

INTRODUCING INDIA



Planning a holiday is a bit of a minefield with so many choices to make to ensure the perfect break.

Iconic sights or beaches and bars? Somewhere you've been to every year since you were five or somewhere new? Best in Travel falls into the latter category for travelling is all about new experiences.

If, like us, you're looking for a little more from your annual leave, allow us to suggest India – one of the oldest civilisations in the world with a kaleidoscopic variety and rich cultural heritage.

As the seventh largest country in the world, India stands apart from the rest of Asia, marked off as it is by mountains and the sea, which give the country a distinct geographical entity. Bounded by the Great Himalayas in the north, it stretches southwards and at the Tropic of Cancer, tapers off into the Indian Ocean between the Bay of Bengal on the east and the Arabian Sea on the west.

As you travel, India offers a range of vast tourism choices, diverse in land and nature, people, tribes, cuisine, faiths, dance forms, music, arts, crafts, adventure, sport, spirituality, history: even these vary as you journey from one state to another. However arguably the most fascinating aspect of India lies in the stark difference between the new and old parts of its cities: from world-class airports and hotels, luxurious shopping malls, restaurants, pubs and cafes to overcrowded streets and alleyways, in the same cities, filled with thousands of little shops offering every possible modern and ethnic product and native street food.

Explore, enjoy – and don't forget to send us a postcard...

Holi (February or March)

Colours splashing everywhere, people spraying water with water guns and throwing water balloons on each other, laughter, commemorate the festival of Holi.

Popularly observed as the festival of colours, Holi has been shaped by different countries in their own way. However, in India it first begins with burning the Holi bonfire a day before the water Holi, which symbolises the killing of Holika. Mythological stories reveal that the

sister of Hrinyakashyapu, Holika, was burnt alive on this day hence the name 'Holika Dahan'. Holi also marks the beginning of the summer season and the end of winters. It also celebrates Radha's eternal love for Lord Krishna.

With Holi comes the preparation of sweets and delicacies, where Ghujiya is the most relished of all.

It is believed that Holi is the day when one gets rid of past errors and ends conflicts. On this day, people pay the debts that have been long waiting to end. It is the beginning of the spring season and for many it is also the beginning of a new year.





Ganesh Chaturthi (August or September)

Ganesh Chaturthi is a ten-day Hindu festival celebrated to honour the elephant-headed God Ganesha's birthday. He is the younger son of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati.

Ganesha is known by 108 different names and is the Lord of arts and sciences and the deva of wisdom. He is honoured at the start of rituals and ceremonies as he's considered the God of beginnings. He's widely and dearly referred to as Ganapati or Vinayaka.

The festival is usually celebrated for 11 days, with the biggest spectacle taking place on the last day called Anant Chaturdasi.



Navaratri (September or October)

The nine days of the auspicious Navaratri Festival in Kerala comes alive with music in the Navaratri Mandapam at the Fort Palace complex in Thiruvananthapuram. The compositions featured belonged to the music maestro, Swathi Thirunal, who was a former king of the Travancore dynasty. The festival is known to adhere to its traditions – be it music or technology, used to amplify the sound. This ancient acoustic technology uses earthen pots of multitudinous sizes and

thicknesses that are put up on the ceiling by the means of coir ropes while their mouths face the ground. Even the mouths of these pots are of different measurements. Technically, the pots are placed in such angles that they pose as sound reflectors and thus prevent echoes. Apart from featuring exquisite Indian classical music, the audience also gets a chance to be mesmerised by traditional dance performances. The atmosphere is filled with soulful music and a distinct smell of sandalwood and flowers that lingers in the air. Even the ambience on the stage is settled by the oil lamps that burn as the beautiful performances takes place.





Diwali (October or November)

Diwali, the Hindu festival of lights, is arguably India's most popular festival.

The word Diwali comes from the Sanskrit word deepavali, meaning "rows of lighted lamps". Houses, shops and public places are decorated with small oil lamps called diyas.

The five-day festival is celebrated to commemorate the return of Ram, the lord of virtue, to his kingdom after 14 years of exile.

For many in India, it also marks the end of the harvest season and is the chance to give thanks to Lakshmi, the Hindu goddess of wealth and prosperity.

While the story behind Diwali and the manner of celebration varies from region to region, the festival is celebrated to remember that light triumphs over dark and good triumphs over evil.

A IS FOR AYURVEDA

TIME TO UNWIND...

During your spell in India, make time to try a relaxing ayurvedic treatment.

Ayurveda (pronounced eye-your-veda) is an ancient system of medicine that uses herbs and oils to heal and is ingrained in Indian society.

Under ayurvedic principles, all body types are organised into three groupings, or doshas. These are vata (air), pitta (fire) and kapha (earth and water). Most people have one or two dominant doshas but all three need to be in balance to enjoy optimum health and avoid illness and disease. One way to do this is to adjust what you eat to follow an ayurvedic diet based on your dosha; another is to submit to an ayurvedic treatment.

Ayurvedic treatments last anything from one hour to one month, are priced to fit any budget and inevitably cheaper than anything in the west. Top end treatments tend to take place in hotels and afterwards you can expect a complimentary cup of tea while you peruse the latest fashion magazines. Meanwhile

budget kneading is available at the street-side ayurvedic centres that are nearly as common as rice and dal. They're no frills joints (often involving just a mattress on the floor) but do administer highly effective treatments.

All ayurvedic treatments involve the pouring of herbal oils, medicated milk and/or butter milk over the body in a special manner so expect to be stroked, soothed and lulled into a state of well oiled peace as the hot oils and herbs are rubbed into your skin. While you can shower afterwards, for maximum results the oil should be left on for as long as possible so as to penetrate and soak into the skin and hair.

Even if you don't buy into ayurveda, a quick hour long massage is guaranteed to gently (or hardily) knead your body back to functionality following a long flight while serving up a slice of local culture.

Relax and revitalise with Best in Travel's pick of the ultimate Indian spas...



JIVA GRANDE SPA AT UMAID BHAWAN PALACE, JODHPUR INDIA'S BEST HOTEL SPA 2017, WORLD SPA AWARDS

Known as the principal residence of the Jodhpur Royal Family, Umaid Bhawan palace is a golden-hued desert sandstone monument. Rediscovering yourself in this architectural masterpiece is an experience in itself. Step in the glorious ambience of Jiva spa and where a royal journey of harmony, rejuvenation and healing awaits you.

Ayurvedic treatments to try include Abhyanga and Pichu. More than just a massage, Abhyanga is an experience where medicated herbal oils are generously applied in gentle strokes by the skilled therapists, giving you a healthy body and mind. Meanwhile Pichu, which is known to relieve stress and stiffness of joints or back, involves cotton and linen pads soaked in hot medicated oils placed on sore areas for immediate relief from pain.

Jiva Grande Spa at Umaid Bhawan Palace
Circuit House Road
Jodhpur
Rajasthan 342006
India

Tel: +91 291 251 0101

www.jivaspa.tajhotels.com/en-in/locate-a-spa/umaid-bhawan-palace-jodhpur



**THE SPA AT THE OBEROI, UDAIVILAS
INDIA'S BEST RESORT SPA 2017, WORLD SPA AWARDS**

The spa at The Oberoi Udaivilas, Udaipur is crowned by a day sky dome, lit by a spectacular chandelier and caressed by the gentle sound of water cas-cading over a white marble fountain.

At The Oberoi Spa, guests can experience restored wellness with Ayurveda, or select one of their carefully designed beauty therapies for skin nourish-ment and radiance.

The spa also has a temperature controlled, outdoor swimming pool. The deep blue tiled pool glows azure in the sunlight, while after sunset, flaming torches blaze red and gold across the dancing water. Decorated with sandstone columns and spouting elephant water fountains, The Oberoi's pool is vibrant with Rajasthani splendour.

**The Spa at The Oberoi, Udaivilas
Haridas Ji Ki Magri
Mulla Talai
Udaipur
Rajasthan 313001
India**

Tel: +91 294 243 3300;

www.oberoihotels.com/hotels-in-udaipur-udaivilas-resort



ATMANTAN WELLNESS RESORT INDIA'S BEST WELLNESS RETREAT 2017, WORLD SPA AWARDS

The conceptualisation of Atmantan began in 2008 having been a long-standing dream of founder and ex-Ironman triathlete, Nikhil Kapur, and his wife, Pranik Healer, Sharmilee Kapur. However it wasn't until 2016 that Atmantan finally opened its doors.

Tucked into the crystalline Sahyadri Mountains and overlooking the pristine Mulshi Lake, Atmantan – whose name is a combination of atma (soul), mana (mind) and tann (body) – is spread over 40 acres of lush valley.

The stunning spa offers a wide range of Ayurveda therapies, many of which are based on the concept that the body can self-heal through channelling its own energy. Fitness is high on the agenda here too with an impressive daily range of activities from Bollywood Blast to Aqua Jam.

