

TRANSINDIA RAILS

# THE WEST COAST OF INDIA RAIL JOURNEY

AN ESCORTED SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCE

8 – 18 March 2027 | 11 Days / 10 Nights

*Mumbai • Goa • Matheran*

MUMBAI — GATEWAY TO INDIA

GOA — ARABIAN SEA COAST

MATHERAN — HILL RAILWAY

## THE WEST COAST OF INDIA RAIL JOURNEY

*Sea air, colonial spice and the rhythm of the rails.*

India's western coastline is one of the great theatrical stages of the subcontinent. Here, the Arabian Sea rolls in against red laterite cliffs and Portuguese whitewash; the air carries frangipani and salt and the distant suggestion of cardamom. And through it all, the railways run — from the magnificent sweep of the Konkan line cutting through jungle and viaduct along the coast, to the beloved Matheran Heritage Railway climbing through forested Western Ghats to a hill station where motor vehicles have never been permitted and time appears to have stopped entirely.

This eleven-day escorted journey moves between three of India's most compelling destinations: the overwhelming vitality of Mumbai, the golden languor of Goa's beaches and Portuguese heritage, and the extraordinary quietude of Matheran. It is a tour designed for those who wish to experience India deeply rather than quickly — by train where possible, unhurriedly always, in the company of fellow travellers who share a taste for the authentic.

<p><b>MUMBAI</b> Day 1, 8, 9 &amp; 10</p> <p>India's most dynamic city — from the Gothic grandeur of CST to the Gateway of India, Dhobi Ghat and the caves of Elephanta Island.</p>	<p><b>GOA</b> Days 2 – 7</p> <p>Six days on the Arabian Sea: Portuguese forts, whitewashed basilicas, spice plantations and the most beautiful coastline in India.</p>	<p><b>MATHERAN</b> Day 9</p> <p>The last true hill station — no cars, no noise, only the Matheran Heritage Railway winding through forested Western Ghats escarpment.</p>
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### DAY 01 — 8 MARCH — ARRIVAL IN MUMBAI

#### A Gentle Introduction to India's Maximum City

Your journey begins in Mumbai — Bombay to those who knew it first — India's oceanic, overwhelming, irrepressible financial and cultural capital. On arrival you are met and transferred to your hotel, and the rest of the day is deliberately unhurried: a considered gift after the long flight from Europe. For those with energy to spare, the historic Fort district is a short walk away, its Victorian Gothic streetscape — the High Court, the University of Mumbai, the magnificent Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus — offering one of the most astonishing concentrations of colonial architecture anywhere in Asia. The iconic Taj Mahal Palace Hotel stands at the water's edge, a century of Mumbai history contained within its domes. Tonight, let the city arrive gradually. Overnight: Mumbai.



*The Konkan Railway crosses the Western Ghats on one of its many spectacular viaducts — one of the great engineering achievements of modern India*

DAY 02 — 9 MARCH — MUMBAI TO GOA

## Along the Konkan Coast Aboard the Vande Bharat Express

An early start carries you to the magnificent Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus — a UNESCO World Heritage building whose Gothic Revival stonework still provokes astonishment after a hundred and thirty years — to board India's flagship Vande Bharat Express. What follows is one of the great rail journeys of the subcontinent. The Konkan Railway threads its way down the Western Ghats and along the Arabian Sea coast through a landscape of extraordinary beauty: jungle-clad hillsides, rivers running silver to the sea, and the occasional viaduct suspended above a gorge with nothing but forest below. Near the Goa border, the train passes beneath the thundering Dudhsagar Falls — one of India's tallest waterfalls — a moment of pure drama. Arriving in Goa in the afternoon, the pace of life immediately and noticeably slows. Overnight: North Goa.



DAY 03 — 10 MARCH — NORTH GOA

## Forts, Coastlines & Portuguese Character

Today explores the vibrant northern coastline where four centuries of Portuguese rule left their mark on everything from architecture to cuisine. Fort Aguada rises above the Mandovi River, its seventeenth-century battlements offering panoramic sea views. The afternoon traces north to Anjuna and Vagator, their dramatic laterite cliffs dropping to white sand below. The pace is relaxed — this is Goa. Overnight: North Goa.

DAY 04 — 11 MARCH — LEISURE BY THE ARABIAN SEA

## A Day at Your Own Pace

Today is yours entirely. The Arabian Sea in March is warm and calm; the morning light on the water is extraordinary. The afternoon might bring a wander through Panaji's fountainhas heritage quarter and excellent cafés, or simply a shaded terrace with a sea view and no particular agenda. Overnight: North Goa.

DAY 05 — 12 MARCH — INTO SOUTH GOA

## Serenity, Space and the Quieter Shore

South Goa is less visited, more serene, its beaches — Palolem, Agonda, Benaulim — among the most beautiful in India. The journey south passes cashew plantations and small Goan villages where the church at the square's centre is the oldest building in sight. The pace adjusts accordingly. Overnight: South Goa.

