes walk from the railway station. It's 80 Rs for the [dormitory](#) with shared [shower](#). Not too bad but very noisy because the window faces towards the main road. Rooftop restaurant. [Map](#)

Not recommendable.

Sight Seeing:

Meherangarh Fort

The entrance fee of 250 Rs includes an audio guide with nicely edited information in many different languages. If you travel to Jodhpur just to visit the fort contact the Tourist Information Office before because the fort is private property and can be rented for weddings or other private events. In this case the fort might be closed for the public.

Food:

Restaurant [Priya](#)

It offers nice [Thali](#) for 55 Rs. Also the Makkhaniya lassi is delicious. It's down the Nai Sarak Road from the clock tower on the left corner to High Court Road. They have rooms too.

Recommendable.

Travel:

To Jaisalmer the express bus starts every hour for 240 Rs and its 6 hours ride.

[Up](#)

Kochi / Cochin (03/07)

Accommodation:

"Home stay" is the place to go for. Every backpacker was satisfied with. It's around 400 RS for a double including breakfast of own choice.

Elite Hotel

The Elite Hotel has [double](#) with own [shower](#), fan, TV for 400 / 500 Rs with is definitely overpriced. Instead of the announced "Green Courtyard" in the Lonely Planet you will find rubbish and a garage between the washing is hanging. The stuff is helpful and the rooms are silent at night. For that price a piece of soap and a towel should be expected but none are present. Laundry is 10 Rs per piece and return not ironed. The restaurant is a bit rundown and the food can't compete with other location. Only the bakery is recommendable.

Not recommendable.

Food:

The [restaurants](#) at the water front at the Tree-Park are tourist rip-off. You have to buy overpriced fishes from the nearby fisherman and wait some hour (or more) to get the prepared which you have to pay extra. For this "extra" you get normally a full board.

Sight Seeing:

Kerala Kathakali Centre

www.kathakalicentre.com

Daily show from 6.30 to 8.00 PM, for watching the artists by their makeup at 5 PM. Costs per seat: 125 RS. The seats are numbered and the best are below 100. So book early. First come first serve! The [show](#) has lots of drums and jingle noise (which might cause headache). The three actors are colourful dressed and wear great makeup. Approximately 1/3rd of the visitors left the show before it ends. [Map](#)

Something for good nerves.

Backwater Tour

Seven hour backwater village tour is 425 Rs including lunch when booked at the tourist office of Kochi and promised to be "The Original".

- Pickup at the hotel is around 8 AM
- One hour bus ride (not 1/2 hour as promised)
- 15 min. waiting for the boat
- Boat trip starts at 9:30 AM
- Boat with diesel engine and 16 customers on board
- Cruising through the islands for some time
- Stop at factory producing calcium from shells. Nice demonstration. Taste the mules with some coconut juice for 75 RS extra
- Walk through the garden with lots of herbs and spices
- One hour back to the start of the boat trip
- Nice vegetarian lunch. This is the only time where the promised bottled water is served!
- 1/2 hour bus transfer to the small rowing boats
- Floating through small channels to a fabrication of ropes from copra
- Watching coconut collectors at work and have a drink from them
- Return with bus at 4 PM.

Nice trip. Recommendable.

Useful:

Tourist Information Centre

Door No: 1/353

Princess Street

Tel.: 2215710

Very helpful !

Travel:

The ferry to Fort Kochi is 2.5 Rs and departs every 30 min. to 1 hour ([Timetable](#)).

From Ernakulam Train Station (the next to Kochi) to Canacona (Goa) is 819 RS for AC Sleeper. The train departs 2:15 PM and arrives in Canacona at 5 AM. Early reservation is recommended. With reserved sleeper you get a new covered pillow, a fresh blanket and a warming cover.

At the AC coaches dinner will be served by the train staff around 8 PM: Nice Biriany veg. 23 RS, chicken 40 Rs. Official vendors selling bottled water, soft drinks (20 Rs), coffee (5 Rs), chai (4 Rs) and even Swiss chocolate Toblerone.

