

Madhya Pradesh

Art Gallery (2511334) with its collection of contemporary Indian art. The **Tribal Habitat Museum (Museum of Man)** is an open-air exhibition of tribal art and homes from all over India. Ancient rock-art



Tribal Habitat Museum

shelters are encompassed within the exhibit area. There are craft and pottery demonstrations, and film shows on Saturdays at 4 pm. Other venues are **Ravindra Bhawan** (2540165), **Sangeet Academy** (2553058), **Birla Museum** (2551388).



Birla Museum

Gourmet's Delights

The Bhopali version of Mughlai cuisine can be called the delicacy here. Dishes can be tried at **Karim's**, on Sultania road. **Madina** offers great take-aways while **Manohar Dairy and Restaurant** is famous for sweets. **Aryamandir** (vegetarian *thali*), **Shahnama** (lunch buffet) and **Indian Coffee House** are recommended for a

leisurely cuppa. These are outlets in New and Old Bhopal.

Shopper's Paradise

The narrow lanes of Old Bhopal have similar items as the wider ones in New Bhopal. In Old Bhopal, try the **Chowk** area for gold and silver jewellery and embroidered sarees and **New Bhopal** for sarees, applique skirts and jewellery. The shops in Chowk's narrow alleys are treasure troves of traditional Bhopali crafts: silver jewellery, exquisitely fashioned beadwork, embroidered and sequined velvet purses and cushions.

Mrignayani is the state handicrafts shop, and the registered trade name for MP state handicraft merchandise. Many retail shops carry Mrignayani products. Old Bhopal is closed on Sundays and New Bhopal on Mondays.

Excursions

Bhojpur: 28 km away, this 11th century town with the Bhojeshwar temple dedicated to Shiva, also has an incomplete monolithic Jain shrine containing a colossal statue of Mahavira.

Bhimbetka: 40 km away, the Bhimbetka caves are located amidst



Bhimbetka

forests of teak and sal in the craggy cliffs. Almost a thousand rock shelters with ancient Neolithic paintings depicting the life and times of the people who lived here, are its major appeal.

Neori: 6 km away, has an 11th-century Shiva temple and is a popular picnic spot. **Islamnagar,** 11 km away, has an 18th century palace. At **Ashapuri,** six km north of Bhopal, there are ruined temples and Jain palaces with statues scattered on the ground. **Hathaikheda,** 10 km away, is a peaceful fishing spot.

Facts at a Glance

Access: By Air: IA has daily flights from Bhopal to Mumbai, Indore and Delhi and four flights a week to Gwalior. Jet Airways flights have also been launched. The airport is 6 km from the city-centre. **By Rail:** Bhopal on two Delhi-Mumbai rail routes is serviced by the Delhi/Bhopal Shatabdi Express. Other trains connect the city with Delhi, Mumbai, Agra, Jhansi, Gwalior and Ujjain. The Railway Station is in Old Bhopal. **By Road:** Regular and deluxe buses connect to Sanchi (46 km), Indore (186 km), Ujjain (188 km), Pachmarhi (195 km) and Jabalpur (295 km) on a daily basis, connecting Bhopal to most major cities. The Bus Stand is near the railway station in Old Bhopal. **Temperatures:** Summer: Min 33°C, Max 44°C; Winter: Min 10°C, Max 27°C. **Best time to visit:** Throughout the year, better to avoid summers.

City Code: 0755
Indian Airlines: 2770480, 2646123
Jet Airways: 2760371/2/3
Madhya Pradesh State Tourism

Development Corporation:

2778383, 2774343

Police: 100

Banks: Allahabad Bank: 2564524,
 Bank of Baroda: 2553867

Post Offices:

Bhopal G.P.O.: 2531206,
 T.T. Nagar Main Post Office: 2556692

Hospitals: Aman Hospital: 2577777,
 Apex Hospital: 2543635,
 Ayushman Heart Hospital: 2290268,
 Hajela Hospital: 2773392,
 Kalpataru Hospital: 2574158

Home Away From Home

The Residency: 2270002,
 WelcomHeritage Noor-Us-Sabah
 Palace: 5223333, Jehan Numa Palace
 Hotel: 2661100, Amer Palace:
 2272110, Hotel Lake View Ashok:
 5230090-93, Hotel Ranjit: 2660600.

SANCHI

Sanchi is little more than a small village at the foot of the hill. A copy of the Sanchi guidebook, published by the Archaeological Survey of India, is a help in identifying the structures. The town abounds in Buddhist architecture — stupas, monasteries, temples and pillars dating from the 3rd century BC to the 12th century AD. The **Sanchi Stupa**, the best known of all, was originally built by the Mauryan Emperor Ashoka. There are many other stupas on the hill, some of them tiny votive ones, less than one metre high. Carved with the stories of Buddha's past and present, and incidents from Buddhist history, the **Eastern, Western and Southern Gateways** are the finest specimens of early classical art. The **Northern Gateway**, topped by a broken wheel of



Main Entrance of Stupa

law, is the best preserved of the gateways. Scattered around the site are pillars and their remains. The most important is **Pillar 10**, which was erected by Ashoka and stands close to the southern entrance the great stupa.