DAY 06 — 13 MARCH — CULTURAL GOA

## Churches, Temples & Four Hundred Years of Heritage

Old Goa — the former capital of Portugal's Asian empire — is one of the most remarkable heritage sites in India. The Basilica of Bom Jesus contains the mortal remains of St Francis Xavier, the Jesuit missionary whose incorrupt body has been venerated here since 1613. The Sé Cathedral is the largest church in Asia, its single surviving bell — the 'Golden Bell' — among the most famous in the world. These extraordinary monuments of Catholic Baroque architecture stand surrounded by jungle, their scale and ambition still startling after four centuries. The afternoon visits the Mangueshi Temple, a reminder that Goa's cultural identity has always been more complex and syncretic than its Portuguese surfaces suggest. Overnight: South Goa.

#### DAY 07 — 14 MARCH — LEISURE & OPTIONAL EXPERIENCES

### Spice Plantations, Sunset Cruises & Final Goan Hours

A last full day in Goa — savour it at leisure or join an optional spice plantation tour, where cardamom, vanilla and pepper grow as they have for centuries. Alternatively, a sunset cruise on the Mandovi River captures Goa in its most golden light, the colonial buildings of Panaji reflected in the water as the sun drops behind the Ghats. Overnight: South Goa.

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#### DAY 08 — 15 MARCH — RETURN TO MUMBAI

### From Coast to City

The train back to Mumbai retraces the extraordinary Konkan coastline in reverse — the same viaducts, the same rivers, the same jungle walls pressing in on either side of the track, but with the light falling differently and the journey now coloured by a week of Goan memories. Mumbai receives you with its characteristic intensity after the languorous pace of the coast: the taxi horns, the crowds, the sheer vertical ambition of the skyline. After hotel transfer and check-in, the evening is yours — perhaps a walk along Marine Drive as the city lights come on, the Arabian Sea dark and enormous beyond the promenade. Overnight: Mumbai.

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#### DAY 09 — 16 MARCH — MATHERAN HERITAGE RAILWAY

### A Step Back in Time on India's Last Motor-Free Hill Station



*The Matheran Heritage Railway winds through the Western Ghats escarpment — the preserved CR loco at Neral station (centre) recalls the line's Victorian origins*

Of all the railways on this journey, the Matheran Heritage Railway is perhaps the most quietly remarkable. Built in 1907 by Sir Adamjee Peerbhoy, the two-foot narrow-gauge line climbs 800 metres in just 21 kilometres, winding through the forested escarpment of the Western Ghats with the kind of unhurried determination that characterises all great mountain railways. At the top lies Matheran — a hill station unlike any other in India, where motor vehicles of every kind have been banned since its founding, and where the principal modes of transport remain the horse, the hand-pulled rickshaw and the human foot. The air is clean, the viewpoints extraordinary, the silence — by Indian hill station standards — almost absolute. After exploring the town at leisure, the little train brings you back down through the forest to Neral and the return to Mumbai. Overnight: Mumbai.

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#### DAY 10 — 17 MARCH — MUMBAI

### Culture, Contrast & Iconic Landmarks

Mumbai's final full day offers the city at its most layered and revealing. The morning begins at the Gateway of India — the great basalt arch built to commemorate the visit of King George V in 1911, and from which, in 1948, the last British troops departed Indian soil. From here, a boat carries the group to Elephanta Island, where rock-cut cave temples dating from the fifth to eighth centuries contain some of the finest sculptures in Indian art, including the magnificent three-headed Trimurti of Shiva — serene, enormous and utterly unforgettable. The afternoon explores the extraordinary Dhobi Ghat — an open-air laundry where Mumbai's washing has been done by hand in the same stone wash pens since 1890 — before an evening stroll along Marine Drive, the Queen's Necklace, where the city curves around its bay in a long arc of light. Overnight: Mumbai.

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DAY 11 — 18 MARCH — DEPARTURE

## Farewell to India's West Coast

After breakfast, transfer to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport for your onward journey home. Mumbai will send you off as it received you: with noise and colour and the particular energy of a city that never quite settles. The Konkan viaducts, the Goan sunsets, the silence of Matheran — they travel with you.

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## PRICING & INCLUSIONS

### West Coast of India Rail Journey

8 – 18 March 2027 • 11 Days / 10 Nights • Land Only

Per Person (Land Only)

# £2,400

Single supplement: £450 per person

*Price is per person on a twin-sharing basis and covers land arrangements only. International flights to/from Mumbai are not included.*

#### INCLUDED

- ✓ 10 nights accommodation (twin-sharing) as per itinerary
- ✓ Daily breakfast throughout
- ✓ All transfers and sightseeing as per the programme
- ✓ Vande Bharat Express: Mumbai to Goa and return
- ✓ Matheran Heritage Railway (Neral–Matheran–Neral)
- ✓ All entry fees as detailed in the itinerary
- ✓ Boat transfer to Elephanta Island and return
- ✓ Services of a dedicated UK Tour Leader throughout
- ✓ Services of an experienced Indian Tour Manager
- ✓ Group tipping fund covering drivers, porters and service staff

#### NOT INCLUDED

- International flights to/from India
- Lunch and dinner (unless specifically mentioned)
- Personal expenses: laundry, telephone, room service
- Optional activities (spice plantation, sunset cruise etc.)
- Travel insurance — mandatory, not included
- Alcoholic beverages and personal bar expenses
- Camera/video permit fees where applicable
- Costs from weather disruption or force majeure

*This is an escorted small group tour. Group size is limited to ensure a personal experience.*

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