

GOA BEACHES

ENCOUNTER

AMELIA THOMAS

Goa Beaches Encounter

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Colour-Coding & Maps

Colour-coding is used for symbols on maps and in the text that they relate to (eg all eating venues on the maps and in the text are given a green knife and fork symbol). Each neighbourhood also gets its own colour, and this is used down the edge of the page and throughout that neighbourhood section.

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AMELIAT HOMAS

Amelia Thomas is a British writer and journalist who works throughout India and the Middle East, often with her highly understanding husband and excitable four under-fives in tow. She has worked on numerous Lonely Planet guides, and her research trip to Goa unintentionally became longer-term when her family decided they liked it so much, they'd stay for the season. Her book, *The Zoo on the Road to Nablus*, telling the true story of the last Palestinian zoo, was published in 2008, and she is currently working on *Hypnosis!* – a tale of the life of eccentric Goa native and hypnotist extraordinaire, Abbé Faria (see p78). Her ideal day involves a long walk along Agonda Beach (p108) and a dip in the sea at Palolem (p110); her toddlers, however, would argue that a close encounter with a troupe of monkeys, a long sandcastle session, and several 'Raspberry Dolly' ice creams make the perfect Goan combination.



AMELIA'S T HANKS

Thanks, first, to Pinky and her wonderful family, and to Nich and Cheryl for sunset G&Ts and breakfast *bhaji-paus* (small, spicy curries with a fluffy bread roll for dunking). Many thanks to Will Gourlay, Shawn Low, Sam Trafford and the Lonely Planet team, and, as always, to Gal, Cassidy, Tyger, Cairo and Zeyah, without whom I'd be lost – even in Goa.

THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Greg Elms has been a contributor to Lonely Planet for over 15 years. Armed with a Bachelor of Arts in Photography, Greg was a photographer's assistant for two years before embarking on a travel odyssey. He eventually settled down to a freelance career in Melbourne, and now works regularly for magazines, graphic designers, advertising agencies and, of course, book publishers such as Lonely Planet.

Cover photograph Local women walking along Arambol Beach, Travel Ink/Getty Images. **Internal photographs** p47, p64, p73, p104, p117 by A Thomas. All other photographs by Lonely Planet Images, and by Greg Elms except p21 by Clint Lucas; p22 by Paul Harding; p24, p28 by Eddie Gerald.

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How now brown cow: a local resident works on its suntan on Palolem Beach (p110)

CONTENTS

THE AUTHOR	03
THIS IS GOA	07
HIGHLIGHTS	10
GOA BEACHES DIARY	21
ITINERARIES	25
BEACHES & TOWNS	30
> ARAMBOL & THE NORTHERN BEACHES	34
> ANJUNA & AROUND	44
> CALANGUTE & BAGA	56
> CANDOLIM & SINGUERIM	68
> PANAJI & THE CENTRAL COAST	76
> COLVA, BENAULIM & AROUND	90
> PALOLEM & THE SOUTHERN BEACHES	106
SNAPSHOTS	122
> ACCOMMODATION	124
> FOOD	126
> GIVING BACK	128
> RELIGIOUS GOA	130
> WILDLIFE	131
> GOA WITH CHILDREN	132
> PAMPERING	133
> SHOPPING & MARKETS	134
> BARS & DRINKING	135
> PARTYING	136
BACKGROUND	137
DIRECTORY	145
INDEX	154

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THIS IS GOA

Swaying palms, white sands and sparkling waters: the three essential elements that attract two million visitors to Goa's balmy shores every year are bountiful in this tiny, glorious slice of India that hugs the country's western coastline.

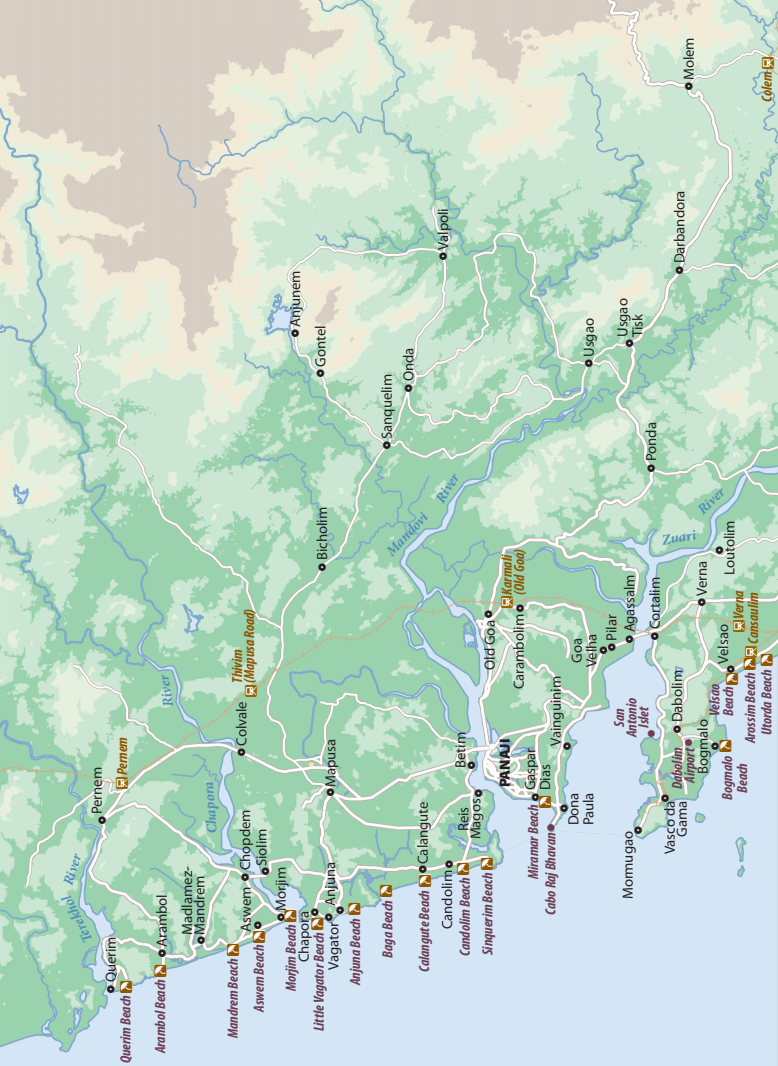
For almost 500 years Goa was a solitary Portuguese outpost in India, and the influence of colonial rule can still be seen almost everywhere: in the exquisite, crumbling architecture; in the East-meets-West cuisine, which combines coconut milk, palm vinegar and chillies with the refined flavours of Lisbon; in the melancholy strains of fado that still waft occasionally on the bougainvillea-scented breeze; and in the siesta-saturated *joie de vivre* that Goans call *susegad*, or *sosegado*.