Pillar 10 at Sanchi Stupa

The **Archaeological Museum** here houses many items which were discovered during the excavation of Sanchi area. Surrounding the various stupas are ruins of many temples, primary being the **Gupta Temple**. Monasteries housing relics bear strong Hindu elements in their design as they date from the time of transition from Buddhism to Hinduism. A few kms from Sanchi are the relics of the **Satdhara Stupa**, kept in glass casket

which is placed in the inner sanctum of the modern monastery. Between Vidisha and Udaigiri, is the **Heliodorus Pillar**, known locally as the **Khamb Baba** pillar. It was erected in about 140 BC by Heliodorus, a Greek ambassador to the city from Taxila (now in Pakistan). The pillar celebrates his conversion to Hinduism.

Excursions

Vidisha: The ruins of the 2nd century shrine here point to the earliest use of cement in India. Finds from the site are displayed in a museum. King Ashoka's wife is said to have come from Vidisha.

Udaigiri Caves: Cut into the sandstone hill, five km from Vidisha are about 20 Gupta cave shrines dating from 320 to 606 AD.

Raisen: 23 km south of Sanchi, the huge and colourful hilltop fort of Raisen has temples, cannons, three palaces, 40 wells and a large tank. Cave paintings too are worth seeing.

Gyaraspur: 51 km northeast of Sanchi, there are tanks, temples and a fort dating to the 9th and 10th centuries.

Udayapur: 90 km north of Sanchi, the 1059 AD **Neelkantheswara Temple** here is so aligned that the first rays of the morning sun shine on the *shiva lingam* in the sanctum.

Sonari: 10 km away, has eight more stupas.

Andher: 8 km away, has three small well preserved stupas.

Facts at a Glance

Access: By Air: The nearest airport is Bhopal. Sanchi is 46 km via

Diwanganj and 78 km via Raisen. From Bhopal one can hire a taxi or take a bus. **By Rail:** Sanchi lies on the Jhansi-Itrasi section of the Central Railways. The most convenient railhead is Vidisha (10 km). **By Road:** Good, motorable roads connect Sanchi with Bhopal, Indore, Sagar, Gwalior, Vidisha and Raisen, besides other places. **Distances:** Bhopal 46 km, Bhimbetka 92 km, Chanderi 159 km, Indore 232 km, Pachmarhi 241 km, Gwalior 399 km. **Temperatures:** Extreme in Summer: reaches 45°C; Winter: Min 8°C. **Best time to visit:** October to March.

City Code: 0751
Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation:
2340370, 2342606

Home Away From Home

Traveller's Lodge (MPT), Tourist Cafeteria (MPT), P.W.D. Rest house and Buddhist Rest house.

PACHMARHI

The valley, ravines and gorges, sculpted in red sandstone, add their own colour to this land of cascading waterfalls. Deep azure pools are hidden delights and fascinating glimpses of the animal and bird kingdoms make Pachmarhi Madhya Pradesh's most verdant jewel. Green shades embrace the mountains, and everywhere the gentle murmur of flowing water is heard. Pachmarhi is also an archaeological treasure-house. In cave shelters in the **Mahadeo Hills** is an astonishing richness in rock paintings, dating back to 500-800 AD. **Priyadarshini (Forsyth Point)** is the vantage viewing point from where

Pachmarhi was discovered by Captain Forsyth in 1857. The British developed Pachmarhi as a resort and their influence is embodied in its churches and colonial architecture. **Jamuna Prapat (Bee Fall), Apsara Vihar (Fairy Pool), Rajat Prapat (Big Fall), Irene Pool, Handi Khoh, Jalawatara (Duchess Falls) and Sunder Kund (Sunder's Pool)** are many of its cascading falls and pools. They all make for ideal family getaways. **Dhoopgarh** is the highest point in the Satpura range, with a magnificent view of the surrounding ranges.



