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AUGUST 2025

# ZEST

TRAVEL IN THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT  
BY ORANGE DMC

## CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENCE!

Seventy-nine years ago, India became an independent nation on August 15, 1947. Almost eight decades later, the world's largest democracy has taken on a life of its own! Discover the depth of India and her South Asian neighbours - Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka, as an independent spirit!

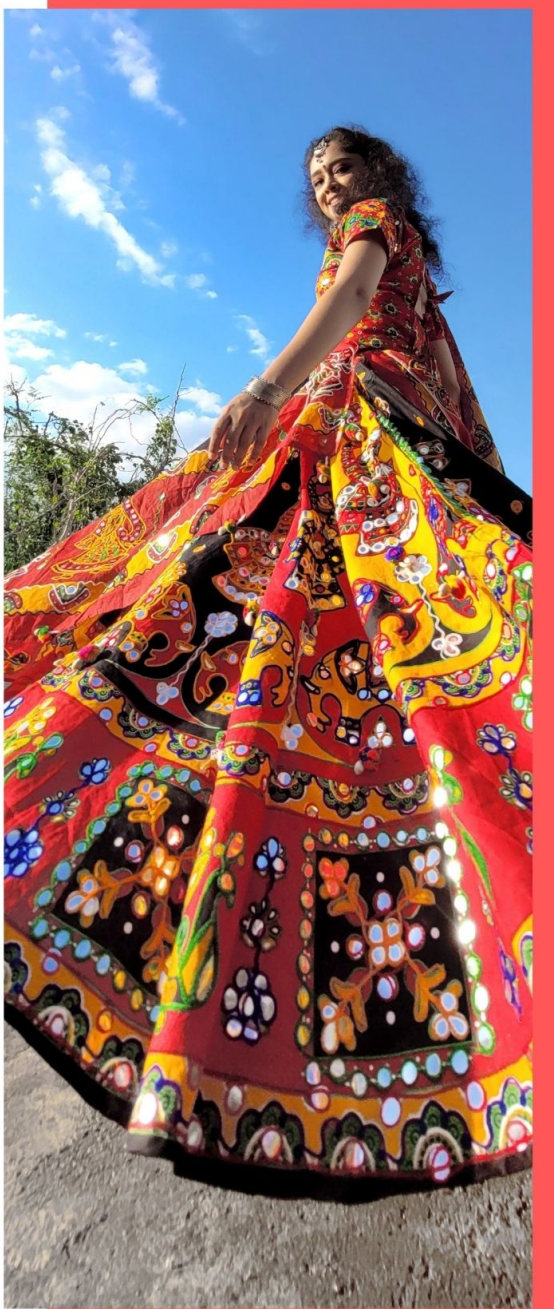
At Orange, we specialize in customizing bespoke journeys. From personalized wellness and wildlife sojourns to culinary journeys, special interest groups to fantastic events, the Orange team is your first point of contact as you embark upon the trip of a lifetime.

August marks the onset of the festive season over the next few months. Explore an array of culture and colour as the entire country celebrates!

In this issue, we also take a deep dive into Punjab, a state that could be a country unto itself, and played a defining role in India's freedom movement.

Award-winning properties to top-notch service. Fantastic guides and naturalists to world-class performances, South Asia excels at offering a once in a lifetime experience at tremendous value for money. So dust off that passport and pack those bags! Please call us today to start planning a holiday that stays with you forever.

Best Regards,  
Manan Mahajan



## FESTIVE & FABULOUS

### SEPTEMBER CULTURAL CALENDAR...



#### ▼ GANESH CHATURTHI, MUMBAI

Mumbai springs into action in September to celebrate Lord Ganesh. The iconic elephant-headed God of Prosperity, Knowledge and Wisdom is a much-revered figure in Hinduism. But before the festivities begin, take a sneak-peak behind the scenes to see how these majestic and multi-hued idols are created by skilled artists, and join in the fun as everyone dances through the streets to the drum beat!

