

# PRAVEG'S TOURISM ONE

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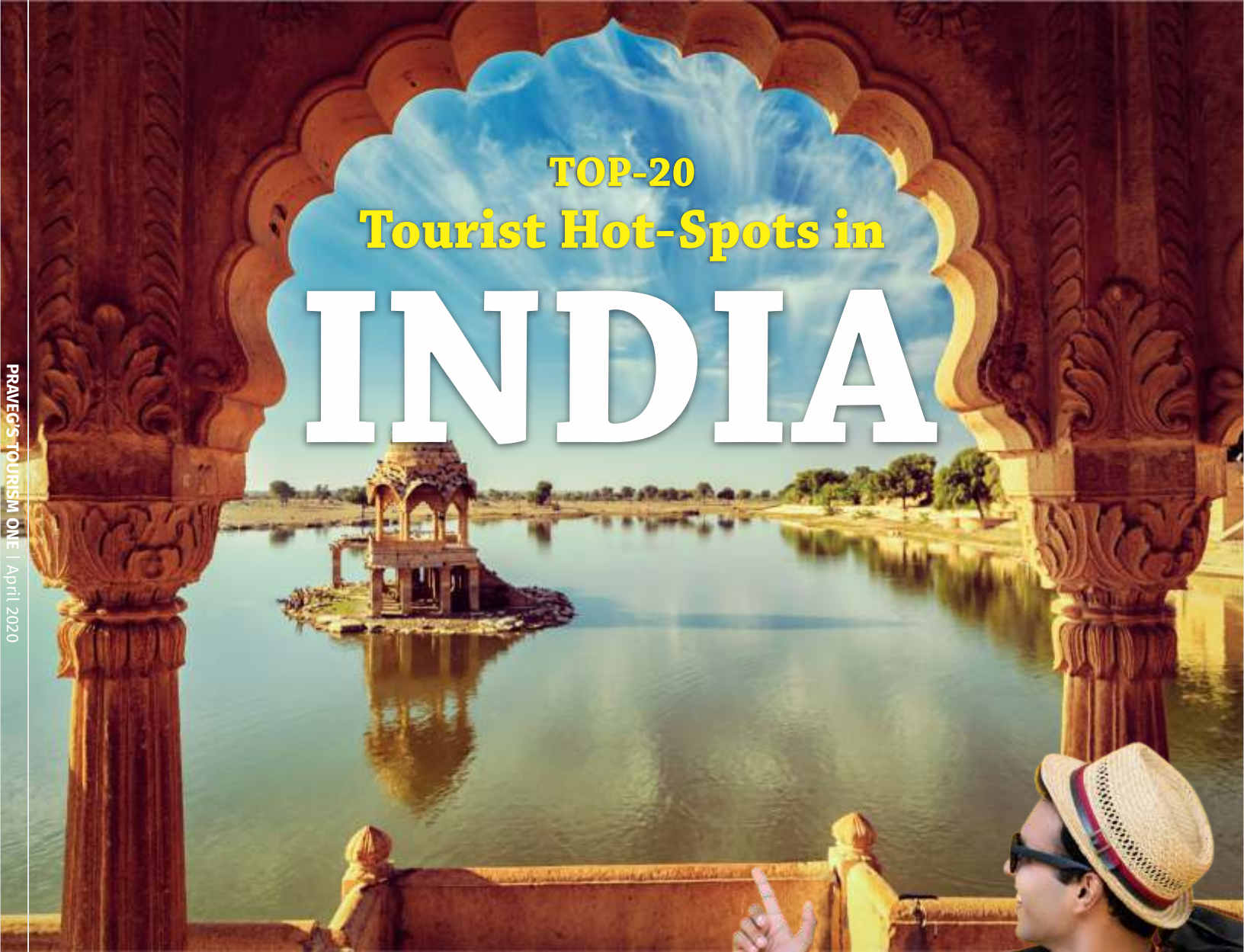
April 2020

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A high-end monthly magazine

## TOP-20 Tourist Hot-Spots in INDIA

PRAVEG'S TOURISM ONE | April 2020



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# *Diversity at its Best*

So what to choose and what to leave? It is pretty confusing to select best tourist attractions in India as every place is best in its own ways. A lot of time, it comes to personal preference. However, some places to visit remain perennially more popular than the others.

This edition of Praveg's Tourism One presents Top-20 Tourist Hot-spots in India (in no particular order) that are worth a visit at least once in a lifetime.

Read on!

# PRAVEG'S TOURISM ONE

April 2020



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City Palace, Udaipur, Rajasthan

TOP-20

## Tourist Hot-Spots in

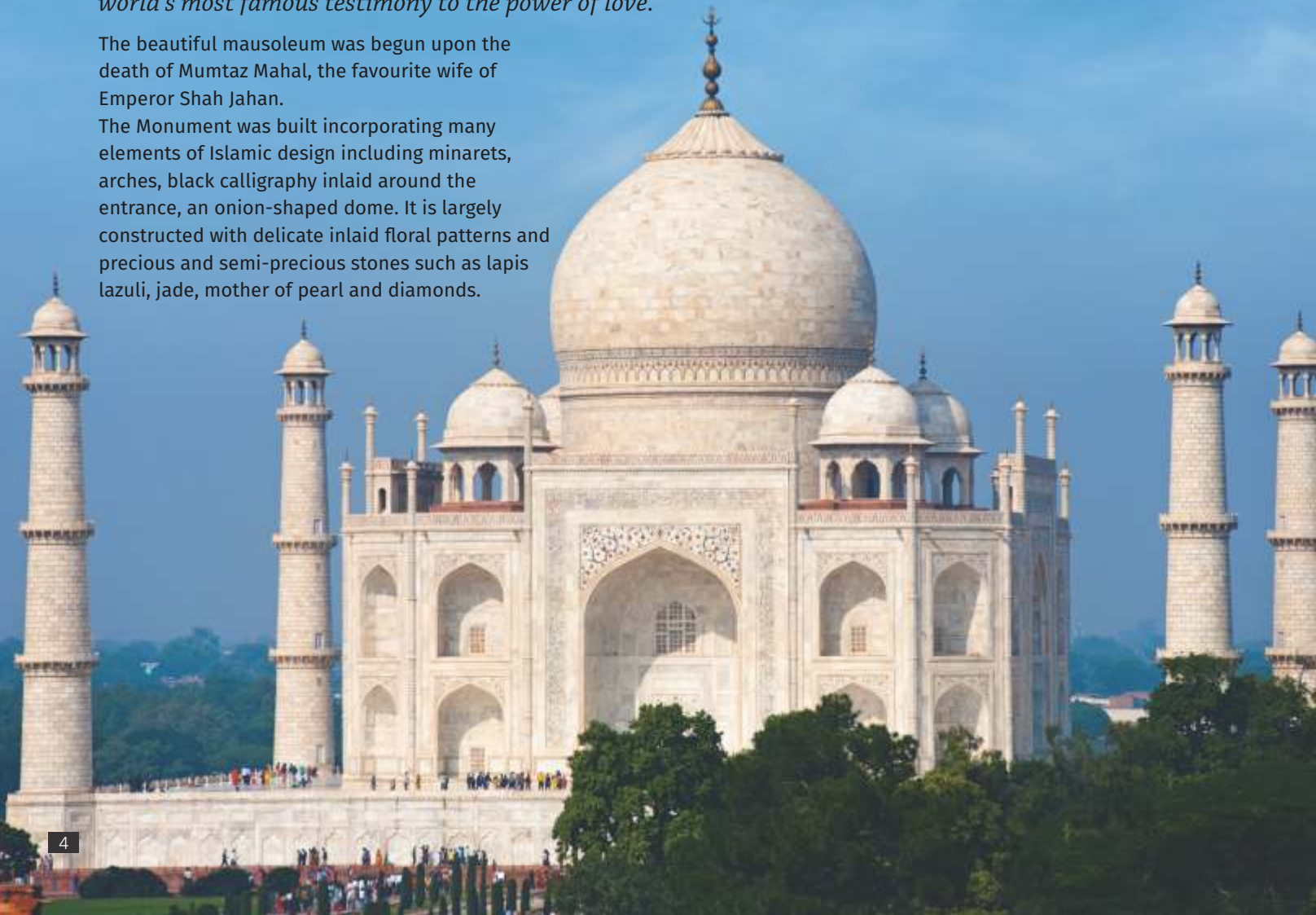
# INDIA

### 1. Taj Mahal, Agra

*The Taj Mahal is India's most recognizable building and world's most famous testimony to the power of love.*

The beautiful mausoleum was begun upon the death of Mumtaz Mahal, the favourite wife of Emperor Shah Jahan.