Jamuna Prapat (Bee Fall)

Excursions

The Bori and Pachmarhi Sanctuaries, Tamia, 78 km away, is a picturesque resort on the Satpura ranges. There are five ancient dwellings excavated in the sandstone rock in a low hill. Pachmarhi derives its name from these **Pandav caves** which, as the legend goes, once provided sanctuary to the five Pandav

brothers. These caves are now protected monuments. **Tridhara (Piccadily Circus)** is a popular picnic spot where two streams meet in a junction. **Vanshree Vihar (Pansy Pool)** is another beautiful spot on the Denwa stream. A wonderful natural amphitheatre in the rock, approached through a cave-like entrance on the south-side is known as **Reechhgarh. Sangam (Fuller's Khud - Waters Meet)** is the lowest of the picnic spots on the Denwa and offers fairly good bathing pools. **Catholic Church**, built in 1892 by the British, its Belgium stained-glass windows add grace and beauty to the building. **Christ Church** was built in 1875. Its 'sanctum-sanctorum' has a hemispherical dome on top with its ribs ending with faces of angels. **Satpura National Park**, 524 sq km in area, spreads through dense forest of evergreen sal, teak and bamboo and is home to the bison, tiger, leopards, etc. **Bison Lodge**, of 1862, is



Chital at Satpura National Park

the oldest house in Pachmarhi. It now houses a natural museum. Some of the best cave shelters and groups of shelters around Pachmarhi are **Dhuandhar, Bharat Neer (Dorothy Deep), Asthachal (Monte Rosa), Harper's Cave, Chieftain's Cave** and **Kites Crag**.

Facts at a Glance

Access: **By Air:** Bhopal (195 km) is the nearest airport. **By Rail:** Pipariya (47 km), on the Mumbai-Howrah mainline via Allahabad, is the convenient railhead. **By Road:** Pachmarhi has regular bus services from Bhopal, Hoshangabad, Nagpur, Pipariya and Chhindwara. MP Tourism also operates coaches from Bhopal. Taxis can be hired from Pipariya. **Temperatures:** Max 37°C during summer, Min 7°C during winter. **Best time to visit:** October to June.

City Code: 07578

Home Away From Home

There are many small and medium range hotels, like Pachmarhi, Saket, Giri Shringar, Mount View, Hill View, Meghdoot, Shilpa besides a couple of guest houses too. **The Satpura Retreat** and most of the holiday homes have multicuisine restaurants. **Amaltas** has a café specialising in South Indian fare.

GWALIOR

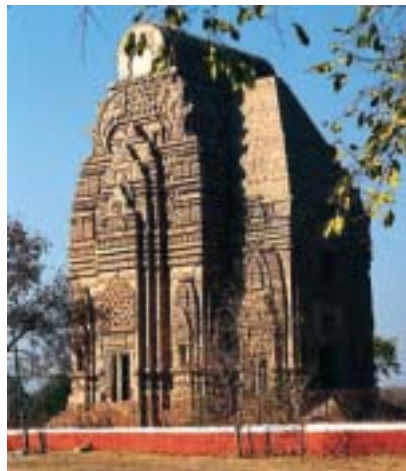
Gwalior could as well be synonymous with its historic and invincible fort, housing temples and ruined palaces within its ramparts. Gwalior's legendary beginning dates back to a meeting between Suraj Sen and the hermit Gwalipa, who lived on the hilltop where the fort now stands and who cured Sen suffering from leprosy. The saint then gave him a new name, Suhan Pal and said that his next 83 generations would rule Gwalior. A scene of palace intrigues and clashes, Gwalior was also affected the most, during the revolt of 1857. Legends of

Tantiya Tope and Rani of Jhansi reverberate through the fort even today. On a clear day the view from the fort walls is superb: you can see old Gwalior at the north-eastern end and far across the plains. The **Man Singh Palace (Man Mandir)**, the southern



Man Singh Palace (Man Mandir)

entrance, **Urbai Gate**, Jain Sculptures, the 9th century **Teli Ka Mandir**, **Sasbahu Temples**, the **Karan Palace**, or **Kirti Mandir**, the **Jahangir Palace** and **Shahjahan Palace**, **Jauhar Kund** are some of the landmarks inside the fort.



Teli Ka Mandir

City Culture

The **Tansen Music Festival**, pays a tribute to the classical music maestro

Tansen. Held in November-December, renowned musicians from the country gather here to perform live. Apart from this, many other fairs and festivals are celebrated in Gwalior.

Gourmet's Delights

A good range is available. **The Indian Coffee House**, **Kwality Restaurant**, **Wenger's**, **Volga**, serve decent Indian food. **The Usha Kiran Palace's** restaurant offers exclusive fare.

Excursions

Dholpur: This is where Aurangzeb's sons fought the battle for succession. **Shivpuri:** 122 km away, located on the Mumbai-Agra highway, has numerous palaces and lakes. **Orchha:** 120 km away, en route Khajuraho was the former capital of Bundela Rajputs. The fort-palace complex by the river is



Orchha Fort-Palace

the major attraction. **Datia:** 69 km away from Gwalior, the seven storeyed palace built by Raja Bir Singh Deo is one of the finest example of Bundela architecture. **Chanderi:** 239 km from Gwalior, the birthplace of beautiful Chanderi sarees, is also renowned for its architectural splendour as can be seen in **Koshak Mahal**, **Jama Masjid**, **Shahzadi Ka Rouza** and **Battisi Bandi**, all built by



Datia Palace

the Sultans of Malwa in the 15th century. **Narwar:** 122 km away, this fort city was the capital of Raja Nal. His love for Damayanti has been the subject of ballads and stories, which form legends of the region. The town is dominated by a fort 500 m above the town. **Pawaya:** 68 km from Gwalior, on the Jhansi road, is a fascinating city of ruins. The life-size statue of **Chaksha Manibhadra** that dates back to 1 AD and the nearby **Dhoomeshwar Mahadeo** temple are the main attractions.

