

## TRAVEL



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## Mumbai: city of dreams

India's economic capital boasts seductive charm

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FOR THE CALGARY HERALD

Mumbai is the economic capital of India and is popularly known for Bollywood, the East-Indian film industry. Visitors might mistake this glamour to be the secret behind its vibrance, but there's more to it than meets the eye. A city built largely on reclaimed land, Mumbai is a metaphor for striving for the impossible. This attitude is prevalent everywhere you look, whether it's the youth of Mumbai pursuing their dreams or a child dancing at a wedding procession, everybody's grooving to their own beat.

There's a lot to see in the cosmopolitan city and 48 hours might just be the beginning. Watch out for the stray animals and get used to the constant honking. Join Mumbai-kars as they enjoy getting drenched in the rain and follow up with hot chai and pakorey.

Be warned though, the charm is seductive and you may just check-in your heart the second you land in Mumbai.

### Haji Ali Dargah

A beautiful mosque in the Arabian Sea, Haji Ali Dargah, commonly referred to as Haji Ali, is surrounded by water on three sides. In daytime, the white marble mosque is a serene getaway for prayers and blessings in its secluded corner by the sea. At night, the walkway is lined with street shops selling sweets, flowers and textiles, often used as offerings to the mosque, while vendors sell toys, games, and devotional music and the aroma of chicken biryani fills the air.

During high tide, the pathway disappears, making the mosque look like it is floating in the sea.

Visitors struggle to find precious space among thousands of devotees on the narrow pathway leading to the mosque where one step in the wrong direction could land you in the sea. The mosque is



Courtesy, Amit Singh

The Gateway of India in the harbour in Mumbai is a great place to walk and take in the sights.

a beautiful combination of serenity infused with the energy of Mumbai and a must-see for a visitor.

**While here:** Visit Haji Ali Juice Centre for its juices and other specialties.

Tikki burger from McDonald's, a vegetarian burger that will have you coming back for more. Around the corner is also Kailash Parbat, a restaurant that has a great menu.

traditional Indian food or cuisines ranging from Chinese to Italian.

**While here:** Don't forget to try out Indian desserts such as kufli, laddus and warm gulab jamun and jalebis.

### Linking Road

Linking Road is the definition of organized chaos. Shopkeepers fix their colourful displays of saris and kurtas alongside shirts, designer jeans and accessories while street intersections and food vendors act as a separation between shops. Expect relentless bargaining.

You'll find everything from sleek heels to designer sunglasses here at incredibly low rates, but only if you excel at bargaining.

Linking Road also hosts designer stores, so if you're looking for quality over quantity shop there. The hustle and bustle of street side shopping has a unique charm that is fun to indulge in or just watch.

**While here:** Try out a street side Frankie (wrap), Mumbai's famous sandwiches or an Aloo

### Street food and more

Mumbai is famous for its street food and offers something for all types of tastebuds. The menu includes everything from the popular chai and samosas to Hakka Chinese and South Indian food such as dosas.

If you're feeling really wild, try pani puri, a small crisp bread stuffed with a combination of boiled potatoes, lentils and chutney, topped off with sweet and sour water that is eaten in one bite. Or Mumbai's native vada pav, a crispy potato ball dipped in gram flour, fried, and served in a bun.

Pav bhaji, bhel and sev puri are also popular choices. Restaurants in Mumbai also serve street food that is no less authentic and the air conditioning makes for a retreat from the heat. Visit restaurants for

### The essentials

Any trip to Mumbai would be incomplete without a walk on Marine Drive, a visit to the Gateway of India and to the Taj Hotel right beside it. Join the sea of people at Chowpatty Beach and take a walk on stunning Bandstand, a picturesque rocky corner by the sea. Visit the architectural beauty of CST station and the Fort area built during the British rule, which represent some of the most iconic images of Mumbai today.

The Rajiv Gandhi Sea Link, an ambitious architectural project that connects Bandra and Worli across the sea, is also a popular destination.

If you're feeling bold, take a ride on Mumbai's local trains that transport millions daily. But be sure to avoid rush hour and hold on tight.

## World's alive with the sound of music

REUTERS  
NEW YORK

The music festival season is just around the corner and whether you're interested in rock, electro-pop, trance, jazz or dance, there's a festival out there to explore.

Online travel advisers Cheapflights.com offer these choices:  
Roskilde Festival  
Roskilde, Denmark



world's largest jazz festivals. Situated in the heart of the city, you can see big names in jazz at a variety of venues from small and intimate clubs, to massive outdoor stages. Much of the downtown area is blocked off from traffic for free and open-air performances, and kids are always welcome. (montrealjazzfest.com/default-en.aspx)

Sziget Fesztivál  
Budapest, Hungary