[Up](#)

Mapusa (03/07)

The fast train Mapusa at 2:45 PM arrives at Mumbai at 11 PM for non AC 510 Rs.

Mumbai (03/07, 08/00) Lage [map](#)

Accommodation:

Hotel Volga
33, Causway House
2nd & 3rd Floor, no sign outside
Shahid Bhagat Singh Road
Above Shop Citywalk Shoes
Coloba
Mumbai - 400 039
Tel: 2202 6320

Tiny windowless [rooms](#) for 450RS. It's just 50 meters away from the hotel Volga II (which offers more comfortable rooms) but if you search for the footprints of Shantaram www.shantaram.com from author Gregory David Roberts it is the authentic place to stay.

It offers tiny rooms with fan (450 Rs) or AC (800 Rs) and shared bath / toilet but without any window. The rooms are clean and the beds are equipped with new sheets. If it's quiet or noisy is dependent on the other guests because the walls are from thin wood and the night bell better than every alarm. You hardly will find better value for money. Laundry is 15 Rs per piece. [Map](#)

(08/00)
Centaur Hotel
Tel.: 022-6156660

If you only have to stay overnight for connecting flights the Centaur Hotel is close by the local airport but count one hour to the international at rush-hour. It announces 6000Rs for a single to be in the luxury category but everyone gets 40% discount because it left this class long time ago. The hotel has all facilities including a nice swimming pool. The rooms are well-worn, smelling of insecticides and have a minibar filled with tap water!

Ramada Hotel Palm Grove
Tel.: 022-6112323
www.krahejahospitality.com

The Ramada Hotel Palm Grove at Juhu Beach is luxury with 7200Rs incl. tax for a single. Nice quite rooms with all you need. They have free pick up service. Only the breakfast buffet was disappointing.

Food:

Khandani Rajdhani Restaurant
Rajdhani Crawford

361, Shaikh Menon Street
Juma Majid Crawford Mkt.
Mumbai - 2
Tel: 2344 9014

www.rajdhani.co.in

Specialized in Thali for 150Rs, open for lunch 12 to 4 PM and dinner 7 to 10.30 PM. The Rajdhani is a perfect restaurant for [Thali](#) and nothing else. 14 different dishes are served from 6 waiters as all you can eat.

Absolutely recommendable

Leopolds

Around the corner of Volga hotel is restaurant Leopolds which is the meeting point for foreigners and good for breakfast too.

Some 200 meters from Volga hotel up the road toward the city center is a McDonald restaurant with AC offering Indian burgers and cold milk shakes at the first floor of the building.

At the street from Churchgate Station to the shore are some "in-restaurants" located.

At Mumbai Central Station is a McDonald and a Rajdhani restaurant which displays the menus. The Thali for 75 Rs is recommendable.

Sight Seeing:

A special experience

Visit the [community](#) of Malabar Hill. It's a former illegal shanty town, transferred into a village in the city and now accepted by the local authorities. Nevertheless you can get lost easily if you have not good orientation skills.

Mani Bhavan

It's the house where Mahatma Gandhi lived for more than 17 years. Very touristy but for me the most impressive man lived in India.

Mahalaxmi Temple

Observe the pilgrims to stick coins to the rear wall of the temple and try the typical eatery around the temple.

Dhobi-Ghat

At the Dhobi-Ghat (the biggest laundry in the world) walk to the north side of the ghat and stroll around till some of the youngsters take you for a tour through the ghat. Ask for the price before. Very colourful. Leave the commuter at Mahalaxmi Station to the east.

