



Mumbai (Bombay)

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Best Places to Eat

- » Khyber (p741)
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Best Places to Stay

- » Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai (p736)
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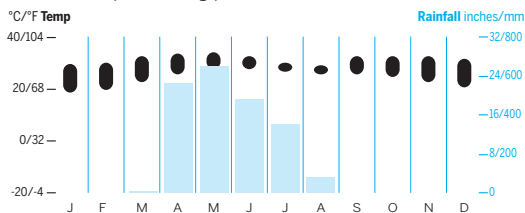
Why Go?

Mumbai is a beautiful mess, full of dreamers and hard-labourers, actors and gangsters, stray dogs and exotic birds, artists and servants, fisherfolk and *crorepatis* (millionaires), and lots more. Its crumbling architecture in various states of Technicolor dilapidation is a reminder that Mumbai once dreamt even bigger, leaving a brick-and-mortar museum around its maze of chaotic streets as evidence that its place in the world has always been a poetic disaster.

Today Mumbai is home to the most prolific film industry, one of Asia's biggest slums and the largest tropical forest in an urban zone. It's India's financial powerhouse, fashion epicentre and a pulse point of religious tension. Between the fantastical architecture and the modern skyscrapers, the fine dining and frenetic streets, the urban grit and suburban glamour, the madness and the mayhem, there's a cinematic cityscape set to a playful and addictive raga – a complex soundtrack that dances to the beat of its own *desi* drum.

When to Go

Mumbai (Bombay)



Apr–May Some like it hot...some like it hot.

Aug–Sep Mumbai goes Ganesh crazy during its biggest and most exciting festival, Ganesh Chaturthi.

Oct–Feb Put away the scuba gear as the monsoons retreat for Mumbai's 'cool' season.

MAIN POINTS OF ENTRY

Most travellers arrive at Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport, Mumbai Central train station (BCT) or Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST; Victoria Terminus).

Fast Facts

- » Population: 16.4 million
- » Area: 444 sq km
- » Area code: 022
- » Languages: Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati, English
- » Sleeping prices: \$ below ₹1000, \$\$ ₹1000 to ₹4000, \$\$\$ above ₹4000

Top Tips

Many international flights arrive after midnight. Save yourself some moon-lit hassle by carrying detailed landmark directions for your hotel – many airport taxi drivers don't speak English and can dwindle precious sleep time hunting it down.

Eicher City Map Mumbai (₹250) is an excellent street atlas, worth picking up if you'll be spending some time here.

Resources

- » Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (www.maharashtratourism.gov.in) is the official tourism site.

A Mouthful of Mumbai

Mumbai is a city shaped by flavours from all over India and the world. Throw yourself into the culinary kaleidoscope by sampling Parsi *dhansak* (meat with curried lentils and rice), Gujarati or Keralan thalis ('all-you-can-eat' meals), Mughlai kebabs, Goan vindaloo and Mangalorean seafood. And don't forget, if you see Bombay duck on a menu, it's actually *bombil* fish dried in the sun and deep-fried.

Streetwise, don't miss Mumbai's famous beach *bhelpuri*, readily available at Girgaum Chowpatty, a flavour summer-sault of crisp-fried thin rounds of dough mixed with puffed rice, lentils, lemon juice, onions, herbs, chilli and tamarind chutney piled high on takeaway plates. Other street stalls offering rice plates, samosas, *pav bhaji* (spiced vegetables and bread) and *vada pav* (deep-fried spiced lentil-ball sandwich) do a brisk trade around the city.

DON'T MISS

For many, a visit to cosmopolitan Mumbai is all about dining, nightlife and shopping, but the city offers far more than nocturnal amusement and retail therapy. Nowhere is that more evident than in the spectacular maze of Gothic, Victorian, Indo-Saracenic and art deco architecture, remnants of the British colonial era and countless years of European influence. **Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (Victoria Terminus)**, **High Court**, **University of Mumbai**, **Taj Mahal Palace hotel** and the **Gateway of India** are just the most prominent – little architectural jewels dot the urban quagmire throughout the metropolis and stumbling upon them is one of Mumbai's great joys.

Top Mumbai Festivals

- » Mumbai Festival (Jan, citywide, p734) A showcase of Mumbai music, dance and culture
- » Elephanta Festival (Feb, Elephanta Island, p734) Classical music and dance on Elephanta Island
- » Kala Ghoda Festival (Feb, citywide, p734) Two weeks of art performances and exhibitions
- » Nariyal Poornima (Aug, Colaba, p734) Commemorates the beginning of fishing season
- » Ganesh Chaturthi (Aug/Sep, citywide, p734) Mumbai's biggest event celebrates all things Ganesh

Mumbai Highlights

1 Marvel at the magnificence of Mumbai's colonial-era architecture: **Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus** (p726), **University of Mumbai** (p726) and **High Court** (p727)

2 Ogle the Renaissance-revival interiors of the **Dr Bhaui Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum** (p727)

3 Dine like a Maharaja at one of India's best **restaurants** (p741)

4 Behold the commanding triple-headed Shiva at **Elephanta Island** (p756)

5 Get lost amid the clutter in Mumbai's ancient **bazaars** (p748)

6 Sleep in one of the world's iconic hotels, the **Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai** (p736)

7 Pay serene respects to an astonishing feat of spiritually fuelled engineering at the **Global Pagoda** (p731)



History

In 1996 the city of Bombay officially became Mumbai. The original Marathi name is derived from the goddess Mumba, who was worshipped by the early Koli residents whose fisherfolk have inhabited the seven islands that form Mumbai since the 2nd century BC. Amazingly, remnants of this culture remain huddled along the city shoreline today. A succession of Hindu dynasties held sway over the islands from the 6th century AD until the Muslim Sultans of Gujarat annexed the area in the 14th century, eventually ceding it to Portugal in 1534. The only memorable contribution the Portuguese made to the area was christening it Bom Bahai, before throwing the islands in with the dowry of Catherine of Braganza when she married England's Charles II in 1661. The British government took possession of the islands in 1665, but leased them three years later to the East India Company for the paltry annual rent of UK£10.

Then called Bombay, the area flourished as a trading port. So much so that within 20 years the presidency of the East India Company was transferred to Bombay from Surat. Bombay's fort was completed in the 1720s,

and a century later ambitious land reclamation projects joined the islands into today's single landmass. Although Bombay grew steadily during the 18th century, it remained isolated from its hinterland until the British defeated the Marathas (the central Indian people who controlled much of India at various times) and annexed substantial portions of western India in 1818.

The fort walls were dismantled in 1864 and massive building works transformed the city in grand colonial style. When Bombay became the principal supplier of cotton to Britain during the American Civil War, the population soared and trade boomed as money flooded into the city.

A major player in the Independence movement, Bombay hosted the first Indian National Congress in 1885, and the Quit India campaign was launched here in 1942 by frequent visitor Mahatma Gandhi. The city became capital of the Bombay presidency after Independence, but in 1960 Maharashtra and Gujarat were divided along linguistic lines – and Bombay became the capital of Maharashtra.

The rise of the pro-Maratha regionalist movement, spearheaded by the Shiv Sena

MUMBAI IN...

Two Days

Start at the granddaddy of Mumbai's colonial-era giants, the old Victoria Terminus. **Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus** (CST; p726) and stroll up to **Crawford Market** (p748) and the maze of bazaars here. Lunch at **Rajdhani** (p744), with a juice shake from **Badshah Snacks & Drinks** (p744).

Spend the afternoon admiring Mumbai's marvellous architecture at the **High Court** (p727) and the **University of Mumbai** (p726). Walk down to the **Gateway of India** (p723) and **Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai** (p723). After sunset, eat street-side at **Bademiya** (p741). Swap tall tales with fellow travellers at **Leopold's Café** (p746).

The next day, visit the ornate **Dr Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum** (p727), then head to Kemp's Corner for lunch at **Café Moshe** (p743) and some shopping. Make your way down to **Mani Bhavan** (p727), the museum dedicated to Gandhi, and finish the day wandering the tiny lanes of **Kotachiwadi** (p739) followed by a beach sunset and a plate of *bhelpuri* at **Girguam Chowpatty** (p727). A blowout dinner at **Khyber** (p741) won't let you forget Mumbai soon.

Four Days

Head out to the **Global Pagoda** (p731) and return in the afternoon to visit the museums and galleries of **Kala Ghoda** (p723). In the evening, head to Bandra for a candle-lit dinner at **Sheesha** (p745), followed by some seriously hip bar action with a view at **Aer** (p746) in Worli.

Another day could be spent visiting the **Dhobi Ghat** (p729) and the nearby **Mahalaxmi Temple** (p730) and **Haji Ali's Mosque** (p729). Lunch at **Olive Bar & Kitchen** (p747) at Mahalaxmi Racecourse and then rest up for a night of avant-garde clubbing at **Bluefrog** (p747) in Worli.

(Hindu Party; literally 'Shivaji's Army'), shattered the city's multicultural mould by actively discriminating against Muslims and non-Maharashtrians. The Shiv Sena won power in the city's municipal elections in 1985. Communalist tensions increased and the city's cosmopolitan self-image took a battering when nearly 800 people died in riots following the destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya in December 1992.

The riots were followed by a dozen bombings on 12 March 1993, which killed more than 300 people and damaged the Bombay Stock Exchange and Air India Building. The July 2006 train bombings, which killed more than 200 people, and November 2008's coordinated attacks on 10 of the city's landmarks, which lasted three days and killed 173 people, are reminders that tensions are never far from the surface.

India's '26/11' – as the Mumbai attacks have come to be known – was a wake-up call for the city. Security is now intense at many of the city's prominent landmarks, well-known hotels and important financial and government buildings. Entire streets have been sealed off in some cases, providing impromptu cricket pitches for the city's numerous street youth. But Mumbai soldiers on, content to up the ante of inconvenience to maintain the Mumbai-kaikar spirit, a defiant Marathi manner that steadies the city as India's commercial hub and a global financial powerhouse.

👁️ Sights

Mumbai, the capital of Maharashtra, is an island connected by bridges to the mainland. The city's (off-limits) naval docks dominate the island's eastern seaboard. The city's commercial and cultural centre is at the southern, claw-shaped end of the island known as South Mumbai. The southernmost peninsula is Colaba, traditionally the travellers' nerve centre, with most of the major attractions, and directly north of Colaba is the busy commercial area known as Fort, where the old British fort once stood. It's bordered on the west by a series of interconnected, fenced grassy areas known as maidans (pronounced may-dahns).

Though just as essential a part of the city as South Mumbai, the area north of here is collectively known as 'the suburbs'. The airport and many of Mumbai's best restaurants, shopping and nightspots are here, particularly in the upmarket suburbs of Bandra and Juhu.

The opening of the cable-stayed Bandra-Worli Sea Link in 2009 cut travel time between the two areas from one hour to seven minutes, making these upmarket suburbs easily accessible to travellers.

COLABA

For mapped locations of all the following sights, see Map p728.

Sprawling down the city's southernmost peninsula, Colaba is a bustling district packed with street stalls, markets, bars and budget to midrange lodgings. **Colaba Causeway** (Shahid Bhagat Singh Marg) dissects the promontory and Colaba's jumble of side streets and gently crumbling mansions.

Sassoon Dock (off Map p728) is a scene of intense and pungent activity at dawn (around 5am) when colourfully clad **Koli fisherfolk** sort the catch unloaded from fishing boats at the quay. The fish drying in the sun are *bombil*, the fish used in the dish Bombay duck. Photography at the dock is forbidden.



Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai LANDMARK

This iconic hotel (p736) is a fairy-tale blend of Islamic and Renaissance styles jostling for prime position among Mumbai's famous landmarks. Facing the harbour, it was built in 1903 by the Parsi industrialist JN Tata, supposedly after he was refused entry to one of the European hotels on account of being 'a native'.

Gateway of India

MONUMENT

This bold basalt arch of colonial triumph faces out to Mumbai Harbour from the tip of Apollo Bunder. Derived from the Islamic styles of 16th-century Gujarat, it was built to commemorate the 1911 royal visit of King George V. It was completed in 1924. Ironically, the gateway's British architects used it just 24 years later to parade off their last British regiment as India marched towards Independence.

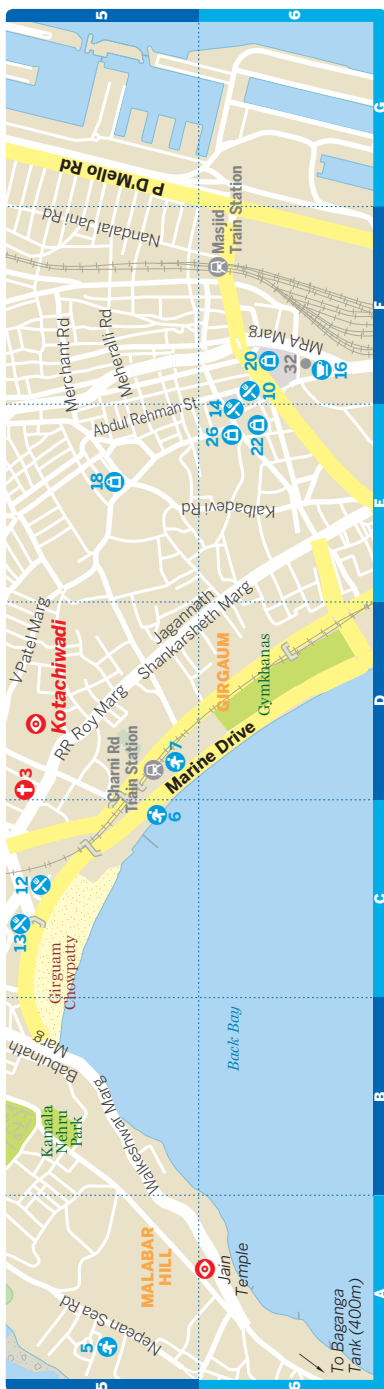
These days, the gateway is a favourite gathering spot for locals and a top spot for people-watching. Giant-balloon sellers, photographers, beggars and touts rub shoulders with Indian and foreign tourists, creating all the hubbub of a bazaar. Boats depart from the gateway's wharfs for Elephanta Island and Mandwa.

KALAGHODA

'Black Horse', the area between Colaba and Fort, contains most of Mumbai's main galleries and museums alongside a wealth of

Mumbai





colonial-era buildings. The best way to see these buildings is on a guided (p733) or self-guided (p735) walking tour.

TOP CHOICE **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (Prince of Wales Museum)**

MUSEUM

(Map p730; www.themuseummumbai.com; K Durbash Marg; Indian/foreigner ₹25/300, camera/video ₹200/1000; ☉10.45am-6pm Tue-Sun) Mumbai's biggest and best museum, this domed behemoth is an intriguing hodgepodge of Islamic, Hindu and British architecture displaying a mix of dusty exhibits from all over India. Opened in 1923 to commemorate King George V's first visit to India (back in 1905, while he was still Prince of Wales), its flamboyant Indo-Saracenic style was designed by George Wittet – who also did the Gateway of India.

The museum has undergone a ₹12 million upkeep renovation, which introduced a fascinating new miniature-painting gallery and a new gallery dedicated to Vishnu. Elsewhere, the vast collection includes impressive Hindu and Buddhist sculpture, terracotta figurines from the Indus Valley, porcelain and some particularly vicious weaponry.

FREE **Jehangir Art Gallery**

ART GALLERY

(Map p730; 161B MG Rd; ☉11am-7pm) Hosts interesting shows by local artists. Most works are for sale. Rows of hopeful artists often display their work on the pavement outside.

National Gallery of Modern Art

ART GALLERY

(Map p728; MG Rd; Indian/foreigner ₹10/150; ☉11am-6pm Tue-Sun) On Mahatma Gandhi (MG) Rd. Has a bright, spacious and modern exhibition space showcasing changing exhibitions by Indian and international artists.

Keneseth Eliyahoo Synagogue

SYNAGOGUE

(Map p730; www.jacobsassoon.org; Dr VB Gandhi Marg; admission free, camera ₹100; ☉9am-6pm) Built in 1884, this impossibly sky-blue synagogue still functions and is tenderly maintained by the city's dwindling Jewish community (and protected to Baghdad Green Zone levels by Mumbai's finest).