**Atmantan Wellness Resort
Village Palse
Tamhini Ghat Road
Mulshi
Maharashtra 412108
India**

Tel: +91 20 6676 6666

www.atmantan.com

BEST IN TRAVEL

ITC GARDENIA



ITC Gardenia, a hotel that is conveniently located in the commercial heart of Bengaluru - equipped with 292 Luxury rooms and suites ITC Gardenia offers the discerning business and leisure traveller the best in Hospitality and Hotel services. Overlooking the century old Bangalore Club, the hotel is situated in the midst of Bengaluru's most elite neighbourhood. An abode for the indulgent and the aspirational, a sublime confluence of the

city's unhurried past and it's dynamic present - ITC Gardenia embodies the splendours of nature. Inspired from the magnificent gardens of the city, this luxury hotel was built as a tribute to the beautiful city of Bengaluru and is in close proximity to key business districts and IT hubs of Bengaluru.

www.itchotels.in/hotels/bengaluru/itcgardenia.html

BEST IN TRAVEL



HISTORY OF INDIA

The Indian Peninsula stands apart from the rest of Asia, bordered as it is by mountains and the sea, which gives the country a distinct geographical entity. Based on the phases of evolution of the country and its people the history of India can be categorised in three major categories...

ANCIENT HISTORY

India's history and culture is dynamic, spanning back to the beginning of human civilisation. It begins with a mysterious culture along the Indus River and in farming communities in the southern lands of India. The history of India is punctuated by constant integration of migrating people with the diverse cultures that surround India. Available evidence suggests that the use of iron, copper and other metals was widely prevalent in the Indian sub-continent at a fairly early period, which is indicative of the progress that this part of the world had made. By the end of the fourth millennium BC, India had emerged as a region of highly developed civilisation.

MEDIEVAL HISTORY

For a period that has come to be so strongly associated with the Islamic influence and rule in India, Medieval Indian

history went for almost three whole centuries under the so-called indigenous rulers, that included the Chalukyas, the Pallavas, the Pandyas, the Rashtrakutas, the Muslims rulers and finally the Mughal Empire. The most important dynasty to emerge in the middle of the 9th century was that of the Cholas.

FREEDOM STRUGGLE

In ancient times, people from all over the world were keen to come to India. The Persians, followed by the Iranians and Parsis, emigrated to India. Then came the Moghuls and they too settled down permanently in India. Chengis Khan, the Mongolian, invaded and looted India many times. Alexander the Great also came to conquer India but went back after a battle with Porus. He-en Tsang from China came in pursuit of knowledge and to visit the ancient Indian universities of Nalanda and Takshila. Columbus wanted to come to India, but instead landed on the shores of America. Vasco da Gama

arrived from Portugal to trade his country's goods in return for Indian spices. The French visited and established their colonies in India.

Lastly, the Britishers arrived and ruled over India for nearly 200 years. After the battle of Plassey in 1757, the British achieved political power in India. And their paramountcy was established during the tenure of Lord Dalhousie, who became the Governor-General in 1848. He annexed Punjab, Peshawar and the Pathan tribes in the north-west of India. And by 1856, the British conquest and its authority were firmly established. And while the British power gained its heights during the middle of the 19th century, the discontent of the local rulers, the peasantry, the intellectuals, common masses as also of the soldiers who became unemployed due to the disbanding of the armies of various states that were annexed by the British, became widespread. This soon broke out into a revolt which assumed the dimensions of the 1857 Mutiny.



FACT FILE: THE TAJ MAHAL

NO TRIP TO INDIA IS COMPLETE WITHOUT TICKING OFF THE TAJ MAHAL.

LEARN A LITTLE MORE ABOUT ONE OF THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD, WITH THE FOLLOWING TEN FACTS...

- According to legend it is believed that Emperor Shah Jahan had planned to construct another Taj Mahal in black marble on the other side of the river, but the war with his sons interrupted his plans.
- It is estimated to have taken more than 22,000 people to build this impressive building including labourers, painters, stonecutters and embroidery artists.
- More than 1,000 elephants were employed to transport the construction materials used to build the Taj.
- Built in memory of the Emperor's third and most favourite wife Mumtāz Mahal, the Taj Mahal took 17 years to be completed.
- It is said that Mumtāz Mahal's death devastated the Emperor – so much so that his hair and beard turned snow white.
- The Taj Mahal takes on different colouring at different times of the day, from a pinkish hue in the morning, milky white in the evening and golden at night when lit by the moon.
- The four sides of the Taj Mahal are perfectly identical creating an astonishingly mirrored image on each side. It uses the principles of self-replicating geometry and symmetry of architectural elements.
- The Taj Mahal is surrounded by significant gardens and a number of other buildings including a mosque and guest houses which make up the 17 hectares of land within the complex walls.
- The full height of the Taj Mahal is 171 metres (561 feet).
- Many precious stones were ripped off from its walls by the British during the Indian rebellion of 1857.



JUNGLE SUTRA

JungleSutra has been especially crafted to showcase India's more commonly sought-after wildlife, as well as introducing the lesser known species that as of now, India may not be known for. We don't just focus on Jeep safaris but a whole array of safari activities encompassing walking safaris, boating, canoeing, night safaris, cycling safaris and elephant safaris. We are very keen to change the way people perceive Wildlife in the Indian Sub-Continent, take guests into the more remote and

therefore less visited parks. We ensure that all itineraries and programs are designed by wildlife enthusiasts rather than travel professionals alone. We at JungleSutra are a team of wildlife enthusiasts and have travelled extensively in India and around the world for wildlife and can curate programs to meet your requirements and exceed expectations.

junglesutra.com/

BEST IN TRAVEL

WHAT TO WEAR ON SAFARI

MAKE SURE THAT YOU ARE PACKING CORRECTLY TO GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR ADVENTURE IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS.





BLEND IN

The best way to get up close and personal with wildlife is to blend in with your surroundings as much as possible. To this end, avoid wearing bright colours (bright is not right when on safari) and opt instead for neutrals – think greens, browns and khakis – which help you to blend in with the environment and hide dust and dirt.

PACK LIGHT

“Travel like Ghandi, with simple clothes, open eyes and an uncluttered mind.” So said Rick Steves – an American author and television personality, passionate about travel. Rick is right.

A bag stuffed with belongings isn't going to 'make' your trip. Quite the opposite: more stuff, simply equals more stress.



KEEP IT CASUAL

Indian safari parks aren't a catwalk. Keep it casual and comfortable with tee shirts, long sleeved shirts, shorts, hiking boots, and athletic socks to keep blisters at bay.

BAG IT UP

Most safari camps are only accessible by small propeller planes, most of which forbid hard-sided luggage. The solution? Pack everything in soft duffels that can be easily tossed into the back of the plane or a 4x4 vehicle. (Weight limits are strict too, so check with the organisation before you go).





SENSIBLE SHOES

This is a non-negotiable. Safari walks can be long plus you need to be climb in and out of the safari vehicle meaning comfortable footwear (think trainers) is essential.

LAYER UP

Dress like an onion when on safari as temperatures can be cool on morning game drives, blazing hot in the afternoon and chilly again at night. Layers allow you to remove clothing to make yourself comfortable as the temperature changes.

HAT AND SCARF

A hat always comes in handy. It often gets hot and dusty on safari, so a hat will protect you from the heat and your hair from the dust. Meanwhile a scarf can be used to wipe dust off yourself or your camera lens as well as keeping you warm.



BEST IN TRAVEL

CAMERA

Going on a safari is a once in a lifetime experience so you'll want to bring a good camera with a zoom lens, with which to capture memories to share with your family and friends back home.

Keep in mind that everything can go very fast while on a safari so get your camera ready and use pre-settings – this will ensure you don't spend the 30 seconds the elephant took crossing the road trying to figure out how your camera works.

Lastly, pack a few extra batteries because the power cuts are quite common in the bush.

SUNGLASSES

Sunglasses are an essential accessory when on safari. The sun is very intense and harsh so it is important to protect your eyes. Best in Travel suggests investing in a pair of polarized sunglasses: you'll be able to spot to in-teresting wild animals easily, even with the sun glaring at its best.

SWIMSUIT

Do throw in a swimsuit if your accommodation has a pool. A refreshing swim is the perfect way to wind down and relax after a long hot day of game viewing.



INDIA ON A PLATE

ENJOYED IN RESTAURANTS, STREETS OR AT HOME, INDIAN FOOD IS NOT ABOUT A FEW CULINARY DELIGHTS BUT ABOUT A VAST ASSORTMENT OF DISHES THAT MAKES IT TRULY AMAZING, AND THE COOKING STYLE VARIES FROM REGION TO REGION. INDIAN CUISINE IS KNOWN FOR THE ART OF USING THE RIGHT SPICES IN EVERY DISH, NOT JUST FOR ITS FLAVOUR BUT ALSO FOR ITS NUTRITIONAL AND MEDICINAL VALUE.

HERE ARE FIFTEEN TRADITIONAL INDIAN DISHES YOU NEED TO TRY...



DHANSAK

A famous Parsee dish. Interestingly the dhan part of the name means rice and a dhansak is traditionally served with a pulao of fried and spiced rice. An authentic dhansak will be made with lamb and contain vegetables and many different types of dhal.

DHOKLA

Dhokla is made from a fermented batter of rice and split chickpeas, and is pale yellow or white in colour. It is usually served with curd or dhania chutney and garnished with a tempering (tadka) of mustard seeds, coriander leaves and split green chillies. It can be eaten for breakfast and can also be served as evening snacks.



HALVAH

An Indian sweet made from a variety of finely grated vegetables, milk, and sugar and flavoured with cardamom. The consistency is akin to that of a thick pudding.



HYDERABADI BIRIYANI

Hyderabadi biryani is one of the most popular dishes in India. It's a traditional biryani with a twist – the vegetables and spiced rice are served inside a large pumpkin, baked until it's steaming hot. The dish is usually accompanied by mirch ka salan or raita and owes its origins to the erstwhile Muslim rulers of Hyderabad.