Elephanta Island

The ticket offices at the Gate of India offering trips to Elephanta Island for 100 Rs (Economic) and 120 Rs (Deluxe) which includes a guided tour. Note that the last guided tour is at 2 PM even when deluxe tickets are sold for later trips. You just spend 20 Rs for nothing! On the boat they try to charge you 10 Rs for using the toilet, 10 Rs for upstairs seats. At the island pay 4 Rs to use the toy train, pay 5 Rs "[Tourist Tax](#)" and 250 Rs entrance fee for the caves. Save the entrance fee by keeping right at the end of the stairs and follow the sign "Way to Canon hills". At the 2nd store selling drinks keep left and take the path leading down to the cave at the southeast side of the hill.

Pay 25 Rs for the worst ever eaten Masala Dosa at one of the quick and dirty restaurants located at the stairs.

All in all a nice waste of time. Not recommendable.

Crawford Market

A sign at the main entrance of the Crawford Market indicates that foreigners must be guided by a porter. So do not use the main entrance where the porters are waiting for customer. Use one of the many side entrances. The meat market is busy from 3 to 7 AM. Not much left after 7 AM.

Horse Track

At the horse track are every Sunday horse races from 2 to 6 PM except monsoon season. It's only 25 Rs entrance fee. Mobile phones and cameras are strictly forbidden and can be stored at the entrance. Leave the commuter at Mahalaxmi Station to the west, cross the road and keep left. It's just 5 minutes to walk.

Useful:

Allibhai Premji Tyrewalla is a very honest motorbike [dealer](#) but to get a used Enfield is very tricky even for him. His recommendation: Buy one in Goa at the touristy places or in Delhi where the prices are lower.

Travel:

From Mapusa / Madgao to Mumbai: The express train for Mumbai Dadar Terminal is 227 Rs and depart 2:30 PM from Madgao and 3:02 PM from Thivim (see Mapusa). It arrives at Dadar Terminal at 11 PM with approximately 1h delay.

A taxi from Dadar Terminal to Colaba is 250 Rs at night time. Do not believe their information that here is no other possibility to reach the center of Mumbai at night than by taxi. Buy a ticket for the commuter (4 Rs) from the ticket office inside the station and wait at platform no. 3 for the commuter to Victoria Station which is the end of this line. From here to Colaba center it's only 50 Rs with the taxi.

From Mumbai to Udaipur take train 2933 at 1:40 PM for 142 Rs which arrives at Ahmedabad at 9:20 PM. Change to train 9944 leaving Ahmedabad at 11:15 PM arriving in Udaipur at 8 AM. It's 164 Rs for a sleeper. Have breakfast at the station in Udaipur.

(08.00)

By entering the country at the international airport there are some reliable hotel booking offices after customs control. They have all categories of accommodation with fixed prices. You can get a voucher with the fixed price when you have chosen one. Make sure that its including tax. They have taxis to any of their places for 300Rs.

To get a prepaid taxi keep right when leaving the building. Short after the crowd is a window where you have to "queue" in. It is 143Rs to any place in Mumbai plus 20Rs each large and 3Rs for small luggage. On your receipt is the number of the taxi which you have to find now. All they are waiting across the street.

[Up](#)

New Delhi (03/07)

Accommodation:

Hotel Toto International
6 Tooti Chowk
Main Bazaar
Pahar Ganj
New Delhi 11055
Tel.: 23562334
Check out 12 AM

The hotel has nice [rooms](#) which are a little cleaner as usual. With own [shower](#) (some cold, some hot, some with TV, some without) starting at 200 Rs for a double without hot and TV. Would be recommendable but the "Music Temple" in front of the hotel entrance starts yelling its music at 5:45 AM every morning.

Hotel India International
2485, Nalwa Street
Behind Imperial Cinema
Chuna Mandi, Pahar Ganj
New Delhi – 11055
Tel.: 51698812

hindian_dx2000@yahoo.co.in

Hotel India International is located in a less frequented remote area of Main [Bazaar](#) area just 100 meters away from the main (tourist) road. The [hotel](#) offers dirty [rooms](#) with own rundown [shower](#), TV and AC. The quietest rooms have just a window to a light yard next to the stair case. Some rooms are better looking but have windows to the road which is not too busy. Rooms are starting are 695 Rs but available for less than 500 Rs with bargain.

