



Bombay, today known as **Mumbai**, is a modern commercial city and so cosmopolitan in its appearance and habits that the visitor feels at home immediately on arrival. Bombay is the capital of Maharashtra and gateway to this beguiling sub-continent. Bombay forms a part of peninsular India, which is considered to be the oldest part of the country.

Coming by sea or air, the visitor cannot help but notice Bombay's lovely natural setting - far-away blue outlines of **Western Ghats**, the calm sea, dotted with picturesque fishing boats with white sails and palm fringed beaches. In contrast, on the outskirts, is smoke rising from a thousand suburban mill chimneys - a reminder that Bombay is the largest commercial city in India and second only in size to **Calcutta**. The rains in Bombay, which are torrential at times, last from June to August (Monsoon Season). The two months - May and October - which come immediately before and after the monsoon are inclined to be humid and sticky. The period from November to March is extremely pleasant, light woollens being sometimes necessary in December and January.

A good deal of Bombay's local color derives from the mixed nature of its population. Apart from the local inhabitants (Maharashtrians, Gujaratis, Parsis, Goans, Kannadis, and Tamils), there are thousands from other parts of India who come here to make a living. The different customs, languages, and even the food eaten can make a fascinating study.

**Malabar Hill and Marine Drive** The visitor cannot do better than to start off his or her visit with a view of Bombay from Malabar Hill, which, together with Cumballa Hills, comprises the most fashionable residential area. There are many large houses with lovely gardens.

Going up Marine Drive, also known as **Netaji Subhash Road**, a modern promenade by the sea, the jostling crowds in the cool of the evening can be so great that the newcomer may well imagine that an important festival is being celebrated.

**The Hanging Gardens** The way up to Malabar Hill from Marine Drive is by Walkeshwar Road and Ridge Road, where the sea recedes further and further until, from the top of the Sir Pherozshah Mehta Gardens and the adjoining Kamala Nehru Park (popularly known as the "the Hanging Gardens") the visitor has a panoramic view of Bombay - the bay, the imposing buildings standing out against the skyline, the colorful Chaupati Beach immediately below, and the faint hills in the distance. At night, the twinkling lights of Marine Drive have been aptly described as "**the Queen's Necklace**." Near these gardens are the Parsi Towers of Silence, (not open to visitors) where the dead are exposed to elements.

**Priyadarshini Park** A rocky wasteland near the sea has been reclaimed and transformed into a large park, which can only be described as a feast for the eyes, amidst the concrete jungle of Malabar Hill. It lies to the west of Napean Sea Road. Besides acting as a lung for the city, it has a large track for joggers, several tennis courts and a fully equipped gym and a health club.

**Mahalaksmi** Proceeding down Malabar and Cumballa Hills, one comes to the Mahalakhmi Temple, where there are always crowds and the sound of gongs as devotees offer prayers to the Goddess of Wealth and Plenty - **Mahalaksmi**. Nearby is the **Mahalaksmi Race-course**, where race meetings are held on weekends and public holidays in the cool weather and some of India's most important races are run. To the left, off another fine road by the sea known as Hornby Vellard, is a 500-year old Muslim shrine, the **Hajji Ali's Tomb**, built on a rocky prominence surrounded by the sea. The pathway leading to it is under water at high tide.

**Nehru Planetarium & Science Centre:** situated at Worli, the planetarium offers the sky observations and astronomical shows and the science center is an inter-active museum, where children can get exposure to the world of science.

**Rani Jijamata Udyan (Rani Bagh)** also known as **Victoria Gardens** In the heart of the city are the Victoria Gardens, laid out in 1861. Here is Bombay's Zoo. Also, situated in the Gardens is the **Victoria and Albert Museum**, mainly of industrial and agricultural interest. It is open on all days except Mondays and certain holidays. In the grounds to the east of the museum is the giant statue of an elephant, brought originally from the **Elephanta Caves**.

**Crawford Market** Crawford Market, also known as **Jyotiba Phule Market**, situated at the junction of Dadabhoy Naoroji Road and Carnac Road was built in 1871. The main section is a covered market where vegetables, fruit, fish, meat, and poultry, flowers, and provisions are sold. The market is in the center of a whole network of lanes where the shopper can pick up almost anything.

**Chor Bazaar** Literally means "Thieve's Market". It is located near Bhandi Bazaar. The adventurous buyer may come across curios and quaint collector's items and may even chance upon a genuine antique.

**Victoria Terminus** now renamed as **Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus** Proceeding down Dadabhoy Naoroji Road towards Flora Fountain one passes two imposing buildings. On the right is the Municipal Building and on the left is Victoria Terminus (popularly referred to as **VT**), headquarters of the Central Railway. It was designed in Italian Gothic style by F.W. Stevens. The 1st train to steam out of Bombay was from here to Thane in 1853.