INDIAN CHAATS

Chaat – the popular Indian street food, with its ball-shaped crispy fried batter, vegetables and a variety of spicy sweet and sour sauces – is a savoury dish enjoyed by the masses all over the world. The full-of-flavour snacks, traditionally sold from carts that line the streets of major cities in India, are said to have originated in Uttar Pradesh. However, the global popularity of the tangy offerings has resulted in many Indian states trying to lay claim to the bite-sized morsels.





JALEBI

These sweet crisp round whirls, made from plain flour and water deep-fried and then dipped in sugar syrup, served hot or cold, are a favourite Indian dessert.

MAKKI KI ROTI AND SARSON KA SAAG

This deliciously spicy vegetarian dish is regarded as signature preparation of Punjabi style of cooking. It is prepared mostly in winter, contains a healthy dose of spinach and makes a perfect party food.



BEST IN TRAVEL

MASALA DOSA

Masala Dosa is a savoury South Indian crepe made from a fermented batter of rice and dal with a delicious potato filling. A properly made Masal Dosa is a delight at any time of day.



PAROTTA

Parottas are layered flour breads that are incredibly popular in the southern states of India (as well as the island country of Sri Lanka). It's quite a sight to see a 'parotta master' artfully flipping parottas in the air on a street corner in southern India.



PATIA

Like its more famous cousin, dhansak, patia is a Parsee dish. A traditional Parsee patia is made with fish cooked in a dark vinegar sauce and garnished with fried tomato pieces.



ROGAN JOSH

A classic Indian staple with lamb as the star. Rogan josh was originally a Kashmiri dish, but is equally at home in the Punjab. An authentic rogan josh will be made with lamb and may, at its most elaborate, contain dozens of spices. The Kashmiri and Punjabi versions do differ (the Kashmiri does not traditionally contain onions or garlic) but they are both highly spiced and share a deep red colour derived from the liberal use of dried red Kashmiri chillies.

BEST IN TRAVEL

SAAG

A favourite side dish, Saag is a traditional creamed spinach that is both vegetarian friendly and gluten-free.



TUNDE KE KABAB

Tunde Ke Kabab, also known as Buffalo meat galouti kebab, is a dish made out of minced meat which is popular in Lucknow, India. The dish is said to incorporate 160 spices and its

ingredients include finely minced lamb, plain yogurt, garam masala, grated ginger, crushed garlic, ground cardamom, powdered cloves, melted ghee, dried mint, small onions cut into rings, vinegar, sugar, lime.



VADA PAV

Of Maharashtrian origin, the vada pav is a very popular Indian street food snack consisting of spiced, deep-fried potato garnished with various chutneys. The credit for invention often goes to a man named Ashok Vaidy, who slung his wares from a stall outside Dadar station in 1971.

VINDALOO

The vindaloo was originally a Portuguese dish which took its name from the two main ingredients which were 'vinho' (wine/wine vinegar) and 'alhos' (garlic). Over time it was spiced up by the indigenous peoples of the ex-Portuguese colony of Goa, with chilli powder. Very hot.



BEST IN TRAVEL

WHERE TO SEE INDIA'S WILDLIFE

ANNAMALAI WILDLIFE
SANCTUARY



BANDHAVGARTH NATIONAL PARK



DUDHWA NATIONAL PARK

WANT TO SEE A REAL WILD TIGER? HEAD TO INDIA, WHERE NEARLY HALF OF THE WORLD'S REMAINING WILD TIGER POPULATION ROAMS. TO UP THE ODDS OF SPOTTING TIGERS – AS WELL AS ASIATIC LIONS, LEOPARDS, ELEPHANTS, ONE-HORNED RHINOS, SLOTH BEARS AND MORE – WE'VE NARROWED YOUR CHOICES DOWN TO THE TOP PLACES IN INDIA WHERE IT'S MOST LIKELY YOU'LL GET A GOOD SIGHTING...

JIM CORBETT NATIONAL PARK





Anamalai Wildlife Sanctuary

Spread across an area of 958 sq km, Anamalai Wildlife Sanctuary is an ecological paradise that also encompasses a national park. Expect to see elephant, gaur, tiger, panther, sloth bear, deer, wild bear, wild dog, porcupine, flying squirrel, jackal, pangolin and civet cat, as well as like the rocket-tailed drongo, red whiskered bulbul, tree pie, black headed oriole, spotted dove, and more.

Bandhavgarh National Park

Spread across an area of 958 sq km, Anamalai Wildlife Sanctuary is an ecological paradise that also encompasses a national park. Expect to see elephant, gaur, tiger, panther, sloth bear, deer, wild bear, wild dog, porcupine, flying squirrel, jackal, pangolin and civet cat, as well as like the rocket-tailed drongo, red whiskered bulbul, tree pie, black headed oriole, spotted dove, and more.



Dudhwa National Park

Located in the Lakhimpur & Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh, lying adjacent to the Indo-Nepal border, Dudhwa National Park brings together two most incredible sanctuaries of the area namely, Kishanpur and Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuaries.

It's here that you'll see swamp deer and tiger species, as well as some of the best forests of 'Sal' tree in the world. For nature lovers, wildlife enthusiasts and bird watchers alike, this place is paradise.



Jim Corbett National Park

One of India's best known and oldest wildlife sanctuaries, the Jim Corbett National Park, a part of the larger Corbett Tiger Reserve (a Project Tiger Reserve) lies along the Ramganga River at the foot of the Kumaon Hills. It is named after Jim Corbett, the famous naturalist and the legendary hunter of the man-eaters of Kumaon.

The main areas for tourists are the Dhikala Tourism Zone (entry is through Dhangarhi Gate) and the Bijrani Tourism Zone (accessed via the Amdanda Gate).

BEST IN TRAVEL

Kanha National Park

Spread across 940 sqkm, Kanha National Park is one of the largest parks in Madhya Pradesh where the majestic Royal Bengal Tigers are found in good numbers. The park is respected globally for saving the Barasingha from near extinction.

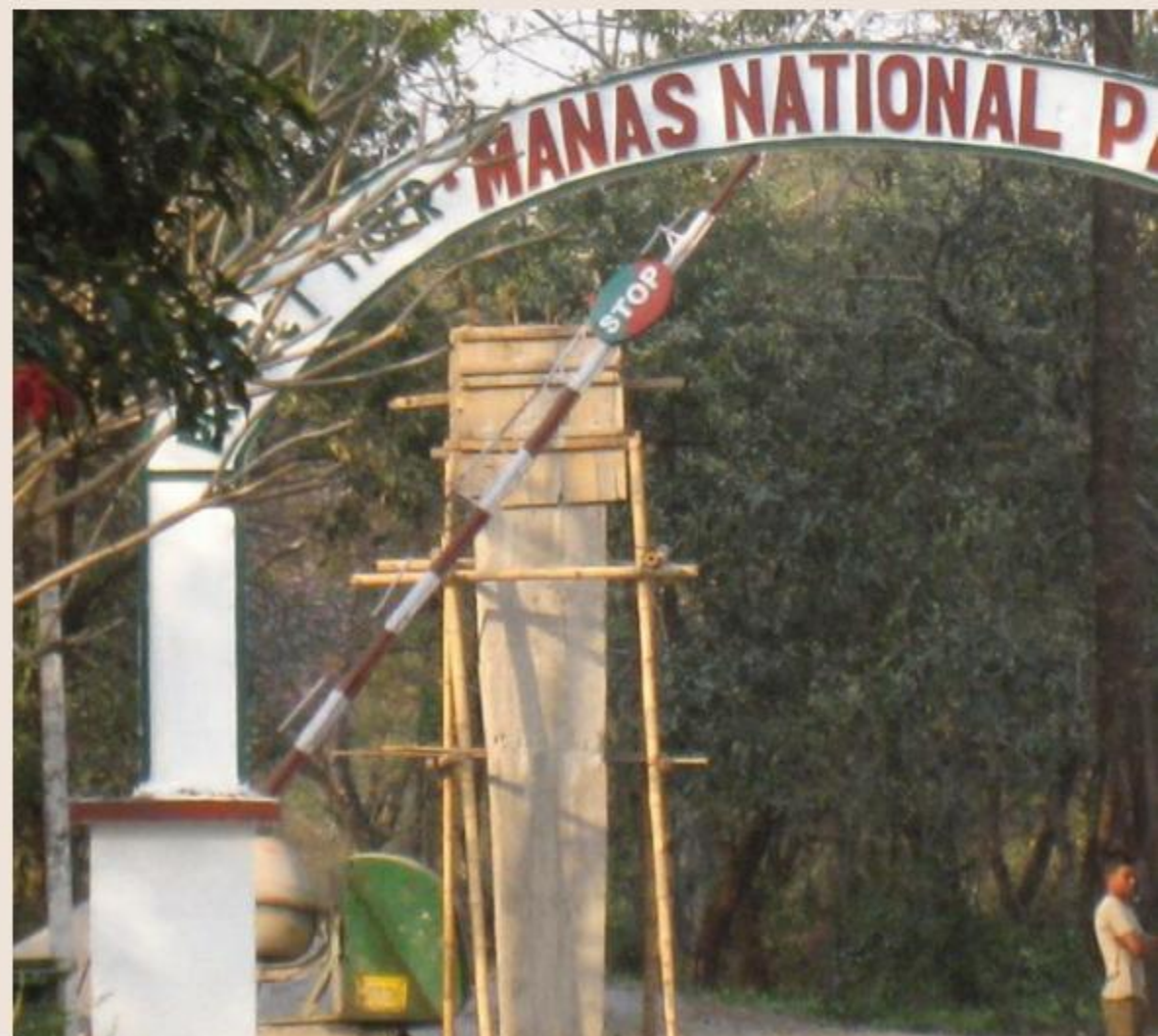
National Geographic's award winning 'Land of the Tigers' was shot here, and the park is also home to leopards, wild dogs and the Barasingha.

