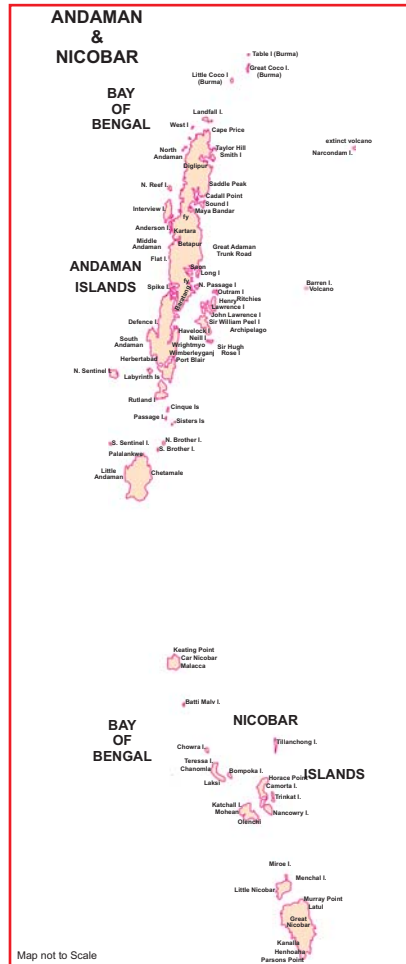


Andaman & Nicobar



Floating in splendid isolation in the Bay of Bengal, 1,200 km off the mainland is an archipelago of 572 emerald islands, stretching as far as 700 km, is the Union Territory of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. However, only 36 of these are inhabited...

PORT BLAIR

The undulating islands are covered with dense forests and endless flowers and birds. The sandy beaches on the edge of the coastline and the sea around the islands offer excellent water sports opportunities. Adventure tourism like trekking, island camping, snorkeling, scuba diving, etc., are the real attractions. The Andaman group comprises the North, Middle, South, Little Andamans and Richies Archipelago along with many smaller islands while Nicobar group consists of Car Nicobar, Great Nicobar, Little Nicobar, Nancowry, Katchal and Chowra. Katchal was the first spot on earth to receive the first rays of the new millennium that dawned in year 2000! The capital, Port Blair, on South Nicobar island, is the gateway to the Union Territory.

City Lights

Cellular Jail, has been a mute witness to the fate of hapless freedom fighters, who were incarcerated in this Jail. The Jail, completed in the year 1906 acquired the name, 'Cellular' because it is entirely made up of individual cells



Cellular Jail

ANDAMAN & NICOBAR

Andaman & Nicobar

for the solitary confinement of prisoners. Now a National Memorial, the saga of the heroic freedom struggle is brought alive in a moving son-et-lumiere daily (230117) at 6 pm (Hindi) and 7.15 pm (English). There is also a Museum and an Art Gallery which is open on all days except Monday from 9 am to 12 noon and 2 pm to 5 pm. The **Andaman Water Sports Complex** has facilities for safe as well as adventure water sports. Besides **Children's Traffic Park**, **Corbyn's Cove** (7 km) is an ideal beach for swimming, surfing and sun-basking. The **Chatham Saw Mill** is one of the oldest and largest mills in Asia. Built on a tiny island, it is connected to Port Blair by a bridge. A short boat ride from Phoenix Bay Jetty, **Ross Island** was the seat of the British Administration. Important ruins include a church, a cemetery, a pool and the chief commissioner's residence. The Indian Navy's small museum, Smritika, has a good collection of old records. Boats are available from **Phoenix Bay** jetty daily except Wednesday. From the same jetty, you can go on Harbour Cruises and enjoy a panoramic view of **Chatham** and **Viper Islands**. Viper Island near Port Blair, earlier housed the old jail. It has ruins of gallows atop a hillock. **Mount Harriet** is the highest point on the island and the Forest Department has a rest house here, surrounded by lush gardens. Jolly Buoy & Redskin are two islands, in the **Mahatma Gandhi Marine Park**, where visitors can view the coral and undersea life in a glass-bottomed boat or by snorkeling. **Museums:** Anthropological Museum (232291), Fisheries Museum

(231848), Forest Museum, Samudrika and Photo Gallery, at Cellular Jail.

Gourmet's Delights

New Lighthouse (excellent seafood), **The China Room** (al fresco dining), **Gem Continental** (Chinese, Continental, Tandoori).

Excursions

Havelock, takes 2-4 hours to reach by ship, and has the clearest blue waters, ideal for snorkeling. Plenty of accommodation options are available in private hotel resorts and tourism department accommodation.