The hotel has a roof top restaurant which is mostly deserted and offers different newspapers in the lobby.

Not very recommendable but quiet. You can find it around the corner of Major's Den Hostel in the street towards the Hotel Victoria Deluxe. This street is not on the map of Lonely Planets India guidebook.

Food:

Restaurant Haldiram's
1454/2, Chandni Chowk

Fountain

Delhi – 110006

Only five minutes to walk from the Red Fort it offer sweets at the ground level and nice displayed meals at the upper floors for 30 up to 90RS.

Highly recommendable.

Restaurant Metropolis Tourist Home

1634-35, First Floor

Main Bazar

Pahar Ganj

New Delhi – 110055

Tel.: 23585766

www.metropolistravels.com

Not that cheap but good meals. Restaurant with AC and heating. [Map](#)

Recommendable.

A McDonald restaurant is at Chandni Chowk. Just 400 meters from the entrance of the Red Fort.

Find many of the well known restaurant chains located at the Connauht Place. Just walk down the Chelmsford Road 5 minutes from New Delhi Train Station to the south. The middle of the Place is a green park area. Good place to relax.

Sight Seeing:

Dance of India

Parsi Anjuman Hall

Bahadurshah Zafar Marg

Delhi Gate

New Delhi

Tel: 26234689

[Dance](#) of India is worth a visit. For 200 Rs the show is starting every day at 6.45 daily. Nice colourful dances with up to six person on stage and three musicians playing drums and vocals. [Info](#)

Recommendable.

National Museum

Janpath

New Delhi 110011

www.nationalmuseumindia.org

Open Tuesday to Sunday from 10 AM to 5 PM.

The National Museum at New Delhi is disappointing because half of the [exhibition](#) area is close for renovation or what ever.

For the entrance fee of 300 Rs you get an audio guide in English, German, French, Japanese or Hindi. The audio files are a bit too scientific but also nice stories can be found.

A group of four or more person can get a "free" guided tour which is tells much less details than the audio guide but is also less time consuming. The guided tour takes an hour, the audio guided tour 3 hours even when you do not listen to all the explanations.

Still or video cameras are 300 Rs extra. Luggage's are not permitted inside the museum and can be left for free.

Not recommendable.

Red Fort

100 Rs entrance fee including two different museums inside the fort.

Timetable for Sound & Light Show: Feb.-April: 8.30 PM, May-August: 9.00 PM, Sep.-Oct.: 8.30 PM, Nov.-Jan.: 7.30 PM.

Monday closed.

From the Main Bazaar an autorikshaw to the Red Fort is 50 Rs, the bus is 10 Rs.

Worth a visit.

Jama Masjid Mosque

Worth a visit, especially to climb the minaret. Entrance fee is 200 Rs while carrying a still or video camera. Pay 5 to 10 Rs for the shoe storage in front of the entrance as they like or carry your shoes. 20 Rs extra to climb the left minaret where you have an amazing view across New Delhi when smog and weather are friendly.

Recommendable.

Shopping:

The Bazaar area in Old Delhi is nothing special but you can find pirated CDs at the right corner opposite the Red Fort and camera equipment at the left site 100 meters down the Chandni Chowk road.

Useful:

Beware of the fake "Tourist Information Offices" which some even announce themselves as Government of India. They just want to sell you overpriced tickets.

Travel:

At the New Delhi International Airport take the exit to your right to find the bus to the city. The fare of 50 Rs includes one backpack / luggage. To the Main Bazaar area leave at New Delhi Railway Station. Cross the railway tracks by using the bridge over the platforms.

From the New Delhi Railway Station to the national or international airport take the [bus No. 781](#) from the bus stop at the east side of the railway station. Do NOT take any other bus even then the driver / conductor promise! They leave every full hour.

The Tourist Ticket Office at New Delhi Railway Station is located at platform No. 1.