The Monument was built incorporating many elements of Islamic design including minarets, arches, black calligraphy inlaid around the entrance, an onion-shaped dome. It is largely constructed with delicate inlaid floral patterns and precious and semi-precious stones such as lapis lazuli, jade, mother of pearl and diamonds.





#### BEST TIME TO VISIT

At dawn or dusk when the atmosphere is brilliantly altered by the changes in lighting

#### VISIT DURATION

2 to 3 Hours

#### ENTRY FEE

Rs. 50 (+200 additional for visiting main mausoleum) per person for Indians  
Rs. 1,100 (+200 additional for visiting main mausoleum) per person for foreigners

#### TOP THINGS TO DO

- Take an alternative view of Taj Mahal from Mehtab Bagh
- Visit Itmad-ud-Daula tomb
- Visit Agra Fort
- Lanes and markets of old Agra
- Street food sojourn

#### HOW TO REACH

*By Air:* The nearest airports to reach Taj Mahal are in Agra and Delhi.

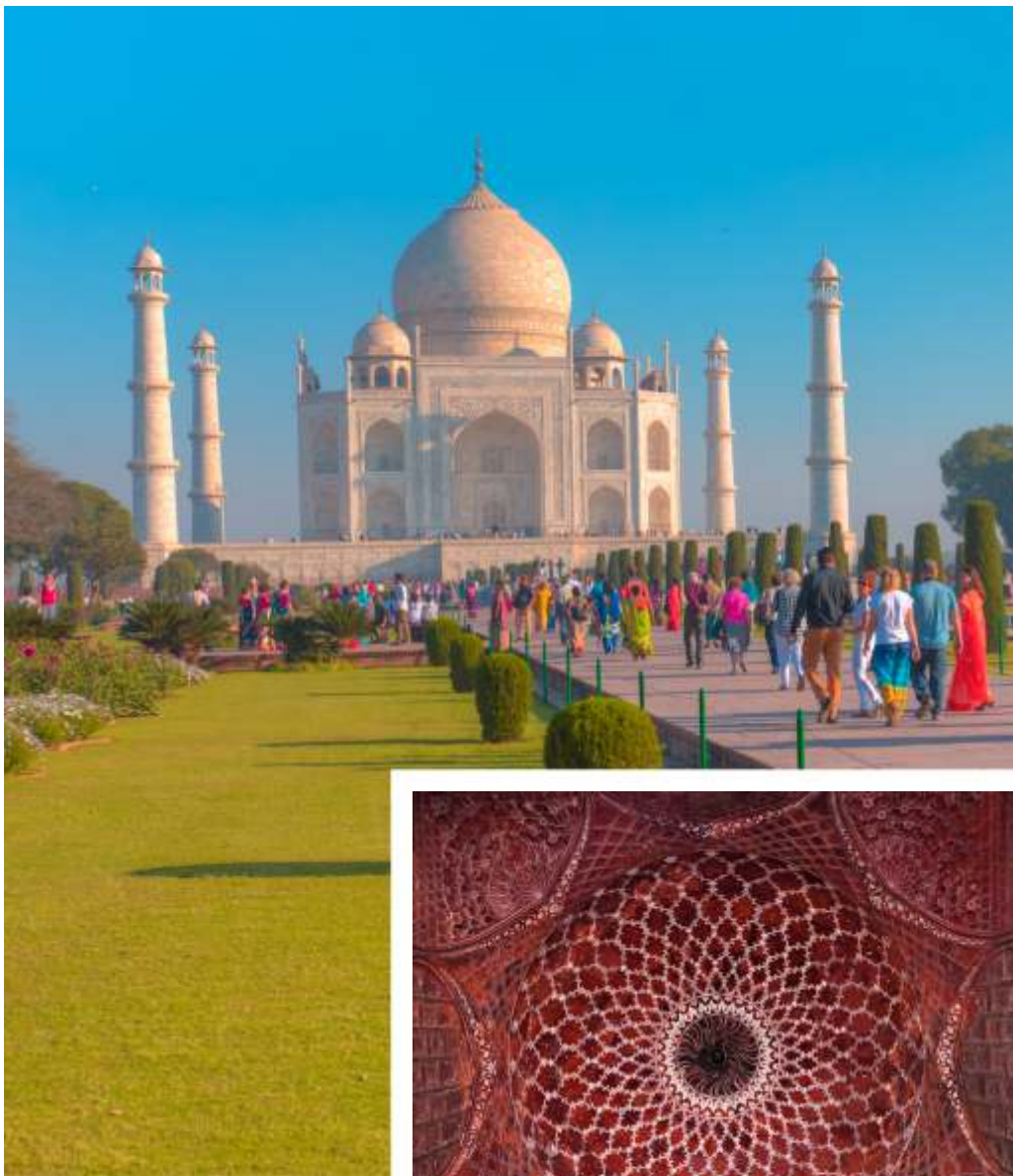
*By Rail:* The Taj Express and Sharabdi offer the best rail connections to Agra.

*By Road:* You can drive or travel by bus (243 km from Delhi). If you take the Taj Express Highway, the trip will take about 3 hours 50 minutes.

#### WHERE TO STAY

Based on proximity to Taj Mahal

- Hotel Sheela
- Hotel Saniya Palace B&B
- The Coral Court Homestay
- Hotel Prashant Palace
- Hotel Kamal
- The Oberoi Amarvilas



## **2. Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh**

*Situated on the banks of the River Ganges, Varanasi is sacred to Hindus, Buddhists and Jains and also one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the World.*

It can be aptly described as a melting pot where both life and death come together. The scene of pilgrims doing their devotions in the River Ganges at sunrise set against the backdrop of the centuries' old temples is probably one of the most impressive sights in the world. Popular among both domestic and international tourists for its magnanimous ghats and Ganga Aarti, the city is among the top tourist attractions in India.



Manikarnika Ghat, Varanasi



Source: artapartment/Shutterstock



Ahilya Ghat





**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

October to March

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Attend Evening Aarti Ceremony
- Explore Varanasi Temples
- Take a Holy Bath in Ganges
- Morning Boat Ride in Ganges River
- Sightseeing Tour of Sarnath
- Stroll along the Ghats

**WHERE TO STAY**

- Varanasi Guest House
- Palace on Ganges
- Hotel Varanasi Ganges
- Hotel Alka
- Hotel Kashi Inn

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* Varanasi Airport is well-linked to some of the major cities in India like Delhi and Mumbai.

*By Rail:* The Varanasi railway station is connected to major cities of India via rail.

*By Road:* Varanasi is connected to major cities of Uttar Pradesh and neighbouring states by state-run buses.







### 3. Ajanta & Ellora Caves, Aurangabad

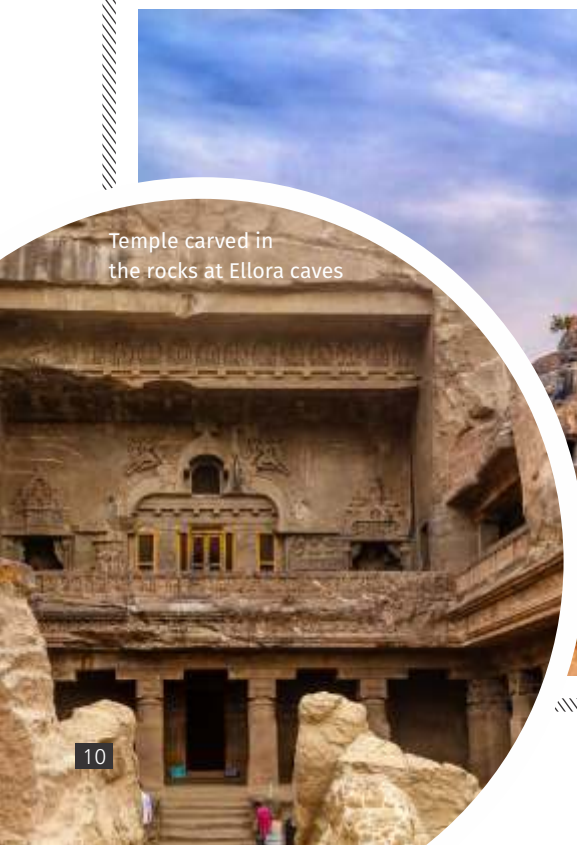
*Situated in Aurangabad, the Ajanta Caves constitute 30 rock-cut cave monuments.*

The best part of this place is the splendid architectural beauty that resides here. The paintings and sculptures of these caves make them all the more inviting and significant from travel point of view.

