

INDIA · BEACHES · FOOD · NIGHTLIFE · HISTORY · SACRED SITES

 Goa

Goa is India's beach state: palm-backed sand, beach shacks serving fish curry, whitewashed Portuguese-era churches and an easy-going pace that has drawn British winter-sun seekers for decades. The season runs from November to March, when skies are clear and the sea calm; the June–September monsoon closes most shacks and makes swimming unsafe.

 **The UK Foreign Office (FCDO) advises against all travel to parts of India.**
Check whether Goa is affected in the latest FCDO travel advice.

 COUNTRY India	 BEST TIME Nov–Mar	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 10h direct ~£500–£950 return	 DAILY BUDGET £30–£180 ££ Moderate
 WARMEST MONTH March (33°C)	 SEA TEMPERATURE 27–30°C coolest–warmest	 TIME ZONE Kolkata +4.5h vs UK now	 CURRENCY Indian rupee £1 ≈ ₹127

Goa divides neatly in two. North Goa, from Candolim and Calangute up to Anjuna, Vagator and Mandrem, has the busiest beaches, the package hotels, the markets and the nightlife. South Goa, around Benaulim, Agonda and Palolem, is quieter, with longer, emptier sands and simpler beach huts. In between lie the capital Panaji, with its Latin Quarter of Fontainhas, and the UNESCO-listed churches of Old Goa. Most visitors base themselves on one stretch of coast and day-trip by taxi. The season runs from November to March; from June to September monsoon rain closes many beach shacks and red flags fly on most beaches.

Highlights

1

SACRED SITE

Churches of Old Goa

The former Portuguese capital's vast churches are UNESCO-listed: the Basilica of Bom Jesus holds the relics of St Francis Xavier, facing the huge Sé Cathedral across the lawns. Go early and dress modestly.

2

ARCHITECTURE

Fontainhas, Panaji

Panaji's Latin Quarter is a tangle of ochre, blue and yellow houses with tiled roofs and balconies, Portuguese street names and small galleries. Walk it in the morning, then lunch on chicken xacuti or cafreal nearby.

3

CULTURE

Anjuna flea market

Every Wednesday in season, stalls spread across the open ground behind Anjuna's southern beach selling textiles, jewellery, spices and souvenirs. Haggle with a smile, arrive by late morning, and stay for sunset at the beach shacks.

4

BEACH

Palolem

A crescent of sand in the far south, lined with palms and colourful beach huts, with calm water for swimming and kayaking. Boatmen run dolphin-spotting trips, and headphone parties keep the late-night noise down.

5

NATURE

Dudhsagar Falls

This four-tiered waterfall on the Karnataka border drops about 310 metres through the forest of Bhagwan Mahavir Wildlife Sanctuary. It is fullest just after the monsoon; jeep tours run once the access track reopens, usually from October.

Where to stay

WHERE TO STAY

Candolim and Calangute

North Goa's package-holiday strip, with big hotels, familiar menus and busy beaches; suits families and first-timers wanting easy restaurants and organised day trips.

WHERE TO STAY

Anjuna and Vagator

Cliff-top cafés, trance-era nightlife, the Wednesday market and red-rock coves; best for younger travellers and anyone wanting bars and clubs nearby.

WHERE TO STAY

Palolem and Agonda

Beach huts and small resorts on two of the south's prettiest bays; ideal for couples and long-stay travellers after quiet evenings and calm swimming.

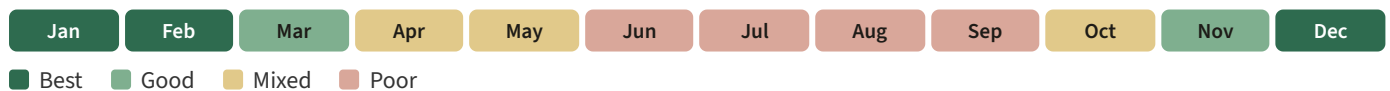
WHERE TO STAY

Benaulim and Cavelossim

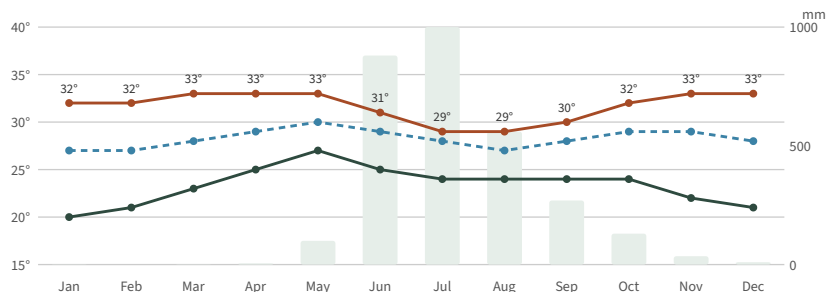
Long, flat beaches with five-star resorts and quieter fishing villages in South Goa; suits families and couples wanting space and a big hotel pool.

When to go to Goa

Best time: **Nov–Mar.**

**Average climate in Panaji**

— High °C
 — Low °C
 — Sea °C
 ■ Rain (mm)

**How much does Goa cost?**

SHOESTRING

£30

per person / day
≈ ₹3,803

MID-RANGE

£75

per person / day
≈ ₹9,509

COMFORTABLE

£180

per person / day
≈ ₹22,821

Per person per day excluding flights. Return flights from London typically cost £500 off-peak and £950 in school holidays.

Visas & entry for Goa

Shown for a British passport.

Visa required — apply before you go

You must have a visa to visit India unless you are an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholder.

India has a number of visa categories including tourist, business, work, journalist and medical. Make sure you get the right visa for your travel.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations

See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Hepatitis A Tetanus Typhoid

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Chikungunya Cholera Dengue Hepatitis B Japanese encephalitis Measles Rabies Tuberculosis

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

A yellow fever certificate is only required if you arrive from (or transit through) a country with yellow fever risk — not if you fly direct from the UK.

MALARIA

Low risk of malaria

- For the rest of India (including Goa and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands) there is a low risk of malaria: awareness of risk and bite avoidance recommended.

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in India

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Sun 8 Nov 2026	Diwali
Tue 24 Nov 2026	Guru Nanak's Birthday
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas
Tue 26 Jan 2027	Republic Day
Sat 6 Mar 2027	Maha Shivaratri
Wed 10 Mar 2027	Eid al-Fitr (date may shift)
Mon 22 Mar 2027	Holi

Fri 26 Mar 2027	Good Friday
Wed 14 Apr 2027	Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's Birthday
Thu 15 Apr 2027	Ram Navami
Sun 18 Apr 2027	Mahavira's Birthday
Mon 17 May 2027	Eid al-Adha (date may shift)
Thu 20 May 2027	Buddha Purnima
Wed 16 Jun 2027	Ashura (date may shift)
Sun 15 Aug 2027	Independence Day · Prophet's Birthday (date may shift)
Wed 25 Aug 2027	Janmashtami (Vaishnava)
Sat 2 Oct 2027	Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday
Sat 9 Oct 2027	Dussehra

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Know before you go

Goa has two airports, Mopa (GOX) in the north, where TUI's winter charters from Gatwick land, and Dabolim (GOI) further south. Check which your flight uses before booking a transfer.

Uber and Ola don't operate in Goa, so use the state's GoaMiles app, prepaid airport taxis or a driver for the day. Scooter hire is cheap, but insurers expect a full motorbike licence.

Plugs, money, phrases, emergency numbers and more: see our India guide.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.