Make no mistake: a safari in Kanha is filled with sightings and adventurous thrills and is a must on any Indian itinerary.

KANHA NATIONAL PARK



KEOLADEO N



Keoladeo National Park

Formerly known as the Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary, the Keoladeo National Park is recognised as one of the world's most important bird breeding and feeding grounds. Every year, thousands of migratory birds such as the green sandpiper and cranes visit the park

NATIONAL PARK



during winter. It was originally a royal hunting reserve and was a game reserve for Maharajas and the British. In 1982, Keoladeo was declared a national park and then later listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1985.

The park is home to over 370 species of birds including herons, storks, cormorants, warblers, sauras crane, babblers, bee eaters, bulbuls, buntings, Painted francolins, quails, Indian grey hornbill, Marshall's iora, osprey, peregrine, Imperial eagle, spotted eagle and crested serpent eagle.

Meanwhile wildlife in the sanctuary includes nilgai, chital, sambar, Indian porcupine, Indian gray mongoose, jungle cat, fishing cat, civet, jackals and striped hyenas.

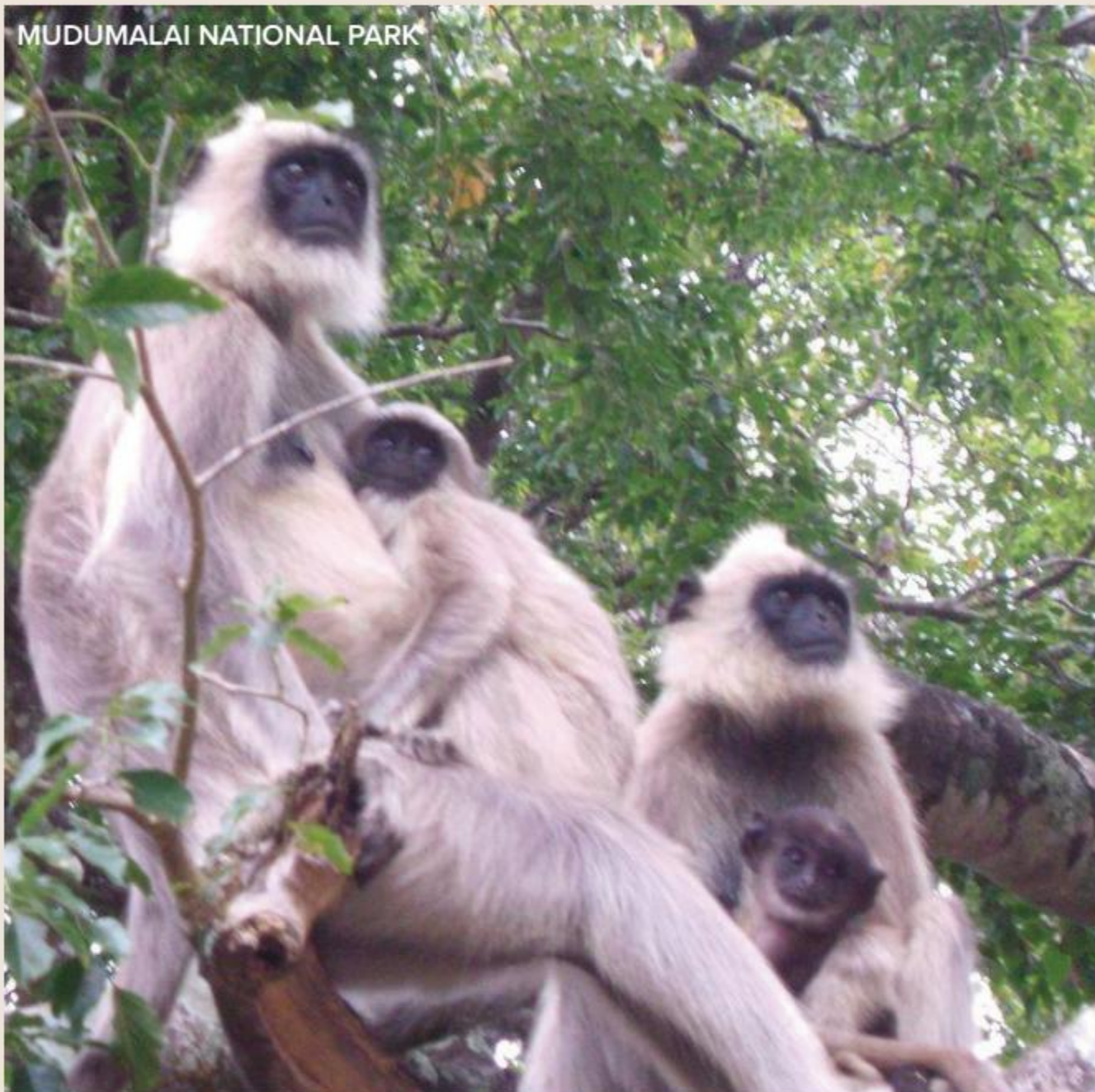
Manas National Park

Located in the Himalayan foothills in western Assam, Manas became a Tiger Reserve in 1974, a World Heritage Site in 1985, and a Biosphere Reserve in 1989 before being declared a National Park in 1990.

The park shares a border with the Buxa Tiger Reserve in West Bengal, and in 2003 it was declared part of the Chirang-Ripu Elephant Reserve which serves as the international corridor for elephant migration between India and Bhutan. Spread over an area of 500 sqkm, the park has extensive grasslands and is famous for its unique scenic beauty. The park harbours more than 20 endangered species.

Considered one of the world's rarest simian species, the golden langur was first spotted in Manas in the mid-20th Century. Other mammals commonly found here are rhino, elephant, tiger, pygmy hog, hispid hare, Assamese macaque, Rhesus macaque, leopard, swamp deer and wild pigs.





Mudumalai National Park

Mudumalai forms a part of Jawaharlal Nehru National Park and is full of tropical evergreen forest, moist deciduous forest, moist teak forest, dry teak forest and secondary grassland swamps.

It is an exciting place to see animals including tiger, panther, elephant, gaur, Mouse deer, Sloth bear, sambar, Spotted deer, Barking deer, blackbuck, Malabar giant squirrel, Flying squirrel, Four-horned antelope (Chowsingha), Wild dog, Striped hyena, Small Indian civet, Wild boar, porcupine, slender lorises and so on. Tigers are largely elusive but leopards on the move are frequently seen.





PANNA NATIONAL PARK

Panna National Park

Panna National Park is home to some of the biggest predators, in addition to waterfalls of dizzying heights. Panna's royal past dates back to the mid 17th Century, when it became the capital of Maharaja Chhatrasal's kingdom. The Ken River passes through Panna hills, making Panna an incredibly wildlife-friendly destination. One can spot the majestic tiger, the ghariyal – a huge reptile found only in the Indian subcontinent – and a variety of flora and fauna.



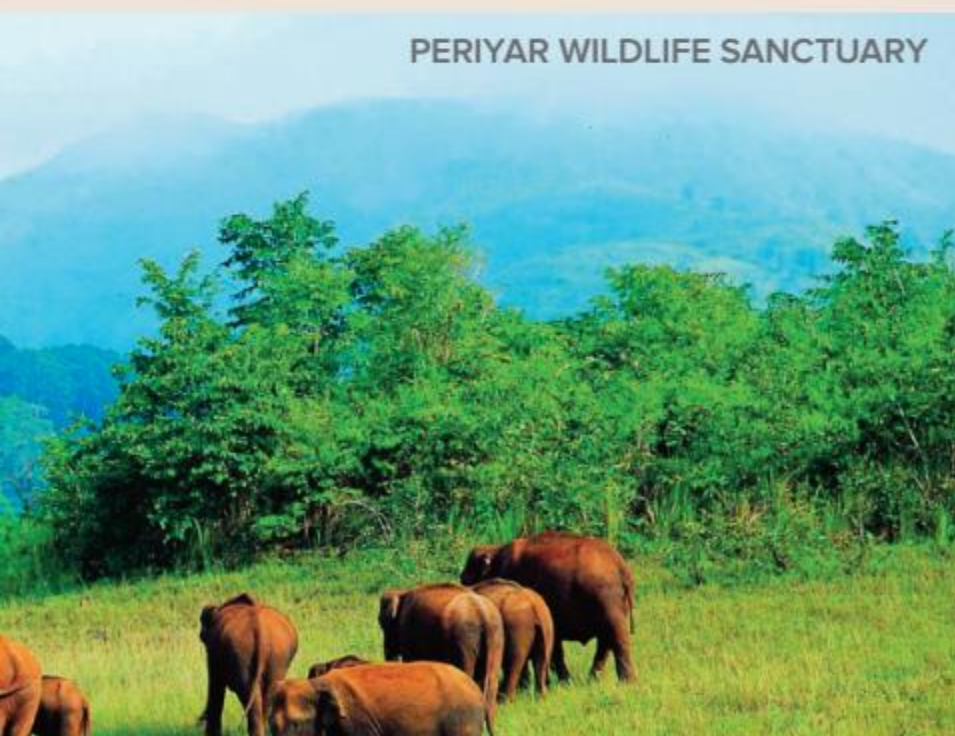
Pench Tiger Reserve

Situated along the Pench River, Pench Tiger Reserve is one of the largest game preserves of Madhya Pradesh. Nearby, Ghuhugarh, is an old fort of the Vakataka period. This magnificent expanse shelters over 285 resident and migratory birds along with majestic tigers and several other animals straight out of the Jungle Book.

Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary

Step into the woods of Periyar, a grand kingdom of wilderness. The tigers in this sprawling green kingdom are elusive and if you're lucky enough to spot one lazily strolling in the wild, you would be struck with awe of the sheer grandeur of his majestic looks and rugged physique. The Periyar Tiger Reserve is one of the 27 tiger reserves in India.

Periyar Sanctuary is the oldest wildlife sanctuary in Kerala, which is also credited with having the largest protected area. The 777 sqkm sanctuary is gifted with a unique landscape that serves as the habitat for numerous flora and fauna in amazing varieties.



PERIYAR WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Rajaji National Park

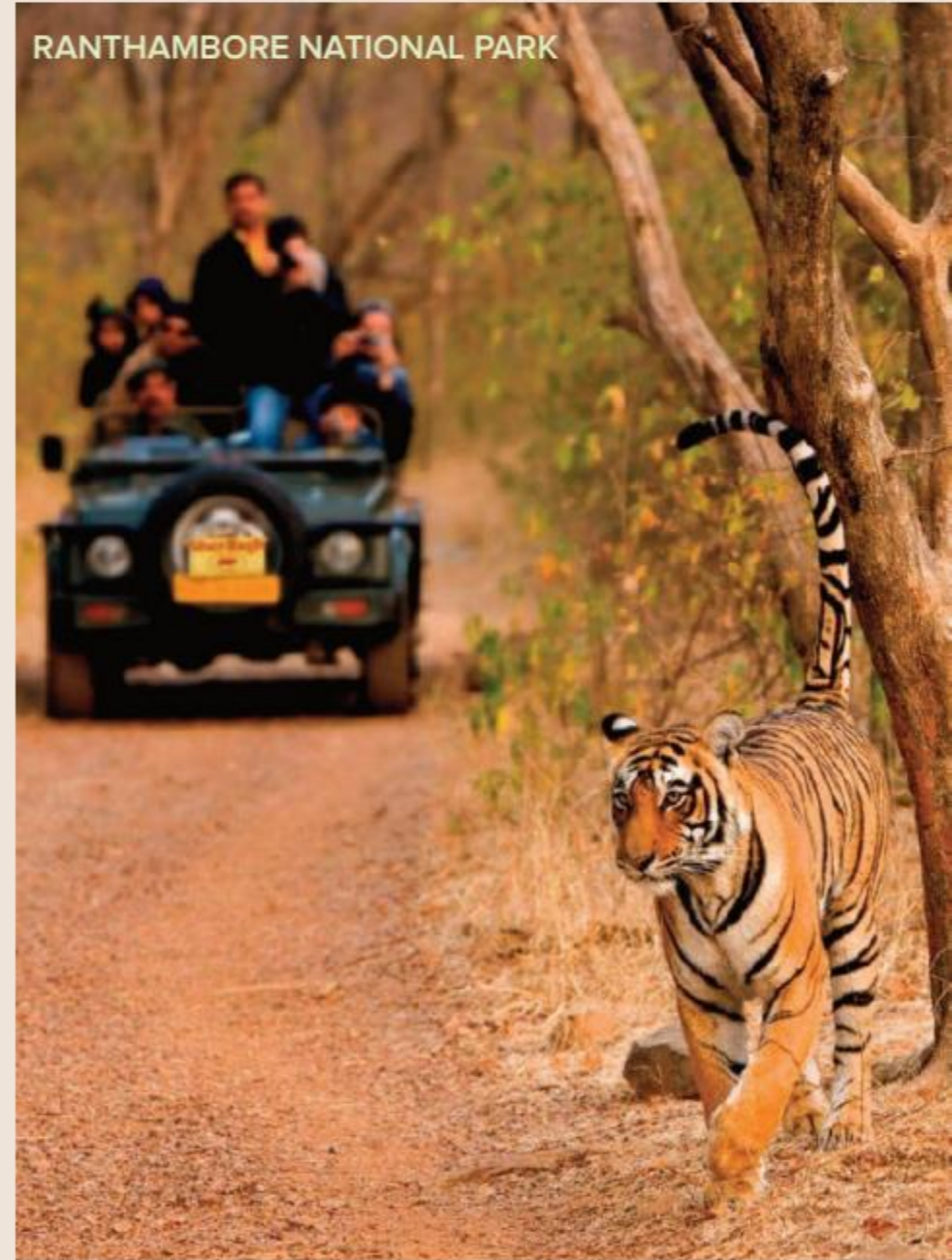
Rajaji National Park is an Indian national park and tiger reserve that encompasses the Shivaliks, near the foothills of the Himalayas. The park is spread over 820km and three districts of Uttarakhand: Haridwar, Dehradun and Pauri Garhwal. Rajaji National Park offers an amazing opportunity for nature lovers to enjoy the beautiful landscape and wildlife.



Ranthambore National Park

Once a private game reserve of the royal family of Jaipur, Ranthambore National Park and Tiger Reserve is one of the world's best known wilderness areas.

Located 14km from Sawai Madhopur and 155km. from Jaipur and at the junction of some of the geologically oldest mountain ranges – the Aravallis and Vindhyas – Ranthambore offers some of the finest opportunities for sighting the magnificent tiger in the wild. Apart from the tiger, you'll also see Sloth bear, leopard, jackal, fox, hyena, Indian wolf, chital, Sambhar deer, Blue bull





SARISKA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

antelope or nilgai, Rhesus macaque, langur and an incredible variety of birds.

The landscape is dominated by the 10th century fortress of Ranthambore.

Sariska Wildlife Sanctuary

Tiger Reserve, situated in the Alwar District of Rajasthan, covers an area of 800 sqkm in total, with a core area of approximately 500 sqkm. The area was declared a sanctuary in 1955 and became a National Park in 1979.

Keep your eyes peeled for tigers, leopards, hyenas, caracals, jungle cats, ratels, nilgai, Sambar deer, Spotted deer and much, much more including 211 species of bird.

Tadoba

Maharashtra's oldest and largest national park, Tadoba is one of 47 project tiger reserves existing in India. It lies in the Chandrapur district of Maharashtra state and is approximately 150km from Nagpur city. The total area of the tiger reserve is 1,727 sqkm which includes the Tadoba National Park, created in the year 1955. The Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary was formed in the year 1986 and was amalgamated with the park in 1995 to establish the present Tadoba Andheri Tiger Reserve.

TADOBA



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

No two parks are the same. Each wildlife area has specific guidelines, including minimum wildlife viewing distances and food storage requirements. Be sure to take a few minutes to review the park's rules.

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE ROAD

When on the road, always follow the speed limits and watch for wildlife that may dart out onto the road. When you want to stop to watch wildlife, pull your vehicle completely off of the road into a designated pull-out—this keeps wildlife safe as well as other motorists.

VIEW FROM A SAFE DISTANCE

The best way to stay safe when watching wildlife is to give animals room to move. Many parks require you to stay a minimum distance of 25 yards from most wildlife and 100 yards from predators (animals react to your presence you are too close). A rule of thumb? If you're close enough for a selfie, you're far too close. Let wildlife be wild and observe from a distance using binoculars.

DO NOT DISTURB

Remember that it's illegal to feed, touch, tease, frighten, or intentionally disturb wildlife. Wild animals are, as the name suggests, wild and can be unpredictable when they're disturbed or surprised.

STORE YOUR FOOD

Feeding wildlife in parks can make them come looking for more. Once they have learned that people are a source of food, wildlife can become aggressive toward people. This puts you at risk of injury and the wildlife at risk of being removed. Our message? Store your food and take your rubbish with you when leave.

SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

Tell your guide/ranger immediately if you come into physical contact with wildlife. Similarly if you see wildlife that are sick, acting strangely or worse, dead, speak up. And should you see people who aren't following any of the aforementioned guidelines, talk to them and, if necessary, report them.

BE RESPONSIBLE

On a final note, we all have a duty to keep ourselves safe, by taking heed of wildlife etiquette and not putting ourselves or others in danger. This is just common sense – something we all use every day.



INDIA

IN INDIA



KERALA BACKWATERS

One India essential is to take a boat cruise through Kerala's backwaters – 900km of interconnected rivers, lakes and lagoons lined with tropical flora – which allows visitors an intimate glimpse into the lives of local people hidden from the road.

As you meander through miles of waterways, expect to see trails of underwear, washing lines,

and villagers cleaning both themselves and their clothes in the water.

Float along the water and watch the sun do its incredible sinking thing and forget about the pile of work, waiting for you back home...

BEST IN TRAVEL

10 ESSENTIAL INDIA



VARANSI

Varanasi is one of the most sacred sites in India because it is believed to have been the home of Lord Shiva.

Millions of pilgrims visit Varanasi in order to purify themselves by bathing in the River Ganges at sunrise.

Some Hindus believe that if they die at Varanasi, they might be able to attain moksha sooner. Because of this, some Hindus go there when they are close to death in order to die there. Others have their ashes scattered there by relatives. A feature of the landscape at Varanasi is the cremation ghats that line the banks of the Ganges.