#### LADAKH CULTURAL FESTIVAL, LEH ▼

The Ladakh Cultural Festival is a wonderful event that celebrates the customs and traditions across this mountainous region. From vivid processions to dance and drama, haunting music to spirited game of polo, this is a whirlwind of activity and a fantastic opportunity to explore Himalayan culture.



#### ▼ NAVRATRI, AHMEDABAD

Dress up, let your hair down, shake a leg and dance till dawn! Navratri begins on September 22, 2025 to mark the nine night count-down to Dussehra, and is a vibrant celebration in the run-up to Diwali. As dusk begins to fall, Ahmedabad lights up and the party begins. The Garba and Dandiya Raas dances are a spirited and exhilarating and we guarantee that you will be swept off your feet!







## 01. THE FOOD

The Punjabis love their food and no trip to India is complete without an introduction to Punjabi cuisine! From Amritsar's signature fish and *kulchas* to spicy *chole-bhature* (chickpeas and an enormous, puffy bread), *sarson ka saag* (mustard greens) to creamy butter chicken, this is a foodie's paradise. In Punjab, several people grow their own produce on their farm, and the farm-to-fork experience doesn't get better than this! Ask us today to plan the ultimate culinary journey across Punjab!

## 02. BHANGRA & FOLK BEATS

Punjab is known for its festive spirit and its music and dance have taken the world by storm! Move to the foot-tapping rhythms of Bhangra beats and dance the night away! Punjab is also home to incredible folk musicians, who are the last few to play the beautiful music of the North-West frontier, and craft the instruments by hand. For all you cultural connoisseurs, the *Hola Mohalla* festival in January is a superb platform for Punjab's music, dance and performing arts!



## PURE PUNJAB: FIVE REASONS WHY WE LOVE THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER

### SPIRITUAL SOLACE

## 03.

No trip to Punjab is complete without a visit to the Golden Temple, the center of Sikh spirituality. You can also visit the Viraat-e-Khalsa in Anandpur Sahib, an incredible contemporary museum and heritage center that documents the journey of Sikhism and the Khalsa Panth.



### ARCHITECTURAL AESTHETIC

## 04.

Those who have an eye for beautiful edifices will be pleasantly surprised by the variety of architecture and design that one can see in Punjab!

From stunning old world palaces to the gold-domed brilliance of the Golden Temple in Amritsar to Le Corbusier's modernism in Chandigarh the sheer variety will leave you amazed!

## 05. INDIA'S FREEDOM STORY

Situated in the north-west, Punjab and Sindh were the provinces that were most impacted by India's independence, a defining moment in history, which ultimately resulted in Partition. A visit to the Partition Museum and the Jallianwala Bagh Centenary Memorial and Museum in Amritsar are a must to understand the many events that shaped the freedom movement.



Situated just a short drive away from the Golden Temple, Taj Swarna is a terrific hotel to base yourself while exploring Amritsar.

The rooms and suites are large and airy, and several of them overlook the city skyline. Excellent cuisine and warm hospitality add to the experience.

With its own international airport, and plenty to see and do in the area, Amritsar is also a fantastic destination for meetings and conferences and the Taj Swarna is well equipped for events.

Orange DMC can also arrange for bespoke, customized experiences, performances and exclusive excursions that spotlight the best of what the destination has to offer.

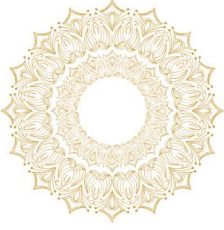
GOLDEN TOUCH

TAJ SWARNA,  
AMRITSAR





PALATIAL PUNJAB



RAN BAAS,  
PATIALA

Ran Baas Palace, situated in the heart of Patiala, is a throwback to a bygone era. Magnificently restored, this gorgeous royal residence was recently recognized by UNESCO-backed Prix Versailles as one of the most beautiful hotels in the world.