The Ellora caves are located in the Deccan Plateau. With numerous Buddhist, Jain Temples and Hindu places of worship, the ambiance of this place is simply amazing. The rock cut beauties are rampant and one cannot undermine the importance of these natural gems.



The Kailasa Temple, Cave 16 in Ellora Complex



Temple carved in the rocks at Ellora caves



Ellora caves



Painting, Ajanta Caves



Ajanta Caves

**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

June to March  
(Timing: 8 am to 5 pm)

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Explore Buddhist Culture
- Visit Kailasa Temple, Grishneshwar Temple
- Visit Bibi ka Makbara
- Visit Khuldabad, a small town called the valley of saints
- Daulatabad Fort
- Shop at open-air markets near the caves

**HOW TO REACH**

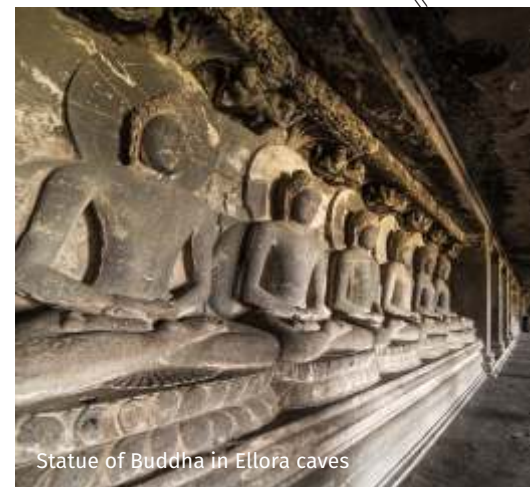
*By Air:* Aurangabad is the closest city to Ellora Caves. Aurangabad Airport is the best-connected airport with several flights from major cities across India.

*By Rail:* Jalgaon and Aurangabad Railway station are the two railway junctions.

*By Road:* There are many private and government buses which run from the main cities in and around Maharashtra.

**WHERE TO STAY**

- Hotel Kailas
- Vrindavan Resorts
- Ellora Heritage Resort
- V Resort Etranger Mhaismal



Statue of Buddha in Ellora caves

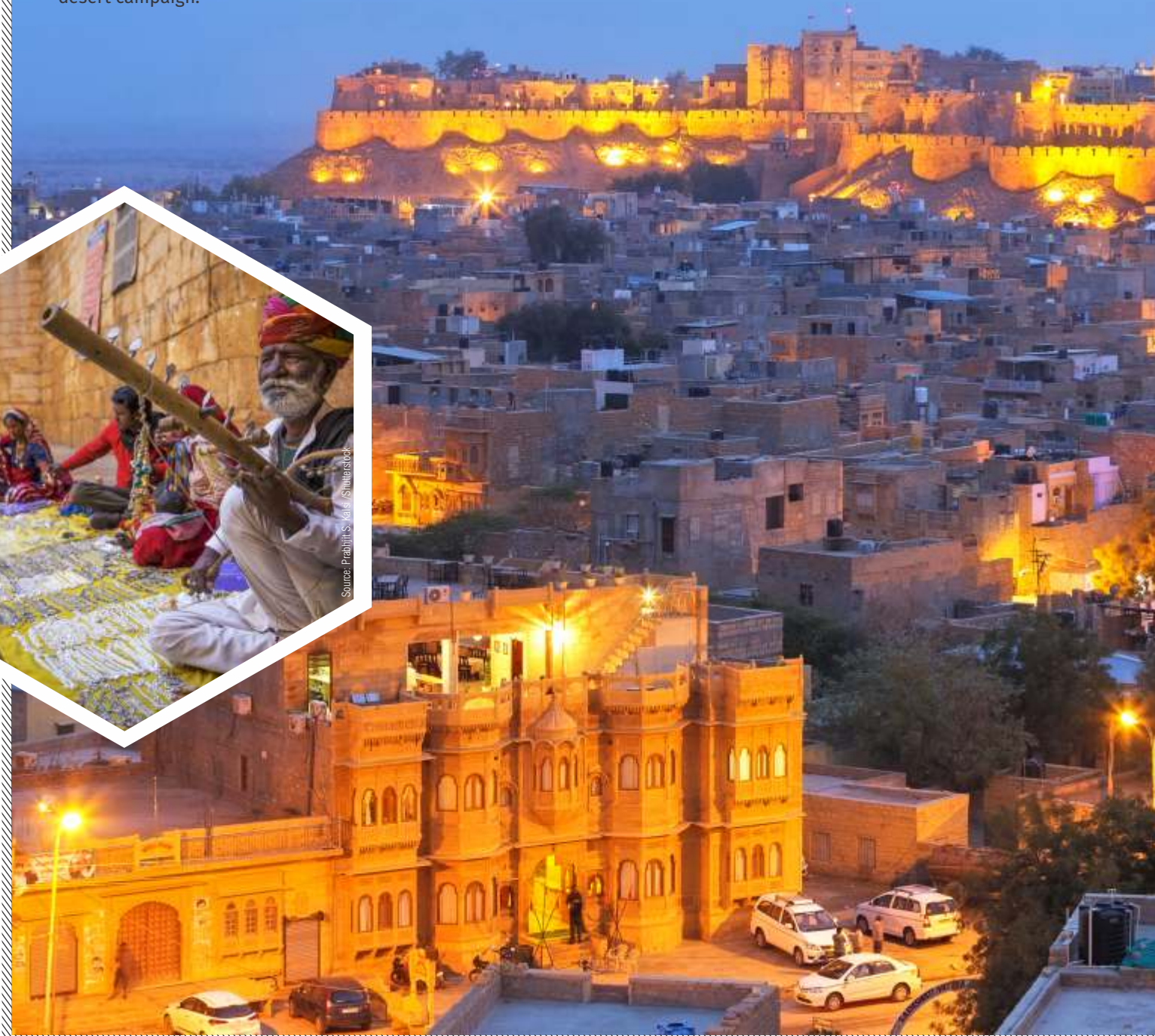
## **4. Jaisalmer, Rajasthan**

*The Golden City of Rajasthan, Jaisalmer is surely one of the best cities to visit in India.*

The part of Rajasthan lies in the Thar Desert region, exhibiting the magic of velvet sand dunes meshed with the ever-colorful culture of the State. Jaisalmer is where you can spend your time indulging in exciting activities such as dune bashing, camel safari and desert campaign.



