

Goa Backwaters & Mandovi Cruise 5N: River Life and Island Visits

Prepared by TourGrids



Destination
Goa



Duration
5 Nights 6 Days



Starting from
Rs. 19,200 / person

ITINERARY ROUTE

↙ **Panaji · 2N**

↙ **Colva / Benaulim · 3N**

<https://tourgrids.com/packages/goa/goa-5-nights-6-days-package-751>

📌 Overview

A curated Goa tour package ideal for those looking for a relaxing Goa Weekend tour package with a focus on river life, backwaters and island visits. This 5 nights / 6 days Goa Weekend package blends coastal beaches, tranquil river cruises, village island experiences and a touch of adventure (snorkelling at Grande Island). Perfect for couples, small groups and families seeking both leisure and local culture.

Highlights:

- Mandovi River Cruise (evening sunset cruise)
- Divar & Chorao Islands – village life & birdwatching
- Sal River Backwaters – serene boat cruise in South Goa
- Grande Island – snorkeling & island hopping
- Panaji & South Goa beaches (Miramar, Colva, Benaulim)

Special notes: Boat timings depend on tides and weather; Grande Island snorkel subject to sea conditions. Book early for weekend departures.

✓ What's Included

- ✓ 5 nights accommodation on twin/double sharing basis (2 nights in Panaji, 3 nights in Colva / Benaulim).
- ✓ Daily breakfast.
- ✓ Airport / Railway Station transfer on arrival and departure (as per group timings).
- ✓ Shared transfers for the listed sightseeing and island trips.
- ✓ Mandovi River Cruise (standard evening cruise).
- ✓ Divar & Chorao island visits with ferry charges.
- ✓ South Goa Sal River Backwater Cruise.
- ✓ Grande Island boat transfer, snorkeling gear and guided session (subject to weather).
- ✓ Local English-speaking guide for included sightseeing.
- ✓ All applicable taxes.
- ✓ Note: Upgrades to private transfers, premium cruises or private snorkel sessions are available at extra cost.

✗ Not Included

- ✗ Airfare / Train fare to Goa.
- ✗ Personal expenses, tips, laundry and telephone calls.
- ✗ Entrance fees not mentioned in inclusions and optional activities (e.g., scuba diving, private speedboat hire, casinos).
- ✗ Travel insurance (strongly recommended).
- ✗ Meals other than breakfast unless specified.
- ✗ Any service not mentioned under Inclusions.
- ✗ Important: Weekend departures (Friday–Sunday) and peak season surcharges may apply – please enquire at time of booking.

Day-by-Day Itinerary

Day

1

Arrival in Goa — Transfer to Panaji & Leisure

Arrive at Goa Airport/Railway Station and transfer to your hotel in Panaji. Check-in and relax. In the evening enjoy a gentle walk along Miramar Beach or explore the Portuguese old quarter of Fontainhas with its colourful colonial houses.

Inclusions: airport transfer (as per itinerary), welcome briefing at hotel.

Tip: If you arrive early, opt for a short heritage stroll in Fontainhas to capture vivid photo opportunities.

Day

2

Panaji City Tour & Sunset Mandovi River Cruise

After breakfast, enjoy a guided half-day city tour covering Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception Church, Panaji Promenade, and Dona Paula viewpoint. Spend the afternoon at leisure. In the evening board the iconic Mandovi River Cruise — enjoy live music, cultural dance performances and a beautiful sunset over the river.

Activity included: Evening Mandovi River Cruise (standard cruise). Wear comfortable shoes; cruise times vary by season.

Day

3

Divar & Chorao Island Day Trip — Backwater Village Life

Early breakfast and a short ferry ride to Divar Island to explore quiet lanes, chapels and local life. Continue to Chorao Island (home to the Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary) with an optional short birdwatching walk. Experience traditional Goan village crafts, toddy tapping demonstrations (seasonal), and a backwater village lunch.

Late afternoon transfer to Colva / Benaulim in South Goa. Check-in at your South Goa hotel and relax.

Note: Ferry schedules may change; island visits are subject to local ferry timings.

Day

4

South Goa Backwater Cruise & Beach Time

After breakfast enjoy a scenic Sal River backwater cruise (South Goa) — tranquil estuary views, mangrove-lined banks and a chance to spot local birdlife. Afternoon at leisure on the Colva / Benaulim beaches with optional water sports or a relaxed beach-side lunch.

Included activity: South Goa Backwater Cruise. Wear sun protection and carry a hat for the boat trip.

Day

5

Grande Island Snorkeling & Island Explorations

Early departure for a full-day island excursion to Grande Island (subject to sea conditions). Enjoy boat transfers, snorkeling over clear reefs, glass-bottom boat options and a beach barbecue (where available). Return to your South Goa hotel for an evening at leisure.

Important: Snorkeling requires basic swimming ability. Equipment and safety briefing included. Activities depend on weather and sea-safety norms.

Day

6

Departure from Goa

After breakfast, check out and transfer to Goa Airport / Railway Station for your onward journey. If time permits, enjoy last-minute shopping at Panaji or a quick beachside stroll.

End of services. We recommend leaving with extra buffer time for weekend departures and peak-season traffic.

🔗 Frequently Asked Questions

🔗 When is the best time to visit Goa and what's the weather like?