GOAN BEACHES

So all your travelling companions want to do is unfurl in the sun yet, while you're looking for blazing sunshine, you don't want to spend all day on the beach. Sound familiar? Please don't worry: just go to Goa, where you'll find spectacular beaches in spades. Standouts include Arambol Beach, Keri Beach, Palolem Beach, Agonda Beach and Benaulim Beach.

Then, when you've had your fill of sand and surf, check out Old Goa, the former capital of Goa that was once considered the Rome of the East. Another don't miss is the Museum of Christian Art which houses a fine collection of 16th and 17th century Christian art from Old Goa and around the state.

BEST IN TRAVEL

10 ESSENTIAL INDIA



DARJEELING

Lying amidst the slopes of the Lesser Himalayas and blanketed by emerald green plantations of tea, Darjeeling is a picturesque town in the Indian state of West Bengal. The majestic Kanchenjunga (also known as Kangchenjunga) towers over this beautiful town, which is the third highest

mountain in the world. Popularly known as the 'Queen of the Hills', Darjeeling is a favoured tourist destination, noted for its scenic beauty, ancient forests, quaint houses, friendly people and the mountain panorama that it provides.



JAISALMER FORT

Nestled amid the golden sands of Thar Desert, Jaisalmer Fort is one of the most renowned forts in the world exhibiting brilliant craftsmanship and aesthetic beauty steeped with rich past and heritage.

Built in 1156 by Raja Jaisal, the fort is 250 feet tall which is protected by 30 feet long walls and constitutes 99 bastions. Perched atop Tirkuta hills, the fort houses prominent structures like the Raj Mahal, which had been the royal palace of the fort, aesthetic Jain temples, Laxminath temple and four massive gateways.

Apart from these, Jaisalmer fort is also famed for its carved yellow sandstone merchant havelis which are still in possession of the original builders. A UNESCO World Heritage site merging brilliantly with the golden hues of the desert, Jaisalmer Fort boasts of various attractions that reflect the majestic life of which the fort was once a part of.

BEST IN TRAVEL

10 ESSENTIAL INDIA



ELLORA CAVES

The Ellora Caves, chiseled into perfection between the 4th and the 9th centuries, belongs to the Buddhist, Hindu and Jain faiths.

One of the most fascinating archaeological sites in Maharashtra, Ellora dates back to the Rashtrakuta dynasty and is the epitome of Indian rock-cut architecture. There are 34 caves in all, of which 12 are Buddhist, 17 Hindu and 5 Jain.

A protected site under the aegis of the Archaeological Survey of India, Cave no 16 – popularly known as Kailash Temple – is a World Heritage Site carved from a single monolithic structure.



MEENAKSHI AMMAN TEMPLE

The Meenakshi Amman Temple is the heart of the ancient city of Madurai in Tamil Nadu, India. A religious and mythological symbol dating back 2,500 years, the temple's 14 towers are each covered in thousands of colourful stone figures depicting animals, gods and demons.

10 ESSENTIAL INDIA



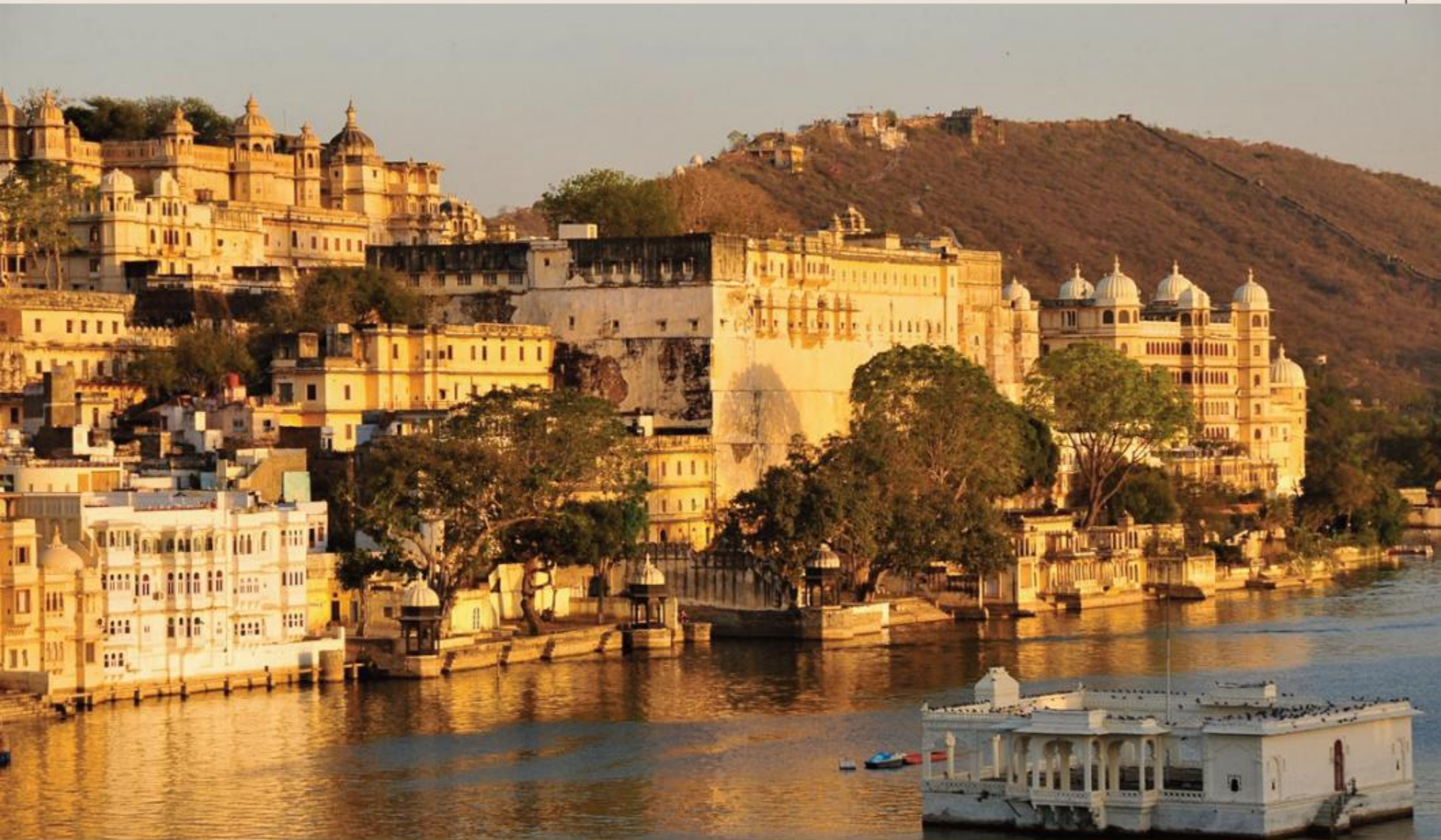
AMRITSAR'S GOLDEN TEMPLE

Also known as Harmandir or Darbar Sahib, the temple is a white and gold majestic building, the foundation of which was laid by the Muslim saint, Mian Mir –an admirer and friend of Guru Arjun.

The temple was built on a 67ft square of marble and is a two storied structure. The top structure of the temple is covered with pure gold leaf, hence, the popular name, Golden Temple. Inside the temple lies the holy book of the Sikhs -- the Granth Sahib. The Granth Sahib is kept in the

temple during the day and in the Akal Takht or Eternal Throne at night. The spiritual focus is the tank, the Amrit Sarovar, which surrounds the glistening central shrine. Embraced by marble stairways, this tank is believed to have healing powers that can cure many diseases.

Visitors to the Golden Temple must remove their shoes and cover their heads before entering the temple.



UDAIPUR

Udaipur was founded in 1553 by Maharana Udai Singh II as the new capital of the Mewar.

Set amidst the Aravalli Ranges, Udaipur is celebrated for its picturesque lakes and is known as 'the city of lakes'. Udaipur is regarded as one of the most romantic cities of the world and is often

referred to as the 'Venice of the East'. It is one of the most sought after tourist destination of the state of Rajasthan. Udaipur's kaleidoscope of fairy-tale palaces, lakes, temples, gardens, vibrant and colourful festivals and narrow lanes strewn with stalls, carry the flavour of a heroic past, epitomising valour and chivalry.

INDIA

SOME 'KN
YOU GO'



Begging

As difficult as it is, try to refrain from giving anything – be it money, sweets, pens – to beggars. Simply put, handouts are not going to solve anything (apart from maybe assuaging your feelings of guilt) because they decrease the chances of helping these people to become self-reliant.

Visiting India can be heart breaking (poverty is prevalent) so if you'd like to help, seek out an established charity to donate to.

Check where you're going

For the latest information on where you're going, check the FCO travel advice for India at: www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/india

Currency

The Indian rupee (sign: ₹; code: INR), is the official currency of the Republic

of India but you won't be able to pre-purchase it in the UK. Panic not: ATMs, which accept international bankcards, abound in India. Additionally there are authorised moneychangers at the airport.

Delhi Belly

Delhi Belly is not a myth: it's an ailment that hits most of the India's Western visitors at some point during their sojourn. If you do succumb to a dose of Delhi belly, stick to a diet of plain rice and yogurt, drink plenty of fluids for 24 hours and get some rest.

NOW BEFORE ESSENTIALS

Don't mistreat the Buddha

You should avoid posing for photographs in front of a statue of Buddha. The mistreatment of Buddhist images and artefacts is a serious offence and tourists have been convicted for posing for such pictures.