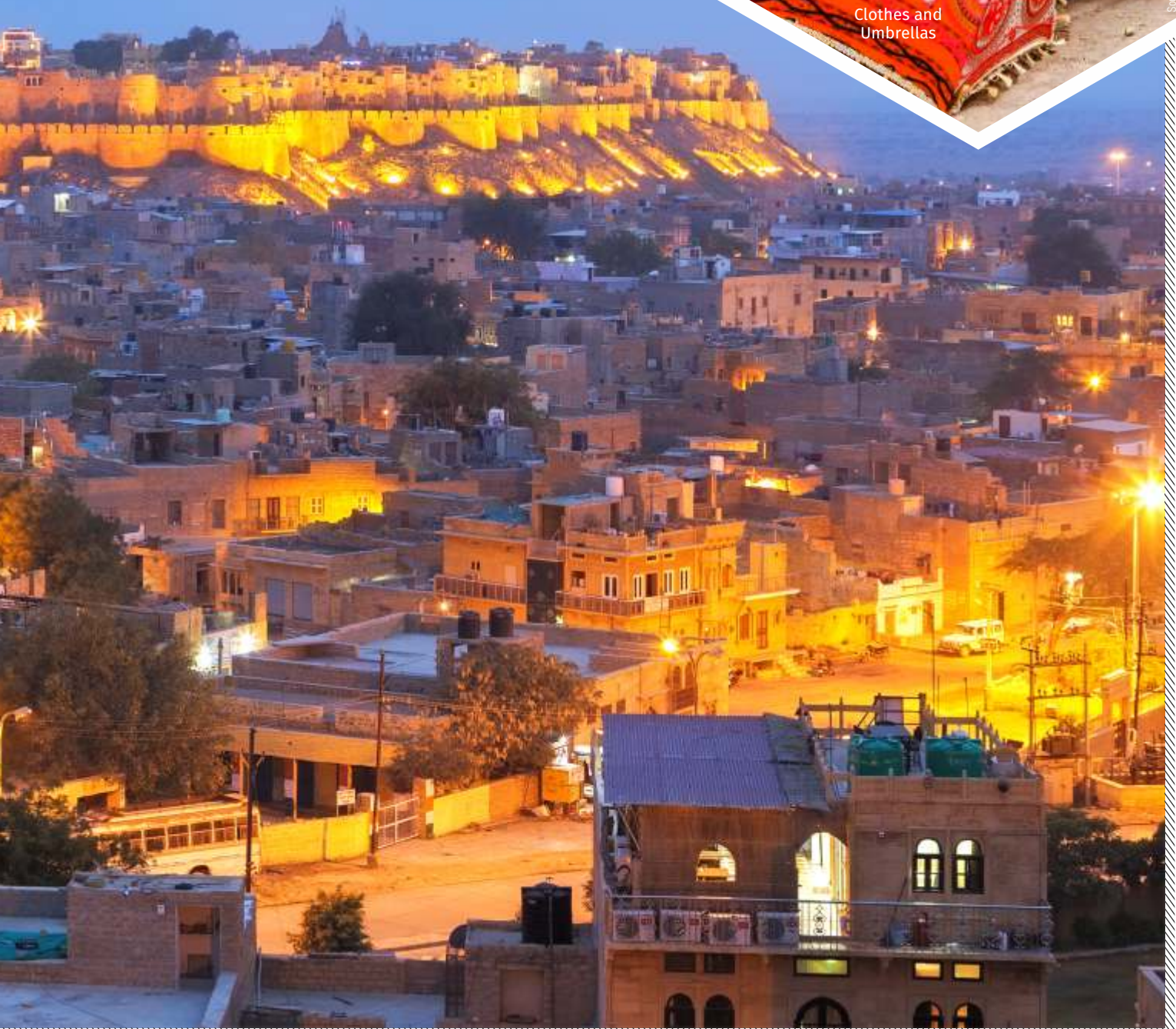
Source: Prabhat S. Kalia / Shutterstock





Clothes and Umbrellas

Source: Dennis Wisth/Alamy/Alamy.com



### BEST TIME TO VISIT

October to February

### TOP THINGS TO DO

- Sighseeing tour to Jaisalmer Fort
- City Tour
- Boating at Gadisar Lake
- Shopping at Jaisalmer local bazaar
- Parasailing, paramotoring
- Explore dune topography with a quad biking
- Thar desert, desert camp

### HOW TO REACH

*By Air:* Jodhpur Airport is the nearest airport from Jaisalmer. Cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Udaipur are connected to this airport.

*By Rail:* Jaisalmer has its own railway station which is connected widely across North India with cities like Jaipur and Delhi.

*By Road:* One can easily reach Jaisalmer by road via buses or cabs.

### WHERE TO STAY

- Jaisalmer Marriott Resort and Spa
- Suryagarh Palace
- Mirvana Nature Resort and Camp
- Desert Tuplip Hotel and Resort
- Club Mahindra Jaisalmer



Camel Caravan



View of Jaisalmer city from Jaisalmer fort







Source: Roop\_Dey/Shutterstock



Thar Desert



Patwon ki Haveli



Source: Sharad Raval/Shutterstock

## 5. Golden Temple, Amritsar

*Amritsar is a home to one of India's most notable landmarks – the Golden Temple.*

It was founded in 1577 by Guru Ram Das, the fourth sikh guru. It's the spiritual capital of the Sikhs and gained its name, meaning "Holy Pool of Nectar", from the body of water around the Golden Temple. The exquisite Golden Temple attracts pilgrims from all over the world. It looks captivating particularly arresting at night when it's beautifully lit up, with its imposing gold dome illuminated.



### BEST TIME TO VISIT

September-December  
February-March

### TOP THINGS TO DO

- Offer your prayer at Harmandir Sahib, eat with others in huge dining hall and walk around the lake at night
- Attend the ceremony at Wagah Border
- Go Shopping at Hall Bazaar
- Travel back in time at Jallianwala Bagh
- Admire the beauty of Gobindgarh Fort

### HOW TO REACH

*By Air:* The closest international airport is Sri Guru Ram Dass Jee International Airport. Amritsar Airport is 11 km away from the city center.

*By Rail:* Amritsar Railway Stations is connected to all the major cities of the country.

*By Road:* The city has an efficient connectivity by road. A number of buses run to and from Delhi, Chandigarh, Patiala, Ambala and Jammu.

### WHERE TO STAY

- Based on proximity to Golden Temple
- goStops Amritsar Sultanwind Gate
- SB Residency
- Hotel MB
- Raj Tirth Niwas
- Blue Eye Backpackers Hostel





Statue of Unity



Butterfly Park



Viewing Gallery



Panoramic View from Viewing Gallery



Cactus Garden



Vishwa Van

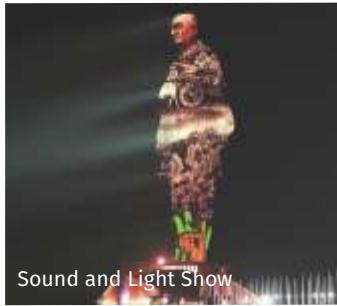
## 6. Statue of Unity, Gujarat

*Statue of Unity is a memorial to the iron man of India, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.*

The Statue has been erected to propagate Sardar Patel's vision of India and to inspire the citizens of India through his patriotism and freedom struggle. The bronze statue stands tall at 182 metres, grabbing the attention of the whole world as the "Tallest Statue in the World". The Statue of Unity is located in Gujarat on the river island of Sadhu Bet overlooking the Sardar Sarovar Dam from 3.2 km.



Museum & Audio Visual Gallery



Sound and Light Show



Valley of Flowers



River Rafting, Khalvani



Jungle Safari



Ekta Nursery





Tent City Narmada



Interior - Darbari Tent



Interior - Mini Darbari Tent





Tent City Narmada



**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

9 am to 5 pm

**ENTRY TICKET**

Rs. 1,000 (+Rs. 350 for Viewing Gallery) per person

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Museum, Sound and Light Show, Valley of Flowers
- Saradar Sarovar Dam Viewpoints
- Boating, Cycling, Crocodile Spotting, Jungle Safar
- Experience tented stay at Tent City Narmada

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* Vadodara Airport is the nearest airport for domestic travellers. Ahmedabad Airport is the nearest international airport.  
*By Rail:* Vadodara Railway Station is well connected to all the major cities of India.  
*By Road:* Vadodara is connected to major cities of India by road. From Vadodara, it is a drive of around 100 km to Statue of Unity.

**WHERE TO STAY**

- Tent City Narmada (closest to Statue of Unity)
- Hotel RAMADA Encore
- Nilkanth Yatrik Bhavan
- Galaxy Homestay
- Hotel Ganga Darshan





White Rann

## 7. White Rann, Gujarat

*On the westernmost tip of Gujarat, lies India's most scenic view, the White Rann.*

The largest salt marshland of India, it is located in Kutch district, and is just 15 meters above the sea level. The expansive desert is nothing but crystals of white salt shimmering on a full moon night. The white rann experience is known for its mesmerising beauty and is shared with the world through Rann Utsav, a 3-month long festival. What others thought of as a barren land is brought to life with the celebration of culture, tradition, food and its people.



Bicycle Riding





Women crafting Kutchi embroidery



Kutchi Attire



Adorned camel for a ride



Sunset at White Rann



White Rann Resort



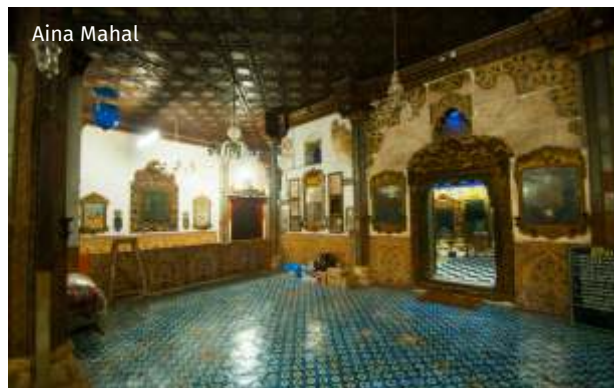
Bird-eye View - White Rann Resort



Rann Safari



Laxmi Vilas Palace



Aina Mahal





**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

November–March during Rann Utsav Festival

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Witness the rich heritage of Kutch region
- Explore art & crafts at Dhordo
- Visit Kala Dungar
- Relish culinary delicacies of the region
- Visit Prag Mahal, Vijay Vilas Palace, Aina Mahal and Kutch Museum

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* The nearest airport is Bhuj Airport.

