



Goa

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Best Beaches

- Palolem (p846)
- Mandrem (p837)
- Cola & Khancola (p844)
- Anjuna (p829)
- Arambol (p838)

Best Places to Sleep

- Panjim Inn (p816)
- Red Door Hostel (p829)
- Mandala (p838)
- Indian Kitchen (p827)
- Ciaran's (p846)

Why Go?

Pint-sized Goa is much more than beaches and trance parties. A kaleidoscopic blend of Indian and Portuguese cultures, sweetened with sun, sea, sand, seafood and spirituality, there's nowhere in India quite like it.

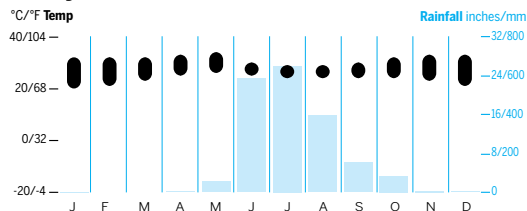
The central region (practically beach-free) is Goa's historic and cultural heart, home to capital Panaji, Old Goa's glorious churches, inland islands, bird sanctuaries, spice plantations and the wild Western Ghats.

North Goa is the Goa you've heard all about: busy beaches, upbeat nightlife, Goan trance, great food, hippie markets and yoga retreats. Calangute and Baga are the epicentre. Anjuna (with its famous Wednesday market) and Vagator still exude some hippie cool and party vibe. Laid-back Morjim, Aswem and Mandrem are burgeoning family-friendly beach resorts. Northern, budget-loving Arambol hosts paragliding.

South Goa is the state's more serene half, with cleaner, whiter, quieter beaches ranging from village-feel Benaulim to beach-hut bliss at Palolem, Patnem and Agonda.

When to Go

Panaji



Sep–Nov Some shacks up, but prices are lower and crowds fewer; humid weather post-monsoon.

Nov–Mar Wonderful weather; yoga, festivals in full swing; peak prices and crowds mid-Dec to early Jan.

Mar–Apr Carnival and Easter celebrations as the season winds down.

Goa Highlights

- 1 Panaji** (p813)
Exploring the historic Latin Quarter, shopping and eating well in India's most laid-back state capital.
- 2 Assagao** (p832)
Dropping in to a yoga class at Assagao, Anjuna, Arambol or Mandrem.
- 3 Anjuna Flea Market** (p832)
Haggling for a bargain at this touristy but fun Wednesday market.
- 4 Old Goa** (p819)
Standing in silence in the extraordinary churches and cathedrals of Old Goa.
- 5 Cola Beach** (p844)
Trekking down to secluded Cola, one of Goa's prettiest beaches.
- 6 Mandrem** (p837)
Sleeping in style and stretching out with a good book at this peaceful beach.
- 7 Palolem** (p846)
Checking into a beach hut on beautiful Palolem Beach, where you can kayak, learn to cook and relax.
- 8 Chandor** (p842)
Marvelling at colonial mansions and *palácio* in this village near Margao.
- 9 Agonda** (p845)
Booking into a luxurious beachfront hut and learning to surf.