FORT

Lined up in a row and vying for your attention with aristocratic pomp, many of Mumbai's majestic Victorian buildings pose on the edge of **Oval Maidan**. This land, and the **Cross** and **Azad Maidans** immediately to the north, was on the oceanfront in those days, and this series of grandiose structures faced west directly out to the Arabian Sea.

Mumbai

📍 Top Sights

| | |
|--|----|
| Dr Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum..... | F1 |
| Haji Ali's Mosque | B1 |
| Kotachiwadi | D5 |
| Mahalaxmi Dhobi Ghat..... | E1 |

📍 Sights

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| 1 Mahalaxmi Temple | B2 |
| 2 Mani Bhavan | C4 |
| 3 St Teresa's Church..... | D5 |

📍 Activities, Courses & Tours

| | |
|--|----|
| 4 Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan..... | C4 |
| 5 BollyDancing Mumbai | A5 |
| 6 H2O Water Sports Complex..... | C5 |
| 7 Khaivalyadham Ishwardas Yogic Health Centre..... | D5 |
| 8 Yoga Sutra | B3 |

📍 Sleeping

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| 9 Hotel Kemps Corner..... | B3 |
|---------------------------|----|

🍴 Eating

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| 10 Badshah Snacks & Drinks..... | F6 |
| 11 Cafe Noorani..... | C2 |
| 12 Cream Centre | C5 |
| Moshe's Café | (see 21) |
| 13 New Kulfli Centre..... | C5 |
| Olive Bar & Kitchen | (see 15) |
| 14 Rajdhani | E6 |
| 15 Tote on the Turf..... | D1 |

📍 Drinking

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| 16 First Floor..... | F6 |
| 17 Haji Ali Juice Centre..... | C1 |

📍 Shopping

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 18 Bhuleshwar Market..... | E5 |
| Biba | (see 21) |
| 19 Chor Bazaar..... | E4 |
| 20 Crawford Market | F6 |
| 21 Crossword | B3 |
| 22 Mangaldas Market | E6 |
| 23 Mélange | B3 |
| 24 Mini Market/Bollywood Bazaar | E4 |
| 25 Shrujan..... | B2 |
| 26 Zaveri Bazaar | E6 |

Information

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| 27 Apne Aap Women Worldwide | E3 |
| 28 Breach Candy Hospital..... | B2 |
| 29 US Consulate..... | B3 |

Transport

| | |
|---|----------|
| 30 Allibhai Premji Tyrewalla | D4 |
| 31 Mumbai Central Bus Terminal | D3 |
| National CTC | (see 31) |
| 32 Private Bus Agents..... | F6 |
| 33 Private Long-Distance Bus Stand & Ticket Agents..... | D3 |

For mapped locations of the following sights see Map p730.



📍 Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (Victoria Terminus)

HISTORICAL BUILDING

Imposing, exuberant and overflowing with people, this is the city's most extravagant Gothic building, the beating heart of its railway network, and an aphorism for colonial India. As historian Christopher London put it, 'the Victoria Terminus is to the British Raj what the Taj Mahal is to the Mughal empire'. It's a meringue of Victorian, Hindu and Islamic styles whipped into an imposing Daliesque structure of buttresses, domes, turrets, spires and stained-glass windows.

Designed by Frederick Stevens, it was completed in 1887, 34 years after the first train in India left this site. Today it's the busiest train station in Asia. Officially renamed Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST) in 1998,

it's still better known locally as VT. It was added to the Unesco World Heritage list in 2004.

📍 University of Mumbai (Bombay University)

HISTORICAL BUILDING

Looking like a 15th-century French-Gothic masterpiece plopped incongruously among Mumbai's palm trees, this university on Bhaurao Patil Marg was designed by Gilbert Scott of London's St Pancras Station fame. There is an exquisite **University Library and Convocation Hall**, as well as an 80m-high **Rajabai Clock Tower**, decorated with detailed carvings, but since the 2008 terror attacks on Mumbai the public is no longer allowed inside the grounds. The architecture is best admired by strolling along Bhaurao Patil Marg as trees obscure much of the splendour when viewed from the Oval Maidan.

High Court

HISTORICAL BUILDING

(Eldon Rd) A hive of daily activity, packed with judges, barristers and other cogs in the Indian justice system, the High Court is an elegant 1848 neo-Gothic building. The design was inspired by a German castle and was obviously intended to dispel any doubts about the authority of the justice dispensed inside, though local stone carvers presumably saw things differently: they carved a one-eyed monkey fiddling with the scales of justice on one pillar. You are permitted (and it is highly recommended) to walk around inside the building and check out the pandemonium and pageantry of public cases that are in progress – just walk right in! You'll have to surrender your camera to the guards, then make your way through the maze-like building to the original building's courtyard opposite Court 6.

St Thomas' Cathedral

CHURCH

(Veer Nariman Rd; ☎6.30am-6pm) Recently restored to its former glory, this charming cathedral is the oldest English building standing in Mumbai (construction began in 1672, though it remained unfinished until 1718). The cathedral is an interracial marriage of Byzantine and colonial-era architecture, and its airy, whitewashed interior is full of exhibitionist colonial memorials.

GIRGUAM CHOWPATTY AREA

For mapped locations of the following sights see Map p724.

Marine Drive & Girguam Chowpatty

BEACH

Built on land reclaimed from Back Bay in 1920, Marine Drive (Netaji Subhashchandra Bose Rd) arcs along the shore of the Arabian Sea from Nariman Point past Girguam Chowpatty (where it's known as Chowpatty Seaface) and continues to the foot of Malabar Hill. Lined with flaking art deco apartments, it's one of Mumbai's most popular

promenades and sunset-watching spots. Its twinkling night-time lights earned it the nickname 'the Queen's Necklace'.

Girguam Chowpatty (often referred to as 'Chowpatty Beach' in English, though this means 'Beach Beach' and often confuses locals) remains a favourite evening spot for courting couples, families, political rallies and anyone out to enjoy what passes for fresh air. Eating an evening time *bhelpuri* at the throng of stalls found here is an essential part of the Mumbai experience. Forget about taking a dip: the water is toxic.

FREE Mani Bhavan

MUSEUM

(☎23805864; www.gandhi-manibhavan.org; 19 Laburnum Rd; ☎9.30am-6pm) As poignant as it is tiny, this museum is in the building where Mahatma Gandhi stayed during visits to Bombay from 1917 to 1934. The museum showcases the room where the leader formulated his philosophy of satyagraha (nonviolent protest) and launched the 1932 Civil Disobedience campaign that led to the end of British rule. Exhibitions include a photographic record of his life, along with dioramas and original documents, such as letters he wrote to Adolf Hitler and Franklin D Roosevelt. Nearby, August Kranti Maidan is where the campaign to persuade the British to 'Quit India' was launched in 1942.

MALABAR HILL

Mumbai's most exclusive neighbourhood of sky-scratchers and private palaces, **Malabar Hill** (Map p724) is at the northern promontory of Back Bay and signifies the top rung for the city's social and economic climbers.

Surprisingly, one of Mumbai's most sacred and tranquil oases lies concealed among apartment blocks at its southern tip. **Bangan-ga Tank** (off Map p724) is a precinct of serene temples, bathing pilgrims, meandering, traffic-free streets and picturesque old *dharamsalas* (pilgrims' rest houses). The wooden pole in the centre of the tank is the centre of the earth: according to legend, Lord Ram created the tank by piercing the earth with his arrow.

For some of the best views of Girguam Chowpatty and the graceful arc of Marine Drive, visit the small **Kamala Nehru Park** (Map p724).

BYCULLA**TOP CHOICE Dr Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum**

MUSEUM

(Map p724; Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Rd; Indian/foreigner ₹10/100; ☎10am-5.30pm Thu-Tue)

**EXILE ON MAIN STREET**

Street numbers on buildings are basically nonexistent in Mumbai and street signs sometimes come in English, sometimes in Hindi, sometimes both, a lot of the time not at all. But signs outside legitimate businesses often include the street address, so look for those to orient yourself when street signs fail you.

Colaba

📍 Top Sights

- Gateway of India D3
Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai D3

📍 Sights

- 1 National Gallery of Modern Art C1

📍 Activities, Courses & Tours

- 2 Reality Tours & Travel C2

📍 Sleeping

- 3 Ascot Hotel B4
4 Bentley's Hotel B4
5 Hotel Moti C3
6 Hotel Suba Palace C2
India Guest House (see 9)
7 Regent Hotel C3
8 Salvation Army Red Shield Guest House C3
9 Sea Shore Hotel C4
10 Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai D3
11 YWCA B1

📍 Eating

- 12 Bademiya C2
Cafe Moshe (see 15)
13 Colaba Market A5
14 Indigo C3
15 Indigo Delicatessen D2
16 New Laxmi Villas C2
Saharkari Bhandar Supermarket (see 35)
17 Theobroma B4
18 Wich Latte B4

📍 Drinking

- 19 Barista C1

- 20 Barista B4
21 Busaba C3
22 Café Mondegar C2
23 Leopold's Cafe C2

📍 Entertainment

- 24 Cooperage Football Ground A2
25 Polly Esther's C2
26 Regal C1
27 Voodoo Pub B4

📍 Shopping

- 28 Antique & Curio Shops C2
29 Bombay Electric C3
30 Central Cottage Industries Emporium D1
31 Good Earth C3
32 Phillips C1

Information

- 33 Magnum International Travel & Tours C3
34 MTDC Booth D2
35 Sahakari Bhandar Chemist C1
Thomas Cook (see 17)

Transport

- 36 BEST Bus Depot B3
37 BEST Bus Stand C1
38 BEST Bus Stand C1
39 Jet Airways B1
40 Launches to Elephanta Island & Mandwa D3
Maldar Catamarans Ticket Office (see 34)
PNP Ticket Office (see 34)



Haji Ali's Mosque

MOSQUE

Floating like a sacred mirage off the coast, this mosque, one of Mumbai's most striking symbols, is an exquisite Indo-Islamic shrine. Built in the 19th century on the site of a 15th-century structure, it contains the tomb of the Muslim saint Haji – legend has it that Haji Ali died while on a pilgrimage to Mecca and his casket miraculously floated back to this spot. A long causeway reaches into the Arabian Sea, providing access to the mosque. Thousands of pilgrims, especially on Thursdays and Fridays, cross it to make their visit, many donating to the beggars who line the way; but at high tide, water covers the causeway and the mosque becomes an island. Once inside, pilgrims fervently kiss the dressings of the tomb.

Erosion has taken its toll on the concrete structure, and at press time, renovations had been ongoing since 2008. The structural upgrade includes beautiful white Rajasthani marble – the same used for the Taj Mahal. The dargah will remain open, but access may be limited.



Mahalaxmi Dhobi Ghat

LANDMARK

If you've had washing done in Mumbai, chances are your clothes have already visited this 140-year-old **dhobi ghat** (place where clothes are washed). The whole hamlet is Mumbai's oldest and biggest human-powered washing machine: every day hundreds of people beat the dirt out of thousands of kilograms of soiled Mumbai clothes and linen in 1026



open-air troughs. The best view, and photo opportunity, is from the bridge across the railway tracks near Mahalaxmi train station.

Mahalaxmi Temple

HINDU TEMPLE

It's only fitting that in money-mad Mumbai one of the busiest and most colourful

temples is dedicated to Mahalaxmi, the goddess of wealth. Perched on a headland, it is the focus for Mumbai's Navratri (Festival of Nine Nights) celebrations in September/October.



Nehru Centre

CULTURAL COMPLEX

(off Map p724; ☎24964676; www.nehru-centre.org; Dr Annie Besant Rd, Worli) This cultural complex includes a planetarium, theatre, gallery and an interesting history exhibition **Discovery of India** (admission free;

☉11am-5pm). The architecture is striking: the tower looks like a giant cylindrical pineapple, the planetarium a UFO.

GORAI ISLAND

TOP CHOICE Global Pagoda

LANDMARK

(www.globalpagoda.org; Near Esselworld, Gorai Creek; ☉9am-6pm) Rising up like a mirage from polluted Gorai Creek and the lush but noisy grounds of the Esselworld and Water Kingdom amusement parks, the breathtaking structure is a 96m-high stupa modelled after Burma's Shwedagon Pagoda. The dome, which is designed to hold 8000 meditators and houses relics of Buddha, was built entirely without supports using an ancient technique of interlocking stones. It just snatched the record away from Bijapur's Golgumbaz for being the world's largest unsupported dome. The pagoda also has a museum dedicated to the life of the Buddha and his teaching – it's affiliated with teacher SN Goenka, and an on-site meditation centre offers 10-day meditation courses. To get here, take the train from Churchgate to Borivali, then an autorickshaw (₹28) to the ferry landing, where the Esselworld ferries (return ₹35) come and go every 30 minutes. The last ferry back is 5.25pm.

Activities

Birdwatching

WILDLIFE-WATCHING

Mumbai has surprisingly good birdwatching opportunities. Sanjay Gandhi National Park is popular for woodland birds, while the marshlands of industrial Sewri (pronounced *shev-ree*) swarm with birds in winter. Contact the **Bombay Natural History Society** (BNHS; Map p730; ☎22821811; www.bnhs.org; Hornbill House, Dr Salim Ali Chowk, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Rd, Kala Ghoda) or Sunjoy Monga at **Yuhina Eco-Media** (☎9323995955) for information on upcoming trips.

Outbound Adventure

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE

(☎9820195115, www.outboundadventure.com) Runs one-day rafting trips on the Ulhas River near Karjat, 88km southeast of Mumbai, from July to early September (₹1600 per person). After a good rain, rapids can get up to Grade III+, though usually the rafting is much calmer, with lots of twists and zigzags. OA also organises camping and canoeing trips.

Courses

Kaivalyadhama Ishwardas

Yogic Health Centre

YOGA

(Map p724; ☎22818417; www.kdhammumbai.com; 43 Marine Dr, Girgaum Chowpatty; ☉6.30-10am

Fort Area & Churchgate

📍 Top Sights

| | |
|--|----|
| Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya (Prince of Wales Museum)..... | E5 |
| Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (Victoria Terminus)..... | F1 |
| High Court..... | D4 |
| University of Mumbai..... | D5 |

📍 Sights

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| 1 Jehangir Art Gallery..... | E5 |
| 2 Keneseth Eliyahoo Synagogue..... | E5 |
| 3 Rajabai Clock Tower..... | D5 |
| 4 St Thomas' Cathedral..... | E4 |

📍 Activities, Courses & Tours

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 5 Bombay Natural History Society..... | E6 |
| MTDC Reservation Office..... | (see 49) |

📍 Sleeping

| | |
|----------------------------|----------|
| 6 Hotel City Palace..... | F2 |
| 7 Hotel Lawrence..... | E5 |
| 8 Hotel Oasis..... | F2 |
| 9 InterContinental..... | B3 |
| 10 Residency Hotel..... | E3 |
| 11 Sea Green Hotel..... | B4 |
| Sea Green South Hotel..... | (see 11) |
| 12 Trident..... | A5 |

| | |
|------------------------|----|
| 13 West End Hotel..... | C1 |
|------------------------|----|

📍 Eating

| | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| 210°C..... | (see 18) |
| 14 Five Spice..... | F3 |
| 15 K Rustom..... | C3 |
| 16 Khyber..... | E5 |
| Koh..... | (see 9) |
| 17 Mahesh Lunch Home..... | E3 |
| Moshe's Café..... | (see 34) |
| Relish..... | (see 18) |
| 18 Samrat..... | C4 |
| 19 Suryodaya..... | C3 |
| 20 Trishna..... | E5 |
| 21 Wich Latte..... | E5 |

📍 Drinking

| | |
|-------------------------|----------|
| 22 Café Universal..... | F3 |
| Cha Bar..... | (see 38) |
| Dome..... | (see 9) |
| 23 Kala Ghoda cafe..... | E5 |
| 24 Mocha Bar..... | C3 |
| Samovar Café..... | (see 1) |

📍 Entertainment

| | |
|--|----|
| 25 Eros..... | D4 |
| 26 National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA)..... | A6 |

& 3.30-7pm Mon-Sat) Several yoga classes are held daily at the Kaivalyadhama Ishwardas Yogic Health Centre. Fees include a ₹600 (students/seniors ₹500/400) monthly membership fee and a ₹500 admission fee.

