



Goa

0832 / POP 1.46 MILLION

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Ruta's World Cafe (p151)
- ➔ Go With the Flow (p138)
- ➔ Black Sheep Bistro (p126)
- ➔ Bomra's (p134)
- ➔ Ourem 88 (p161)

Best Beaches

- ➔ Palolem (p157)
- ➔ Mandrem (p147)
- ➔ Cola & Khancola (p156)
- ➔ Anjuna (p139)
- ➔ Arambol (p148)

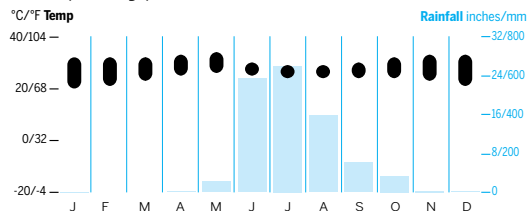
Why Go?

Goa is like no other state in India. It could be the Portuguese colonial influence, the endless beaches, the glorious whitewashed churches or the relaxed culture of *susegad* – a uniquely Goan term that translates as 'laid-backness' and is evident in all aspects of daily life and in the Goan people themselves.

But Goa is far more than its old-school reputation as a hippie haven or its contemporary status as a beach getaway. Goa is as naturally and culturally rich as it is compact; you can go birdwatching in a butterfly-filled forest, marvel at centuries-old cathedrals, trek out to milky waterfalls and aromatic spice farms or meander the capital's charming alleyways. Add a dash of Portuguese-influenced food and architecture, infuse with a colourful blend of religious traditions, pepper with parties and beach shacks, and you've got a recipe that makes Goa easy to enjoy and extremely hard to leave.

When to Go

Goa (Panaji)



Sep–Nov

Post-monsoon, some shacks are up but crowds are still down

Dec–Feb Festi-

vals, Christmas and great weather; peak prices and crowds from mid-Dec to early Jan.

Mar–Apr

Carnival and Easter celebrations as the season winds down.



Goa Highlights

- 1** Wander the Portuguese-era quarters of **Panaji** (p122), cruise the Mandovi and linger over lunch at one of its traditional Goan restaurants
- 2** Open up your chakras and join one of the **yoga** (p143) retreats around Assagao and Anjuna
- 3** Bask in the glory of the grand Se Cathedral and Basilica of Bom Jesus at historic **Old Goa** (p129)
- 4** Bargain hard at **Anjuna's flea market** (p142) then watch the sunset at a beachside bar
- 5** Indulge in barefoot luxury on the white-sand beach at **Agonda** (p156) or hidden **Cola Beach** (p156), in the state's sleepy south
- 6** Worship the sun and sleep in style at smooth and soulful **Mandrem Beach** (p147)
- 7** Kayak out to see playful dolphins at sunset from **Palem Beach** (p157)
- 8** Spend a day learning about the spices that first made Goa famous at a **spice plantation** (p131) near Ponda
- 9** Dream of times gone by in the mansions of **Chandor** (p153)