This all suite property is managed by The Park Hotels, and is an exclusive member of Relais & Chateaux. The suites combine traditional elegance with modern amenities, and offer gorgeous views over the grounds. The restaurant, Neel, is inspired by the royal family's love for the hunt and adventure and features exquisite cuisine including several iconic Punjabi dishes!

Ran Baas is perfectly situated to explore Patiala's rich cultural heritage. Ask us today to discover more!



EFFORTLESS ELEGANCE



OBEROI SUKHVILAS,  
SISWAN FOREST,  
CHANDIGARH

Set amid lush environs on the edge of Chandigarh, The Oberoi Sukhvilas is an urban oasis.

Conveniently located so that you can explore Chandigarh, the property is situated in the midst of the Siswan Forest Range, making it the perfect place to get back in touch with nature. Take a delightful stroll or bike ride, or indulge in a luxurious treatment at the spa.

The rooms and suites are elegantly furnished to reflect classic sophistication with all the modern conveniences. You can opt for a room or a tented suite.

Delicious cuisine and Oberoi's signature service make this an idyllic location to kick back and relax. Chandigarh is not only worth a visit, but is also the perfect point of departure for a trip into the mountains. Ask us today to learn more!



CULINARY CURIOSITY

THE ORANGE COMPASS TO ETHNIC CUISINE

In India, food feeds the stomach as well as your mind, soul and spirit. Our ethnic cuisine is legendary, and a true window to the subcontinent's culture. So, what's brewing?

HIMACHAL PRADESH

*Naar* offers a spectacular menu spotlighting gourmet Himalayan cuisine by celebrity chef, Prateek Sadhu. More than a restaurant, *Naar* is Sadhu's personal canvas on which he lays out a sensational food story across the Himalayan region. From fruit to mountain trout to pine syrup, each ingredient is beautifully crafted (according to the season, of course) to evoke its delicate flavour. Perched on a hill in the Solan region, the views add to the dining experience!

GOA

Goan cuisine is sublime – and one of the best reasons to visit this state! Dive into a mouthwatering blend of coconut infused Konkani and Malvani coastal cuisine – with a Portuguese colonial twist. From a mouthwatering (and eye-watering) iconic vindaloo to spicy chorizo to rawa crusted fried fish and a scintillating prawn curry, you just can't get enough of it. From *Bombil* for its rawa encrusted fish to *Martin's Corner* for an award winning chicken xacuti and recheado, to *The Fisherman's Wharf* for the best prawn curry rice and chorizo-pao... Goa is a gastronomad's dream.



## CULINARY CURIOSITY

### COORG

This gorgeous tropical rainforest in the heart of the Nilgiri Mountains doesn't seem like a foodie paradise at first -- but for those in the know, this is the place to go to for fabulous food!

Coorg cuisine is truly unique and utterly delicious. Try the Pandhi Curry made from a pork simmered in locally grown spices with an Akki roti (a typical flat bread from the area) to bamboo shoot, jackfruit and more... the variety of ingredients is incredible. But what makes the food even more tasty is the freshly ground spices that grow on Coorg's plantations. From cinnamon to black pepper to all-spice, the flavours simply burst in your mouth.


There's also a wide variety of tropical fruit that is not only eaten whole, but also made into heady fruit wine which you can down with your meal. And if you need a pick-me-up afterwards, a cup of Coorg's finest filter coffee will do the trick! The area is known for its coffee estates and the locals brew their Kapi South Indian style. Have it at breakfast with a soft neer dosa (crepe) or if you're feeling adventurous, try Nuuputtu – a curry like stew made with meat and veggies that is usually eaten for breakfast!





#### WOULD YOU LIKE TO ORGANIZE A CULINARY JOURNEY WITH ORANGE DMC?

Orange DMC's team can help you organize a fabulous itinerary filled with market walks, cooking workshops, chef interactions, and ethnic food tastings. While you're at it, discover more about our wines, gins and single malts – some of India's best-kept secrets!

Contact us today to learn more about how we can help you put together a mouthwatering culinary journey.