Facts at a Glance

Access: **By Air:** Indian Airlines has 'hopping' flights from Delhi through Gwalior to Bhopal, Indore and Mumbai. **By Rail:** Gwalior is one of the main stations on the Delhi-Mumbai line. Shatabdi Express links Gwalior with Delhi, Agra, Jhansi and Bhopal. On other express trains it takes five hours to Delhi, 2 hours to Agra, 12 hours to Indore and 24 hours to Mumbai from Gwalior. **By Road:** There are regular services to Agra, Jhansi, Shivpuri, Ujjain, Indore, Bhopal, Jabalpur and Khajuraho. Buses also depart from the private bus stand at Lashkar. **Distances:** Bhopal 423 km, Agra 118 km, Shivpuri 112 km, Orchha 120 km, Chanderi 239 km, Khajuraho 275 km, Narwar

122 km, Pawaya 68 km, Sanchi 381 km, Delhi 321 km. **Getting Around:** Cycle-rickshaws, auto-rickshaws, horse-drawn *tongas* are the common modes of transport. Non-metered auto-rickshaws and point to point tempos are also available. Price negotiable. **Temperatures:** Extreme climate, in summer, temperature shoots to 45°C. **Best time to visit:** October to March.

City Code: 0751

Tourist Information: 2340370, 2342606

Tourist Information Center: 2345379

Banks: State Bank of India: 2428495, 2430210, Nagrik Sahakari Bank: 2321603

Hospitals: Anand Smriti, Navkar Nursing Home: 2320465, Janak Hospital: 2322298

Home Away From Home

Hotel Gwalior Regency: 2340670, 2340674; Hotel Tansen Gwalior: 2340370; Usha Kiran Palace: 2323993.

KHAJURAHO

The Khajuraho Temples, a World Heritage Site, are world famous for their erotic carvings on temple panels. Not merely a treatise on the art of love-making, these carvings also show the path of salvation by renouncing earthly pleasures. The Khajuraho temples follow a fairly consistent design pattern that is unique. Externally, the temples consist of successive waves of higher and higher towers culminating in soaring *shikhara* (spires), which top the sanctum. The interiors are as ornate as

the exteriors. Built by the warrior kings of the Chandela dynasty during the 10th 11th centuries, they were discovered in 1838, and the surviving 22 temples are firmly on the world tourism map.

The best way is to take a **Walkman Tour** – pre-recorded audio cassettes



Kendriya Mahadev Temple

can be hired from the MP Tourism counter at the entrance to the Western Group of Temples, closest to the tourist part of Khajuraho. The Western Group also has a **son et lumiere** every evening during winter. Admission is free on Fridays. There is also an Archaeological Survey of India guidebook. The temples are clubbed in Western, Eastern and Southern groups. The eastern group can be subdivided into Jain temples in the walled enclosure while the other four temples are scattered through the small village of Khajuraho. There are only two temples in the southern group, **Duladeo** and **Chaturbhuj**, one is several km south of the river. Close to the western enclosure, the **ASI** museum has a collection of statues and sculptures rescued from around Khajuraho. The **Jain Museum** is filled with statues of 24 tirthankars. **Shilpgram** is a 10-acre complex where craftsmen from various parts of India create ethnic handicrafts. These are sold in the shops within the complex.

Gourmet's Delights

Being a city frequented by tourists, the cuisine is more contemporary than traditional. There are good eateries in the top-end hotels that serve local flavours alongwith international dishes. Otherwise check out **Raja's Café** for snacks and mini-meals; **Delhi Restaurant** for Indian fare; **Shivam** for *thalis* and Gujarati cuisine; **Mediterraneo** for Italian; and **Sakura** for Japanese.

Fairs & Festivals

The Khajuraho dance festival held with the temples as a backdrop in February/March is a week long event.

Shopper's Paradise

There are a number of handicraft shops in the market opposite the Western group of temples and the nearby Gole market. The hotels too have shopping arcades. Photo shops are also located here and cameras are available on hire.