**Flora Fountain** Down the Veer Nariman Road, one comes to Flora Fountain, also known as **Hutatma Chowk**, the very hub of Bombay's busy life, which is at the junction of Mahatma Gandhi Road, Dadabhoy Naoroji Road and Veer Nariman Road. Within a radius of two miles of the Fountain are some of the most interesting institutions and buildings of Bombay - the University, the old Secretariat, and the famous Gateway of India. Near the fountain is the building of the High Court, the highest court of law in the State, which was completed in 1879 and is in the Venetian Gothic style characteristic of all Bombay's public buildings put up in the 19th century. It has two pinnacles with the statues of Justice and Mercy. Across the road, on Veer Nariman Road, is the Central Telegraph Office. Turning left (down a shady avenue adjoining a sports field known as the Oval) one comes to the old Secretariat. Built in 1874, it is in the same style of architecture as the High Court.

**Rajabai Tower** Adjoining the University, its architecture a mixture of Gothic and 15th century French style. The Rajabai Tower gives a fine view of the city. A Gujarati businessman Premchand Roychand constructed this in the honour of his mother.

**Prince of Wales Museum** To the left, a number of small parallel roads near the University lead to Wellington Fountain, named after the Duke of Wellington, who came to Bombay in 1801 as a junior officer during his early military career. Here is one of the greatest attractions of Bombay, the Prince of Wales Museum, built in the Indo-Saracenic style of architecture and having an imposing dome modeled on the architectural styles of Western India of the 15th and 16th centuries. The museum has important Art, Natural History, and Archaeological Sections besides smaller sections devoted to other specialized subjects. It is open daily, except on Mondays from 10 am to 6 pm.

**Jehangir Art Gallery** In the grounds of the Museum is the modern Jehangir Art Gallery, completed in 1952. It is frequently used for art and photographic exhibitions, where the visitor can get an idea of modern Indian painting and sculpture. Just outside the entrance, at the junction of Rampart Row and Mahatma Gandhi Road is one of the finest statues in Bombay, an equestrian statue of King Edward VII, by Boehm.

**Gateway of India** Past the Council Hall and towards the sea is one of Bombay's main hotel areas at the extreme end of which is a wide-open space known as **Apollo Bunder**. This is dominated by the Gateway of India, erected to commemorate the landing of King George V and Queen Mary in 1911. It consists of a central hall with great archways, and side halls, which can accommodate 600 people. The design, by the English architect Wittet, is based on the 16th century Gujarat style.

**Juhu Beach** In Bombay's northern suburbs, well served by buses and trains, are big middle class residential localities as well as the main industrial area. Beyond lie the picnic spots of Bombay, which provide a welcome break in a crowded program of sight seeing in the city. Of these, the most popular is Juhu, 13 miles from Bombay, approachable by rail (station Santa Cruz) or road. It has fine, palm-fringed beach ideal for bathing.

Beyond are the attractive beaches of Marve and Manori, approximately 19 miles from Bombay. Manori is approached by ferryboat, available a few miles from Marve. Both are pleasant for bathing. Marve boasts of a 5-star resort hotel for a weekend retreat. On the way is Madh Beach, another favorite picnic spot.

**Trombay**, a picturesque fishing village 16 miles from Bombay, has some fine scenery. Here is situated India's largest atomic plant.

**Powai and Vihar Lakes** Within easy reach of Bombay by car are several picturesque lakes. Powai Lake, 25 miles from Bombay, is a quiet stretch of water by the side of a motor road. It can be approached via King's Circle, Sion, and Kurla. or through Santa Cruz and Andheri. Lake Powai is smaller lake of the two, and is situated a little west of the campus of **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)**, one of the premier institutions of science and technology in India.

Vihar Lake, a mile away, is less secluded, as it is one of the sources of Bombay's water supply. The lake, incidentally, is infested with crocodiles, which often bask in the sun.

**Aarey Milk Colony** The Aarey Milk Colony, situated in a part 20 miles from Bombay on the main Ghodbunder Road, is one of the most modern milk colonies in the world. Aarey is of interest, because of its natural beauty, to all besides the dairy expert and cows. There is an observation pavilion on a hill near the entrance to the colony from where one can survey an enchanting landscape, the main feature being the fine gardens laid out over nearly 4000 acres of parkland. A favorite spot for holiday excursions, there are all amenities for picnic parties. The colony's canteen serves snacks and fresh milk from the dairy.

**Sanjay Gandhi National Park** at Borivli, off the Western Express Highway, covers an extensive area of 5000 acres and is equipped with a number of beautiful picnic cottages, and is an ideal place for restful relaxation. The show-piece of the park is the Smriti Mandir, built high up on a hill in the pattern of a modern Buddhist pavilion, which commands a panoramic view of the park lying below. Another attraction here is the lion safari

A small trip of four miles brings the visitor to the famous **Kanheri Caves** - which are believed to have been excavated between the 2nd and 9th centuries, by Buddhist monks. These are about 100 in number and Cave Nos. 3, 10, 35, and 56 are of considerable interest.

**Chowpati Beach** Chowpati Beach is located between Marine Drive and Malabar Hill. It occupies a special place in the life of Bombay, being the venue of mass political meetings during the freedom struggle. Spectacular immersion of Ganesh idols take the place here on the 10th day of Ganesh Festival (around first week of September).

**Taraporewala Aquarium** on Marine Drive has a good collection of sea and fresh water fish and other marine life. It is open on all days except Mondays.