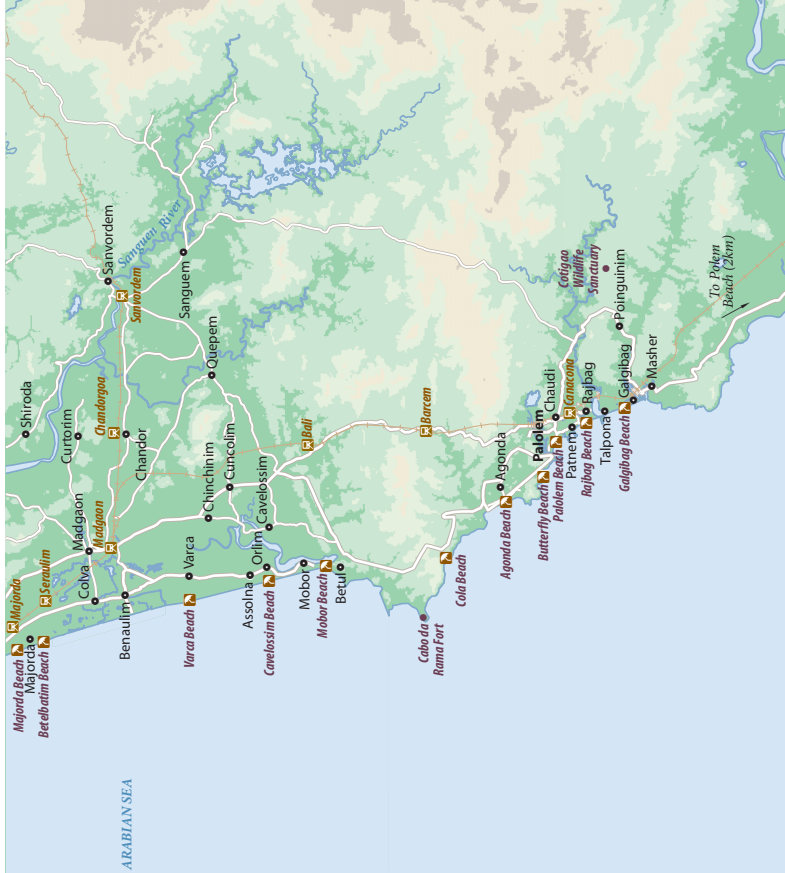
Nowhere else in India will you find the laid-back languidness of a Goan lunchtime, the easy charms of its people, or the soothing serenity of a day on its beaches. In Goa, a herd of water buffalo will greet you at breakfast, a lily-covered lake might provide the scenery for a morning walk, a sea eagle will prove an afternoon companion along a deserted stretch of pristine beach, a gorgeously spice-laden *vindalho* can make your evening repast, and a fiery glass of cashew-palm feni liquor will be your bedtime tonic.

Whether you choose to ply the state squeezed sardinelike into its faithful chugging buses or opt, as most travellers do, to buzz its byways on a scooter or aboard a roaring Royal Enfield motorbike, the more you explore the more you'll love this little haven in the maelstrom that is India. Wander its riotous markets, experience a blazingly colourful Muslim, Hindu or Catholic festival, then lie back and relax with a sunset cocktail or an ayurvedic massage on its glorious beaches, where coconut palms murmur gently overhead and crabs scuttle silently in the shallows.

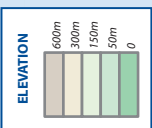
So come, shed your cares, and be intoxicated by the hospitality that's kept invaders of both the friendly and more forceful varieties returning time and again for centuries.

Top left Colonial architecture on show at Hospedaria Venite (p82), Panaji **Top right** Time out on Mandrem Beach (p40)
Bottom Colourful culinary delights prepared street side





ARABIAN SEA



To Pofem Beach (2km)