Yoga Institute

YOGA
(Map p742; ☎26122185; www.theyogainstitute.org; Shri Yogendra Marg, Prabhat Colony, Santa Cruz East; per 1st/2nd month ₹400/300) The Yoga Institute, near Santa Cruz station, has daily classes as well as weekend and weeklong programs.

Iyengar Yogashraya

YOGA
(off Map p724; ☎24948416; www.bksiyengar.com; Elmac House, 126 Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel; per class ₹130) Has classes in Iyengar yoga, including some for the developmentally disabled. There is a ₹113 admission fee.

BollyDancing Mumbai

DANCING
(Map p724; ☎9821130788; www.BollyDancing.co.in; Napean Sea Rd, opp Walsingham School, Malabar Hill) The family-run institute runs choreographed Bollywood dance classes as well as BollySalsa, a salsa-fusion with a fitness edge. Hour-long beginner classes (₹450 per hour)

are held every Thursday (1.30pm) and Friday (noon); or by special arrangement.

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

LANGUAGE
(Map p724; ☎23871860; cnr KM Munshi Marg & Ramabai Rd, Girgaum; per hr ₹500) Professor Shukla is based at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and offers private Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati and Sanskrit classes. Contact this worldly octogenarian directly to arrange a syllabus and class schedule to suit your needs.

Khatwara Institute

HANDICRAFTS, COOKING
(Shri Khatwari Darbar; Map p742; ☎26042670, cnr Linking Rd & Shri Khatwari Darbar Marg, Khar West) The Khatwara Institute offers dozens of courses, lasting from three days to one month, for women only (sorry guys!) in Arabic *mehndi* (decorative henna tattoos), 'basic' *mehndi*, block printing, embroidery, sewing and cooking, among other things. Call Vanita for details.

👉 Tours

Fiona Fernandez's *Ten Heritage Walks of Mumbai* (₹395) contains excellent walking

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|----|------------------|--|----|
| 27 | NCPA Box Office..... | A6 | 47 | German Consulate..... | B6 |
| 28 | Sterling..... | E2 | 48 | Government of India Tourist Office..... | D3 |
| 29 | Valhalla..... | D4 | | Israel Consulate..... (see 53) | |
| 30 | Wankhede Stadium..... | C2 | 49 | MTDC Reservation Office..... | B5 |
| Shopping | | | 50 | Royal Chemists..... | C1 |
| 31 | Bombay Store..... | E3 | 51 | Singaporean Consulate..... | B6 |
| 32 | Chimanlals..... | E2 | 52 | Sri Lankan Consulate..... | E4 |
| 33 | Cotton Cottage..... | E5 | | Swiss Consulate..... (see 51) | |
| 34 | Fabindia..... | E5 | 53 | Thai Consulate..... | B6 |
| 35 | Fashion Street Market..... | D3 | 54 | Thomas Cook..... | E3 |
| 36 | Kala Niketan..... | C1 | Transport | | |
| 37 | Khadi & Village Industries Emporium..... | E3 | 55 | Air India..... | B5 |
| 38 | Oxford Bookstore..... | C5 | 56 | Bus Stand..... | F2 |
| 39 | Rhythm House..... | E5 | 57 | Central Railways Reservation Centre..... | F1 |
| | Standard Supply Co..... (see 6) | | 58 | El Al Airlines..... | B4 |
| Information | | | 59 | Emirates Airlines..... | B6 |
| 40 | Akbar Travels..... | F2 | | Indian Airlines..... (see 55) | |
| 41 | Australian Consulate..... | B6 | 60 | Kingfisher..... | B5 |
| 42 | Bombay Hospital..... | D1 | 61 | Chandni Travels/Private Buses to Goa..... | E1 |
| 43 | Canadian Consulate..... | E2 | 62 | Swiss..... | D2 |
| 44 | Concern India Foundation..... | E5 | 63 | Thai Airways..... | C6 |
| 45 | Dutch Consulate..... | E2 | | Western Railways Reservation Centre..... (see 48) | |
| 46 | Foreigners' Regional Registration Office (FRRO)..... | E1 | | | |

tours in the city, with fascinating historical background.

The Government of India tourist office (p751) can arrange **multilingual guides** (per half-/full day ₹600/750). Guides using a foreign language other than English will charge at least ₹225 extra.



Reality Tours & Travel

DHARAVI TOUR

(Map p728; ☎9820822253; www.realitytoursandtravel.com; 1/26 Akbar House, Nawroji F Rd, Colaba; short/long tours ₹500/1000) Runs socially responsible tours of Dharavi (p736). Photography is strictly forbidden and funds from the tour plus 80% of post-tax profits go to the agency's own NGO, **Reality Gives** (www.realitygives.org), which runs a kindergarten and community centre in Dharavi. Enter the office through SSS Corner store on Nawroji F Rd.

Bombay Heritage Walks

WALKING

(☎23690992; www.bombayheritagewalks.com) Run by two enthusiastic architects, has the best city tours. Private two-hour guided tours are ₹1500 for up to three people, ₹500 for each additional person.

MTDC

CITY TOUR

(Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation; Map p728; ☎22841877; Apollo Bunder; 1hr tour ₹120; ☀8.30am-4pm Tue-Sun & 5.30-8pm Sat & Sun) Runs open-deck bus tours of illuminated heritage buildings on weekends at 7pm and 8.15pm. They depart from and can be booked at the booth near Apollo Bunder.

Cruises

CRUISE

(☎22026364; ☀9am-7pm) A cruise on Mumbai Harbour is a good way to escape the city and a chance to see the Gateway of India as it was intended. Ferry rides (₹60, 30 minutes) depart from the Gateway of India.

Traansway International

CITY TOUR

(☎9920488712; traanswaytours@gmail.com; per 1-/2-/3-person tour ₹2500/3500/4500) Runs five-hour day or night tours of South Mumbai's sights. Prices include pick-up and drop-off.

H2O Water Sports Complex

CRUISE

(Map p724; ☎23677546; www.drishtigroup.com; Marine Dr, Mafatall Beach; ☀10am-10pm Oct-May)

BOLLYWOOD DREAMS

Mumbai is the glittering epicentre of India's gargantuan Hindi-language film industry. From silent beginnings with a cast of all-male actors (some in drag) in the 1913 epic *Raja Harishchandra* and the first talkie, *Lama Ara* (1931), it now churns out more than 1000 films a year – more than Hollywood. Not surprising considering it has a captive audience of one-sixth of the world's population, as well as a sizable Non-Resident Indian (NRI) following.

Every part of India has its regional film industry, but Bollywood continues to enthrall the nation with its escapist formula in which all-singing, all-dancing lovers fight and conquer the forces keeping them apart. These days, Hollywood-inspired thrillers and action extravaganzas vie for moviegoers' attention alongside the more family-oriented saccharine formulas.

Bollywood stars can attain near godlike status in India and star-spotting is a favourite pastime in Mumbai's posher establishments.

Extra, Extra!

Studios sometimes want Westerners as extras to add a whiff of international flair (or provocative dress, which locals often won't wear) to a film. It's become so common, in fact, that 100,000 junior actors nearly went on strike in 2008 to protest, among other things, losing jobs to foreigners, who work for less.

If you're still game, just hang around Colaba where studio scouts, recruiting for the following day's shooting, will find you. A day's work pays ₹500. You'll get lunch, and other snacks if you start early or finish late. Transport is usually by 2nd-class train unless there are enough tourists to justify private transport. The day can be long and hot with loads of standing around the set; not everyone has a positive experience. Complaints range from lack of food and water to dangerous situations and intimidation when extras don't 'comply' with the director's orders. Others describe the behind-the-scenes peek as a fascinating experience. Before agreeing to anything, always ask for the scout's identification and go with your gut.

Arranges 45-minute day (₹170 per person, minimum four people) and night (₹280, 7pm to 11pm) cruises.

Taj Yacht

CRUISE

(up to 10 people per 2hr ₹48,000) For the luxury version, hire this yacht; contact the Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai (p736) for details.



Festivals & Events

Mumbai Festival

MUSIC, DANCE

Based at several stages around the city, it showcases the food, dance and culture of Mumbai in January.

Banganga Festival

MUSIC

(www.maharashtratourism.gov.in) A two-day classical-music festival held in January at the Banganga Tank.

Kala Ghoda Festival

ARTS, CULTURE

(www.kalaghodaassociation.com) Getting bigger and more sophisticated each year, this two-week-long offering in February has a packed program of arts performances and exhibitions.

Elephanta Festival

MUSIC

(www.maharashtratourism.gov.in) Classical music and dance on Elephanta Island in February.

Nariyal Poornima

HINDU

(www.rakhifestival.com) Festivals in the tourist hub of Colaba kick off with this celebration in August at the start of the fishing season after the monsoon.

Ganesh Chaturthi

HINDU

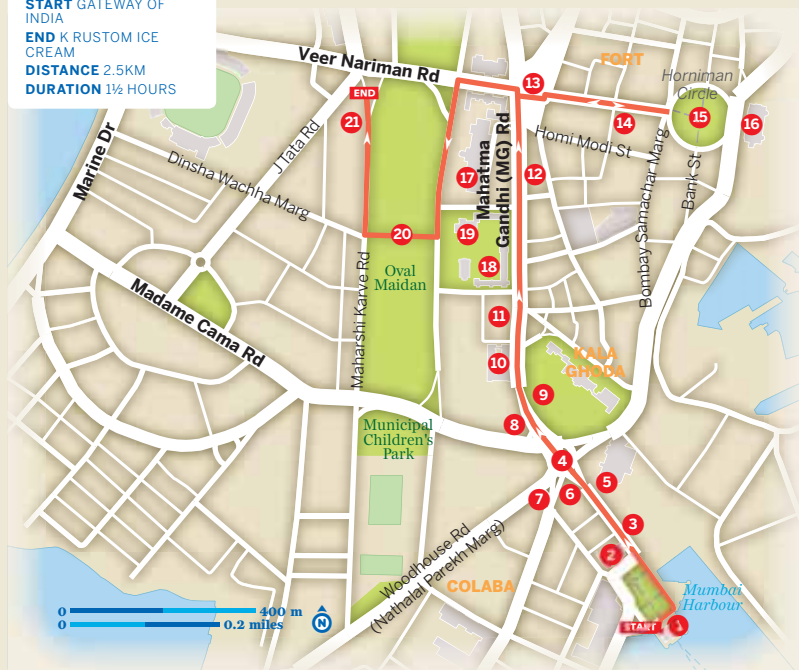
Mumbai's biggest annual festival – a 10- to 11-day event in August or September in celebration of the elephant-headed deity Ganesh – sweeps up the entire city. On the first, third, fifth, seventh and 10th days of the festival families and communities take their Ganesh statues to the seashore and auspiciously drown them: the 10th day, which sees millions descending on Girgaum Chowpatty to submerge the largest statues, is pure mayhem.

Colaba Festival

ARTS

A small October arts festival in Colaba that sometimes overlaps with Diwali festivities.

START GATEWAY OF INDIA
END K RUSTOM ICE CREAM
DISTANCE 2.5KM
DURATION 1½ HOURS



Walking Tour Mumbai

Its distinctive mix of colonial-era and art deco architecture is Mumbai's defining feature.

Starting from the **1 Gateway of India** walk up Chhatrapati Shivaji Marg past the members-only colonial relic **2 Royal Bombay Yacht Club** on one side and the art deco residential-commercial complex **3 Dhunraj Mahal** on the other, towards **4 Regal Circle**. The best view of the surrounding buildings – including the old **5 Sailors Home**, which dates from 1876 and is now the Maharashtra Police Headquarters, the art deco **6 Regal** cinema and the old **7 Majestic Hotel**, now the Sahakari Bhandar cooperative store – is from the circle's centre.

Continue up MG Rd, past the beautifully restored facade of the **8 National Gallery of Modern Art**. Opposite is the **9 Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya**. Back across the road is the 'Romanesque Transitional' **10 Elphinstone College** and the **11 David Sassoon Library & Reading Room**, where members escape the afternoon heat lazing on planters' chairs on the upper balcony.

Continue north to admire the vertical art deco stylings of the **12 New India Assurance Company Building**. On a traffic island ahead lies the pretty **13 Flora Fountain**, erected in 1869 in honour of Sir Bartle Frere, the Bombay governor responsible for dismantling the fort.

Turn east down Veer Nariman Rd, walking towards **14 St Thomas' Cathedral**. Ahead lies the stately **15 Horniman Circle**, an arcaded ring of buildings laid out in the 1860s around a circular and beautifully kept botanical garden. The circle is overlooked from the east by the neoclassical **16 Town Hall**.

Backtrack to Flora Fountain, continuing west and turning south on to Bhaurao Patil Marg to see the august **17 High Court** in full glory and the ornately decorated **18 University of Mumbai**. The university's 80m-high **19 Rajabai Clock Tower** is best observed from within the **20 Oval Maidan**. Turn around to compare the colonial edifices with the row of art deco beauties lining Maharshi Karve (MK) Rd, culminating in the wedding cake tower of the **21 Eros Cinema**.

DHARAVI SLUM

Mumbaikars had mixed feelings about the stereotypes in 2008's runaway hit, *Slumdog Millionaire* (released in Hindi as *Slumdog Crorepati*). But slums are very much a part of – some would say the foundation of – Mumbai city life. An astonishing 55% of Mumbai's population lives in shantytowns and slums, and the largest slum in Mumbai (and Asia, for that matter) is Dharavi. Originally inhabited by fisherfolk when the area was still creeks, swamps and islands, it became attractive to migrant workers, from South Mumbai and beyond, when the swamp began to fill in as a result of natural and artificial causes. It now incorporates 1.75 sq km sandwiched between Mumbai's two major railway lines and is home to more than one million people.

While it may look a bit shambolic from the outside, the maze of dusty alleys and sewer-lined streets of this city within a city are actually a collection of abutting settlements. Some parts of Dharavi have mixed populations, but in others inhabitants from different parts of India, and with different trades, have set up homes and tiny factories. Potters from Saurashtra live in one area, Muslim tanners in another; embroidery workers from Uttar Pradesh work alongside metalsmiths; while other workers recycle plastics as women dry pappadams in the searing sun. Some of these thriving industries, some 10,000 in all, export their wares, and the annual turnover of business from Dharavi is thought to top a remarkable US\$665 million.

Up close, life in the slums is strikingly normal. Residents pay rent, most houses have kitchens and electricity, and building materials range from flimsy corrugated-iron shacks to permanent multistorey concrete structures. Many families have been here for generations, and some of the younger Dharavi residents even work in white-collar jobs. They often choose to stay, though, in the neighbourhood they grew up in.

Slum tourism is a polarising subject, so you'll have to decide your feelings for yourself. If you opt to visit, Reality Tours & Travel does a fascinating tour, and pours a percentage of profits back into Dharavi, setting up community centres and schools. Some tourists opt to visit on their own, which is OK as well – just don't take photos. Take the train from Churchgate station to Mahim (₹12), exit on the west side and cross the bridge into Dharavi.

Prithvi Theatre Festival

THEATRE

(www.prithvitheatre.org) A showcase of what's going on in contemporary Indian theatre, held in November; also includes performances by international troupes and artists.

 Sleeping

You'll need to recalibrate your budget here: Mumbai has the most expensive accommodation in India. Book ahead at Christmas and in Diwali season.

Colaba is compact, has the liveliest foreigner scene and many of the budget and midrange options. Fort is more spread out and convenient to sights and the main train stations (CST and Churchgate). Most of the top-end places are dotted around the suburbs; hotels in Juhu are convenient for the trendy Bandra district.

To stay with a local family, contact the Government of India tourist office for a list of homes participating in Mumbai's **paying-guest scheme** (r with full board; ₹1500-2500; ☎).

A 4% (more common at budget end) or 10% tax should be added to all prices listed here unless otherwise stated.

COLABA

For mapped locations of the following venues see Map p728.

 **Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai**

HERITAGE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p728; ☎66653366; www.tajhotels.com; Apollo Bunder, Colaba; s/d tower from ₹21,500/23,000, palace from ₹25,250/26,750; ☎@☎☎) The hotel formerly known as the Taj Mahal Palace & Tower debuted its new name and new spaces on Indian Independence Day 2010, the result of a meticulous restoration following the November 2008 terrorist attacks that nearly brought this 1903 Mumbai landmark to its knees. But with its sweeping arches, staircases and domes, it has risen again, defiantly opulent. Some 285 rooms have been lavishly restored in gorgeous fuchsia, saffron and celadon colour schemes, and

security is Fort Knox level – guests can only access their own floor via elevator keys. All of the hotel bars – including the legendary **Harbour Bar**, Mumbai's first licensed bar – and restaurants have been redesigned, rounding out a triumphant return for one of Mumbai's most enduring symbols.