Travel Advice

* **Foreigners Entry:** Foreign nationals require stay permits that can be obtained for a maximum of one month, either on arrival at Port Blair or from Indian missions overseas, immigration authorities at metro airports or Foreign Registration Offices. Tribal areas are out of bounds for everybody, including Indians. Special permission can be obtained from Dy. Commissioner, Andaman, Port Blair.

Facts at a Glance

Access: By Air: Indian Airlines-Alliance Air and Jet Airways have flights to Port Blair from Kolkata and Chennai. **By Sea:** The Shipping Corporation of India has four services a month from Kolkata and Chennai and once from Vishakhapatnam. The journey time ranges from 55 to 65 hours. **Distances:** Kolkata 1,255 km, Chennai 1,190 km, Vishakhapatnam

1,200 km. **Getting Around:** Most places on the island can be covered on foot. Taxis are available but unmetered. There are four inter-island passenger-cum-cargo vessels operating between Port Blair and other islands. For schedules contact: 220725. **Climate:** Tropical. **Temperatures:** Min 23°C; Max 31°C. Humidity: 70 to 90%. **Annual Rainfall:** 3,000 mm (May to mid-Sept. & Nov. to Jan.). **Best time to visit:** October to May.

- **City Code:** 03192
- **Indian Airlines:** 233108, 234744
- **Jet Airways:** 236922, 235911
- **Shipping Corporation:** 233347
- **Rail Reservations:** 233042
- **India Tourism:** 230066
- **Tourism Information Centre:** 232694
- **Directorate of Tourism:** 231346
- **City Tours:** 234060
- **Car Rentals:** Island Travels: 233358, TSG Travels: 232894
- **Banks:** SBI: 230224
- **Currency Exchange:** Island Travels: 233358, LN Travels, Shompen Travels: 232452
- **Hospitals:** G B Pant: 232102

Home Away From Home

Fortune Resort Bay Island: 234101, Peerless Resort: 233461, Sinclairs Bay View: 233159, Hornbill's Nest Resort: 229245.

LAKSHADWEEP

The coral islands of Lakshadweep, in the Indian Ocean, offer nature at its best to travellers. Of a total of 36, only 11 islands are inhabited, and to ensure that ecology remains undisturbed, only five of them have been opened to



Minicoy

domestic tourists – **Kavaratti, Kalpeni, Kadmat, Minicoy and Agatti. Kadmat and Bangaram** have been opened for international tourists. Rich coral and marine life, blue lagoons, coconut groves, unsullied environment, Lakshadweep is a dream destination for solitude seekers. Tour packages are available inclusive of accommodation in the ships and tourist cottages. These are: **Coral Reef**, covering Minicoy, Kavaratti and Kalpeni; **Swaying Palm**, covering Minicoy; **Coconut Grove**, to Kalpeni; Paradise Island, covering Kavaratti; and Kadmat Beach Resorts. For the international and domestic traveller, there is a package to **Bangaram Island Resort**. Packages on glass-bottomed boats are also available.



Bangaram

Gourmet's Delights

Spicy, coconut-rich food and fish – curried, fried or barbecued, is a

ANDAMAN & NICOBAR

Andaman & Nicobar

speciality. You can also sample Indian and continental food at any of the resorts. The **Bangaram Resort** has an excellent restaurant.

Travel Advice

- * Alcohol is banned, and picking of coral is a punishable offence.
- * Tourists require an entry permit to for the islands.
- * Drugs (narcotics), swimming or sunbathing in the nude is prohibited.
- * Venturing out of your island lagoon without permission or a proper escort – can be risky.
- * Coconut trees are privately owned, and unauthorised plucking of coconuts is considered a theft.

Entry Process: All visitors to the islands require a permit from the administration. SPORTS, a branch of Lakshadweep Administration organises package tours by ship between September and May. There is a Tuna canning factory on Kavaratti so **by canned Tuna to bring back.**

Access: By Air: Indian Airlines connects Agatti Island from Kochi and Goa. **By Sea:** M V Bharatseema and M V Tipu Sultan, both all weather ships, operate between Kochi (Kerala) and the islands. These ship cruises are part of a package designed by SPORTS (Society for Promotion of Nature Tourism & Sports), the official tourist agency of the islands. Individual tourists cannot access any of the Lakshadweep islands. **Boat Service:** A regular boat service connects all the inhabited islands. **Temperatures:** 27-32°C during September-March; 30-33°C in April-May. **Rainfall:** Mid-May to mid-September. **Best time to visit:** November to March.

City Code: 0542

Agatti: 04894

Kavaratti: 04896

Minicoy: 04892

Sports: 04894-2668387 (Packages can be booked through selected agents, like Ashoka Travel & Tours (Delhi, 23315723), Raj Travels (Mumbai, 23676266), Clipper Voyages (Bangalore, 2292023), Shiv Shakti Travels (Vadodara, 2324091).



Kavaratti