Dress code

Large parts of India are still fairly conservative so steer clear of skimpy outfits to avoid causing offence.

Language

India recognises 22 official languages (with Hindi – which has numerous dialects – and English as the most important and widely spoken). In addition, there are more than 200 other languages, which means most Indians are at least trilingual.

Rainy season

The rainy season in India begins generally from the second week of July and continues up to the second week of October. From the second week of June humid monsoon enters various parts of India and causes rainfall everywhere in the state.

Solo female travel

The numerous assaults on women in India recently have been well publicised but, by taking a few precautions, female travellers can definitely travel safely. Women-only rooms or floors are on offer in a few big Indian hotels including the ITC group of luxury hotels (www.itchotels.in).

Consider putting a ring on it: wearing a simple band that suggests you're married (regardless of whether you actually are) will keep unwanted questions and interest at bay.





Summer

During the three months from April to June it is summer in most parts of India. Generally in the month of April, many parts of India experiences high temperature. The normal temperature recorded in this time is generally 30°C. But at some places in the plateau region the temperature rises to 40°C and in the Himalayan mountain region, it remains near about 20°C.

Temple etiquette Solo

Always take your shoes off before you enter a place of worship in India, and be sure to keep your shoulders and the lower part of your body covered.

Vaccinations

All tourists visiting India should get vaccinated for Hepatitis A, Tetanus and Typhoid. There's also a risk of Malaria - check www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk for the latest updates.

Visas

The easiest way to apply for your India visa is through the e-Tourist visa (e-TV) process now available to British citizens in the UK.

You can apply online up to four days before your arrival and must enter the country within 30 days of its issue.

Your e-TV will be valid for 60 days from the date of arrival in India and costs US\$75 (£55). For more information, visit www.indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html

Watch those hands and feet

Feet are considered to be unclean in India, so if you touch something with your feet offer your apologies. Similarly, eating or passing things on with your left hand is considered rude in Indian culture (for reasons best left unsaid) can cause offence. If you're unsure of local customs, keep an eye out for what others do and imitate.



Water

Tap water is a no-go in India so be sure to use bottled water even when brushing your teeth. We'd also recommend avoiding fruit and salads rinsed in tap water, and unfiltered ice cubes.

Weather

The best time to visit India is from October to March. India is large with diverse weather patterns. The Himalayas stop cold winds from reaching most of India so winters remain warm and summers can get very hot. The majority of India is tropical and is affected by three main seasons; summer, winter and monsoon.

Winter

During the period from December to February there is winter season in India. During this time clouds and dry North-East Monsoon passes over different regions of India and temperature is decreased considerably. In Himalayan area the temperature is much lower (between 5°C and 10°C). But sometimes cyclone (coming from the West) causes storm and rainfall which is known as Western disturbance.

"This is indeed India; the land of dreams and romance, of fabulous wealth and fabulous poverty, of splendour and rags, of palaces and hovels, of famine and pestilence, of genii and giants and Aladdin lamps, of tigers and elephants, the cobra and the jungle, the country of a thousand nations and a hundred tongues, of a thousand religions and two million gods, cradle of the human race, birthplace of human speech, mother of history, grandmother of legend, great-grandmother of tradition, whose yesterdays bear date with the moldering antiquities of the rest of the nations—the one sole country under the sun that is endowed with an imperishable interest for alien prince and alien peasant, for lettered and ignorant, wise and fool, rich and poor, bond and free, the one land that all men desire to see, and having seen once, by even a glimpse, would not give that glimpse for the shows of all the rest of the globe combined."

Mark Twain

TRANSPORT YOURSELF TO THE SUBCONTINENT, WITH WORDS AT LEAST

The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy

"They all broke the rules. They all crossed into forbidden territory. They all tampered with the laws that lay down who should be loved, and how. And how much."

This is the story of Rahel and Estha, twins growing up among the banana vats and peppercorns of their blind grandmother's factory, and amid scenes of political turbulence in Kerala. Armed only with the innocence of youth, they fashion a childhood in the shade of the wreck that is their family: their lonely, lovely mother, their beloved Uncle Chacko (pickle baron, radical Marxist, bottom-pincher) and their sworn enemy, Baby Kochamma (ex-nun, incumbent grand-aunt).

Arundhati Roy's Booker Prize-winning novel was the literary sensation of the 1990s: a story anchored to anguish but fuelled by wit and magic.

Midnight's Children by Salman Rushdie

Born at the stroke of midnight at the exact moment of India's independence, Saleem Sinai is a special child. However, this coincidence of birth has consequences he is not prepared for: telepathic powers connect him with 1,000 other 'midnight's children' all of whom are endowed with unusual gifts.

Inextricably linked to his nation, Saleem's story is a whirlwind of disasters and triumphs that mirrors the course of modern India at its most impossible and glorious.

A Suitable Boy by Vikram Seth

A modern classic, this epic tale of families, romance and political intrigue never loses its power to delight and enchant readers.

Vikram Seth's novel is, at its core, a love story: the tale of Lata – and her mother's – attempts to find her a suitable husband, through love or through exacting maternal

appraisal. At the same time, it is the story of India, newly independent and struggling through a time of crisis as a sixth of the world's population faces its first great general election and the chance to map its own destiny.

The Ramayana by R. K. Narayan

The Ramayana is, quite simply, the greatest of Indian epics – and one of the world's supreme masterpieces of storytelling. "Almost every individual living in India," writes R. K. Narayan in the Introduction to this new interpretation, "is aware of the story of The Ramayana. Everyone of whatever age, outlook, education or station in life knows the essential part of the epic and adores the main figures in it – Rama and Sita. Every child is told the story at bedtime ... The Ramayana pervades our cultural life." Although the Sanskrit original was composed by Valmiki, probably around the fourth century BC, poets have produced countless variant versions in different languages. Here, drawing his inspiration from the work of an eleventh-century Tamil poet called Kampan, Narayan has used the talents of a master novelist to recreate the excitement and joy he has found in the original. It can be enjoyed and appreciated, he suggests, for its psychological insight, its spiritual depth and its practical wisdom – or just as a thrilling tale of abduction, battle and courtship played out in a universe thronged with heroes, deities and demons.

Nine Lives: In Search of the Sacred in Modern India by William Dalrymple

A Buddhist monk takes up arms to resist the Chinese invasion of Tibet – then spends the rest of his life trying to atone for the violence by hand printing the best prayer flags in India. A Jain nun tests her powers of detachment as she watches her best friend ritually starve herself to death. Nine people, nine lives: each one taking a different religious path, each one an unforgettable story. William Dalrymple delves deep into the heart of a nation torn between the relentless onslaught of modernity and the ancient traditions that endure to this day.

TIME FOR TEE



Mention India and the usual clichés spring to mind: treasured temples, verdant vegetation, bustling cities, brightly coloured saris, happy herds of elephants, palm-fringed beaches.

However India is also celebrated for its genteel golf courses. Here's where you should be practicing your swing.



AAMBY VALLEY GOLF COURSE

Designed by David Hemstock, Aamby Valley Golf Course is a sheer visual delight and a marvel of British Golf Architecture waiting to be conquered by those who value the challenges, pristine outdoors, constantly changing conditions and variety that defines the game of golf.

Immediately the game begins by testing the golfers with undulating fairways and subtly-contoured greens with strategically-placed bunkers. Sitting in the valley of

Sahyadri Ranges of the Western Ghats and spread over 250 acres, the par-72 course is a surreal experience. With hills on all sides and a vast expanse of lakes within, the air is crisp and fresh. The birds sing, peacock dash across the fairways and the deer peep, making your day.

aambyvalley.com

BEST IN TRAVEL

TIME FOR TEE



BOMBAY PRESIDENCY GOLF CLUB

One of the most prestigious golf clubs in Mumbai, the Bombay Presidency Golf Club boasts a beautiful, yet demanding 18-hole course. Among the eleven water hazards and 43 bunkers is one interesting hazard at 16: an elephant pit.

Built in 1927, and extensively updated in 2009, Bombay Presidency provides services such as golf set rental, a driving range, a practice putting range, caddy service and many more.

bpgc-golf.com



CLASSIC GOLF COURSE - RIDGE & VALLEY

Classic Golf & Country Club is set amidst the foot hills of the Aravali, Mother Nature's own hillocks and knolls make for natural golfing country...lending themselves ideally to enticing fairways, cunning greens and engaging waterways...enough to quicken any serious golfer's heart.

Both professionals and leisure golfers can discover the joys and challenges of golf at this 27-hole Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course.

Jack's philosophy behind Classic Golf & Country Club was to create a great and unique golf course by mixing shot value and blending holes, which rewards the player who uses his intelligence and favours precision over

The course is well balanced, with holes that vary in direction, 'look' and 'feel', so that one type of golfer isn't favoured over another. The course rewards strategic, intelligent thinking as much as fine ball striking, and the holes are designed to enable golfers to make precise decisions in club selection and execution of each shot.

Preserving the land's natural character was also paramount and the natural features have been integrated into the design. The majority of the holes follow the existing contours of the site in order to make the course as enjoyable and user friendly as possible.

cgronline.com

BEST IN TRAVEL

TIME FOR TEE



DELHI GOLF CLUB - LODHI GOLF COURSE

Built by the British in 1931, it is one of the oldest golf courses in Asia & the oldest one in Delhi. The 18 hole, 7036 yard design Lodhi course contains many Tughlak & Lodi dynasty monuments and is also home to a variety of birds and deer. Don't be surprised to see a Peacock saunter across the course or break into a dance or a big Nilgai appear from nowhere & disappear as quickly. Partridges in the rough are common here.