*By Rail:* Bhuj Railway Station is well connected to Gujarat and other states.

*By Road:* Buses from Bhuj are available from many places in and around Gujarat.

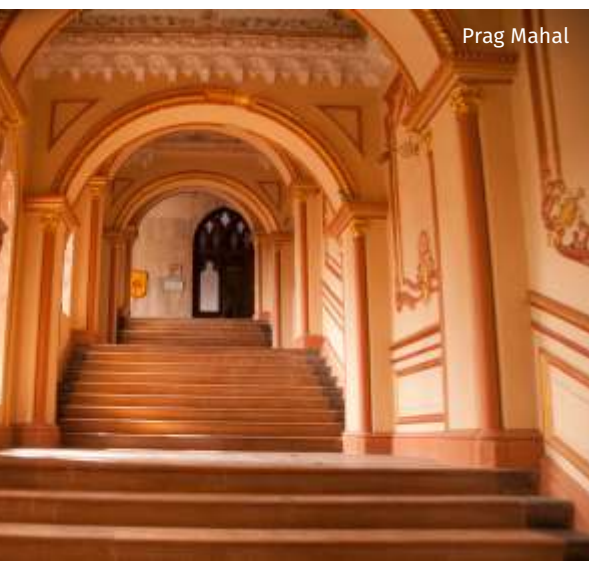
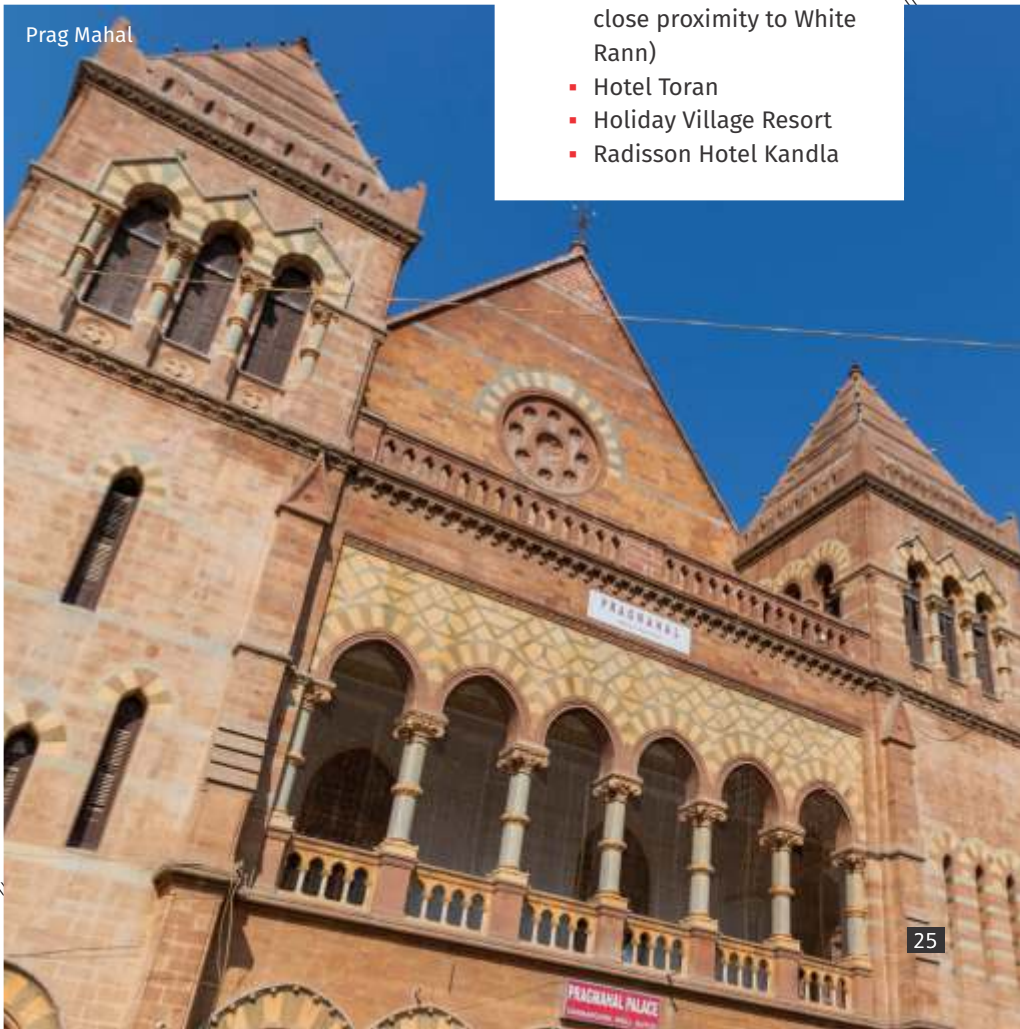
**WHERE TO STAY**

- White Rann Resort (In close proximity to White Rann)
- Hotel Toran
- Holiday Village Resort
- Radisson Hotel Kandla



Cultural Performance

Prag Mahal



Prag Mahal

## **8. Goa Beaches, Goa**

*Goa is the tourist paradise located on the western coast of India in Konkan belt and the favourite destination for Indian and foreign tourists.*

The state of Goa is famous for exotic beaches, museum, cuisines, carnival, festival, beach party, night life and the only place in India where casino is legal. It also renders you yummy seafood with adventure activities such as parasailing, wind surfing and water-skiing. Some places of interest include Alorna Fort, Arvalem Waterfalls, Ancestral Goa Museum, Chapora Fort and Calangute beach.



Aguada Fort





Sunset on Palm Beach

**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

November-March

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Beach visit
- Water sports
- Kayaking
- Dolphin Tours
- Sightseeing tour to Old Goa, Churches, Museum

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* Goa has domestic and international airports.  
*By Rail:* The two railheads in Goa are Madgaon and Thivim, well connected by trains from all over the country.  
*By Road:* Goa enjoys daily bus service from important cities like Mumbai and Pune.

**WHERE TO STAY**

- Goa Marriott Resort & Spa
- Royal Orchid Beach Resort & Spa
- Caravela Beach Resort
- Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa
- Ibis Styles Goa Calangute Resort



Night Market

Source: saiko3p/Shutterstock



Se Cathedral in Old Goa

Parasailing at Candolim Beach



Basilica of Bom Jesus





Saheliyon Ki Bari

## **9. Lake Palace, Rajasthan**

*The vibrant city of Udaipur with its historical background proves to be one of the most popular tourist locations of India.*

The glorious lakes that come with their own set of picturesque areas make it more intriguing a city. Since it consists of many tourists attractions, Udaipur's Lake Palace is no exception. Situated in the middle of Pichola Lake, the heavenly Lake Palace has Aravalli Hills as its backdrop. The Palace is entirely made of white marble, giving it an allure like no other. The Lake Palace has it all, be it sprawling gardens, terraces, splendid architecture or beautiful fountains.



Taj Lake Palace on lake Pichola



Fateh Sagar Lake



Jag Mandir Palace  
Lake Pichola

City Palace



**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

September-March

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Visit Lake Pichola, Saheliyo ki Bari Garden
- Explore classic at Bagore-ki-Haveli
- Try Rajasthani cuisine at Jagat Niwas
- Do traditional shopping at Hathi Pol Bazaar
- Visit City Palace, Vintage Car Museum, Fateh Sagar Lake and Jagdish Temple

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* Udaipur has its own domestic airport.

*By Rail:* Udaipur Railway Station is connected to almost all cities of Rajasthan and important cities of the country.

*By Road:* Regular buses from cities inside Rajasthan and numerous top cities around the country.

