## Contents

**Hampi** 110  
Around Hampi 116  
Hospet (Hosapete) 117  

**NORTH GOA** 118  
Panaji to Fort Aguada 119  
Candolim, Sinquerim & Fort Aguada 119  
Calangute & Baga 127  
Anjuna 135  
Mapusa 140  
Vagator & Chapora 143  
Siolim 148  
Morjim 149  
Aswem 150  
Mandrem 151  
Arambol (Harmal) 153  
Inland Bardez & Bicholim 156  

**SOUTH GOA** 159  
Margao (Madgaon) 162  
Around Margao 166  
Vasco da Gama 169  
Around Vasco da Gama 170  
Bogmalo to Betalbatim 170  
Colva 174  
Benaulim 176  
Varca, Cavelossim & Mobor 179  
Assolna to Agonda 180  
Agonda 181  
Chaudi 182  
Palolem 183  
Patnem 188  
Rajbag 189  
Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary 190  
Galgibag & Talpona 190  
Polem 191  
**Beyond Goa** 191  
Gokarna 191  
Jog Falls 194  

---

**UNDERSTAND**  
Goa Today 196  
History 198  
The Way of Life 205  
Delicious India 210  
Markets & Shopping 213  
Arts & Architecture 215  
Wildlife & the Environment 218  
Scams 222  
Women & Solo Travellers 224  

**SURVIVAL GUIDE**  
Directory A–Z 226  
Transport 233  
Health 238  
Language 244  

**SPECIAL FEATURES**  
Beach Planner 26  
Yoga & Activities 29  
Markets & Shopping 213  
Arts & Architecture 215  
Wildlife & the Environment 218  

---

CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION, PANAJI P79
Itineraries

Northern Beaches

For travellers zipping south from Mumbai, the northern beaches encompass a little of everything that’s great about Goa – fine beaches, forts, rivers, lively resorts, yoga and nightlife.

Start by taking the short cut across the Mandovi River by vehicle ferry from Panaji to Betim and pay a visit to refurbished Reis Magos Fort before taking in the views from hilltop Fort Aguada. The beaches of Candolim, Calangute and Baga make up Goa’s busiest resort strip so there’s always plenty to do here, from water sports to nightclubs and beach shacks to fine dining. Head north of the Baga River to Anjuna, where the hippie trance days all began. It’s a good place to join a yoga class, party at one of the beachfront clubs or browse the Wednesday flea market. Nearby, Vagator and Chapora are easygoing villages with a relaxed party vibe: climb Chapora Fort for great sunset views or dine on the clifftop at Thalassa. Across the Chapora River is Russian-flavoured Morjim, mellow Aswem and Mandrem, with upmarket hut villages, a lovely clean beach and good yoga retreats. Then it’s on to Arambol, a popular backpacker beach with a Bob Marley vibe and paragliding from the northern headland.
Goa in a Nutshell

Start in the state capital, Panaji, where you can easily spend a few days staying in heritage accommodation, cruising the Mandovi River and eating well at Goan restaurants. Following the Mandovi eastwards, birdwatchers will enjoy taking the ferry over to Chorao Island for a visit to the mangroves of the Dr Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary. Otherwise continue to Goa’s greatest historic site – the churches and cathedrals of Old Goa.

The next day head further east to visit the Hindu temples around Ponda, spending the afternoon having lunch and taking a plantation tour at a spice farm. Further on nature lovers will enjoy Goa’s smallest wildlife sanctuary, Bondla, and its largest, Bhagwan Mahavir, or a trip to Dudhsagar Falls.

Returning to Panaji, it’s time to hit the beach. For beaches north of the Baga River, head straight up the NH66 to Mapusa and continue from there. Otherwise take the free ferry across the Mandovi and follow the back road over the Nerul River and along Fort Aguada Rd, exploring crowded Candlim, Calangute and Baga beaches. Cross the Baga River to Arpora – if it’s a Saturday, don’t miss one of the night markets at Baga or Arpora. Continue north to the village of Assagao to sample some of Goa’s best yoga retreats.

From here you can explore the coast from the hippie, party beaches of Anjuna and Vagator, and the boutique hotels of Siolim to the northern beaches of Morjim, Aswem, Mandrem and Arambol. Further north is secluded Querim Beach, from where you can take the vehicle ferry across the Terekhol River to Terekhol Fort, Goa’s most northerly point.