Excursions

Dhubela: 64 km from Khajuraho, along the road to Jhansi, there is a small museum. Exhibits include Shakti cult sculptures, weapons, clothes and other personal belongings of the Bundela kings. **Panna National Park:** 32 km away, the road to Satna



Tiger at Panna National Park

Madhya Pradesh

passes through this park, along the river Ken. Numerous waterfalls in this area are popular picnic spots and can be combined with a visit to the diamond mines at **Majhgawan**, the **Rajgarh Palace** and the temples of Panna town, 48 km from Khajuraho. The park is closed from June to October. Accommodation is available in the Forest Rest House outside the village. Another possibility is spending the night in Tree Houses. **Ajaigarh/ Kalinjar Forts:** 80 km from Khajuraho, Ajaigarh is the large isolated hilltop fort, built by the Chandelas, to protect the local population during attacks and sieges. Kalinjar Fort, 25 km from north, dates back to the Gupta period. **Raneh Falls:** 19 km away, on the Ken river, has famous rock formations. The main attraction is a 5-km-long, 100-foot-deep canyon made of pure crystalline granite. Must visit. **Ken Gharial Sanctuary:** 24 km from the temples, this is a natural home of the long-snouted crocodiles. **Benisagar Lake and Rangan Lake:** 11 km and 25 km away respectively, both are ideal picnic spot suitable for boating and angling. **Pipraghat:** 24 km from the temples, you can do boating, swimming and angling. **Pandav Falls:** 34 km away, they form a picturesque drop in a bowl-shaped valley on river Ken.

Facts at a Glance

Access: By Air: Khajuraho Airport has flights by Indian Airlines, Alliance Air and Jet Airways from Delhi, Agra, Varanasi and Kathmandu. **By Rail:** For those coming from Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai, Jhansi (175 km) is the convenient nearest railhead and for

those travelling from Varanasi and Kolkata, Satna (120 km) is the nearest railhead. From Jhansi, take a MPSRTC bus or taxi to Khajuraho.

By Road: Khajuraho is also well connected by regular and direct bus services from Agra (12 hours), Gwalior (nine hours), and Jhansi (5 1/2 hours). **Distances:** Satna 117 km, Rewa 167 km, Jhansi 175 km, Gwalior 276 km, Allahabad 285 km, Bhopal 372 km. **Temperatures:** Summer: Min 20°C, Max 45°C; Winter: Min 5°C, Max 27°C. **Best time to visit:** October to April. March is recommended as the annual Dance Festival takes place during this month.

City Code: 07686

Indian Airlines: 244035

Jet Airways: 244406

India Tourist Office: 242347, 242348

MPSTDC: 274046

Foreign Currency can be changed at SBI and the Canara Bank.

Home Away From Home

Taj Chandela: 272355; Jass Trident: 272344; Holiday Inn Khajuraho: 272301; Usha Bundela: 272386; Clarks Khajuraho: 274038.

INDORE

Rani Ahilya Bai, the brave Holkar queen, built this city in 18th century from a small village into one of the richest cities in India. It is the centre for trade and textiles. Situated on the **Malwa plateau, on the banks of two small streams** — the Khan and the Saraswati, which unite at the centre of the city. The combined stream flows into the famed Chambal river.

City Lights

Indore was originally known as Indrapur or Indreshwar, and a temple dedicated to Lord Indreshwar, built in 1741, **Sangamnath**, built in the centre of the city, still exists.

For immersion of Ganesh on the night of **Anant Chaudas**, a large procession is taken out. Equally important for the city is **Ahilya Utsav**, marking the death anniversary of Maharani Ahilya Bai.

The history of Indore is inseparable from the history of the Holkar Dynasty. The founder of the House of Holkars was Malhar Rao Holkar, born in 1693. Malhar Rao was succeeded by his grandson on whose death without issue, his mother, Maharani Devi Ahilya Bai ascended the throne. Ahilya Bai contributed vastly to the heritage of India by establishing several religious edifices remarkable in architecture. The **Lal Baug Palace** is one of the grandest monuments of the Holkar dynasty. Its construction began in 1886 under Tukoji Rao Holkar II and was carried out in three phases. The blend of European influence and Maratha school of architecture shows through in the exquisite villa like palace. **Bada Ganpati** is the largest Ganesh idol in the world, measuring 25 ft from crown



Kanch Mandir

to foot, built in 1875. Made by late Seth Hukumchand the, **Kanch Mandir** is an architectural marvel in glass. The walls, ceiling, floors, pillars, door knobs are entirely inlaid with glass chamber which multiplies the three statues of Lord Mahavir



Annapurna Temple

installed there, into an infinite number. The architecture of the **Annapurna Temple** has been inspired by the Meenakshi temple of Madurai. Inside, apart from the main temple of Annapurna Devi are also temples of Shiva, Kal Bhairav, Hanuman and a Pravachan hall. The **Town Hall**, made in 1904, used to be one of the prettiest buildings of Indore. Its architectural style – Indo-Gothic made in seoni stone, with domes and steeples are a landmark of Indore city today. **Rajwada** was burnt down three times in its history, so only the front façade remains. This two-century old seven-storeyed historic palace of the Holkars is built in a mixture of Muslim, Maratha and French styles. **Chhatri Baug** has cenotaphs erected in memory of the dead Holkar rulers and their family. The main collection of tombs is housed in two compounds, one on the northern bank of the Khan river besides the MG road and the other to the south, across the river. **Nehru Park**, is the oldest and most

Madhya Pradesh

centrally located and also operates a miniature train. **Meghdoot Upavan** has a sprawling lawn and lighted fountains, landscaped gardens and variety of fancy swings. **Kamla Nehru Park** combines the pleasures of a park and zoo.

