

# Best off-beat options this Festival Season!

■ MYSORE DUSSEHRA © SUNAYANA JAIN/LONELY PLANET

*The Indian festival season may be all colourful traditions, cultural celebrations and good food. Why not try an itinerary of off-beat festivals that give you the same vibe and more? Here's a list of some off-beat festivals across India to attend this season:*

## Indian Art Festival

This modern and contemporary art fair aims to provide

a cultural bridge between Indian artists, art galleries, collectors and connoisseurs. Art collectors and artists take an active part in this event and will get an opportunity to interact and engage with each other. India Art Festival brings forward the importance and value of modern, fine and contemporary art in recent times.

► **WHEN** October 6-9

► **WHERE** NEHRU CENTRE, WORLI, MUMBAI

## Samsara Himalaya Edition 2016

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2016 brings the Bir International Yoga Festival conducted by Arya Marga Yoga. The Samsara Himalaya Edition has experienced yoga, qigong and tai chi teachers, healers from the fields of Reiki, Ayurveda and Chinese and Tibetan

acupuncture all at one place. The ultimate goal is to bring together authentic masters of yoga and ancient healing techniques at Bir. This is a big draw for fans of holistic wellness.

► **WHEN** October 7-17

► **WHERE** THE TIBETAN SECTION OF BIR VILLAGE, HIMACHAL PRADESH

## Mysore Dussera & Kullu Dusshera

Dussera marks the end of Navratri and

celebrations are marked all over the country. For a special experience, travel south to the royal city of Mysore that is lit up for the occasion. Here a regal ambience, local folk forms, elephant processions make the festival worthwhile. Up north, autumn winds add charm to the valley town of Kullu that gathers in a replay of 17th century- festive rituals for Lord Raghunatha.

► **WHEN** Oct 11

► **WHERE** Mysore, Karnataka & Kullu, Himachal Pradesh

## Rajasthan International Folk Festival (RIFF), Jodhpur

Harsh desert glows with festive lights and colourful festivities in Jodhpur.

The annual Rajasthan International Folk Festival is organised at the impressive Mehrangarh Fort in Jodhpur. People from across the country make their way to the Blue City to listen to renowned musicians, not just from India but also overseas. The Rolling Stones frontman Mick Jagger has dropped by for this festival. Passes for the festival are available at Mehrangarh Fort.

► **WHEN** October 13-17

► **WHERE** MEHRANGARH FORT, JODHPUR, RAJASTHAN

## Mussoorie Writers' Mountain Festival

An annual literary festival and writers Himalayan

congregation celebrates its location and heritage. In essence, the idea is to bring distinguished writers, mountaineers, conservationists, artists and filmmakers to Mussoorie so that they can share their experiences and perspectives on mountain adventure, culture

and traditions. The theme of this year's festival is "Women and Mountains", highlighting the important role of women in Himalayan culture. The programme includes lectures, performances, screenings and photographic and painting exhibitions.

► **WHEN** Oct 22-25

► **WHERE** WOODSTOCK SCHOOL, TEHRI ROAD, MUSSOORIE, UTTARAKHAND

## Wangala Festival

This annual Garo festival celebrates the harvest and bounty and marks the

beginning of winter in Meghalaya. Also known as the "100 drum festival", the festival is marked by celebrations with music, percussion and dancers who gather for public display of their skills. Some 300 dancers move to the rhythm of 100 drums, buffalo horns and flutes. The festival also offers its salutations to the sun god or the Saljong deity for blessing the people with a healthy harvest. The atmosphere is carnivalesque set to the tempo of traditional nagaras or drums. The dates are usually fixed by the elder tribe headman each year.