Now head south down the NH66 to Margao, a good base from which to explore the traditional villages around Chandor, or hit the beaches which stretch roughly from Velsao south to Colva, Benaulim, Cavelossim and Mobor. South of the Sal River, it’s a beautiful coastal drive to isolated Cola Beach, laid-back Agonda, then onto the palm-fringed southern jewel of Palolem. There’s plenty to do here, from lazing with a book to exploring Patnem and Galgibag beaches and Cotigao Wildlife Sanctuary.
PLAN YOUR TRIP ITINERARIES

Top: Palolem (p183)
Bottom: Cabo da Rama (p180)
South Goa is as much about lazing on the beaches as the north, but there are some interesting inland adventures here too. Start in busy Margao, where you can browse the market and grab a bite to eat at Ruta’s World Cafe or Longhuino’s.

The beach at Colva is just 6km west of Margao and stretches up and down the coast. If you’re into scuba diving, head north to Bogmalo, via pretty Utorda and Velsao beaches, or make your way south to Betul to the lovely village of Betul, where you can stop for lunch at the Blue Whale shack near the mouth of the Sal River.

Follow the coastal road through bucolic Betul to lovely Agonda, calling in at Cabo de Rama and secluded Cola Beach.

The final coastal stretch leads to Goa’s little paradise beach at Palolem, great for swimming, yoga, cooking courses and beach huts. Patnem is a little more peaceful. Intrepid travellers should hire a bike and explore further south to Galgibag and Polem beaches.

Take a few days to get off the beaten track.

From Panaji, start out early to Colem for Dudhsagar Falls. On the way back stop at Tambdi Surla for Shri Mahadeva Temple, the elephant camp at Jungle Book or some birdwatching at Backwoods Camp. Another excellent self-drive day trip from Panaji is to take a picturesque circuit from Old Goa, to serene Divar Island (via a ferry), catch another ferry to Naroa, where you can take in Mayem Lake, Corjuem Fort and Aldona. Return to Panaji via Torda, visiting the Houses of Goa museum.

Head south to Margao, from where you can explore the villages of Chandor, with one of Goa’s grandest Portuguese mansions, Quepem, Loutolim and the ancient Rivona Buddhist caves and prehistoric Usgalimal rock carvings.

Continue on to Palolem or Patnem, from where you can head inland through forest and farmland to the Netravali Protected Area to discover the mysterious ‘bubble lake’, the Tanshikar Spice Farm and jungle treks to remote waterfalls.
Paul Harding
Coordinating Author; Goa
Paul first landed in India in the mid-'90s looking for adventure and soon found himself in Goa looking for a decent beach hut. After many return visits to India as a traveller, writer and photographer, he keeps landing back in Goa, where the pace of life is a little slower but the wit of the people is often quicker. During his travels Paul worked on Lonely Planet’s Goa guidebook in the 2000s and was fortunate enough to be drawn back for this edition, where he sampled seafood and beaches, sunsets and susegad and chose to ride a Honda Kinetic over an Enfield. Contributor to more than 40 Lonely Planet titles, this was Paul’s 9th assignment on India and the second time with his intrepid young daughter, Layla.

Iain Stewart
Mumbai
Iain grew up in Leicester, a very Indian town transplanted to the Midlands, UK (complete with its own curry mile). He first visited India in 1991 and explored the sights at totally the wrong time of year, with temperatures approaching 50°C in parts. For this trip he wised up and travelled post-monsoon: bar-hopping in Mumbai, meandering down the Konkan coast and having several near-misses with tigers in Tadoba.

Abigail Blasi
Abigail fell in love with India on her first visit in 1994, and since then she’s explored and written about the country from north to south and back again. She’s covered plenty of other places for Lonely Planet too, from Mauritania and Mali to Rome and Lisbon. Abigail wrote the Scams, Women & Solo Travellers and Health chapters.

Trent Holden
Beyond Goa
On his third time authoring in India, Trent checked out Hampi’s ruins before hitting the beaches in Gokarna. A freelance travel writer based in London, Trent also covers destinations such as Nepal, Zimbabwe and Japan. In between travels he writes about food and music. You can catch him on Twitter @hombreholden.