The Lodhi course has a reputation – its a very unforgiving course with narrow fairways & thorny bushes alongside.

delhigolfclub.org



DLF GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

The DLF Golf and Country Club, located in DLF5 in Gurgaon, was opened in 1999, with the first Arnold Palmer Signature course in the country.

The club featured many other firsts – the first course to offer Night Golf and the first professional Golf Academy in the country were some of them.

The new Gary Player 18-hole Signature Course opened its first 9-holes in October 2013. Widely recognised as the world's most successful golf course architectural firm, Gary Player Design is renowned for its select and

ecological approach to design. DLF took a lead in creating not only an excellent golf facility, but also a township around golf, which has become a model to follow across the country. The course is a scenic parkland design with dramatic landscape enhanced by ambient lighting.

The club also upgraded its facilities with the opening of a new golfer's Pavilion equipped with new lockers, a restaurant and a bar.

dlfgolfresort.com

BEST IN TRAVEL

TIME FOR TEE



EAGLETON GOLF COURSE

The magnificent golf course at Eagleton fulfils a dual purpose. It presents every golfer with the appropriate level of enjoyment and challenge. And, equally important, it creates a permanent ecological oasis, enhancing the image of the Garden City.

Like the Old Course at St. Andrews, which preserves the Scottish Linklands for posterity, Eagleton seeks to honour and accentuate the natural setting. Displaying total sensitivity for the environment, the design emerges from the terrain, sculptured around existing contours. Creative land management attuned in form, function and aesthetics to the surroundings, has resulted in a masterpiece. Trees, open landscape, water

bodies and theme plantings add a supreme sense of satisfaction.

Ecological factors come into play at every stage. Over 25,000 trees, lush turf and sophisticated fertilisation, irrigation and waste water management measures contribute to a natural pleasing biosphere.

At Eagleton, a game of golf is an adventure, an exploration of the multi-layered course character, a truly unique playing experience.

eagletonindia.com



GOLDEN GREENS GOLF CLUB

Golden Greens is a golf course designed by two great names – DR Martin Hawtree and the Aravalli hills. As an artist uses clay, Hawtree, has sculpted a championship course in the finest 'Links' tradition. This 18-hole, par 72, 7100 yards championship course is replete with strategically placed bunkers on meandering fairways which look like olive green crumpled blankets. Spread over 275 acres of land in the National Capital Region of Delhi – Gurgaon, it is just 25km from the international airport.

The first and only one of its kind in India, at the Golden Greens, the emphasis has been to create a golf course which looks a part of its natural surroundings. Wind swept dunes and the native scrub found in the Aravallis hills, deep pot bunkers, cleverly contoured greens which demand precise play and strategic placing of shots is the key to successfully negotiating this course. A challenge that tests the skills levels of all level of golfers ranging form the professional to the high handicappers. The course blends with the natural surroundings and provides an exceptional golfing experience.

gggrl.com

BEST IN TRAVEL

TIME FOR TEE



JAYPEE GREENS GOLF COURSE

India's first 18-hole golf course, Jaypee Greens Golf - designed by veteran golfer Greg Norman - is a visual treat.

jaypeegreensgolf.com

Carpeted with Bermuda Evergreen on the fairways and Tifdwarf on the greens, this thoughtfully designed edifice will surely hold your attention. This meticulous golf course in Greater Noida is sprawled over 452 acres of land and offers wide array of options to those, who seek peace as well as recreation in the lap of nature. Adding to its overall beauty are the visually striking bunkers, shimmering lakes & water bodies that give this lush green golf course a whole new meaning.



KALHAAR BLUES & GREENS GOLF CLUB

The idyllic golf course in Ahmedabad, Kalhaar Blues & Greens is a world class championship 18 holes, 7,425 yards, Par 72 layout designed by 'Nicklaus Design', a company owned by the legendary golfer and golf icon Jack Nicklaus.

Developed by the Navratna Group, the course complies with the United States Golf Association (USGA) specifications as well as the stringent and exacting standards of 'Nicklaus Design', making it one of the most exclusive and prestigious golf courses in the country.

The layout offers unique challenges and aesthetics, such as sand and beach bunkers, and 14 bodies of water

that cover over 35 acres. In addition, the course features a scenic 'Island green' on Hole No. 7 – a 174 yards, Par 3.

Contouring across this rolling layout ranges from 1 to 5 meters and in line with being a best of its class design it features a state-of-the-art, computerised irrigation system. The entire golf course has been sand-capped to enable one of the finest water harvesting and drainage systems to drain rainwater and excess irrigation water to the lake. The course has two varieties of grass - MiniVerde for tees and greens, and Bermuda 419 for fairways and roughs.

kalhaarbluesandgreens.com

TIME FOR TEE



KARNATAKA GOLF ASSOCIATION COURSE

Golf enthusiasts created this 125 acre oasis from the old Chalaghatta swamp. A 7219 yard par 72 course of Peter Thompson design, it currently has a slope rating of 137 off the championship tees. The fairways of Hybrid Bermuda tiffway lead to true-running greens of Bermuda Tiff Dwarf, the general grain on the greens is westerly except where the ponds lie near. The greens are usually on the fast side with stimp meter reading above ten during tournaments. Prevailing winds are south westerly June to August but north easterly the rest of the year. All Out-of-Bounds areas are fenced and clearly marked white stakes.

Bottled water, refreshments and rest rooms are provided on the course at the 4th, 6th and 15th tees with full service dining at the clubhouse. Mid-round refreshments can be had at the club house. All on-course huts have first-aid kits and intercom to the clubhouse, along with Wi-Fi facility.

kga.in



OXFORD GOLF RESORT - PUNE

The 5 Star Oxford Golf Resort boasts of Pune's only 18 hole private golf course that's set amidst 136 acres with close proximity to Pune City.

The valley and mountains of the Sahayadri range provide the perfect setting for 18 holes of competitive golf along with world class living, dining and entertainment facilities.

oxfordgolfresort.com

BEST IN TRAVEL

TIME FOR TEE



PRESTIGE GOLFSHIRE CLUB

Imagine a secret place with 275 acres of lush greenery, bordered by an expansive lake at the foothills of an ancient hill fortress, and hidden from the outside world. Prestige Golfshire, a classic golf resort in Bangalore, enjoys such a setting. Located at the foot of the Nandi Hills on the edge of Lake Karehalli, Prestige Golfshire uses the very latest in sustainable design techniques to provide one of the finest Golf environments in the Indian subcontinent.

Measuring roughly 7,000 yards, the Prestige Golfshire Club offers an 18-hole championship golf course as well as a premier golf driving range for those who want to practise golf.

golfshire.com/



ROYAL CALCUTTA GOLF CLUB

Royal Calcutta Golf Club affectionately known as the 'Royal' was established in 1829, making it the oldest golf club in the world outside Britain.

Built over mostly flat terrain and with small greens and natural water hazards, the course has been redesigned to add "contemporary" to the world-class golfing heritage.

The Royal also offers houses tennis courts, a fine swimming pool and a Lawn Bowls Pavilion in the Kolkata Maidan.

rcgc.in

BEST IN TRAVEL

TIME FOR TEE



ROYAL SPRINGS GOLF COURSE

Spanning an expanse of 300 acres near the famous Chashma Shahi, The Royal Spring Golf Course was designed and laid out by the world renowned golf architect, Robert Trent Jones Jr.

As such, expect a scenic golf course in a natural environment created against the dramatic backdrop of Zabarvan mountains at Chashma Shahi, the Royal Springs. These springs were the source of soft sweet water, prized by the Mughal emperor Jehangir, around which he built exquisite walled gardens—the Chashma Shahi.

This 18-hole golf course with practice fairways of approximately 225m length has three lakes, two marshes, an underground sprinkler irrigation system, comfort stations, rain shelters, full-fledged maintenance complex, a clubhouse, and about 8.5km of long cart path.

rsgc.co.in



TOLLYGUNGE GOLF COURSE

Just across the road from the Royal Springs Golf Club, lies Tollygunge Golf Course. This 18 hole, 70 par 100 acre championship golf course is designed by internationally reputed golf architects. The all season course is rich in challenge and natural appeal. It caters to different skill levels and provides fresh insights on every visit.

Furthermore Tollygunge's dedicated staff, modern equipment and underground irrigation system maintain the course in top condition through the year. The golf

course is an oasis of green nested in the heart of urban Kolkata. A floodlit driving range and illuminated putting and chipping green give you an opportunity to hone your skills even after the sun has gone down.

tollygungeclub.org

BEST IN TRAVEL

TIME FOR TEE



ZION HILLS GOLF COUNTY COURSE

Designed by legendary architect Ronald Fream and built by master shaper Bill Kessener, the 18 hole, 7500 yard championship level course is a golfer's paradise. The combination of a world class course, Bangalore's idyllic golfing weather and the welcoming, friendly service culture makes golf at Zion Hills a real delight.

A challenging, championship level 18 hole golf course forms the centrepiece at Zion Hills. Expansive granite shelves, rusty boulders and abundant lakes interweave with rolling greens to create a course that challenges experts and yet inspires learners, guaranteeing the mix of exhilaration and indomitable spirit that makes golf such an addiction.

zionhills.in