Amusement Parks: Mayank's Blue Water Park: 284259, Fun & Food: 874483, Mangal Merryland: 271329.

Gourmet's Delights

You can get south Indian food at **Indian Coffee House, Café Udipi, Ding Dong** and **Woodlands**. There are many bakeries too, like **Fantasy, Bombay Bakery, New Bombay Bakery** and **Ever Fresh**. MG road is the haven for restaurants, here you have fast food – **Campus, Atithi, Anjora, Kanchan** and **Surya** for Chinese food. **Ramanbhai Ki Dukan, Anand Bazar** and **Mhow Ke Lala Agrawala** are popular for Indian *chaat*. Mughlai and non-vegetarian restaurants include **Chandini, Kandahar** and **Moti Mahal Bar & Restaurant**. **Classic** and **Nafees** are other popular choices.

Shopper's Paradise

The Jhabua bell metal, leather products, jewellery and Maheshwari sarees are prime buys from Indore. You can go to **Kothari Market** for high fashion readymades, footwear, toys, books etc., **Rampurawala building** for books, cards, gifts, Jaipur handicrafts and sweets. **Apollo Towers** is the biggest shopping cum commercial complex in MP. **Ada Bazaar** to buy women's trinkets, knick-knacks, fancy items and a wide variety of glass and lac bangles.

Sarafa is the most famous bazaar for silver and gold shops, jewellery of traditional and modern styles.

Marothia Bazaar has a fascinating show of ceremonial accessories. **Bohra Bazaar** is the market for leather goods. **Mrignayani** on Krishanpur bridge is a viable place for state's handicrafts.

Excursions

Deoguradia: 8 km away, on Nemawar road, here stands a half-rock monolithic temple dating back to 7th century, but which was redone in 18th century by Ahilya Bai. The original Shivalinga is 12 ft underwater, in a sunken temple above which the present temple is constructed. Every Shivratri (mid-Feb) a fair is held for



Bahubali statue at Gomatigiri

three days in honour of the deity, Shri Gutkeshwar Mahadeo. **Gomatigiri:** In 1981, the M.P government donated a hillock to the Jain Samaj, who constructed a 21 ft statue of lord Gomateshwar, a replica of the Bahubali statue of Shravanbelgola. Also built are 24 marble temples with *shikhars*, for each tirthankar. It also has a guest-house, dharamshala and restaurant. **Bijaysen Tekri:** A small hillock housing Border Security Arms Museum in a former guest house of Holkars. It also has a small temple of

Bijasen Mata, built in 1920, which gives a magnificent view of the sunset. A mela is held here during Navratri. **Patal Pani:** 36 km away, is famous for its scenic waterfall, spanning a height of 150 feet into a kund whose depth is still unknown. **Omkareshwar & Maheshwar:** An island shaped like the 'Om', is located at the confluence of the Narmada and Kaveri rivers. It has the temple of one of the 12 *Jyotirlingas*. Maheshwar is on the bank of the Narmada, and finds mention in the **mythological epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata**. The temples and fort here are worth visiting. You can reach by bus from Indore, Ujjain or Khandwa. Maheshwari sarees are a must buy from here.

Facts at a Glance

Access: By Air: Indore Airport is 10 km from the city. Indian Airlines has daily flights to Mumbai, Delhi, and Bhopal. There are also twice-weekly flights to Ahmedabad. Jet Airways has also started services to Mumbai and Delhi. **By Rail:** Indore is connected to Delhi, Mumbai, Jammu Tawi, Kolkata, Cochin and Jaipur with good express trains. Metre gauge routes connect Indore with Ajmer, Chittorgarh, Khandwa and Kachiguda. While the fast Intercity Express runs between Indore and Bhopal, shuttle services operate to and from Ujjain and Mhow. **Railway Station:** Near Gandhi Hall, in the heart of the city, it's easily accessible from the main hotels. Enquiry Tel: 131, Reservation Tel: 0731-2521685. **By Road:** Indore is on National Highway No.3, connected to Mumbai (602 km), Agra (606 km), Gwalior (486 km) and Ahmedabad (384 km) by