It's difficult to book flights from local avionic companies online because most of them except just Indian credit cards. So you have to book the flights at a travel agency which charge you around 10 % more and 3% additional if you pay by credit card.

Flight Delhi to Bangalore with Spice Air for 4.230 Rs booked online but only accept Indian, US, Canadian and British Credit Cards. At the travel agency it was 4.600 Rs + 3% "cover charge" (see above).

Flight New Delhi – Bangkok with www.airindia.com for 10.824 Rs.

[Up](#)

Palolem (03/07) [Map](#)

Accommodation:

A [bamboo hut](#) with simple cold shower, toilet and rundown [mosquito net](#) is 150 Rs in the off season with good bargain at Palolem.

Beaches:

Palolem

It's the busiest and most crowded [beach](#). Lots of restaurants, huts, shops, night live. Nice looking beach with fine sand, shallow water and some rocks at the ends. Beautiful.

Agonda

It is very [relaxed](#). Lots of space between the few restaurants and resorts. Only a view people are there including some at the very left end of the beach with their caravans. Hats are more expensive than in Palolem.

Cola Beach

Very little infrastructure, very expensive (30 Pound Stirling for a fully equipped king size tend). Mostly elderly people from Britain are located here. Not easy to reach and the [beach](#) itself is divided into two pieces by some rocks. Not very nice but very calm.

Patnem Beach

The beach is a nice combination from calm to good infrastructure. Highly recommendable for couples in love.

Culomb Beach

It's very rocky, small and almost no infrastructure present.

Sight Seeing:

The Tower: Very nice viewpoints, no entrance fee

Useful:

Laundry is available for 10 Rs per piece.

Rental Kayak for open water at Palolem Beach is 150 Rs for one, 250 Rs for two hours.

A good scooter is available for 200 Rs per day. Fuel up immediately. Do not make any loop way because the gasoline will last exactly to the next available gas station.

Travel:

From Canacona to Palolem Beach its 3 km (30 Rs) or 30 minutes on foot.

From Canacona to Hampi: Train from [Canacona](#) (6:30 AM) to Madgaon (7:15 AM) is 50 km and 11 Rs. Train from Madgaon (8:30 AM) to Hospet (3:45 PM) for 185 Rs. Rickshaw from Hospet to Hampi for 60 Rs + 10 Rs admission fee to enter Hampi with a vehicle.

@ Madgaon Train Station: Toilet (ugly) is 1 Rs, shower (very ugly) is 2 Rs, milk coffee at the restaurant 6 Rs and reasonable meals 15 to 30 Rs.

[Up](#)

Pushkar (03/07)

Accommodation:

New Sunshine Hotel & Garden
Vaam Dev Road
Nala
Tel.: 09828 – 179438

You have to walk 7 minutes from the Gurdwara temple to the south to find this resort surrounded by flower fields. It has some concrete double with own shower and some traditional Rajasthan-style [huts](#) with bamboo roof and own [shower](#) for 250 Rs. All are very clean with fresh blankets. A rooftop restaurant with nice view over the [fields](#) is present too. [Map](#)
Recommendable if you like walking.

Hotel Kanhaia
Choti Basti
0145 - 2772146

The Hotel Kanhaia has cheap, clean [rooms](#) with [shower](#) (hot on request), nice rooftop restaurant and laundry. 250 Rs for a double or 200 Rs at the lower floor with Indian-style toilet. Some noise early morning must be expected. No lake view.
Recommendable.

Food:

OM Shiva
Buffet Garden Restaurant
On the way to Hotel Pushkar Palace
Tel.: 0145 - 5105045

Buffet all you can eat for 50 Rs

Breakfast 7 AM to 12.30 PM, lunch 1 PM to 4 PM, dinner 5 PM to 10 PM. Nice roofed place with open garden too.

Sight Seeing:

Nice view from the temples on the hills. Bring a torch with you if you want to watch the sunset from here.