**WHERE TO STAY**

- Radisson Blu Udaipur Palace Resort & Spa
- Hotel Lakend
- Jaiwana Haveli
- Hotel Udai Kothi
- The Fern Residency

## 10. Kerala backwaters, Kerala

*The scenic backwaters of Kerala comprise a serene stretch of lakes, canals and lagoons located parallel to the coast of the Arabian Sea.*

The backwater regions of Kerala are one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. The tranquil backwater cruises are a once in a lifetime experience. Alappuzha, known as the “Venice of the East”, is especially popular for its houseboat cruises where you can soak in nature in its finest form.



Houseboats at the backwaters



Kathakali Dance

Source: satishgoyal/shutterstock



Houseboats at the backwaters



Houseboats at the backwaters



Tea plantations in Munnar

**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

September-March

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Watch a Kathakali performance
- Visit the Iringal crafts village
- Stay in a houseboat, go on Shikara rides, watch snake boat race in Alleppey
- Try varied tea flavors in Munnar
- Stay in a treehouse in Wayanad

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* Kerala is the second state in India to have four international airports – Trivandrum, Cochin, Calicut and Kannur

*By Rail:* Kerala has more than 200 railway stations, connecting various major cities as well as small towns of the State.

*By Road:* Kerala is connected to most nearby states via well-connected roads.

**WHERE TO STAY**

- Old Harbour Hotel
- Niraamaya Retreats Surya Samudra
- The Leela
- Brunton Boatyard
- The Panoramic Gateway

Wayanad





Sculptures, Kandariya Mahadev Temple

Source: GTW/Shutterstock

## 11. Khajuraho, Madhya Pradesh

*The Khajuraho is a group of Hindu temples and Jain temples in Chhatarpur district, Madhya Pradesh.*

They are a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The temples are famous for their nagara-style architectural symbolism and their erotic sculptures. Most Khajuraho temples were built between 950 AD and 1050 AD by the Chandela dynasty. Historical records note that the Khajuraho temple site had 85 temples by the 12th century, spread over 20 sq.km. Of these, only about 25 temples have survived, spread over 6 sq.km. Of the surviving temples, the Kandariya Mahadeva Temple is decorated with a profusion of sculptures with intricate details, symbolism and expressiveness of ancient Indian art.



Sculpture Kandariya Mahadeva Temple



Devi Jagdambi Temple

**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

October-February

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Temple Tour of Khajuraho
- Attend the Sound & Light Show near Western Group of Temples
- Witness wildlife and nature at Panna National Park
- Enjoy Dance Festival
- Visit State Museum of Tribal and Folk Art

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* Kahjuraho Airport also known as Civil Aerodrome Khajuraho receive regular flights from Delhi and Varanasi.

*By Rail:* There is a regular train from New Delhi for Khajuraho. The second major railway station connecting Kahjuraho with other Indian cities is in Mahoba, 75km away.

*By Road:* Khajuraho enjoys excellent road connectivity with other cities in Madhya Pradesh.

**WHERE TO STAY**

- The Lalit Temple View
- Clarks
- Ramada by Wyndham
- Hotel Isabel Palace
- Hotel Harmony



Sculpture at at Vishvanatha Temple





Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple

## 12. Meenakshi Temple, Madurai

*The historical Meenakshi Amman temple is located on the southern bank of the Vaigai River, Madurai, Tamil Nadu.*

Built sometime between the year 1623 and 1655, the wonderful architecture of the place is renowned globally. Meenakshi Temple is dedicated to Parvati, known as Meenakshi, and her spouse, Shiva. What makes this temple different from the others is the fact that both God and Goddess are worshipped together.

According to the mythology, Lord Shiva visited Madurai to marry Parvati and it has been the sacred abode of Goddess since her birth. The most striking feature of the temple is its exquisite façade, which has highly minute details with great art pieces incorporated in the walls and pillars. The temple has 14 gateway towers or 'gopuram', golden 'vimanas', holy sanctums and shrines dedicated to the revered Goddess Meenakshi and many others. It is a major tourist attraction with thousands of devotees visiting the shrine on a daily basis.

Meenakshi Amman Temple





Saint Mary's Cathedral



Thirumalai Nayak Palace



**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

October-March

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Go shopping at Puthu Mandapam
- Admire Thirumalai Nayak Palace
- Pray at Saint Mary's Cathedral
- Marvel over the Banana Market
- Feast on South Indian Food

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* Madurai Airport is well connected to all major cities of India. Nearest international airport is Chennai.  
*By Rail:* Direct trains are available from many cities of India.  
*By Road:* The City is well connected by all southern parts of India.

**WHERE TO STAY**

- Heritage Madurai
- Hotel Royal Court
- JC Residency Madurai
- Astoria Hotels
- Moskva Hotel

Source: Kay Gregory/Shutterstock



### 13. Mysore Palace, Mysuru

*Mysore Palace, also called Amba Vilas Palace, is one of the most magnificent and largest palaces in India.*

Situated in the southern state of Karnataka, it used to be the official residence of the Wodeyar Dynasty, the rulers of Mysore from 1399 to 1950. The grand palace stands tall in the heart of Mysore city and attracts visitors from across the world. Built in the Indo-Saracenic style with a touch of Hindu, Mughal, Rajput and Gothic architectural styles, the 3-storied tower was built using fine grey granite while deep pink marble was used for the domes. Being one of the prime attractions in India after the Taj Mahal, it certainly deserves a place in every traveller's bucket list.

Mysore Palace





Chamundi Hills

Source: Manju Mandayya/Shutterstock

**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

October-February

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Visit Chamundi Hills
- Market tours & artisan tour
- Try South Indian food
- Folklore museum

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* The nearest major airport is Bangalore International Airport. Bangalore is well connected to all major cities of India.

*By Rail:* The railway station is well connected throughout the region.

*By Road:* Several options of state transport buses as well as private tour operators are available.

**WHERE TO STAY**

- Southern Star
- Treebo Trend Akshay Mahal Inn
- Grand Mercure
- Roopa Elite
- Aishwarya Residency



Ambavilas Palace



Qutub Minar



## 14. Qutub Minar, Delhi

*The Qutub Minar is a towering 73 meter high tower built by Qutub-ud-Din Aibak in 1193.*

The tower was built to celebrate Muslim dominance in Delhi after the defeat of Delhi's last Hindu ruler. This tower is the highest tower in India, complete with 5-storeys and projecting balconies. The first three storeys of the Qutub Minar are made of red sandstone and the last two are made of marble and sandstone.

The different architectural styles from the time of Aibak to Tughlak are clearly visible in the Qutub Minar. Apart from the tower, the Qutub Minar complex comprises of the Quwwat-us-Islam Mosque (the first mosque built in India), a 7 metre high iron pillar, and the tomb of Iltutmish, Ala'i-Darwaza and the Ala'l Minar.



Source: Tossaworn Sawatcheeewan/Shutterstock



Garden of Five Senses

Source: Ravinder Kanya/Shutterstock



Tughlakabad Fort

### ENTRANCE FEE

Rs. 10 (Indians),  
Rs. 250 (foreigners)

### BEST TIME TO VISIT

October and November,  
February and March

### TOP THINGS TO DO

- Visit Mehrauli Archaeological Park
- Explore the degenerated remnants of Lal Kot, a thick forest bordering the Qutub Minar complex
- Take a trip to Tughlakabad Fort
- Appreciate nature at Garden of Five Senses
- Visit to Champa Gali for an offbeat experience

### HOW TO REACH

**By Air:** Indira Gandhi International Airport is well connected to cities across India and the World.

**By Rail:** The headquarter of the northern railway, Delhi has five major railway stations in Delhi.

**By Road:** Well-connected by bus to cities like Jaipur, Agra, Alwar, Chandigarh, Amritsar, Shimla, Manali, Dharamsala, Dehradun and even Kathmandu among many others.

### WHERE TO STAY

- The Oberoi, Gurgaon
- The Leela Palace, New Delhi
- The Imperial, New Delhi
- The Metropolitan Hotel & Spa, New Delhi
- Le Meridein, New Delhi

## **15. Darjeeling**

*From the times immemorial, the mighty town of Darjeeling, tucked in the Lesser Himalaya, has always attracted the mind of travellers from all over the world.*

The town hosts the typical Gorkha culture and is well-known for its quaint colonial ambience. Moreover, this hill station in India is the gateway to one of the popular treks in the Indian Himalaya region, the Sandakphu-Phalut Trek and is also one of the two places in India where from one can capture the entire panorama of the Eastern Himalaya ranges, from the Everest to Kanchenzonga. Further, the refreshing environment layered with several tea estates and evergreen forests simply offers a retreat and is ideal for leisure escapers.