The best time to visit Goa is October to March (prime season) when the weather is dry with pleasant days (20–32°C) and cool nights. This period offers calm seas perfect for swimming, open beach shacks, vibrant nightlife, and ideal conditions for water sports. Summer (March–May) is hot but manageable with temperatures reaching 36°C, offering good deals and fewer crowds. Monsoon season (June–September) brings heavy rains and rough seas, with many beach activities suspended, but it's perfect for experiencing lush landscapes, waterfalls, and romantic ambiance at discounted rates. Christmas–New Year is peak season with highest prices and crowds.

🔗 How do I reach Goa and what are the transportation options?

Goa has two airports: Manohar International Airport (GOX) in North Goa near Mopa, and Dabolim Airport (GOI) for Central/South Goa access. Both receive direct flights from major Indian cities and seasonal international connections. By train, major stations include Madgaon, Thivim, Karmali, and Vasco da Gama, connected via the scenic Konkan Railway. By road, NH 66 coastal highway and NH 48 via Western Ghats connect Goa to Mumbai, Pune, and Bengaluru. Overnight buses operate frequently from these cities. The journey from Mumbai takes 8–10 hours by road, while flights take 1.5 hours.

❓ **Do I need a visa to visit Goa as a tourist?**

Goa is part of India, so visa requirements depend on your nationality. Indian citizens need only valid government-issued photo ID. Foreign tourists require appropriate Indian visas - tourist visa, e-visa, or visa-on-arrival (for eligible countries). E-visas are convenient and can be obtained online for most nationalities, valid for 30-365 days depending on type. Processing typically takes 2-4 business days. Ensure your passport has at least 6 months validity and blank pages. Some nationalities like Bhutan and Nepal citizens don't need visas but require valid identification. Check the latest visa requirements on the official Indian visa website before traveling.

❓ **What are the best local transportation options in Goa?**

Goa offers diverse transportation options. Rental scooters/motorbikes are most popular for flexibility - carry your original license and wear helmets (mandatory). Motorcycle taxis called 'pilots' are unique to Goa, perfect for solo travelers. Regular taxis and app-based services like GoaMiles operate throughout. Kadamba state buses and private buses connect major towns and beaches affordably. River ferries to islands like Divar and Chorao are scenic and frequent. Auto-rickshaws exist but are limited in some areas. For comfort, rent a car with driver. Always negotiate fares beforehand for taxis and pilots, or use metered/app-based services.

❓ **Where should I stay in Goa and what accommodation options are available?**

North Goa (Calangute, Candolim, Anjuna, Vagator) offers vibrant nightlife, water sports, and party atmosphere with beach shacks, budget guesthouses to luxury resorts. South Goa (Colva, Benaulim, Palolem, Agonda) provides quieter, family-friendly vibes with wider beaches and upscale resorts. Panaji offers heritage charm and cultural experiences. Accommodation ranges from budget hostels (₹500-1500/night), mid-range hotels and beach resorts (₹2000-8000/night), to luxury properties like Taj, W Goa, and Alila Diwa (₹15000+/night). Beach huts and homestays offer authentic experiences. Book well in advance for December-January. Consider proximity to beaches, nightlife preferences, and transportation when choosing location.

❓ **What are the must-visit attractions and places in Goa?**

Essential Goa experiences include UNESCO-listed Old Goa churches (Basilica of Bom Jesus, Se Cathedral), colorful Fontainhas Latin Quarter in Panaji, and Fort Aguada for sunset views. North Goa highlights are Chapora Fort, Anjuna's Wednesday flea market, and Calangute-Baga beach strip. Don't miss Dudhsagar Falls (spectacular four-tier waterfall), spice plantations in Ponda, and peaceful Divar Island accessible by ferry. South Goa offers pristine beaches like Palolem and Agonda, plus hidden gems like Cola Beach's blue lagoon. Take sunset cruises on Mandovi River, explore Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary, and visit off-beat Tambdi Surla Temple. Each region offers distinct experiences from heritage to nature to beaches.

🔗 What local food and cuisine should I try in Goa?

Goan cuisine blends Portuguese and Konkani influences. Must-try dishes include Goan Fish Curry with rice, Pork Vindaloo, Chicken Cafreal (green masala), and Chicken Xacuti (coconut-spice curry). Seafood specialties are rava-fried fish, Prawn Balchão, and fresh catch at beach shacks. Try local breads like poi and pão, and end meals with bebinca (layered dessert) or dodol. Drink feni (cashew or coconut spirit) – Goa's signature alcohol, or seasonal urrak. Visit Vinayak Family Restaurant, Kokni Kanteen, or Martin's Corner for authentic experiences. Beach shacks serve fresh seafood with sea views. Vegetarians can enjoy sol kadhi, Goan dal, and coconut-based curries. Always try the local fish thali for a complete experience.

★ Traveller Reviews



Aditi Sharma

★★★★★ 5/5

Amazing Experience in Goa!

We had a fantastic time exploring Goa with this tour package. The beaches were beautiful, and the itinerary was well-planned. Highly recommend!



Rahul Desai

★★★★★ 5/5

Romantic Escape

We had the most romantic getaway in Goa. Sunset cruises and candlelight dinners made it memorable.



Karan Singh

★★★★★ 5/5

Relaxing Beach Getaway

The beach resorts were luxurious, and the food was a delight. Perfect retreat for those looking to unwind. Would book again!



Raghav Khanna

★★★★★ 5/5

Adventurous Couples Retreat

A wonderful package for couples looking to engage in fun activities together. We made amazing memories!



Ashwin Varma

★★★★☆ 4/5

An Unforgettable Journey

Goa was stunning, and this tour enhanced our experience. From the scenic views to local interactions, it was unforgettable.

⚡ Why Choose TourGrids?

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