the Agra-Mumbai Road (NH 3) that runs through the city. Apart from the MP State Transport Corporation, the state roadways of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Rajasthan also operate services to all the nearby cities like Vadodara (410 km), Jaipur (600 km) and Udaipur (390 km). **Bus Stands:** Sarvate Bus Stand (Tel: 0731-2465688) near the railway station is the most important hub for GSRTC services. Rajasthan state transport buses depart from Gangwal Bus Stand (Tel: 0731-2480688). To avail good private services, you need to go to the Indira Complex Bus Stand near the Navlakha Chauraha (Tel: 0731-2413585). **Distances:** Ujjain 80 km, Mandu 95 km, Ratlam 120 km, Omkareshwar 88 km. **Getting Around:** Local transport includes buses, scooters, taxis, *tongas*, auto-rickshaws. The auto-rickshaws are cheap and the best option one should select to go around. But make sure that they use their meters and also very few of the drivers understand English. **Temperatures:** Summer: Min 23°C, Max 38°C; Winter: Min 6°C, Max 24°C. **Best time to visit:** October to March.

City Code: 0731
Indian Airlines: 2023031
Jet Airways: 2854384
 MP STDC: 2521818, 2528653.
Banks: Allahabad Bank: 2540317, Andhra Bank: 2530961, Bank of Baroda: 2542023

Hospitals: Anand Hospital: 2472121-24, Apollo Nursing Home: 2430111, Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalaya: 2431909, City Orthopaedic & Accident Hospital: 2533400
Police: 100

Home Away From Home

Fortune Landmark Indore: 2557700, Sayaji: 2552121, President Planet: 2244000, Princes' Palace: 2517940, Indotels Manor House: 2434862, Hotel Crown Palace: 2531970, Kanchan: 2522391, Central Hotel: 2435621.

MANDU

Mandu, 100 km from Indore, was founded as a fortress and a retreat in the 10th century, which became an important centre by the 13th century. So beautiful is the place that its Muslim rulers called it Shadiabad, the 'city of joy'. Of course, it is the love story of singer Rani Roopmati and prince-poet Baz Bahadur that lends it, its romantic charm. The balladeers of Malwa still sing of the romance of these royal lovers, and high up on the crest of a hill, Roopmati's Pavilion still gazes down at Baz Bahadur's Palace, a magnificent expression of Afghan architecture. Under Mughal rule, Mandu was a pleasure resort, its lakes and palaces, the scenes of splendid and extravagant festivities. The glory lives on, in legends and songs, chronicled for posterity.

City Lights

The monuments can be divided into three categories: the **Royal Enclave**,



Jahaz Mahal

the **Central Group** and **Rewa Kund Group**. The royal enclave includes **Jahaz Mahal** and **Hindola Mahal**; the central group has **Hoshang Shah's Tomb, Jami Masjid, Ashrafi Mahal**;



Jami Masjid

and the **Rewa Kund group** has **Rewa Kund, Baz Bahadur Palace** and **Roopmati Pavilion**. Then there are some more monuments which are not part of any of the groups, like the **Nilkanth Shrine** and palace, **Hathi Mahal, Darya Khan's Tomb, Dai Ka Mahal**, all worth giving a visit.

Fairs & Festivals

Festive atmosphere prevails in Mandu in September-October, when **Ganesha Chaturthi** is celebrated. Excellent pieces of art & crafts made in clay, wood, metal, bamboo, cloth, leaves are visual treats and good purchases for decoration and gifts. The MPTDC organises the **Malwa festivals** in Indore, Ujjain and Mandu. Among other things, a cultural programme is also organised.

Shopping

Local handicrafts and items make good souvenirs and decorative pieces. Items made of gold and silver are particularly popular. One can buy handloom fabric and colourful garments. One can also look for

leather work.

Facts at a Glance

Access: By Air: The nearest airport is at Indore, 99 km away, connected to Mumbai, Delhi, Gwalior and Bhopal.

By Rail: Convenient railheads are Ratlam (124 km) on the Mumbai-Delhi main line and Indore (99 km).

By Road: Regular bus services connect Mandu with Indore, Dhar, Mhow, Ratlam, Ujjain and Bhopal.

Distances: Indore 100 km, Bhopal 285 km, Maheshwar 63 km, Alwar 142 km, Bharatpur 176 km.

Getting Around: Auto-rickshaw and cycle-rickshaw are common modes of transportation in the city.

Temperatures: Summer: Min 30°C, Max 44°C; Winter: Min 10°C, Max 20°C. **Best time to visit:** October to March.

City Code: 07292

MPSTDC: 63235

Home Away From Home

Tourist Cottages: 263235, Travellers Lodge: 263221, both managed by MPSTDC, also located in the heart of the city is Hotel Rupmati.