Tea plantations in Darjeeling



**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

February to March,  
September to December

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Enjoy a ride on the Batasia Loop
- Meditate at the Japanese Temple and Peace Pagoda
- Take a walk in The Rock Garden
- Have a picnic at Nightingale Park
- Shop for gifts at Nehru Road

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* Bagdogra Airport is the nearest air connection which is 96 km away from Darjeeling.

*By Rail:* New Jalpaiguri connects major Indian cities through railway.

*By Road:* The regular bus service from Siliguri to Darjeeling is economical. Similar services are available from neighbouring towns.

**WHERE TO STAY**

- Sinclairs Darjeeling
- Central Heritage Resort & Spa
- Mayfair Darjeeling
- Sterling Darjeeling
- New Mandala Golden Spa Resort



Japanese World Peace Pagoda



Batasia Loop



Source: saiko3p/Shutterstock



Darjeeling Himalayan Railway



Source: beibaoko/Shutterstock

## 16. Pushkar Camel Fair, Rajasthan

*Pushkar, a town in Rajasthan, earned fair share of limelight over the past years, aided by Pushkar Camel Fair.*

It is quite a unique fair focusing mainly on camel as well as cattle trade. On Kartik Purnima, thousands of Hindu pilgrims come to bathe in sacred waters of Pushkar.

From the cattle show to the snake charmers and the active trade of camels, Pushkar Fair is a display of exquisite colors of culture. The charming tunes of local music and the rhythm of dance will steal your attention and make you immerse yourself in the elements of fair. The 8-10 day festival is a greatest tribal gathering organized annually.



Source: Abhishek/Mittal/Shutterstock



Pushkar Holy Lake



Source: photo/Shutterstock



Source: ImagesofIndia/Shutterstock

## TOP-20 TOURIST HOT-SPOTS IN INDIA

### BEST TIME TO VISIT

October-November (For year 2020, the dates for the fair are 22nd November to 30th November)

### TOP THINGS TO DO

- Visit Pushkar Lake
- Hike Savitri Temple
- Watch the Evening Aarti
- Hot Air Balloon over Pushkar
- Hike to Pap Mochani Temple

### HOW TO REACH

*By Air:* The nearest airport is in Jaipur, 140 km away.

*By Rail:* The nearest railway station is Ajmer Railway Station, 10 km away

*By Road:* Regular buses to Pushkar from other major cities of the country are available.

### WHERE TO STAY

- The Country Side Resort
- The Westin Pushkar Resort & Spa
- Gulaab Niwaas Palace
- Hotel Brahma Horizon
- Pushkar Resorts





Gateway of India

## **17. Gateway of India, Mumbai**

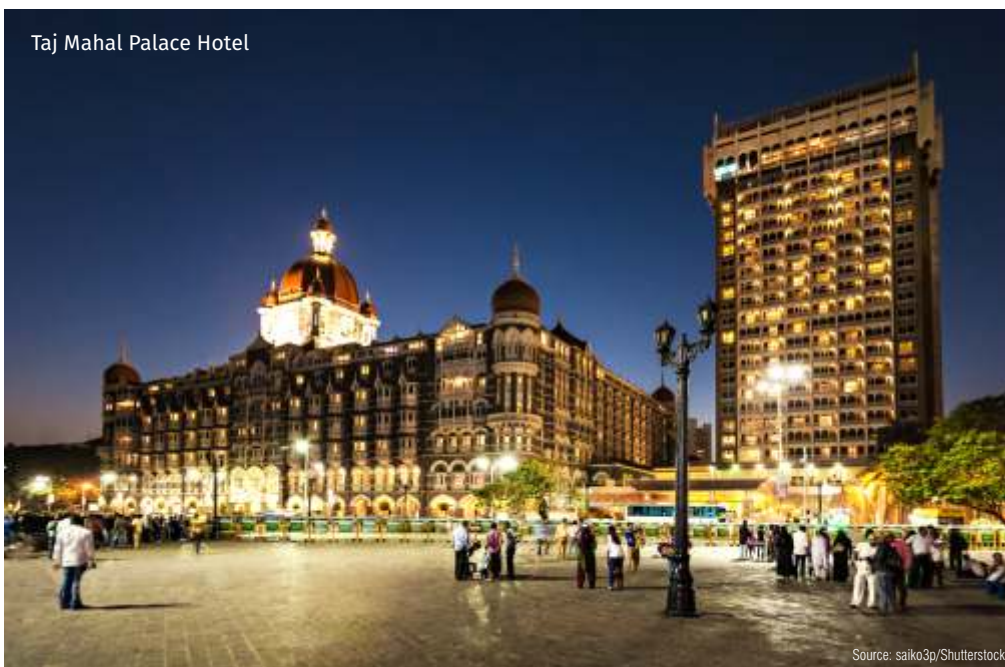
*The Gateway of India with its regal arches, stands guard facing the Arabian Sea at Apollo Bunder in bustling Colaba area of Mumbai.*

The most popular tourist attraction, it is the unofficial icon of the city of Mumbai and is a reminder of its rich colonial history as Bombay. The first structure to welcome visitors entering the city by sea, it is popularly called 'Taj Mahal of Mumbai'. Visited by tourists and locals alike, the gateway and its promenade affords a great view of the boat-studded sea and is the connecting point for boat rides to and from the famous Elephanta Caves.





Gateway of India



Taj Mahal Palace Hotel

Source: saiko3p/Shutterstock

**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

October-March

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Hog on the best food or grab a pint
- Go shopping at Colaba Causeway
- Live by the sea
- Sail on the Arabian Sea by renting a yacht
- Visit Elephanta Islands and Taj Mahal Hotel
- Capture breathtaking sunrise and breezy sunset

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport is the primary international airport serving the Mumbai Metropolitan Area. Mumbai Airport (BOM) is well-connected to major cities of India.

*By Rail:* The city is the main headquarter for both the western and central railways. These rails connect Mumbai to other cities of India.

*By Road:* Mumbai has been provided with luxury coaches and ramshackle rattletraps by the State roadways and private operators.

**WHERE TO STAY**

- Carlton Hotel – Colaba
- Hotel Harbour View
- Hotel Sea Grand
- Backpacker Panda Colaba
- Hotel Suncity Apollo



Marine Drive

Source: Parfenteva Tatiana/Shutterstock



Elephanta Island



Source: Vetrakoni/Shutterstock

## 18. Kashmir

*One of the most incredible places in India, Kashmir is known for its enthralling beauty and is rightly nicknamed as the "Heaven on Earth".*

With its picturesque lakes, striking fruit orchards, verdant meadows surrounded with thick woods of pines and deodars, lush green gardens teeming with vibrant flowers and captivating valleys enclosed with snow-covered peaks of Himalayan and Pir-Panjal ranges – Kashmir seems to have directly made its way out from a picture postcard. From enjoying a heavenly 'Shikara boat ride' on the pristine 'Dal Lake', strolling through the beautifully manicured 'Mughal Gardens', soaking in the untouched pastoral beauty of 'Betaab' and 'Aru' valleys or revelling in the adventure of world's highest Gondola ride at Gulmarg, the magic of Kashmir with its breath-taking vistas is sure to captivate your heart and soul forever.



Source: Tappasan Phurisamrit/Shutterstock

Houseboats, the floating luxury hotels in Dal Lake



46 Kashmiri Cuisine



Shikara - a small boat for transportation

Source: Tappasan Phurisamrit/Shutterstock





Aru Valley, Pahalgam



River Ganga



Mughal Garden



Ganga River, Aru Valley



Gandola Cable Car

**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

March-August

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Take a Shikara ride across the Dal Lake
- Spend a night at the houseboat at Dal Lake
- Ride the Gondola cable car to enjoy the best views of the snowcapped mountains
- Try Kashmiri cuisines
- Visit Gulmarg and Pahalgam

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* Srinagar International Airport and Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport in Leh are the major airports. The airport in Srinagar is connected with major cities in India.

*By Rail:* Jammu Tawi, located in the State's winter capital, is the busiest railway station.

*By Road:* Jammu and Srinagar, seasonal capitals of the state can be reached throughout the year by road.

