

Understand › Goa & Mumbai

GOA TODAY 188

With growth and modernisation afoot, just how is Goa doing in that delicate balancing act of past, present and future?

HISTORY 190

From the Mauryans to the Portuguese, many civilisations have added their own coat of paint. Here's how best to view the resulting masterpiece.

THE WAY OF LIFE 197

When it comes to living, Goans take *susegad* seriously. But there's more to progressive Goa than the art of relaxation.

ARTS & ARCHITECTURE 203

Architecture, music and dance form the beating heart of Goa, where cultural melanges have created fascinating art forms.

FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD 206

Never go hungry beside the Arabian Sea, with sizzling seafood, Portuguese-inspired hotpots and South Indian vegetarian treats aplenty.

MARKETS & SHOPPING 212

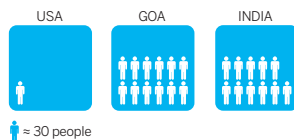
Stretch your rucksack seams with booty from market stalls, lifestyle shops, bookstores, antiques emporia...and even a magic shop or two.

WILDLIFE & THE ENVIRONMENT 215

Behind the beach fronts, a greener, quieter, kingfisher-filled Goan world exists. But how best to keep it that way?



population per sq km



Goa Today

Paradise Found

Goa was a solitary Portuguese outpost in India for almost 500 years and the influence of colonial rule can still be seen everywhere: in the exquisite, crumbling architecture; in the East-meets-West cuisine; and in the siesta-saturated *joie de vivre* that Goans themselves call *susegad*.

Little wonder, with all these charms, that just about everybody wants – or wanted at some point in history – to come here. The state has had her fair share of would-be conquerors, from the Mauryans and the Marathas, to the British, Dutch and Portuguese. Today pinkish package tourists throng the northern beaches; upwardly mobile internationals lounge beside infinity pools; well-heeled Russians party through the evenings; and young Israelis soak away the stresses of military service.

But international travellers aren't the only non-Goans who arrive in the state in search of the good life. Domestic tourists from across India flock here for an annual dose of sun and fun, outnumbering international visitors five-to-one. Moreover, Goa enjoys one of India's highest per-capita incomes and comparatively high health and literacy rates, factors which attract a good scattering of folks from other parts of India who arrive looking for work and that magical *susegad* they've heard so much about.

The Darker Side

Despite its myriad charms, Goa is not a perfect paradise. Goa's large homeless population is mostly migrants, driven from their homes often due to water shortages, and hoping life here will treat them more kindly. Almost inevitably, it doesn't.

Meanwhile Goa suffers from a sorely stressed environment, burdened by the effects of logging, iron-ore mining, relentlessly expanding tour-

- » Population: 1.34 million
- » Annual tourists: 2.6 million (12% of tourists to India)
- » Average annual income per capita: ₹34,000 (US\$683)
- » Literacy rate: 82% (national average: 65%)

Top Books

- » **Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found** (Suketu Mehta) Mumbai in all its gritty glory
- » **Goa and the Blue Mountains** (Richard Burton) Classic account of Goa, written in 1851
- » **Goa Traffic** (Marissa de Luna) Thriller set in Goa's party scene

- » **Reflected in Water: Writings on Goa** (Jerry Pinto) Collected writings by literary luminaries
- » **Houses of Goa** (Pandit/Mascarenhas) Beautifully illustrated book on Goa's mansions

Goan Music

- » **Goa Trance** (www.goatrance.radio.com) Goan psy-trance
- » **Goan Fusion** (www.remomusic.com) Legend Remo Fernandes
- » **Konkani radio** (www.live365.com/stations/61664) Traditional Goan music of all kinds