### THROUGH THE LENS – Wildlife This Winter



#### FELINE PHOTOGRAPHY

Thinking of doing going on a wildlife photography safari this winter? South Asia is the ideal place to capture some of the world's most iconic species with your lens from October onwards.

**TIGER TRAILS:**  
Kaziranga in Assam, Ranthambore in Rajasthan, and Bandhavgarh and Tadoba in Madhya Pradesh are some of the best places to photograph tigers in the wild.

**SNOW LEOPARD SAFARIS:**  
Once the winter chill hits the Trans-Himalayan region, the Snow Leopards descend to a lower altitude, making this a great time to photograph them in Ladakh.

**CLOUDED LEOPARD LAIRS:**  
In the furthest corners of India's north-eastern region, the clouded leopard is a beautiful sight. You can usually spot them in remote jungles like Namdapha and in the forests of Mizoram.

Fascinated by felines? Ask us today to discover more!

*Did you know...*

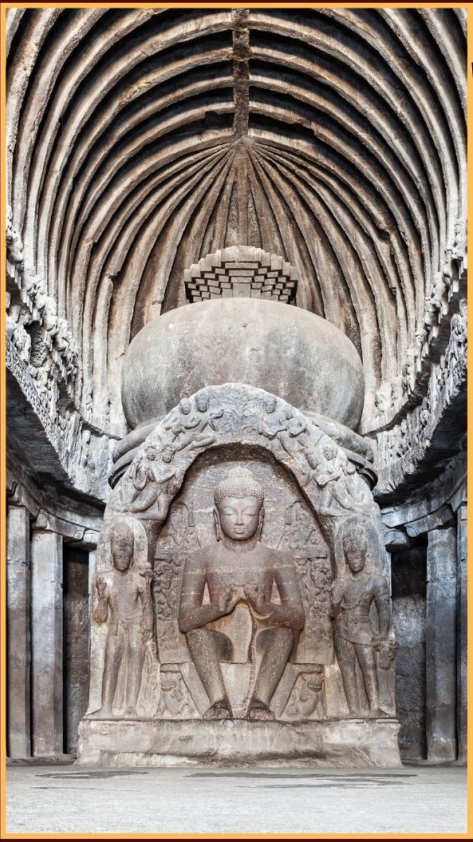
*Situated in western Rajasthan, Jawai is one of the few places where leopards and human-beings co-exist in perfect harmony.*

## ANCIENT HERITAGE IN MAHARASHTRA

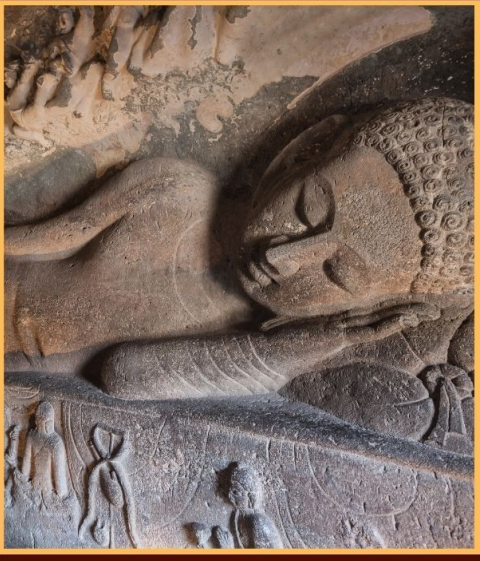
The caves in Ajanta and Ellora are known for their incredibly intricate rock carvings, and depict detailed scenes from Buddhist, Hindu and Jain scriptures.

These are some of the oldest rock carvings known to mankind and both the Ajanta and the Ellora cave clusters are designated UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The thirty caves in Ajanta are primarily Buddhist, featuring a variety of themes, including an enormous reclining Buddha. By contrast, Ellora's art features a blend of Hindu, Buddhist and Jain concepts, drawn from fables and myth. Historians believe that the caves date back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, but the artwork and construction of the monasteries and cloisters within the caves was created in two distinct phases.