YWCA

GUESTHOUSE \$\$
(☎22025053; www.ywca.info; 18 Madame Cama Rd; s/d/t/q incl breakfast, dinner & taxes ₹2024/3000/4200/6000; 🍷🍷🍷) The YWCA presents a frustrating dilemma: It's immaculate and surprisingly good, considering it's a cool ₹1000 cheaper than most in its class. Rates include tax, breakfast, dinner, 'bed tea', free wi-fi ...and a newspaper, so it's the best value (and location, for that matter) within miles. But there's a trade-off here with a series of unorthodox rules, including the very stubborn policy of not allowing early check-in – even if your room is ready – unless you pay extra.

Hotel Moti

GUESTHOUSE \$\$
(☎22025714; hotelmotiinternational@yahoo.co.in; 10 Best Marg; s/d/tr with AC incl tax from ₹1800/2000/3200; 🍷🍷) This traveller's haven occupies the ground floor of a gracefully crumbling, beautiful colonial-era building. Simple rooms have whispers of charm and some nice surprises, like ornate stucco ceilings and Western showers. Some are huge and all have fridges filled with soft drinks and bottled water, which is charged at cost – one of the many signs of the pragmatic and friendly management.

Sea Shore Hotel

GUESTHOUSE \$
(☎22874237; 4th fl, Kamal Mansion, Arthur Bunder Rd; s/d without bathroom ₹500/700) In a building housing several budget guesthouses, the Sea Shore will go above and beyond your expectations for the price, mainly due to a

spiffy new makeover that has turned ratty plywood walls and shoebox-sized rooms into simple but near hotel-quality accommodation, with communal bathrooms and sinks that approach those of design hotels. On the floor below, the same owners offer **India Guest House** (☎22833769; s/d without bathroom ₹350/450) with the same new bathrooms but no further renovations at research time.

Hotel Suba Palace

HOTEL \$\$\$
(☎22020636; www.hotelsubapalace.com; Battery St; s/d with AC incl breakfast ₹4400/5170; 🍷🍷🍷) Teetering precariously on the edge of boutique hotel, the Suba Palace oozes soothing neutral tones, from the tiny taupe shower tiles in the contemporary bathrooms to the creamy crown moulding and beige quilted headboards in the tastefully remodelled rooms. Comfy, quiet and central.

Salvation Army Red Shield Guest House

GUESTHOUSE \$
(☎22841824; red_shield@vsnl.net; 30 Mereweather Rd; dm incl breakfast ₹225, d/tr/q with full board ₹725/991/1368, d with AC & full board ₹1199; 🍷🍷) Salvy's is a Mumbai institution popular with travellers counting every rupee. The large, ascetic dorms are clean, though ratty mattresses encourage bed bugs. All rooms have their own bathroom; some are not attached but you get a private key. Dorm beds cannot be reserved in advance so come just after the 9am kickoff to ensure a spot.

Ascot Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$
(☎66385566; www.ascototel.com; 38 Garden Rd; d with AC incl breakfast from ₹6000; 🍷🍷🍷) Marble-meets-modern at this classy hotel with hardwood hallways leading to boutiquey rooms with big headboards, bathtubs, desks, new LCD TVs, and lots of natural light and tree views.

MUMBAI FOR CHILDREN

Rina Mehta's www.mustformums.com has the Mumbai Mums' Guide, with info on crèches, health care and even kids' salsa classes in the city. *Time Out Mumbai* (₹50) often lists fun things to do with kids.

Little tykes with energy to burn will love the Gorai Island amusement parks, **Esselworld** (www.esselworld.in; adult/child ₹510/380; ☀️11am-7pm) and **Water Kingdom** (www.waterkingdom.in; adult/child ₹510/380; ☀️11am-7pm). Both are well maintained and have lots of rides, slides and shade. Combined tickets are ₹710/580 (adult/child). Low-season weekday ticket prices are lower. It's a ₹35 ferry ride from Borivali jetty.

BNHS (p731) and Yuhina Eco-Media (p731) often conduct nature trips for kids while **Yoga Sutra** (Map p724; ☎32107067; www.yogasutra.co.in; Chinoy Mansions, Bhulabhai Desai Rd, Cumballa Hill; drop-in classes ₹300) has kids' yoga classes, taught in English.

GAY & LESBIAN MUMBAI

The decriminalisation of homosexuality – a law on the Indian books for 148 years – by Delhi's High Court in July 2009 means India is out of the closet, but cosmopolitan Mumbai has been slow on the uptake.

The pioneering GLBTQ magazine *Bombay Dost* (www.bombaydost.co.in) organises **Sunday High**, a twice-monthly screening of queer-interest films, usually in the suburbs, and is an excellent resource on happenings around town. You can pick up a copy at Oxford Bookstore (p750) in Churchgate as well as the Humsafar Trust (p1166) offices around town. **Queer Ink** (www.queer-ink.com) is an online Indian bookstore specialising in gay and lesbian books and magazines of every ilk.

The **Kashish-Mumbai International Queer Film Festival** (www.mumbaiqueerfest.com) made its debut in 2010 and is expected to become an annual event. *XXWHY*, a documentary short by Mumbai-based filmmaker Dr Bharaty Manjula about Kerala's first out female-to-male transgender, was the big winner in the inaugural event.

Around town, no dedicated gay and lesbian bars/clubs have yet opened but gay-friendly 'safe house' venues often host private gay parties on specific nights – see the following. Check out Gay Bombay (www.gaybombay.org) for listings.

Azaardbaazaar

BOUQUET

(Map p742); 16th/33rd Rd, Bandra; ☺closed Monday) Billed as India's first GLBTQ pride store, tucked in a garage off 33rd Rd.

Just Around the Corner

CAFE

(Map p742); cnr 24th & 30th Rd, Bandra West; mains ₹95-375; ☺lunch) This great cafe is a popular meeting point for the GLBTQ crowd, but it's popular with everyone for its tolerance across the board.

Voodoo Pub

NIGHTCLUB

(Map p728; ☎22841959; Kamal Mansion, Arthur Bunder Rd, Colaba; cover ₹300) This dark and sweaty bar has unofficially hosted Mumbai's only regular gay night on Saturdays since 1994 – long before it was trendy (or legal) to do so. There is little going on other nights of the week, but staff are screened for open-mindedness and it's considered gay friendly all week long.

Eclipse Lounge

NIGHTCLUB

(off Map p730; 11/13 Walchand Hirachand Marg, Ballard Estate) Formerly known as Let's Scream, the dark and iffy Eclipse was quick to point out it isn't gay, but does often host private gay parties.

Bentley's Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(☎22841474; www.bentleyshotel.com; 17 Oliver Rd; s/d incl breakfast & tax from ₹1690/2090; ☹) Colonial charm aplenty, with old-school floor tiles and wooden furniture; its location spread out over several buildings on Oliver St and Henry Rd can all seem a bit *The Shining*-like isolated.

Regent Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(☎22871853/4; www.regenthotelcolaba.com; 8 Best Marg; r/tr with AC incl breakfast & tax ₹4290/4620; ☹@) An upper-scale Arabian-flavoured hotel with marble surfaces and soft pastels aplenty. The retro-chic breakfast area fills the 1st floor hallway, so avoid rooms 101-110 if you plan to sleep in.

FORT, CHURCHGATE & MARINE DRIVE

For mapped locations of the following venues see Map p730, unless otherwise stated.



Residency Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p730; ☎22625525; www.residencyhotel.com; 26 Rustom Sidhwa Marg, Fort; s/d from ₹2500/2700; ☹@☺) This polarising hotel can be hit or miss. On one hand, the small rooms in the original building – where a waft of sweet lemongrass graces the lobby – are older but come with fridges, flat-screen TVs and flip-flops (thongs), while the newly annexed building next door houses a far more modern design-style hotel with rain showers, leather-walled elevators and free wi-fi. But during our visit, a Londoner was overheard complaining, 'One of our rooms

smells like cigarettes, the other like urine, so it's a gamble.

Welcome Hotel

HOTEL \$\$

(off Map p730; ☎6631488; welcome_hotel@vsnl.com; 257 Shahid Bhagat Singh Rd; s/d incl breakfast from ₹2783/3278, without bathroom from ₹1397/1595; 🏠🏠) Its reputation as immaculate was crushed when a cockroach scurried across our authoring desk but, all things considered, this is a cleaner-than-most mid-range choice. New top-floor executive rooms evoke a different hotel altogether – a boutique makeover has turned them into something more LA than Bombay. Rates include evening tea in the rooms. For value under ₹2000, it's tough to beat.

Sea Green Hotels

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p730; s/d ₹2500/3150; 🏠🏠) Seagreen Hotel (☎66336525; www.seagreenhotel.com; 145 Marine Dr); Sea Green South Hotel (☎22821613; www.seagreensouth.com; 145A Marine Dr) These identical art deco hotels have spacious but spartan AC rooms, originally built in the 1940s to house British soldiers. Snag a sea-view room – they're the same price – and you've secured top value in this price range (even with the 10% service charge).

West End Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p730; ☎22039121; www.westendhotelmumbai.com; 45 New Marine Lines; s/d with AC from ₹3900/4500; 🏠🏠) This accidentally retro hotel boasts a nonchalant funky vibe built around old-fashioned rooms that are spacious, with bathtubs, shagalicious rugs and modish daybeds.

Trident

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Oberoi Hotel; Map p730; ☎66324343; www.tridenthotels.com; Marine Dr, Nariman Point; s/d from ₹18,750/20,000; 🏠@🏠🏠) The Trident is, along with the Oberoi, part of the Oberoi

Hotel complex. But the Trident wins out both on price and on the spiffy, streamlined design of its restaurants, bars and pool area. The rates above are rack, but you can get the rooms for half depending on occupancy.

InterContinental

HOTEL \$\$\$

(☎39879999; www.intercontinental.com; 135 Marine Dr, Churchgate; r incl breakfast from ₹19,500; 🏠@🏠🏠) Very sleek for an InterContinental. All earth tones and Buddha chic, the spacious deluxe rooms are sizeable in their own right, while the halfmoon corner suites mirror the curved elegance of Marine Drive's Queen's Necklace. The stunning **Dome** bar and restaurant stylishly graces the rooftop and overlooks the sea, while **Koh** turns Thai food on its head at the lobby level.

Traveller's Inn

GUESTHOUSE \$

(Map p730; ☎22644685; 26 Adi Marban Rd, Ballard Estate; dm ₹500, r ₹900, with AC ₹1150; 🏠@🏠) On a quiet, tree-lined street, the tiny Traveller's Inn underwent a spiffy renovation in 2010 and now boasts bigger rooms (and thinner hallways); and new air-con units, lockers and windows, making a good budget choice that much better.

Hotel Lawrence

GUESTHOUSE \$

(☎22843618; 3rd fl, ITTS House, 33 Sai Baba Marg; s/d/tr without bathroom incl breakfast & tax ₹600/700/900) A bottom-barrel guesthouse tucked away in a little side lane offering clean crashpads that are popular with shoestring meditators – and a management that tends to enforce moral judgments on guests.

Hotel City Palace

HOTEL \$\$\$

(☎22666666; www.hotelcitypalace.net; 121 City Tce, Walchand Hirachand Marg; s/d without bathroom from ₹803/1350, r with bathroom from ₹2200; 🏠) Organised and clean, across from CST. If you just got off an overnight

DON'T MISS

KOTACHIWADI

This storied *wadi* (hamlet) is a bastion clinging onto Mumbai life as it was before high-rises. A Christian enclave of elegant two-storey wooden mansions, it's 500m northeast of Girgaum Chowpatty (Map p724), lying amid Mumbai's predominantly Hindu and Muslim neighbourhoods. These winding laneways allow a wonderful glimpse into a quiet life free of rickshaws and taxis. It's not large by any means, but you can lose considerable moments wandering these fascinating alleyways – no doubt in shock that the hustle and bustle of the real Mumbai is but steps away.

To find it, aim for **St Teresa's Church** (Map p724) on the corner of Jagannath Shankarsheth Marg (JS Marg) and RR Roy Marg (Charni Rd), then head directly opposite the church on JS Marg and duck down the second and third lanes on your left.

train, the rooms are no bigger than a sleeper compartment, so you won't suffer any disorientation at wake up.

THE SUBURBS

There are several midrange hotels on Nehru Rd Extension in Vile Parle East near the domestic airport, but rooms are overpriced and only useful for early or late flights. Juhu is convenient for Juhu Beach and for the restaurants, shops and clubs in Bandra.

TOP CHOICE Iskon

GUESTHOUSE \$\$

(Map p742; ☎26206860; guesthouse.mumbai@pamho.net; Hare Krishna Land, Juhu; s/d incl tax ₹2095/2495, with AC incl tax ₹2395/2995; 🍷🍷) If you are looking for an experience rather than a shelter, this efficiently managed guesthouse, part of Juhu's lively Hare Krishna complex, is one of Mumbai's most interesting choices. The lobby looks out into the temple, while rooms in the two flamingo-pink towers have pretty lacquered *sankheda* (lacquered country wood) furniture from Gujarat and those in the original tower have semicircular balconies. The whole things feel like you are in the thick of India, which is more than can be said for most of the resort or business-oriented hotels out this way. Don't miss the evening *aarti* (candle-lighting ritual).

Four Seasons Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Off Map p724; ☎24818000; www.fourseasons.com; 114 Dr E Moses Rd, Worli; r from ₹15,200; 🍷🍷🍷) This modern Four Seasons is everything you expect it to be: exemplary service, psychic staff, everything classic yet slick as oil. Now with the addition of its fashionable rooftop lounge **Aer** (p746), it's hip as hopscotch, too.

Hotel Kemps Corner

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p724; ☎23634646; 131 August Kranti Marg; s/d from ₹2700/3800; 🍷🍷) A general spiffing-up of the place means the prices at this friendly midrange are no longer the deal they once were, but it remains a great spot in the heart of the Kemp's Corner fashion bonanza (which is a lot less frenzied than Colaba or Fort) and walking distance to Haji Ali Mosque and Girgaum Chowpatty. Service comes with more smiles than most, though it takes a serious dive on Sundays.

Juhu Residency

BOUQUETTE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p742; ☎67834949; www.juhuresidency.com; 148B Juhu Tara Rd, Juhu; s/d with AC incl breakfast from ₹5000; 🍷🍷🍷) A makeover two years ago turned this into a quasi-boutique hotel, with sleek marble floors, king-size beds (in

the premium rooms), dark woods and artistic bedspreads imported from Singapore. There are three restaurants for 18 rooms, and one, the **Melting Pot**, garners accolades for its Indian cuisine. A great choice if you're looking for something hip and intimate that won't cost you a fortune.

Hotel Suba International

BOUQUETTE HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p742; ☎67076707; www.hotelsubainternational.com; Sahar Rd, Vile Parle East; s/d with AC incl breakfast from ₹6000/7000; 🍷🍷) Brand-spanking new at time of research, this hi-tech boutique business hotel is just 1km from the international terminal, 3km from the domestic. It's laid out in slick blacks and glossy marble, with clean lines and lots of masculine hardwoods and design-forward touches. All the electronics in the rooms are controlled wirelessly by iPod Touch! If it's full, its sister property in Andheri East, **Hotel Suba Galaxy** (Map p742; ☎26821188; www.hotelsubagalaxy.com; NS Phadke Rd, Andheri East; s/d with AC incl breakfast from ₹3200/6000; 🍷🍷), isn't as shiny but is an acceptable alternative.

Sun-n-Sand

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p742; ☎66938888; www.sunnsandhotel.com; 39 Juhu Beach, Juhu; r with AC from ₹7500; 🍷🍷🍷) The Sun-n-Sand has been offering up beachfront hospitality for decades. The newly renovated 4th floor offers shiny new hardwood floors and some bathtubs, but the best rooms remain the sea-facing ones (from ₹8500): lots of silk and the pleasant burnt-orange motif complement the pool, palm-tree and ocean views from the huge window. It's off Juhu Rd, near the old Holiday Inn.

