

# Understand Goa & Mumbai

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# Goa Today

Goa joined the rest of India more than 50 years ago, but it has continued to dance to the beat of its own drum – socially, musically, economically and politically. It might still be considered small fry by more powerful Indian states, but Goa's tourism rupee – both foreign and domestic – should never be underestimated and, for better or worse, much of Goa's population relies more than ever on the annual influx of holidaying visitors.

## Best in Print

**Maximum City: Bombay Lost and Found** (Suketu Mehta) Mumbai in all its gritty glory.

**Shantaram** (Gregory David Roberts; 2003) Gripping tale of a fugitive in Mumbai, with Goa featuring.

**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.

**Goa Freaks: My Hippie Years in India** (Cleo Odzer) A disturbing tale of the drug-crazed, hippie 'freak' days of the 1960s and '70s, by one who lived it.

## Goan Music

**Goa Trance** ([www.goatranceradio.com](http://www.goatranceradio.com)) Goan psy-trance.

**Goan Fusion** ([www.remomusic.com](http://www.remomusic.com)) Legend Remo Fernandes.

**Goa Freaks** ([www.goa-freaks.com](http://www.goa-freaks.com)) Social network of psychedelic trance with streaming.

**Konkani radio** ([www.live365.com/stations/61664](http://www.live365.com/stations/61664)) Traditional Goan music of all kinds.

## 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 has wanted at some point in history – to come here. The growth in tourism in the past two decades has surprised even the locals. From the hippies and euro charter tourists to the Israeli ravers, passing backpackers and interstate holidaymakers, Goa's tourist scene has changed over time but rarely waned. In 1985, total tourist arrivals were just a tick over 775,000; in 2013 it was over 3.12 million – almost doubling in the last 10 years alone.

Russians now make up the bulk of the overseas holiday crowd – almost 40% of foreign visitors – but that's nothing compared with the visitor numbers from interstate. Young Indian tourists, singles, couples and families, often middle-class with disposable incomes, are making Goa their holiday destination of choice. While most tourism operators rely on the brief November to February tourist trade, domestic tourists are increasingly visiting in the summer (monsoon) season.

All of this is generally good news for those involved in a saturated tourist trade and for the state's GDP, but a little bemusing for the rest of the population who deal with the annual invasion and the overstretching of precious resources.

Still, Goa enjoys one of India's highest per-capita incomes and comparatively high health and literacy rates, factors which attract migrants and traders from other parts of India who arrive looking for work and that magical *susegad* they've heard so much about.