**WHERE TO STAY**

- Hotel Gulmarg
- Comrade Inn
- Nedou's Hotel
- RK Sarovar Portico
- Hotel Glacier Heights

Source: S B Stock/Shutterstock

Tirupati Balaji Temple



Source: CRS PHOTO/Shutterstock

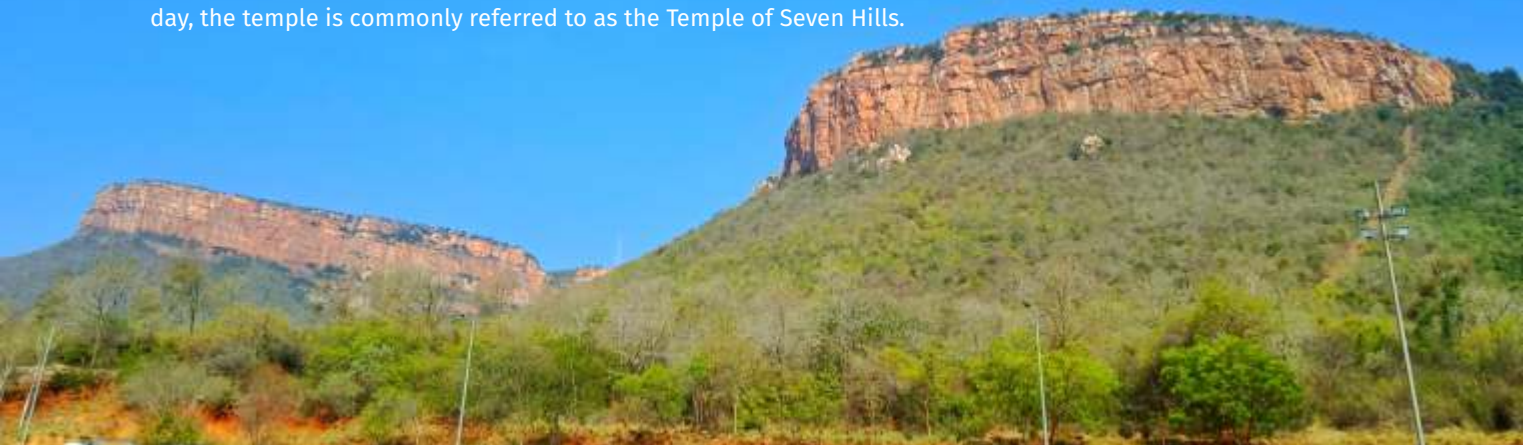
## 19. Tirupati Balaji

A beautiful hill view from Alipiri

*Situated in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh, Tirupati is known for Lord Venkateshwara Temple, one of the most visited pilgrimage centres in the country.*

Tirumala is one of the seven hills in Tirupati, where the main temple is located. The temple is believed to be place where Lord Venkateshwara took the form of an idol and is hence. Home to the deity also known as Balaji and Govinda, Tirupati is one of the oldest cities of India and finds mention in plenty of ancient vedas and puranas.

Spread over an area of 26 km and visited by nearly 50,000 pilgrims every day, the temple is commonly referred to as the Temple of Seven Hills.



## TOP-20 TOURIST HOT-SPOTS IN INDIA



### BEST TIME TO VISIT

September to March

### TOP THINGS TO DO

- Pay homage to Balaji Tirupati Temple
- Marvel at the glorious Sri Kalyana Venkateswara Swamy
- Witness the beauty of Kapila Theertham
- Experience Talakona Waterfall
- Take a dip in the holy waters of Papavinasam Theertham

### HOW TO REACH

**By Air:** The Tirupati Airport is located at Tirumala. The airport is connected to the airports at Chennai, Hyderabad and Bangalore.

**By Rail:** The Tirupati Railway Station is well connected to the major railway stations in South India.

**By Road:** Tirupati is well connected to all the major cities in the state by the Andhra Pradesh State Run Transport Corporation buses.

### WHERE TO STAY

- Hotel PLR Grand by Tommaso
- Ramee Guestline Hotel
- Kences Hotel
- Hotel Bliss
- Hotel Mayura



Tirupati Balaji Temple



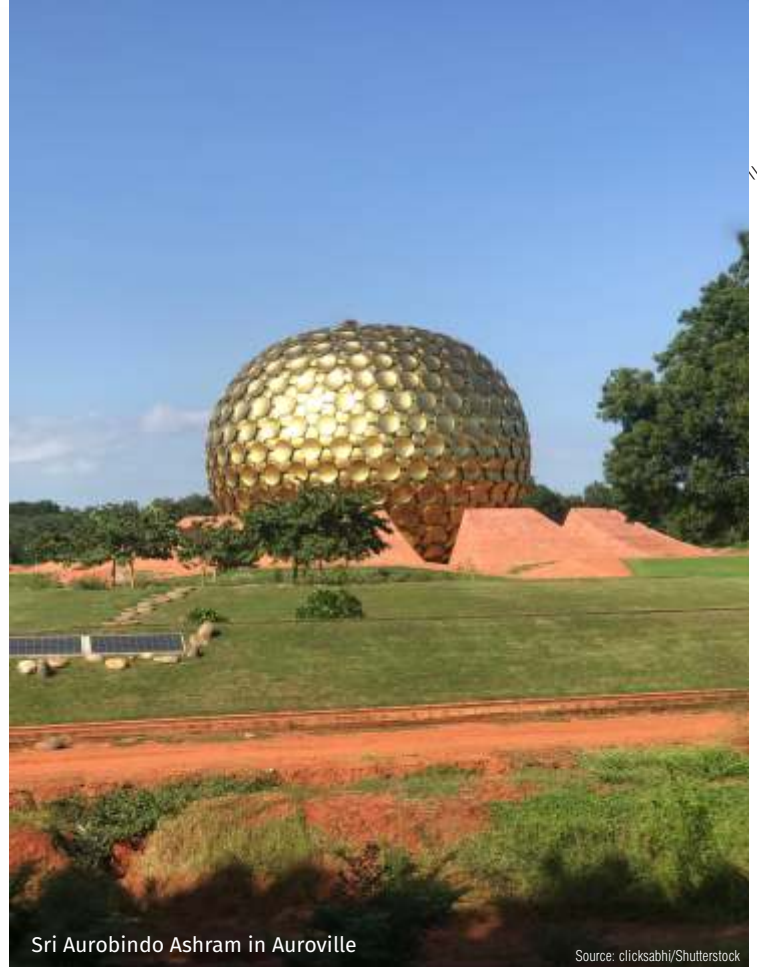
Talakona Waterfalls



## 20. Puducherry

*Blossoming bougainvillea, crumbling cathedrals on leafy boulevards and 18th century colonial buildings color the former French colony of Pondy, which sits on the Bay of Bengal.*

But it's also unmistakably Indian, with colourful festivals throughout the year, several mosques and the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. Quiet beaches stretch north and south from town, good for swimming and sunrise strolls. Pondy is a popular weekend getaway destination from Chennai and is easy to navigate on foot or by bicycle.



Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Auroville

Source: clicksabhi/Shutterstock

Sri Aurobindo Ashram



Source: Melting Spot/Shutterstock



Ousteri Lake

**BEST TIME TO VISIT**

October-March

**TOP THINGS TO DO**

- Soak up the sun and salt at the beach
- Boating at Chunnambar backwater
- Go scuba diving at Aravind's Wall, 4 Corners, The Hole, Coral Shark Reef and Temple Reef
- Enjoy the sunset at Ousteri Lake
- Explore the French Colony on two wheels
- Visit temples and churches and Aurobindo Ashram

**HOW TO REACH**

*By Air:* The airport at Puducherry can accommodate landing of a small aircraft only and has flights coming in from Bangalore and Hyderabad. Chennai is second nearest domestic as well as international airport which is connected to major cities across India and world.

*By Rail:* The nearest rail stations from Puducherry is Villupuram, 35 km away. It is connected to cities like New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai and Trivandram.

*By Road:* There are several buses that ply frequently from Chennai, Thanjaur, Trichy, Coimbatore, Bangalore and Madurai.



Our Lady of Angels Church



French Quarters Architecture



Banyan tree in Auroville



Church Basilica

Source: Alexandra Lande/Shutterstock



Villianur Roman Catholic Church



Samba Kovil

**WHERE TO STAY**

- The Promenade
- Shenbaga Hotel & Convention Centre
- Le Royal Park
- Villa Shanti
- Club Mahindra Puducherry

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