ITC Maratha

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p742; ☎28303030; www.itcwelcomegroup.in; Sahar Rd, Andheri East; s/d incl breakfast & tax from ₹22,000/23,500; 🍷🍷🍷) The five-star with the most luxurious Indian character, from the Jaipur-style lattice windows around the atrium to the silk pillows on the beds to Peshawri, one of the best restaurants in town.

Hotel Columbus

HOTEL \$\$

(Map p742; ☎42144343; www.hotelcolumbus.in; 344 Nanda Patkar Rd, Vile Parle East; r with AC from ₹3000; 🍷🍷) The best midrange in the domestic airport area, with gussied-up super deluxe rooms (₹4000) with stylised wood-grain accents, flat-screen TVs and an aspiration for high design.

Citizen Hotel

HOTEL \$\$\$

(Map p742; ☎66932525; www.citizenhotelmumbai.com; Juhu Tara Rd, Juhu; s/d with AC incl

breakfast from ₹7000/7500; 🍷🍷🍷) The Citizen's location is what you're paying for here, but rooms are also well maintained, with marble floors and marble-top furniture, flat-screen TVs, wi-fi access, fridges – and, of course, excellent beach views.

🍴 Eating

In this gastro-epicentre a cornucopia of flavours from all over India collides with international trends and tastebuds. Colaba is home to most of the cheap tourist haunts, while Fort and Churchgate skew more upscale, a trend that continues as you head north to Mahalaxmi and the Central Suburbs, where you'll find Mumbai's most exciting, cutting-edge and expensive restaurants.

For self-caterers, the **Colaba market** (Map p728; Lala Nigam St) has fresh fruit and vegetables. **Saharkari Bhandar Supermarket** (Map p728; 📍22022248; cnr Colaba Causeway & Wodehouse Rd; 🕒10am-8.30pm) and, even better, **Suryodaya** (Map p730; 📍22040979; Veer Nariman Rd; 🕒7.30am-8.30pm) are well-stocked supermarkets.

COLABA

For mapped locations of the following venues see Map p728.

Indigo

FUSION, EUROPEAN \$\$\$

(📍66368980; 4 Mandlik Marg; mains ₹525-945; 🕒lunch & dinner) Over a decade in and still a star, Colaba's finest eating option is a gourmet haven serving inventive European cuisine, a long wine list, sleek ambience and a gorgeous roof deck lit with fairy lights. Favourites include excellent kiwi margaritas, tea-grilled quail (₹625), anise-rubbed white salmon (₹725) and inventive takes on traditional cuisine like juniper-berry-cured tandoori chicken (₹625). Its cool quotient has chilled a bit with the focus on the suburbs, but it remains a high-gastronomy favourite.

Bademiya

INDIAN \$

(Tulloch Rd; meals ₹50-100) If you can walk by this street-stall-on-steroids without coming away with a chicken tikka roll in hand, you are a better person than us. This whole street buzzes nightly with punters from all walks of Mumbai life lining up for spicy, fresh grilled treats. If Mumbai street food scares the bejesus out of you, this is the spot to get over it.

Indigo Delicatessen

CAFE \$\$

(Pheroze Bldg, Chhatrapati Shivaji Marg; mains ₹245-495; 🕒9am-midnight) Indigo's casual and

less expensive sister is just as big a draw as the original, with cool tunes, warm decor and massive wooden tables. It has breakfast all day (₹155 to ₹295), casual meals, French press coffee, wines (₹300 to ₹690 per glass) and is also a bakery and deli.

Theobroma

CAFE \$

(Colaba Causeway; confections ₹40-85) Theobroma calls its creations 'food of the gods' – and it ain't lying. Dozens of perfectly executed cakes, tarts and chocolates, as well as sandwiches and breads, go well with the coffee here. The genius pistachio-and-green-cardamom truffle (₹30) or decadent chocolate overload brownie (₹65) should send you straight into a glorious sugar coma. A bigger location has opened in Bandra West (Map p742).

Wich Latte

CAFE \$\$

(Map p728; Western Breeze Bldg, Colaba; sandwiches ₹120-175) Churning out excellent coffee but trumping both Coffee Day and Barista when it comes to food, Wich Latte bills itself as India's first sandwich cafe. For breakfast, the bagelwiches are an excellent homesick remedy and throughout the day there are salads, sandwiches and pizza. There's also a convenient location in Kala Ghoda (Map p730), but it opens from lunch onwards.

New Laxmi Vilas

SOUTH INDIAN \$

(19A Ram Mansion, Nawroji F Rd; mains ₹23-85) A budget eatery that serves great South India specialities.

KALA GHODA & FORT

TOP CHOICE Khyber

NORTH INDIAN \$\$\$

(Map p730; 📍40396666; 145 MGRd, Fort; mains ₹225-450; 🕒lunch & dinner) Like Bukhara in Delhi, Khyber is an iconic restaurant the thought of which will spark Pavlovian drooling for years to come. The burnt-orange, Afghan-inspired interiors are a multitiered and cavernous maze of moody Mughal royalty art embedded in exposed brick, tasteful antique oil lanterns and urns, and railway-trestle ceilings. As mouth-watering Punjabi/North Indian kebabs, biryanis and curries saunter their way to a who's who of Mumbai's elite, your tastebuds will do a happy dance – before the disheartening realisation: too much food, too little space. Highlights of the meat-centric menu include the Reshmi Kebab Masala, a transcendent dish of cream and yoghurt-marinated chicken drowning in the restaurant's intricate red masala; and its pièce de résistance, *raan* (a whole leg of slow-cooked lamb).



Five Spice

INDO-CHINESE \$\$
 (Map p730; 296A Perin Nariman St, Sangli Bank Bldg, Fort; mains ₹220-275; ☺lunch & dinner) A 30-minute wait is commonplace at this overheated, near-divive Indo-Chinese Gotsend that's so good, it'll make you downright an-

gry you can't eat Chinese like this at home. The menu is packed with chicken, lamb, prawn and veg dishes, all tantalising, so choosing is an issue. We went for the chicken in burnt chilli sauce (₹235) and dumped it on a bed of burnt chilli rice (₹185) -

gry you can't eat Chinese like this at home. The menu is packed with chicken, lamb, prawn and veg dishes, all tantalising, so choosing is an issue. We went for the chicken in burnt chilli sauce (₹235) and dumped it on a bed of burnt chilli rice (₹185) -

Central Suburbs

Sights

- 1 Wall Project..... B6

Activities, Courses & Tours

- 2 Khatwara Institute..... B4
3 Yoga Institute..... B3

Sleeping

- 4 Citizen Hotel..... A2
5 Hotel Columbus..... C2
6 Hotel Suba Galaxy..... C1
7 Hotel Suba International..... C2
8 Iskcon..... A1
9 ITC Maratha..... D2
10 Juhu Residency..... A2
11 Sun-n-Sand..... A1

Eating

- 12 Culture Curry..... B6
Five Spice..... (see 21)
Goa Portuguesa..... (see 12)
13 Just Around the Corner..... B4
14 Lemongrass..... A4
15 Mahesh Lunch Home..... A2
Peshawri..... (see 9)
Prithvi Cafe..... (see 23)
16 Salt Water Cafe..... A5
17 Sheesha..... B4
18 Theobroma..... B4

Drinking

- Elbo Room..... (see 18)
19 Mocha Bar..... B2
20 Olive Bar & Kitchen..... A4
21 Toto's Garage..... B4
22 WTF!..... B4

Entertainment

- Bonobo..... (see 18)
23 Prithvi Theatre..... A1
24 Trilogy..... A2

Shopping

- 25 Azaadbazaar..... B4
Biba..... (see 2)
26 Fabindia..... B3
27 Shrujan..... B1

Information

- 28 French Consulate..... C4
29 Humsafar Trust..... C3
30 Malaysian
Consulate..... A4
31 New Zealand
Consulate..... C4
32 UK Consulate..... C4

Transport

- 33 Qantas..... C1

quite possibly the best thing since the fortune cookie. Of course, there's one in Bandra (Map p742).

Trishna

SEAFOOD \$\$\$

(Map p730; ☎22614991; Sai Baba Marg, Kala Ghoda; mains ₹170-575; ☺lunch & dinner) An outstanding and intimate seafood restaurant focused on Mangalorean preparations. The crab with butter, black pepper and garlic and Hyderabad fish tikka are house specialities that warrant the hype, while service is underbearing, friendly and helpful. One of the best seafooders in town. Reservations unnecessary before 8pm.

Brittania

PARSI \$\$

(off Map p730; Wakefield House, 11 Srott Rd, Ballard Eatte; mains ₹100-250; ☺lunch Mon-Sat) The kind of place traveller's tales are made of – this Mumbai icon, and its endearing owner, has been going since 1923. The signature dish is the berry *pulao* (₹250) – spiced and boneless mutton or chicken buried in basmati rice and tart barberries, imported to

the tune of 1000kg per year from Iran. The owner, Boman Kohinoor – born the year his father opened the place – will take your order and chat your ear off. Dead simple, dead delicious.

Café Moshe

CAFE \$\$\$

(Map p730; Fabindia, 1st fl, Jeroo Bldg, MG Rd, Kala Ghoda; light meals ₹120-270; ☺lunch & dinner) After shopping downstairs, refuel with Moshe's excellent salads, sandwiches, baked goods, coffees and smoothies. There's also a Moshe's in Kemp's Corner (Map p724); and Colaba (Map p728), where you'll find an extended menu, including the famed marinated garlic, mushroom, leek and capsicum open-faced sandwich with melted mozzarella on brown bread.

Mahesh Lunch Home

SEAFOOD \$\$\$

(Map p730; ☎22023965; 8B Cowasji Patel St, Fort; mains ₹150-600; ☺lunch & dinner) A great place to try Mangalorean seafood in Mumbai. It's renowned for its ladyfish, pomfret, lobster and crabs; the *rawas tikka* (marinated

DABBA-WALLAHS

A small miracle of logistics, Mumbai's 5000 *dabba*-wallahs (*dabba* means food container; also called tiffin-wallahs) work tirelessly to deliver hot lunches to office workers throughout the city.

Lunch boxes are picked up each day from restaurants and homes and carried on heads, bicycles and trains to a centralised sorting station. A sophisticated system of numbers and colours (many wallahs are illiterate) identifies the destination of each lunch. More than 200,000 meals are delivered – always on time, come (monsoon) rain or (searing) shine.

This system has been used for centuries and, on average, there's only about one mistake per six million deliveries. No wonder *dabba*-wallahs take immense pride in their work.

white salmon) and tandoori pomfret are outstanding. There's also a branch on Juhu Tara Rd (Map p724).

Badshah Snacks & Drinks INDIAN \$
(Map p724; snacks ₹30-110) Opposite Crawford market, Badshahi's been serving snacks, fruit juices and its famous *falooda* (rose-flavoured drink made with milk, cream, nuts and vermicelli – like swallowing a bed of roses!) to hungry bargain-hunters for more than 100 years.

Rajdhani INDIAN \$\$
(Map p724; 361 Sheikh Memon St, Kalbadevi; thali ₹249; ☺lunch & dinner Mon-Sat, lunch Sun) Opposite Mangaldaas Market, Rajdhani is famous for its Gujarati and Rajasthani thalis. On Sundays, dinner isn't served and thali prices jump ₹50.

CHURCHGATE

For mapped locations of the following venues, see Map p730.

TOP CHOICE Koh THAI \$\$\$
(InterContinental Marine Dr; ☎39879999; mains ₹495-925; ☺lunch & dinner) India's first signature Thai restaurant is Mumbai's hottest dining destination. Celebrity chef Ian Kittichai works his native cuisine into an international frenzy of flavour that starts with the 'liquid gastronomy', which might be a jasmine and honey martini or a Bloody Mary made with lemongrass-infused vodka and *sriracha* chilli; from there the envelope is further pushed into revelational dishes like the 12-hour lamb shank Massaman curry – pair it with hot-stone garlic rice – that throws preconceived notions about Thai food to the Mumbai curb.

Samrat SOUTH INDIAN \$\$
(☎42135401; Prem Ct, J Tata Rd; lunch/dinner thalis ₹220/260; ☺lunch & dinner) If this is your

first thali, strap yourself in – the cavalcade of taste and texture will leave you wondering what the hell just happened – *then* they bring the rice. With a dizzying number of concoctable bites, it's as adventurous and diverse as India itself. Samrat is the anchor behind a pure-veg empire in the same location, which includes **210°C**, an outdoor cafe and bakery, and **Relish**, a funky spot that's home to Asian-Mexican-Lebanese fusion.

K Rustom SWEETS \$
(87 Stadium House, Veer Nariman Rd; dessert ₹40; ☺lunch & dinner) Nothing but a few metal freezers, but the ice-cream sandwich (₹40) has been pleasing Mumbaikar palettes since 1953. Delish.

GIRGAUM CHOWPATTY

For mapped locations of the following venues see Map p724.

TOP CHOICE New Kulfi Centre SWEETS \$
(cnr Chowpatty Seaface & Sardar V Patel Rd; kulfi per 100gm ₹20-40; ☺9am-1.30am) Serves the best *kulfi* (firm-textured ice cream served in killer flavours like pistachio, rose and saffron) you'll have anywhere, which means it will rock your pants off. When you order, the *kulfi* is placed on a betel-nut leaf and then weighed on an ancient scale – which makes it even better.

Cream Centre CAFE \$\$
(Chowpatty Seaface; mains ₹100-249; ☺lunch & dinner) This sleek and contemporary Indian diner is hugely popular for its pure-veg hodgepodge of Indian, Mexican and Lebanese as well as its extensive menu of sizzling sundaes (₹195 to ₹220), which take 'hot fudge' to the boiling point!

MAHALAXMI TO WORLI

For mapped locations of the following venues see Map p724.

Tote on the Turf

FUSION \$\$\$

(Map p724; ☎61577777; Near Gate No 5 & 6, Mahalaxmi Racecourse, Mahalaxmi; mains ₹485-985; ☺lunch & dinner) Funky, all-white tree-branch interiors and ridiculously beautiful crowds aside, this hip new restaurant from the folks who own Indigo dishes out Euro-fusion, split into veg (like green garlic risotto with palm hearts, cherry tomatoes and chilli feta) and non-veg (grilled chicken with stuffed Bhavnagri chilli and mustard sauce). Don't dismiss the thin, wood-fired pizzas, which caused a bit of order envy on our visit.

Cafe Noorani

NORTH INDIAN \$\$

(Tardeo Rd, Haji Ali Circle; mains ₹120-180; ☺lunch & dinner) This almost-retro diner is a requisite stop before or after visiting Haji Ali Mosque. On the menu is the gamut of Mughlai and Punjabi staples, all done well and cheap. The chicken tikka biryani is so good, you'll forgive a bite or two of gristle.

THE SUBURBS

North Mumbai is home to the city's trendiest dining, centered on Bandra West and Juhu. For mapped locations of the following venues see Map p742.

**Peshawar**

NORTH INDIAN \$\$\$

(☎28303030; ITC Maratha, Sahar Rd; mains ₹700-1675; ☺lunch & dinner) Make this Indian north-west frontier restaurant, just outside the international airport, your first or last stop in Mumbai. It's pricy as hell, but you won't regret forking out the ₹2700 (feeds two easily) for the exquisite Sikandari *raan* (leg of spring lamb braised in malt vinegar, cinnamon, black cumin) – it will forever skew your standards of lamb. The buttery dhal Bukhara (a thick black dhal cooked for a day; ₹700) is also memorable.

Culture Curry

SOUTH INDIAN \$\$

(Kataria Rd, Matunga West; mains ₹209-459; ☺lunch & dinner) As the Culture Curry folks rightly point out, there's a lot more to southern food than *idli* and *dosas*. Exquisite dishes from all over the south, ranging from Andhra and Coorg to Kerala, are the specialty here. Vegies are particularly well served: the Kooru Curry (kidney and green beans in coconut gravy; ₹179) is extraordinary. The same owners run **Goa Portuguesa** (attached), specialising in fiery Goan dishes, where the 'Chicken Chilly Fry' is also a knockout (₹299). From Matunga station, it's about 750m west on Katinga Rd on the left.