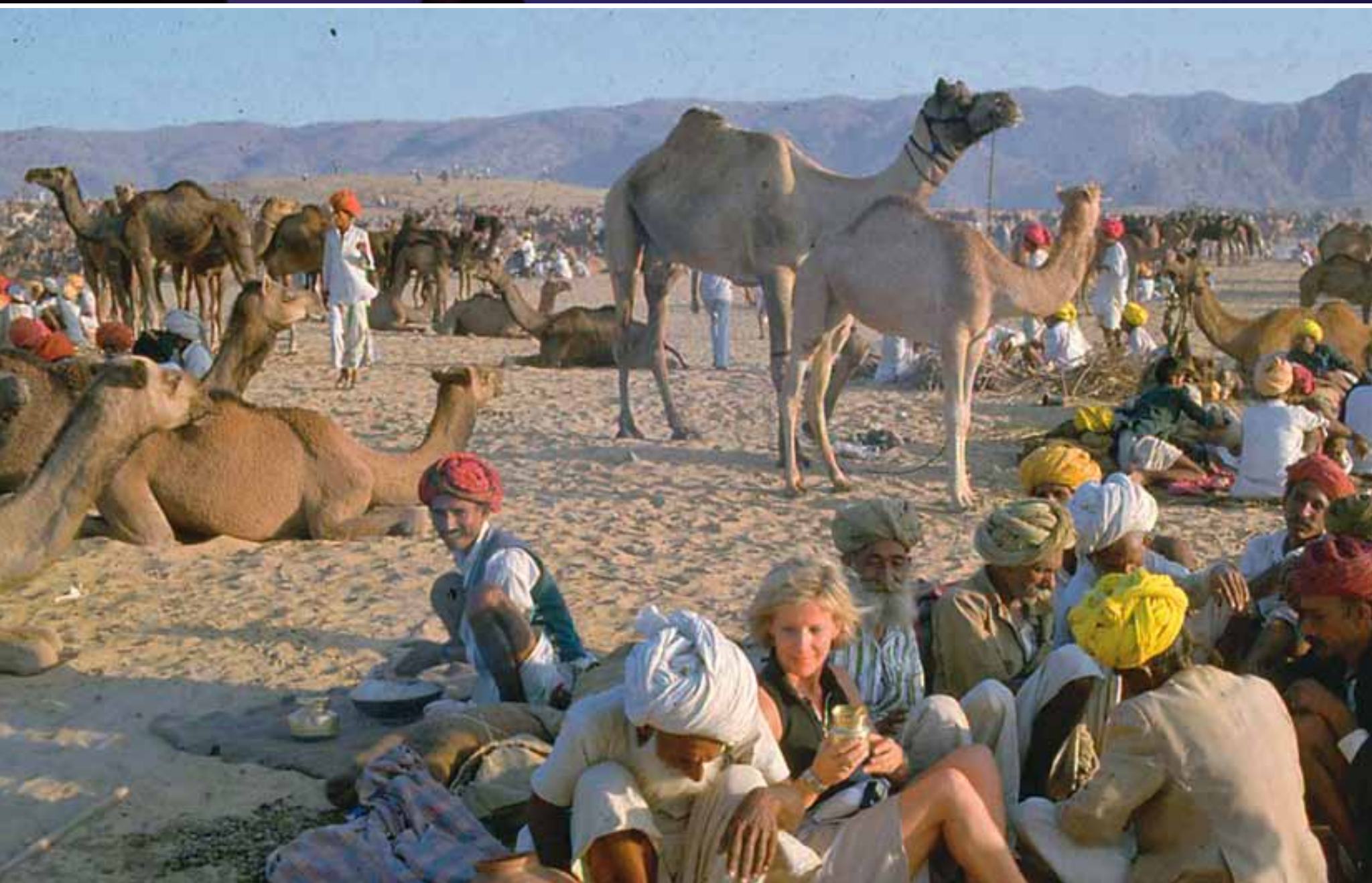
► **WHEN** 2nd week of November

► **WHERE** ASANANG, TURA, MEGHALAYA

► PEOPLE ACROSS THE COUNTRY MAKE THEIR WAY TO THE BLUE CITY TO LISTEN TO RENOWNED MUSICIANS © RAJASTHAN INTERNATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL







■ CATCH A GLIMPSE OF RAJASTHAN'S RURAL BEAUTY © RAJASTHAN TOURISM BOARD

## Pushkar Cattle Fair

Once a fair where villagers gathered to sell their cattle and camels, the Pushkar Fair has now achieved cult status. Held for four days every year, this mega event sees travellers from across the globe turning up. Expect to witness interesting contests, listen to folk music and see Rajasthani men and women sporting traditional clothes and jewellery unique to these areas. The main aim of the Pushkar Fair is to promote trade of cattle such as camels, horses, cows, goats, sheep etc. For tourists, the Pushkar fair is an experience of a lifetime that with camel safari, local music, and cultural performances.

► **WHEN November 8-14**

► **WHERE PUSHKAR, RAJASTHAN**

## Vettukadu Festival

Vettukadu, is a seaside suburb in Thiruvananthapuram, famous for Madre De Deus, a 500 year old church. The church is believed to have been graced by the presence of St Francis Xavier, the missionary in the 16th century. The Annual Feast of Christ the King brings the place to celebratory fervour as devotees from far and near congregate. The social function is marked by a ceremonial procession of the deity marked by local customs and traditions. It helps to check before making travel plans as the dates for the festivities change as they follow the Malayalam calendar.

► **WHEN 11-20 November**

► **WHERE VETTUKADU, THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**