About a hundred kilometers away, the city of Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar (formerly known as Aurangabad) has its own charm and there are several sites that are worth a visit. One of these is Bibi ka Maqbara, a beautifully constructed tomb that was commissioned by the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb and his son, Prince Azam Shah, in Dillras Banu Begum's (Aurangzeb's wife) memory. Bibi ka Maqbara has a striking resemblance to the Taj Mahal, the tomb of Aurangzeb's own mother, Mumtaz.



### ART, ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORY IN THE DECCAN PLATEAU.





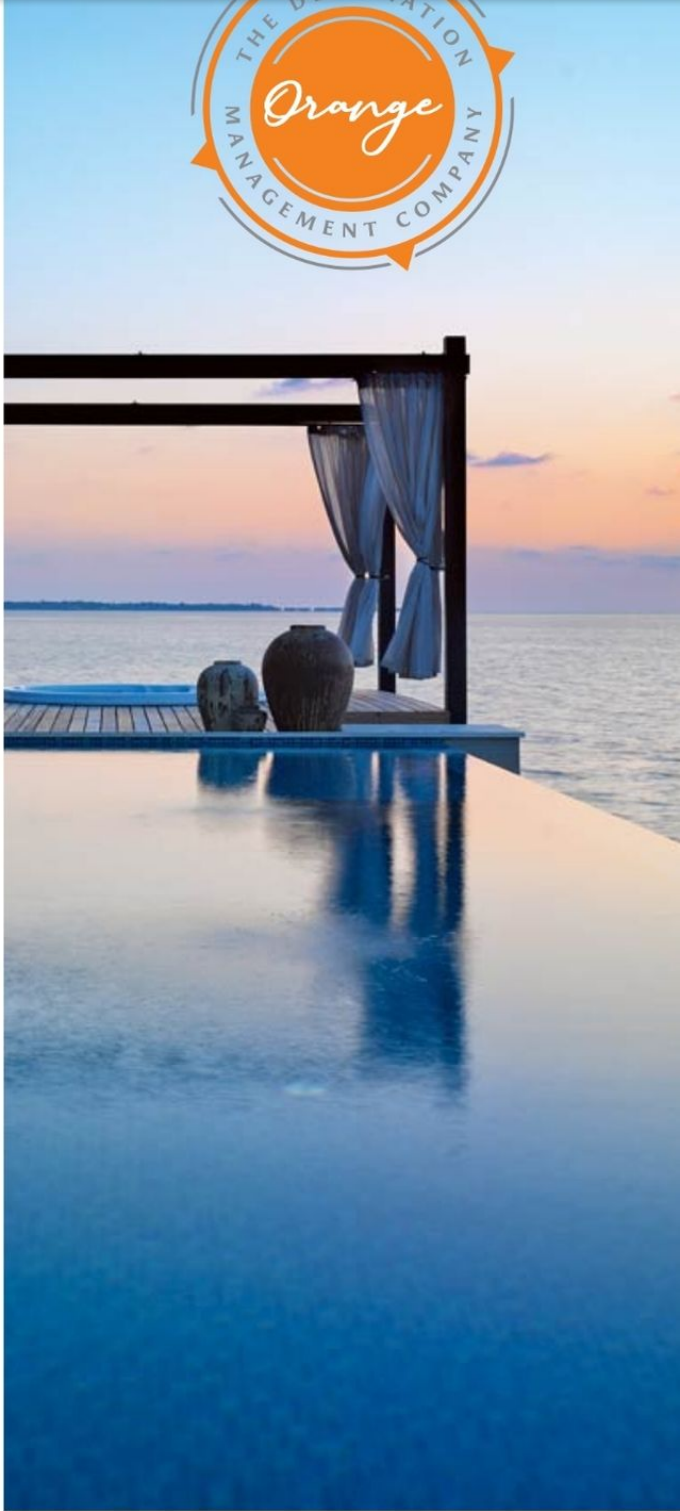
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