Sheesha

NORTH INDIAN \$\$

(☎66770555; 7th fl, Shoppers Stop, Linking Rd, Bandra West; mains ₹145-295; ☺lunch & dinner) With maybe the most beautiful ambience in town, Sheesha's alfresco rooftop lair has glass lanterns hanging from wooden beams, comfy couches and coloured-glass lamps high above the city and shopping madness below. You almost forget about the food, though you shouldn't; the countless kebabs and curries are outstanding. Otherwise, it's all hookah action (no alcohol). Order double apple: 'It's way better than apple', as one Desi beauty put it. Reserve on weekends.

Lemongrass

SOUTHEAST ASIAN \$\$\$

(Carlton Ct, cnr of Turner & Pali Rds, Bandra West; mains ₹215-400; ☺lunch & dinner) In a good spot for watching Bandra streetlife, Lemongrass serves up tasty Southeast Asian fare from Myanmar (Burma) to Indonesia. The veg or meat *khowsuey* (Burmese noodles with a coconut broth; ₹400) is superb; and the service is above and beyond for its price: staff fronted our rickshaw fare when we didn't have small change; and the owner told us, 'If you don't like the food, send it back'. No, he didn't know who we were.

Salt Water Cafe

FUSION \$\$\$

(87 Chapel Rd, Bandra; mains ₹180-500) This foodie find offers one of Mumbai's most ambitious menus. It made a name for itself for marrying dramatically opposing flavours (green peppercorn chicken with grape jus, cardamom and carrot mash) but most of the menu is just mouth-watering global fusion. The aesthetically cold design is as much of a contrast to India as some of the recipes, and service grinds to a crawl at lunchtime, but it's a lovely spot to twist up your tastebuds after a curry overdose.

Prithvi Cafe

CAFE \$

(Map p742; Juhu Church Rd, Juhu; light meals ₹70-140) You'd never know it was there, but this bohemian cafe attached to the Prithvi Theatre is a cultural hub of intellectuals, artists and theatre types who tuck themselves away in the lush, bamboo-heavy spot for all-day breakfast, cheap kebab value meals, sandwiches and savoury croissants. The non-veg combo is distinctly average, but the vibe more than makes up for it. Try the Irish coffee instead!

**Drinking**

Mumbai's lax attitude to alcohol means that there are loads of places to drink – from hole-

in-the-wall beer bars and chichi lounges to brash, multilevel superclubs – but the 25% liquor tax means bills can bring sticker shock.

If it's the caffeine buzz you're after, Barista and Café Coffee Day cafes are ubiquitous in Mumbai.



Kala Ghoda Café

CAFE

(Map p730; 10 Ropewalk Ln, Fort) An artsy, modern and miniscule cafe that's a favourite among journalists and other creative types, who come for the organic Arabica and Robusta coffee sourced from sustainable plantations, organic teas, small bite sandwiches and salads, and charming breakfasts – and then fight for one of the few tables. Even the *jaggery* (natural sugar) is organic. It's across the street from Trishna, but uses the English street name.

Mocha Bar

CAFE

(☉10am-1.30am); Churchgate (Map p730; 82 Veer Nariman Rd); Juhu (Map p742; 67 Juhu Tara Rd) This atmospheric Arabian-styled cafe is often filled to the brim with bohemians and students deep in esoteric conversation, Bollywood gossip, or just a hookah pipe. Cosy, low-cushioned seating (including some old cinema seats), exotic coffees, shakes and teas, and global comfort cuisine promote an intellectually chilled vibe.

First Floor

CAFE

(Map p724; Sitaram Bldg, Dr Dadabhai Naoroji Rd; ☉7pm-4am) This local's secret is the come-down cafe of choice; there's no alcohol, but the party ends up here, anyway – especially on Wednesdays and Saturdays – when the cool kids pack the house from 1.30am to 4am to sop up the drunkenness over a Continental mix of burgers, Mexican, Italian and sheeshas. It's above Zaffran, a worthy Muglai restaurant in its own right.

Haji Ali Juice Centre

JUICE BAR

(Lala Lajpatrai Rd, Haji Ali Circle; ☉5am-1.30am Mon-Sat) An excellent juice megastand, strategically placed at the entrance to Haji Ali Mosque. A great cool off after the hot sun, overwater pilgrimage.

Samovar Café

CAFE

(Map p730; Jehangir Art Gallery, 161B MG Rd, Kala Ghoda; meals ₹60-90; ☉closed Sun) This intimate place inside the art gallery overlooks the gardens of the Prince of Wales Museum.

Cha Bar

TEAHOUSE

(Map p730; Oxford Bookstore, Apeejay House, 3 Dinsha Wachha Marg, Churchgate; teas ₹30-

80; ☉10am-9.30pm) Thirteen pages of exotic teas, including organic and ayurvedic; and tasty snacks amid lots of books.

SOUTH MUMBAI

For mapped locations of the following venues see Map p728, unless otherwise indicated.

Cafe Mondegar

BAR

(☉22020591; Metro House, 5A Shahid Bhagat Singh Rd, Colaba) Like Leopold's, 'Mondys' draws a healthy foreign crowd, too, but with a better mix of friendly Indians, who all cosy up together in the much smaller space, bonding over the excellent jukebox, one of Mumbai's few. Good music, good people.

Busaba

BAR, LOUNGE

(☉22043779; 4 Mandlik Marg) Red walls and contemporary Buddha art give this loungey restaurant-bar a nouveau Tao. It's next to Indigo so gets the same trendy crowd but serves cheaper, more potent cocktails (₹330 to ₹480). There's a low-key DJ Wednesdays to Sundays from 8.30pm. The upstairs restaurant serves pan-Asian (mains ₹350 to ₹575); its back room feels like a posh tree-house. Reserve ahead if you want a table.

Leopold's Café

BAR

(cnr Colaba Causeway & Nawroji F Rd) Love it or hate it, most tourists end up at this Mumbai travellers' institution at one time or another. Around since 1871, Leopold's has wobbly ceiling fans, open-plan seating and a rambunctious atmosphere conducive to swapping tales with random strangers. Although there's a huge menu, the lazy evening beers – especially the 3L yards – are the real draw.

Café Universal

BAR

(Map p730; 299 Shahid Bhagat Singh Rd; ☉9am-11pm Mon-Sat, 4-11pm Sun) A little bit of France near CST. The Universal has an art nouveau look to it, with butterscotch-colour walls, a wood-beam ceiling and marble chandeliers, and is a cosy place for happy hour and Kingfisher drafts (₹100).

Dome

BAR

(Map p730; Hotel InterContinental, 135 Marine Dr, Churchgate) This white-on-white rooftop lounge has awesome views of Mumbai's curving seafront while cocktails beckon the hip young things of Mumbai nightly.

THE SUBURBS



BAR/LOUNGE

(off Map p724; Four Seasons Hotel, 33rd fl, 114 Dr E Moses Rd, Worli) With astounding city views on

one side and equally impressive sea views on the other, we'll be damned if this isn't India's most impressive tippie. Aer is a slick, open-air rooftop lounge with its share of plush couches as well as weird, uncomfortable plastic 'lounge chairs' that cater more to form than function. You'll need to remortgage your home for something shaken and stirred (₹600), but the ₹250 Kingfishers are a steal at these views. A DJ spins low-key house and techno nightly from 9pm, but who cares? It's all about the eye candy, both near and far.

Shiro

LOUNGE

(☎66156969; Bombay Dyeing Mills Compound, Worli) Shiro has its share of detractors, who squabble: Overpriced! Too pretentious! Snippy service! Sub-par food! (*Maybe...* but we adored our crispy spicy avocado sushi roll). Regardless, its status as a shock-and-awe venue for a cocktail cannot be denied. Water pours from the hands of towering Japanese faux-stone goddesses into lotus ponds, which reflect shimmering light on the walls. It's totally over the top, but the drinks are excellent and the DJs spin some mean house (Saturdays) and retro (Fridays).

Olive Bar & Kitchen

BAR

(Map p742; ☎26058228; Pali Hill Tourist Hotel, 14 Union Park, Khar West; ☎7.30pm-1.30am) Hip, gorgeous and snooty, this longtime Mediterranean-style restaurant and bar has light and delicious food (mains ₹525 to ₹950), soothing DJ sounds and pure Ibiza-meets-Mykonos decor (even the host is Greek). Thursday and weekends are packed. There's a second branch at Mahalaxmi Racecourse.

WTF!

BAR

(Map p742; 8 Vora Bldg, 3rd Khar Rd, Khar) Hilariously named and an equally good time, rambunctious WTF! (pronounced as letters) is a small venue divided in two rooms, one a lipstick-red den of pop culture kitsch and Formica, the other dumbed down with the cricket likely to be on the big screen. The DJ spins right in your face beside the front door – a loud and brash wall of international pop trash. Staff wouldn't call us a taxi at the end of the night, though – WTF?

Toto's Garage

BAR

(Map p742; ☎26005494; 30 Lourdes Heaven, Pali Naka, Bandra West; ☎6pm-1am) Forget the beautiful people. Toto's is a down-to-earth local dive done up in a mechanic's theme where you can go in your dirty clothes, drink pitchers of beer and listen to music that gave us

guilty pleasure with the back-to-back-to-back Savage Garden-Linkin Park-AC/DC set. Get there early or you won't get a seat.

Elbo Room

PUB

(Map p742; St Teresa's Rd, Khar West) A genuine bar that approaches resto-lounge but thankfully falls short. Instead, it's a pub reminiscent of home and a good bet for wines by the glass (₹275 to ₹700) screening both English Premier League and Bundesliga football matches. The Italian-Indian menu is best enjoyed on the terrace while the serious drinkers – no shortage of expats among them – stay inside.

★ Entertainment

The daily English-language tabloid *Mid-Day* incorporates a guide to Mumbai entertainment. Newspapers and *Time Out Mumbai* (p751) list events and film screenings, while www.nh7.in has live music listings. The cutting-edge **Bombay Elektrik Projekt** (www.bombayelektrik.com) organises everything from live DJs to poetry slams to short film screenings.

It would be a crime not to see a movie in India's film capital. Unfortunately, Hindi films aren't shown with English subtitles. The cinema we've listed all show English-language movies, along with some Bollywood numbers.

Big clubs nights are (oddly) Wednesday, as well as the traditional Friday and Saturday; there's usually a cover charge. Dress codes apply so don't rock up in shorts and sandals. The trend in Mumbai of late is towards resto-lounges as opposed to full on night-clubs – serious tax implications on discos versus lounges and restaurants means folks got a little clever.

TOP CHOICE Bluefrog

LIVE MUSIC

(off Map p742; ☎6158; www.bluefrog.co.in; D/2 Mathuradas Mills Compound, NM Joshi Marg, Lower Parel; admission after 9pm Sun & Tue-Thu ₹300, Fri & Sat ₹500; ☎7pm-1am Tue-Sun) The most exciting thing to happen to Mumbai's music scene in a long time, Bluefrog is a concert space, production studio, restaurant and one of Mumbai's most happening spaces. It hosts exceptional local and international acts, and has space-age, orange-glowing 'pod' seating in the intimate main room.

Valhalla

RESTO-LOUNGE

(Map p730; ☎67353535; 1st fl, East Wing, Eros Theatre Bldg, Churchgate) This discreet resto-lounge

caters to Mumbai's bold and beautiful, who turn up here amid aubergine walls and baroque aesthetics on Friday and Saturday club nights when everywhere else closes (it's unofficially open until 4am or so). Getting in isn't easy – you need to call ahead and get on the list – but if you manage it, you'll rub elbows with a very high-profile crowd.

Not Just Jazz By the Bay LIVE MUSIC
(Map p730; ☎22851876; 143 Marine Dr; admission weekdays/weekends ₹100/300; ☀noon-3.30am) This is the best, and frankly the only, jazz club in South Mumbai. True to its name, there are also live pop, blues and rock performers most nights from 10pm, but Sunday, Monday and Tuesday are reserved for karaoke. By day, there's a well done all-you-can-eat buffet (₹325).

Trilogy NIGHTCLUB
(Map p742; Hotel Sea Princess, Juhu Tara Rd, Juhu; cover per couple after 11pm ₹1000; ☀closed Tue) Mumbai's newest club at time of writing is all attitude – rumour has it that staff size up potentials for looks and charge a varying admission accordingly. That bodes well for those who make it past face patrol. The trilevel space is gorgeous, highlighted by a black granite dance floor lit up by 1372 LED cube lights that go off like an epileptic Lite-Brite in an Indian power surge. The imported sound system favours house and hip-hop while the bartenders look imported from Ed Hardy's employee pool.

Polly Esther's NIGHTCLUB
(Map p728; Gordon House Hotel, Battery St, Colaba; cover per couple Wed, Fri & Sat ₹800-1500) The city's fashionistas feel nauseous at its mere mention, but this mirror-plated, cheesy nightclub wallowing in retro gaudiness remains a fun choice to mingle with middle-class Mumbai. The *Saturday Night Fever* illuminated dance floor stays packed with gossiping 20-somethings and ogling tourists. Wednesday is free for the gals and all but ₹200 is recoupable in drinks most nights.

Wankhede Stadium SPORT
(Mumbai Cricket Association; Map p730; ☎22795500; www.mumbaicricket.com; D Rd, Churchgate) Test matches and One Day Internationals are played a few times a year in season (October to April). Contact the Cricket Association for ticket information; for a test match you'll probably have to pay for the full five days.

Cooperage Football Ground SPORT
(Map p728; ☎22024020; MK Rd, Colaba; tickets ₹20-25) Home to FC Air India, Mumbai FC and ONGC FC. Hosts national-league and local football (soccer) matches between October and February. Tickets are available at the gate.

National Centre for the Performing Arts THEATRE
(NCPA; Map p730; ☎66223737, box office 22824567; www.ncpamumbai.com; cnr Marine Dr & Sri V Saha Rd, Nariman Point; tickets ₹200-500; ☀box office 9am-7pm) Spanning 800 sq metres, this cultural centre is the hub of Mumbai's music, theatre and dance scene. In any given week, it might host Marathi theatre, poetry readings and art exhibitions, Bihari dance troupes, ensembles from Europe or Indian classical music. The Experimental Theatre occasionally has English-language plays. Many performances are free. The box office is at the end of NCPA Marg.

Prithvi Theatre THEATRE
(Map p742; ☎26149546; www.prithvitheatre.org; Juhu Church Rd, Juhu) At Juhu Beach, this is a good place to see both Hindi and English-language theatre. It hosts an excellent annual international theatre festival and there's a charming cafe, too.

Regal CINEMA
(Map p728; ☎22021017; Opposite Regal Circle, Shahid Bhagat Singh Rd, Colaba; tickets ₹100-200) Check out the art deco architecture.

Eros CINEMA
(Map p730; ☎22822335; MK Rd, Churchgate; tickets ₹80-120)

Metro Big CINEMA
(off Map p730; ☎39894040; MG Rd, New Marine Lines, Fort; tickets ₹100-600) This grand dame of Bombay talkies was just renovated into a multiplex.

Sterling CINEMA
(Map p730; ☎66220016; Marzaban Rd, Fort; tickets ₹120-180)

Shopping

Mumbai is India's great marketplace, with some of the best shopping in the country.

You can buy just about anything in the dense bazaars north of CST (Map p724). The main areas are Crawford Market (fruit and veg), Mangaldas Market (silk and cloth), Zaveri Bazaar (jewellery), Bhuleshwar Market (fruit and veg) and Chor Bazaar (antiques and furniture). Dhabu St is lined with fine leather goods and Mutton St specialises in antiques, reproductions and fine junk.

PRAMOD SIPPY: DJ PRAMZ

A Mumbai turntable veteran, DJ Pramz has spun the black circles in the city for over half his lifetime. Here are his top picks.

Cosiest Club

Bonobo (Map p742); Kenilworth, Phase 2, Off Linking Rd, Bandra West) is a home away from home. They don't impose a dress code neither do they charge an entry. It's a walk-in and offers some really good cocktails at very good prices. It doesn't take long for one to establish their comfort level. As a DJ, I love performing there because of the 'no mainstream music' policy and of course because the owners are very much on the same page as me. They are young entrepreneurs who understand the global trends and are ready to experiment and do things differently.