Useful:

The flower trick

Someone hand you a flower over to drop it at the ghat into the holy lake. Once at the ghat a [priest](#) guide you to a spot at the water and start with the procedure. You have to repeat a few mantras which include good wishes for all your relatives too. After getting lull by repeating the mantras the priest will ask nicely to say the amount you like to donate. He will insist that the donation will maintain all the ghats and the 2000 other priests and that foreigners usually donate 50 to 150 EURO! Have you spent some money the priest give some additional blessings and ask for a donation only for his family. Don't believe what they are telling you where the money is used for. You may give some tip of approximately 50 Rs for the ceremony and labour of the priest.

[Up](#)

Rimbick (05.98)

Accommodation:

Sherpa Tenzing Lodge
Tel. 0354-54882

Cheap double for 40Rs per person. Comfortable and very friendly.

[Up](#)

Udaipur (03/07) [Map1](#) , [Map2](#)

Accommodation:

Lalghat Guesthouse
Behind Jagdish Temple
Near Pichola Lake
Tel.: 0294 – 2525301

lalghat@hotmail.com

Lalghat Guesthouse has clean and calm rooms with own or shared bathroom. The [dormitory](#) is good too, equipped with curtains around the [beds](#), fan and a lockable storage. It's only 75 Rs per night. Checkout time is 10 AM. Internet, meals, laundry, bus and train tickets and a nice [viewpoint](#) are present. [Map](#)

Highly recommendable.

Food:

Bawarchi Restaurant
6 – Delhi Gate
Udaipur
Tel.: 0294 2414955

Nice and cheap [Thali](#) served at the upper floor.

Highly recommendable.

Sight Seeing:

City Palace

The 50 Rs entrance fee includes a guided tour. Camera or video extra. It's a long walk through lots of different rooms, staircases and alleys. Nice view across the city from the rooftop.
Worth a visit.

Main temple

Free of charge. No photos inside the temple are allowed. Come early before the tour groups.

Sunset Point

5 Rs entrance fee. Great spot for the sunset view. The music fountain is not worth the money. It's 30 Rs for a taxi from the city center.

With a rented motorbike or taxi visit the following places:

Ranakpur: Beautiful temple with lots of columns and carvings. 50 Rs for the camera.
Definitely worth a visit.

Kumbhalgar: Wow, this [fort](#) is overwhelming. Come through the narrow valley over the ridge through the first gate and be fascinated by the size of the walls surrounding the palace. 100 Rs entrance fee and 5 Rs for the parking.
Highly recommendable.

Useful:

Heera Tours & Travels
Inside Hotel Badi Haveli
Gangaur Ghat Road
Tel.: 0294 5130625

www.udaipurwebs.com

At Heera Tours & Travel a 100 cc motorbike is 300 Rs per day. They have scooters, helmets, bicycles and taxies too. [Map](#)

Travel:

A taxi from the railway station to the city center is 30 Rs.

To Jodpur it's 150 Rs with the express bus. Starts at 8 AM and arrives at 2 PM. Tea break half the way. Pleasant ride.
[Up](#)

Varanasi (05/98)

Accommodation:

New Shiddi Guesthouse

Here is a especial feeling and really all is available. There is the very simple but cheap and friendly New Shiddi Guesthouse between Hanuman Ghat and Shivala-Ghat with a nice courtyard and a balcony direct at the Ganga. Self-cooking is possible but cheap and good restaurants are not far.

Travel:

From Varanasi to Darjiling a 2nd class sleeper cost 208Rs to New Jalpaiguri. Book as early as possible at the foreign ticket office in the many railway station. Right hand side from the railway station in N.J. goes a public-bus to the bus-terminal for 5Rs. There you can take the express bus to Darjiling for 48Rs (its better than the jeep).

[Up](#)

To West-Nepal (03/98)

If you want to go to the west of Nepal leave the train at Bareilly railway station. Take a rickshaw to the bus terminal for 4Rs. Change to the bus to Bebassa and take a horsecar across the border and to Mahendra Nagar (Nepal).

[Up](#)

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