Most Stunning Club

Wink (off Map p728; Vivanta by Taj – President Hotel, 90 Cuffe Pde, Cuffe Parade) is a beautifully designed bar with a demarcated area for quick meals. The drinks and service are easily the best in town. Their Winkinis are world-renowned and the music is nothing short of spectacular. I love to perform here because they are open-minded and, in spite of being situated in a five-star [hotel], they don't entertain requests that fall outside the ambit of the DJ. It's frequented by a large expatriate crowd who are usually [hotel] guests. Although the space is bright and unlike a club, the pulsating music on weekends makes the vibe quite groovy.

Most Celebrated Club

Zenzi Mills (off Map p724; Mathuradas Mills Compound, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel; ☺closed Sun) is a paradise of sorts for all alternative music aficionados. It's basically an offshoot of the legendary Zenzi (Bandra), which essentially laid the foundation for alternative entertainment in the city. Zenzi widened its horizon by launching Mills, which had everything that the original Zenzi lacked – a state-of-the-art sound system, a beautiful set-up for visuals, a split level space. It works for artists of all alternative genres as the club is open to experimentation. A lot of deep-rooted sentiments are attached to it and it has become immortal for many in their hearts, but word is out that it's undergoing an image makeover and will be seen in an all-new form and feel. What it's going to be like is yet a mystery, though.

Crawford Market (Mahatma Phule Market) is the last outpost of British Bombay before the tumult of the central bazaars begins. Bas-reliefs by Rudyard Kipling's father, Lockwood Kipling, adorn the Norman Gothic exterior.

Snap up a bargain backpacking wardrobe at Fashion Street, the strip of stalls lining MG Rd between Cross and Azad maidans (Map p730), or in Bandra's Linking Rd, near Waterfield Rd (Map p742) – hone your bargaining skills. Kemp's Corner has many good shops for designer threads.

Various state-government emporiums sell handicrafts in the World Trade Centre Arcade (off Map p728) near Cuffe Parade. Small antique and curio shops line Merewether Rd behind the Taj Mahal Palace (Map p728). They aren't cheap, but the quality is a step up from government emporiums. If you prefer Raj-era

bric-a-brac, head to Chor Bazaar (Map p724): the main area of activity is Mutton St, where you'll find a row of shops specialising in antiques (and many ingenious reproductions, so beware) and miscellaneous junk.

Fabindia

CLOTHING

(Map p730; Jeroo Bldg, 137 MG Rd, Kala Ghoda) Founded as a means to get traditional fabric artisans' wares to market, Fabindia has all the vibrant colours of the country in its trendy cotton and silk fashions, materials and homewares in a modern-meets-traditional Indian shop. If you are too cool for Indian-wear, try here. The Santa Cruz outpost (Map p742) is also good.



Bombay Electric

CLOTHES

(Map p728; www.bombayelectric.in; 1 Reay House, Best Marg, Colaba) High fashion is the calling

THE GREAT WALL OF MUMBAI

An artistic initiative similar to Berlin's East Side Gallery, though without the 28 years of oppression and isolation, the **Wall Project** (Map p742; www.thewallproject.com) was started by a group of ex-art/design students who decided to paint their neighbours' walls with local themes and artsy graffiti. This soon spread into a public project that has splashed colourful murals on everything from houses to hospitals all over the suburb of Bandra. The idea quickly began spreading like kaleidoscopic Kudzu – a spray-painted virus that has turned crumbling structures and neglected walls into a living museum of contemporary urban culture. At time of writing, hundreds of artists (and nonartists) have painted some 600 murals, the longest stretch of which starts at Mahim station (West) on Tulsī Pipe Rd (Senapati Bapat Marg) and runs along the Western Railway to Matunga Rd station – nicknamed as the Great Wall of Mumbai.

Anyone can visit and paint the wall, as long as the art is not sexually explicit, political, religious or commercial. Grab some acrylic distemper paint – recommended due to harsh weather conditions – and get your art on!

at this trendy unisex boutique next to the Taj Mahal Palace hotel. It sources fabrics (for its own hip brand, Gheebutter) and weaved scarfs and jackets from NGOs in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, as well as select antiques and handicrafts. It's a sharp spot to pick up *kurtas* (long shirts), dress shirts and stylish T-shirts.

Phillips

ANTIQUES, CURIOS

(Map p728; www.phillipsantiques.com; Wodehouse Rd, Colaba) The 150-year-old Phillips has nizam-era royal silver; wooden ceremonial masks, Victorian glass and various other gorgeous things that you never knew you wanted. It also has high-quality reproductions of old photos, maps and paintings, and a warehouse shop of big antiques.



Shrujan

HANDICRAFTS

Breach Candy (Map p724; Sagar Villa, Warden Rd, opposite Navroze Apts; ☺closed Sun); Juhu (Map p742; Hatkesh Society, 6th North South Rd, JVPD Scheme; ☺closed Sun) Selling the intricate embroidery work of women in 114 villages in Kutch, Gujarat, the nonprofit Shrujan aims to help women earn a livelihood while preserving the spectacular embroidery traditions of the area. The sophisticated clothing, wall hangings and purses make great gifts.

Biba

CLOTHING

(Map p724; 1 Hughes Rd, Kemp's Corner; ☺10.30am-9pm Mon-Sat) You'll be impossibly fashionable in LA or London in these sundresses! Also in Khar West (p742).

Bombay Store

HANDICRAFTS

(Map p730; Western India House, Sir PM Rd, Fort; ☺10.30am-8pm Mon-Sat, to 6.30pm Sun) A classy selection of rugs, clothing, teas,

stationery, aromatherapy, brass sculptures and, perhaps most interestingly, biodegradable Ganesh idols for use in the Ganesh Chaturthi festival.



Good Earth

HANDICRAFTS

(Map p728; 2 Reay House, Colaba) This Delhi transplant hawks gorgeous, eco-leaning housewares, candles, cosmetics and glassware. Funky coasters, hand-decorated china, stylish coffee mugs – all higher end and artsy.

Oxford Bookstore

BOOKSTORE

(Map p730; www.oxfordbookstore.com; Apeejay House, 3 Dinsha Wachha Marg, Churchgate; ☺8am-10pm) Mumbai's best, with a tea bar.

Crossword

BOOKSTORE

(Map p724; Mohammedbhai Mansion, NS Patkar Marg, Kemp's Corner) Enormous.

Khadi & Village Industries Emporium

CLOTHING

(Khadi Bhavan; Map p730; 286 Dr Dadabhai Naoroji Rd, Fort; ☺10.30am-6.30pm Mon-Sat) Khadi Bhavan is dusty, 1940s timewarp with ready-made traditional Indian clothing, material, shoes and handicrafts that are so old they're new again.

Cotton Cottage

CLOTHING

(Map p730; Agra Bldg, 121 MG Rd, Kala Ghoda; ☺10am-9pm) Stock up on simple cotton *kurtas* and various pants – *salwars*, *churidars*, *patiala* – for the road.

Mini Market/Bollywood Bazaar

ANTIQUES, CURIOS

(Map p724; ☎23472427; 33/31 Mutton St; ☺11am-8pm Sat-Thu) Sells original vintage Bollywood posters and other movie

ephemera as well as odd and interesting trinkets. Call if you get lost.

Kala Niketan CLOTHING
(Map p730; 95 MK Rd; ☎9.30am-7.30pm Mon-Sat)
Sari madness on Queens Rd.

Mélange CLOTHING
(Map p724; 33 Altamount Rd, Kemp's Corner; ☎closed Sun) High-fashion ladies garments from over 100 Indian designers in a chic exposed-brick space.

Chimanials HANDICRAFTS
(Map p730; 210 Dr Dadabhai Naoroji Rd, Fort; ☎9.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, to 5.30pm Sat)
Beautiful writing materials made from traditional Indian paper. Enter from Wallace St.

Rhythm House MUSIC STORE
(Map p730; ☎22842835; 40 K Dubash Marg, Fort; ☎10am-8.30pm Mon-Sat, 11am-8.30pm Sun)
Nonpirated CDs; tickets to concerts, plays and festivals.

BX Furtado & Sons MUSIC STORE
(off Map p730; www.furtadosonline.com; Jer Mahal, Dhobitalao; ☎10am-8pm Mon-Sat) The best place in Mumbai for musical instruments – sitars, tablas, accordions and local and imported guitars. The branch around the corner on Kalbadevi Rd is pianos and sheet music only.

Central Cottage Industries Emporium HANDICRAFTS, SOUVENIRS
(Map p728; ☎22027537; Chhatrapati Shivaji Marg, Colaba; ☎closed Sun) Limited souvenir shopping at government-restricted prices.

Standard Supply Co PHOTOGRAPHY
(Map p730; ☎22612468; Image House, Walchand Hirachand Marg, Fort; ☎10am-7pm Mon-Sat)
Everything you could possibly need for digital and film photography.

Information

Internet Access

Portasia (Kitab Mahal, Dr Dadabhai Naoroji Rd, Fort; per hr ₹25; ☎9am-9pm Mon-Sat)
Entrance is down a little alley; look for the 'cybercafe' sign hanging from a tree.

Sify iWay (per 2hr ₹100) Churchgate (Prem Ct, J Tata Rd; ☎8.30am-9.30pm); Colaba (Donald House, 1st fl, Colaba Causeway; ☎8.30am-9.30pm) The Colaba branch entrance is on JA Allana Marg.

Media

To find out what's going on in Mumbai, check out the free *burrp! Know Your City* (www.mumbai.burrp.com), available in most hotels; the

Hindustan Times' Café insert or **Time Out Mumbai** (www.timeoutmumbai.net; ₹50).

Medical Services

Bombay Hospital (Map p730; ☎22067676, ambulance 22067309; www.bombayhospital.com; 12 New Marine Lines)

Breach Candy Hospital (Map p724; ☎23672888; www.breachcandyhospital.org; 60 Bhulabhaji Desai Rd, Breach Candy) Best in Mumbai, if not India.

Royal Chemists (Map p730; ☎22004041-3; 89A Maharshi Karve Rd, Churchgate; ☎8.30am-8.30pm Mon-Sat)

Sahakari Bhandar Chemist (Map p728; ☎22022399; Colaba Causeway, Colaba; ☎10am-8.30pm)

Money

ATMs are everywhere and foreign-exchange offices changing cash and travellers cheques are also plentiful.

Akbar Travels Colaba (Map p728; ☎22823434; 30 Alipur Trust Bldg; ☎10am-7pm); Fort (Map p730; ☎22633434; Terminus View, 167/169 Dr Dadabhai Naoroji Rd; ☎10am-7pm Mon-Fri, to 6pm Sun)

Thomas Cook (☎9.30am-6pm Mon-Sat) Colaba (Map p728; ☎22882517-20; Colaba Causeway); Fort (Map p730; ☎61603333; 324 Dr Dadabhai Naoroji Rd)

Post

The **main post office** (Map p730; ☎10am-6pm Mon-Sat) is an imposing building behind Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST; Victoria Terminus). **Poste restante** (☎9am-8pm Mon-Sat) is at Counter 1. Letters should be addressed c/o Poste Restante, Mumbai GPO, Mumbai 400 001. Bring your passport to collect mail. The **EMS Speedpost parcel counter** (☎11.30am-7.30pm Mon-Fri) is across from the stamp counters. Opposite the post office, under the tree, are parcel-wallahs who will stitch up your parcel for ₹40.

Colaba post office (Map p728; Henry Rd) Convenient branch.

Blue Dart/DHL Churchgate (Map p730; www.bluedart.com; Khetan Bhavan, J Tata Rd; ☎10am-8pm Mon-Sat); Nariman Point (Map p724; www.dhl.co.in; Embassy Centre; ☎9am-8.30pm Mon-Sat) Private express-mail company.

Telephone

Justdial (☎69999999; www.justdial.com) and ☎197 provide directory enquiries.

Tourist Information

Government of India tourist office (Map p730; ☎22074333; www.incredibleindia.com; 123 Maharshi Karve Rd; ☎8.30am-7pm Mon-Fri, to 2pm Sat) Provides information for the entire country.

Government of India tourist office airport booths domestic (☎26156920; ☎7am-midnight); international (☎26813253; ☎24hr)

Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation booth (MTDC; Map p728; ☎22841877; Apollo Bunder; ☎8.30am-4pm Tue-Sun, 5.30-8pm weekends) For city bus tours.

MTDC reservation office (Map p730; ☎22841877; www.maharashtratourism.gov.in; Madame Cama Rd, opposite LIC Bldg, Nariman Point; ☎9.45am-5.30pm Mon-Sat) Information on Maharashtra and bookings for MTDC hotels and the *Deccan Odyssey* train package. This is also the only MTDC office that accepts credits cards.

Travel Agencies

Akbar Travels (Map p730; ☎22633434; www.akbartravelsonline.com; Terminus View, 167/169 Dr Dadabhai Naoroji Rd, Fort; ☎10am-7pm Mon-Fri, to 6pm Sun)

Magnum International Travel & Tours (Map p728; ☎61559700; 10 Henry Rd, Colaba; ☎10am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 4pm Sat)

Thomas Cook (Map p730; ☎22048556-8; 324 Dr Dadabhai Naoroji Rd, Fort; ☎9.30am-6pm Mon-Sat)

Visa Extensions

Foreigners' Regional Registration Office (FRRO; Map p730; ☎22620446; Annexe Bldg No 2, CID, Badaruddin Tyabji Rd, near Special Branch) Does not officially issue extensions on tourist visas; even in emergencies it will direct you to Delhi (p1174). However, some travellers have managed to procure an emergency extension here after much waiting and persuasion.

i Getting There & Away

Air

AIRPORTS Mumbai is the main international gateway to South India and has the busiest network of domestic flights. **Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport** (☎domestic 26264000, international 26813000; www.csia.in), about 30km from the city centre, has been undergoing a \$2 billion modernisation since 2006. At time of writing, the airport comprises three domestic (1A, 1B and 1C) and one international terminal (2A). However, the domestic side is accessed via Vile Parle and is known locally as Santa Cruz airport, while the international, with its entrance 4km away in Andheri, goes locally by Sahar. Both terminals have ATMs, foreign-exchange counters and tourist-information booths. A free shuttle bus runs between the two every 30 minutes for ticket holders only. By 2014 the shiny new terminal T2 is expected to be open, serving both domestic and international flights, with the existing Santa Cruz terminal being converted to cargo only.

INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES Travel agencies are often better for booking international flights, while airline offices are increasingly directing customers to their call centres. The following airline ticket offices are clinging to life in Mumbai:

Air India (Map p730; ☎27580777, airport 26156633; www.airindia.com; Air India Bldg, cnr Marine Dr & Madame Cama Rd, Nariman Point; ☎9.15am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, to 5.15pm Sat & Sun)

Cathay Pacific (off Map p724; ☎66572222, airport 66859002/3; www.cathaypacific.com; 2 Brady Gladys Plaza, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel; ☎9.30am-6.30pm Mon-Sat)

Emirates Airlines (Map p730; ☎40974097; www.emirates.com; 3 Mittal Chambers, 228 Nariman Point; ☎9am-5.30pm Mon-Sat)

EI Al Airlines (Map p730; ☎66207400, airport 66859425/6; www.elal.co.il; 6th fl, NKM International House, BM Chinai Marg, Nariman Point; ☎9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 1pm Sat)

Qantas (Map p730; ☎61111818; www.qantas.com.au; 4th fl, Sunteck Centre, 37-40 Subhash Rd, Vile Parle; ☎9am-1.15pm & 2.30-5.30pm Mon-Fri)

Swiss (Map p730; ☎67137240; www.swiss.com; 2nd fl, Vashani Chambers, 9 New Marine Lines; ☎9am-5.30pm Mon-Sat)

Thai Airways (Map p730; ☎61395599; www.thaiair.com; 2A Mittal Towers A Wing, Nariman Point; ☎9.30am-5.30pm Mon-Fri, to 4pm Sat)

Major nonstop domestic flights from Mumbai include the following:

| DESTINATION | SAMPLE LOWEST ONE-WAY FARE (₹) | DURATION (HR) |
|-------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Bengaluru | 2533 | 1½ |
| Chennai | 3482 | 1¾ |
| Delhi | 3483 | 2 |
| Goa | 2532 | 1 |
| Hyderabad | 2282 | 1¼ |
| Jaipur | 2533 | 1¾ |
| Kochi | 3483 | 1¾ |
| Kolkata | 3882 | 2¾ |

DOMESTIC AIRLINES The following all have ticketing counters at the domestic airport; most open 24 hours.

GoAir (☎call centre 1800 222111, airport 26264789; www.goair.in)

Indian Airlines (Map p730; ☎22023031, call centre 1800 1801407; www.indian-airlines.nic.in;

Air India Bldg, cnr Marine Dr & Madame Cama Rd, Nariman Point)

IndiGo (☎call centre 1800 1803838; www.goindigo.in)

Jet Airways (Map p728; ☎call centre 39893333, airport 26266575; www.jetairways.com; Amarchand Mansion, Madame Cama Rd; ☎9.30am-6pm Mon-Fri, to 1pm Sat)

JetLite (☎call centre 1800 225522; www.jetlite.com)

Kingfisher/Kingfisher Red (Map p730; ☎call centre 1800 2331310, airport 26262605; www.flyingkingfisher.com; Nirmal Bldg, Marine Dr, Nariman Point; ☎9am-7pm Mon-Sat, 10am-2pm Sun)

SpiceJet (☎call centre 1800 1803333, airport 26156155; www.spicejet.com)

Bus

Numerous private operators and state governments run long-distance buses to and from Mumbai.

Private buses are usually more comfortable and simpler to book but can cost significantly more than government buses; they depart from Dr Anadrao Nair Rd near Mumbai Central train station (Map p724). Fares to popular destinations (like Goa) are up to 75% higher during holiday periods. To check on departure times and current prices, try **National CTC** (Map p724; ☎23015652; Dr Anadrao Nair Rd; ☎7am-10pm).

More convenient for Goa and southern destinations are the private buses run by **Chandni Travels** (Map p730; ☎22713901) that depart three times a day from in front of Azad Maidan, just south of the Metro cinema. Ticket agents are located near the bus departure point.

Long-distance government-run buses depart from **Mumbai Central bus terminal** (Map p724; ☎23074272/1524) by Mumbai Central train station. Buses service major towns in Maharashtra and neighbouring states. They're cheaper and more frequent than private services, but the quality and crowd levels vary.

Popular long-distance bus fares include the following:

| DESTINATION | PRIVATE NON-AC/AC SLEEPER ₹ | GOVERNMENT NON-AC ₹ | DURATION (HR) |
|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Ahmedabad | 250/600 | N/A | 13 |
| Aurangabad | 250/600 | 368 | 10 |
| Mahabal-eshwar | 450/500* | 270 | 7 |
| Paniji | 300/700 | N/A | 14-18 |
| Pune | 200** | 170-250 | 4 |
| Udaipur | 350/1400 | N/A | 16 |

* AC Sitting; **AC Sitting

Train

Three train systems operate out of Mumbai, but the most important services for travellers are Central Railways and Western Railways. Tickets for either system can be bought from any station, in South Mumbai or the suburbs, that has computerised ticketing.

Central Railways (☎134), handling services to the east, south, plus a few trains to the north, operates from CST. The **reservation centre** (Map p730; ☎139; ☎8am-8pm Mon-Sat, to 2pm Sun) is around the side of CST where the taxis gather. **Foreign tourist-quota tickets** (Counter 52) can be bought up to 90 days before travel, but must be paid in foreign currency or with rupees backed by an encashment certificate or ATM receipt. Indrail passes (p32) can also be bought at Counter 52. You can buy nonquota tickets with a Visa or MasterCard at the much faster credit-card counters (10 and 11) for a ₹30 fee. Refunds for Indians and foreigners alike are handled at Counter 8.

Some Central Railways trains depart from Dadar (D), a few stations north of CST, or Churchgate/Lokmanya Tilak (T), 16km north of CST.

Western Railways (☎131, 132) has services to the north (including Rajasthan and Delhi) from Mumbai Central train station (MC; ☎23061763, 23073535), usually called Bombay Central (BCT). The **reservation centre** (Map p730; ☎8am-8pm Mon-Sat, to 2pm Sun), opposite Churchgate train station, has a **foreign tourist-quota counter** (Counter 14). The same rules apply as at CST station. The creditcard counter is No 6.

Getting Around

To/From the Airports

INTERNATIONAL The prepaid-taxi booth that is located at the international airport has set fares for every neighbourhood in the city; Colaba, Fort and Marine Dr are AC/non-AC ₹495/395, Bandra West ₹310/260 and Juhu ₹235/190. There's a ₹10 service charge and a charge of ₹10 per bag. The journey to Colaba takes about 45 minutes at night and 1½ to two hours during the day. Tips are not required.

Autorickshaws queue up at a little distance from arrivals, but don't try to take one to South Mumbai: they can only go as far as Mahim Creek. You can catch an autorickshaw (around ₹40) to Andheri train station and catch a suburban train (₹7, 45 minutes) to Churchgate or CST. Only attempt this if you arrive during the day outside of rush 'hour' (6am to 11am) and are not weighed down with luggage.

Minibuses outside arrivals offer free shuttle services to the domestic airport and Juhu hotels.

MAJOR TRAINS FROM MUMBAI

| DESTINATION | TRAIN NO & NAME | SAMPLE FARE (₹) | DURATION (HR) | DEPARTURE |
|-------------|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Agra | 12137 Punjab Mail | 410/1098/1501/2533 | 22 | 7.40pm CST |
| Ahmedabad | 12901 Gujarat Mail | 232/594/802/1350 | 9 | 9.50pm MC |
| Aurangabad | 17057 Devagiri Express | 176/463/632/1061 | 7 | 9.05pm CST |
| | 17617 Tapovan Express | 102/363* | 7 | 6.10am CST |
| Bengaluru | 16529 Udyan Express | 363/991/1364/2298 | 25 | 8.05am CST |
| Bhopal | 12137 Punjab Mail | 325/857/1167/1958 | 14 | 7.40pm CST |
| Chennai | 11041 Chennai Express | 383/1046/1440** | 27 | 2.00pm CST |
| Delhi | 12951 Rajdhani Express | 1495/1975/3305† | 16 | 4.40pm MC |
| | 12137 Punjab Mail | 442/1187/1623/2743 | 25½ | 7.10pm CST |
| Margao | 10103 Mandavi Express | 288/782/1073/1799 | 11½ | 6.55am CST |
| | 12051 Shatabdi Express | 283/787/1073/1799 | 9 | 5.10am CST |
| Hyderabad | 12701 Hussainsagar Express | 312/823/1119/1876 | 14½ | 9.50pm CST |
| Indore | 12961 Avantika Express | 320/847/1151/1931 | 14½ | 7.05pm MC |
| Jaipur | 12955 Jaipur Express | 383/1021/1394/2348 | 18 | 6.50pm MC |
| Kochi | 16345 Netravati Express | 430/1178/1624*** | 26½ | 11.40am T |
| Kolkata | 12859 Gitanjali Express | 508/1883* | 30½ | 6.00am CST |
| | 12809 Howrah Mail | 508/1374/1883/3190 | 33 | 8.35pm CST |
| Pune | 12125 Pragati Express | 76/267* | 3½ | 5.10pm CST |
| Varanasi | 11093 Mahanagari Express | 422/1157/1593*** | 2½ | 12.10am CST |
| Trivandrum | 16345 Netravati Express | 1277/1762# | 30 | 11.40am T |

Station abbreviations: CST (Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus); MC (Mumbai Central); T (Lokmanya Tilak); D (Dadar)

Note: fares are for sleeper/3AC/2AC/1AC except for: * AC/Non-AC, ** sleeper/3AC/2AC, *** Non-AC/3AC/2AC, # 3AC/2AC, † 3AC/2AC/1AC

A taxi from South Mumbai to the international airport should be between ₹350 and ₹400 by negotiating a fixed fare beforehand; official baggage charges are ₹10 per bag. Add 25% to the meter charge between midnight and 5am. We love the old-school black-and-yellows, but there are also AC, metered call taxis run by **Meru** (☎44224422; www.merucabs.com), charging ₹20 for the first kilometre and ₹14 per kilometre thereafter (25% more at night). Routes are tracked by GPS, so no rip-offs!

DOMESTIC Taxis and autorickshaws queue up outside both domestic terminals. The prepaid counter is outside arrivals. A non-AC/AC taxi to Colaba or Fort costs ₹350/400, day or night, plus ₹10 per bag. For Juhu, ₹150/200.

A cheaper alternative is to catch an autorickshaw between the airport and Vile Parle train station (₹20 to ₹30), and a train between Vile Parle and Churchgate (₹7, 45 minutes). Don't attempt this during rush hour (6am to 11am).

Boat

Both **PNP** (☎22885220) and **Maldar Catamarans** (☎22829695) run regular ferries to Mandwa (oneway ₹110), useful for access to Murud-Janjira and other parts of the Konkan Coast, avoiding the long bus trip out of Mumbai. Their ticket offices are at Apollo Bunder (near the Gateway of India; Map p728).

Bus

Mumbai's single- and double-decker buses are good for travelling short distances. Fares around South Mumbai cost ₹3 for a section; pay the conductor once you're aboard. The service is run by **BEST** (Map p728; www.bestundertaking.com), which has a depot in Colaba (the website has a useful search facility for bus routes across the city). Just jumping on a double-decker (such as bus 103) is an inexpensive way to see South Mumbai. Day passes are available for ₹25.

In the table following are some useful routes; all of these buses depart from the bus stand at the southern end of Colaba Causeway and pass Flora Fountain.

| DESTINATION | BUS NO |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Breach Candy | 132, 133 |
| CST & Crawford Market | 1, 3, 21, 103, 124 |
| Churchgate | 70, 106, 123, 132 |
| Girgaum Chowpatty | 103, 106, 107, 123 |
| Haji Ali | 83, 124, 132, 133 |
| Hanging Gardens | 103, 106 |
| Mani Bhavan | 123 |
| Mohammed Ali Rd | 1, 3, 21 |
| Mumbai Central train station | 124, 125 |

Car

Cars are generally hired for an eight-hour day and an 80km maximum, with additional charges if you go over. For an AC car, the best going rate is about ₹1000.

Agents at the Apollo Bunder ticket booths near the Gateway of India can arrange a non-AC Maruti with driver for a half-day of sightseeing for ₹1000 (going as far as Mahalaxmi and Malabar Hill). Regular taxi drivers often accept a similar price.

Metro

Mumbai's US\$8.17 billion metro project has broken ground. The Colaba-Bandra-Airport line will most benefit tourists, but is several years away from completion.

Motorcycle

Allibhai Premji Tyrewalla (Map p724; www.premjis.com; 205/207 Dr D Bhadkamkar Rd; ☎10am-7pm Mon-Sat), around for almost 100

years, sells new and used motorcycles with a guaranteed buy-back option. For two- to three-week 'rental' periods you'll still have to pay the full cost of the bike upfront. The company prefers to deal with longer-term schemes of two months or more, which work out cheaper anyway. A used 150cc or 225cc Hero Honda Karizma costs ₹25,000 to ₹80,000, with a buy-back price of around 60% after three months (higher-cc Enfields are sometimes available). A smaller bike (100cc to 180cc) starts at ₹25,000. The company can also arrange shipment of bikes overseas (around ₹24,000 to the UK).

Taxi & Autorickshaw

Every second car on Mumbai's streets seems to be a black-and-yellow Premier taxi (India's version of a 1950s Fiat). They're the most convenient way to get around the city, and in South Mumbai drivers *almost* always use the meter without prompting. Autorickshaws are confined to the suburbs north of Mahim Creek.

Drivers don't always know the names of Mumbai's streets (especially new names) – the best way to find something is by using nearby landmarks. A 2010 fare increase means taxi meters start at ₹16 during the day (₹20 after midnight) for the first 1.6km and ₹10 per kilometre after this (₹12 after midnight). If you get a taxi with the old-fashion meters, the fare will be roughly 16 times the amount shown. The minimum autorickshaw fare is ₹11.

Train

Mumbai has an efficient but overcrowded suburban train network.

There are three main lines, making it easy to navigate. The most useful service operates from Churchgate heading north to stations such as Charni Rd (for Girgaum Chowpatty), Mumbai Central, Mahalaxmi (for the Dhobi Ghat; p729), Vile Parle (for the domestic airport), Andheri (for the international airport) and Borivali (for Sanjay Gandhi National Park). Other suburban lines operate from CST to Byculla (for Veermata Jijabai Bhonsle Udyan, formerly Victoria Gardens), Dadar and as far as Neral (for Matheran). Trains run from 4am till 1am. From Churchgate, 2nd-/1st-class fares are ₹4/41 to Mumbai Central, ₹7/78 to Vile Parle or Andheri, and ₹9/104 to Borivali.

'Tourist tickets' permit unlimited travel in 2nd/1st class for one (₹50/170), three (₹90/330) or five (₹105/390) days.

Avoid rush hours when trains are jam-packed, even in 1st class; watch your valuables, and gals, stick to the ladies-only carriages.



TAXI TROUBLE

We won't name names, but Mumbai's taxis and rickshaws *might* occasionally like to take advantage of foreign faces. If you find yourself in either with an old-fashion meter (outside on the left-hand dash), you are vulnerable. Print out handy conversion charts from the **Mumbai Traffic Police** (www.trafficpolice.mumbai.org/Tariffcard_Auto_taxi_form.htm) – end of discussion (until the next price hike).

SANJAY GANDHI NATIONAL PARK

It's hard to believe that within 90 minutes of the teeming metropolis you can be surrounded by this 104-sq-km **protected tropical forest** (📍28866449; adult/child ₹30/15, 2-/4-wheeler vehicle ₹15/50; 🕒7.30am-6pm). Here, bright flora, birds, butterflies and elusive wild leopards replace pollution and crowds, all surrounded by forested hills on the city's northern edge. Urban development and shantytowns try to muscle in on the fringes of this wild region, but its status as a national park has allowed it to stay green and calm.

In addition to well-worn trekking trails to Shilonda waterfall and Vihar and Tulsi lakes, there is a lion and tiger safari and Kanheri caves to occupy day-trippers escaping the Mumbai mayhem. Inside the main northern entrance is an information centre with a small exhibition on the park's wildlife. The best time to see birds is October to April and butterflies August to November.

GREATER MUMBAI

Elephanta Island

In the middle of Mumbai Harbour, 9km northeast of the Gateway of India, the rock-cut temples on **Elephanta Island** (<http://asi.nic.in/>; Indian/foreigner ₹10/250; 🕒caves 9am-5.30pm Tue-Sun) are a Unesco World Heritage Site and worth crossing the waters for. Home to a labyrinth of cave-temples carved into the basalt rock of the island, the artwork represents some of the most impressive temple carving in all of India. The main Shiva-dedicated temple is an intriguing latticework of courtyards, halls, pillars and shrines, with the magnum opus a 6m-tall statue of Sadhashiva – depicting a three-faced Shiva as the destroyer, creator and preserver of the universe. The enormous central bust of Shiva, its eyes closed in eternal contemplation, may be the most serene sight you witness in India.

The temples are thought to have been created between AD 450 and 750, when the island was known as Gharapuri (Place of Caves). The Portuguese renamed it Elephanta because of a large stone elephant near the shore, which collapsed in 1814 and

was moved by the British to Mumbai's Jijamata Udyan.

The English-language guide service (free with deluxe boat tickets) is worthwhile; tours depart every hour on the half-hour from the ticket booth. Beware of touts that meet you at the jetty and try to convince you to employ their services – the included English guide will meet you at the entrance to the temples. Ask for government-issued ID in doubt.

If you explore independently, pick up Pramod Chandra's *A Guide to the Elephanta Caves* from the stalls lining the stairway. There's also a small **museum** on-site, which has some informative pictorial panels on the origin of the caves.

i Getting There & Away

Launches (economy/deluxe ₹105/130) head to Elephanta Island from the Gateway of India every half-hour from 9am to 3.30pm Tuesday to Sunday. Buy tickets at the booths lining Apollo Bunder. The voyage takes just over an hour.

The ferries dock at the end of a concrete pier, from where you can walk (around three minutes) or take the **miniature train** (₹10) to the **stairway** (admission ₹5) leading up to the caves. It's lined with handicraft stalls and patrolled by pesky monkeys. Wear good shoes.

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