JABALPUR

Jabalpur is more famous for the gorge on the Narmada river, known as the Marble Rocks, than anything else. Though it is a major administrative and educational center and the army headquarters for the states of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. Jabalpur's active Christian community maintains a number of Christian schools, colleges and churches scattered throughout the cantonment area.

City Lights

Built by the Gond ruler, Raja Madan Shah, in 1116 atop a rocky hill, the **Madan Mahal Fort** dominates the skyline and provides a panoramic view of the town. **Sangram Sagar** and **Bajnamath** were built by Sangram Shah, between 1480-1540. **Rani Durgavati Memorial and Museum** houses a fine collection of sculptures, inscriptions and prehistoric relics.



Marble Rocks

Tilwara Ghat is where Mahatma Gandhi's ashes were immersed in the Narmada, while **Mala Devi Mandir**, **Pisan Hari Jain Temples** and **Roopnath** are some of the other sites in and around Jabalpur which merit a visit. **The Marble Rocks** are known locally as **Bhedaghat**. This gorge on the Narmada river is 22 km from Jabalpur. The gleaming white and pink



Dhuandhar Waterfalls

Madhya Pradesh

cliffs rise sheer from the clear water and are a very impressive sight, especially by moonlight. The best way to see the long gorge is by a shared rowboat. These ply all day, every day from the jetty at the bottom of the gorge. The cliffs at the foot of the gorge are floodlit at night. At the head of the gorge is the **Dhuandhar** or Smoke Cascade. All around the falls, are hundreds of stalls selling marble carvings, much of it fairly clichéd but some nice pieces can be found. Above the lower end of the gorge, a flight of over 100 steps lead to Madanpur temple, with its damaged images of the 64 yoginis, or attendants of the goddess Kali.

Gourmet's Delights

It is advisable to eat at restaurants attached to hotels. **The Grub Room** at Jackson's Hotel has a wide choice. **Haveli Restaurant**, at Hotel Krishna and **Zayaka Restaurant** at the Rishi Regency serve good Indian food. **Indian Coffee House** is reliable and **Woodlands** at the Samdariya is recommended.

Facts at a Glance

Access: By Rail: Jabalpur is on the main Mumbai-Howrah line (via Allahabad). So, it is well connected to other major cities. There are direct rail connections between Jabalpur and Bhopal, Satna, Indore, Varanasi, etc. **By Road:** Jabalpur is well connected to other cities in M.P. as well as some cities of neighbouring states of U.P. and Maharashtra. There are direct buses to Bhopal, Indore, Varanasi, Nagpur, Allahabad, Khajuraho, etc. **Distances:** Bhopal 295 km.

Bandhavgarh 197km. Getting

Around: Auto-rickshaw and cycle-rickshaw are easily available. **Temperatures:** Summer: Min 32°C, Max 40°C; Winter: Min 8°C, Max 18°C. **Best time to visit:** October to March.

City Code: 0761

Home Away From Home

Kalchuri: 2321490, Samdariya: 2411872, Krishna: 2315153, Kartik: 2322448, Jackson: 2322448, 2323945.

UJJAIN

Modern Ujjain is situated on the banks of the river Shipra, regarded since time immemorial, as sacred. On the ancient trade route, Ujjain has a distinguished history, whose origins are lost in the mists of the time. It was an important city during Mauryan rule, when it was known as Avantika. Later, it was attractive to Chandragupta II, who ruled from here rather than from his actual capital, Pataliputra. It was at his court that Kalidasa, one of Hinduism's most revered poets, wrote 'Meghdoota' with its famous lyrical description of the city and its people.

City Lights

Ujjain abounds in temples, with hoary traditions attached to each of them. **Bade Ganeshji Ka Mandir** situated above the tank near the **Mahakaleshwar** temple, enshrines a huge artistic sculpture of Ganesh. The **Chintaman Ganesh** temple is built across the Shipra on the Fatehabad railway line. Worshippers throng to this temple because the deity here is traditionally known as Chintaharan Ganesh meaning "the assurer of

freedom from worldly anxieties". **Pir Matsyendranath** is an attractive spot on the banks of the Shipra close to the **Bhartihari Caves** and the **Gadkalika** temple. **Kaliadeh Palace** has the flowing river on both sides and man-made tanks and channels provide a spectacular backdrop. **Durgadas Ki Chhatri** glows like a small jewel in the surrounding lush landscape. Vir Durgadas fought for the independence of Jodhpur after the death of Maharaj Jaswant Singh and helped Ajit Singh to ascend the throne against the wishes of Aurangzeb. **Harsiddhi Temple** was reconstructed during the Maratha period and two pillars adorned with lamps are special features of Maratha art. **Siddhavat**, the banyan tree on the banks of the Shipra, has been vested with religious sanctity. The ancient temple of **Kal Bhairava** too draws



Mahakaleshwar Temple

followers. **Gopal Mandir** is a beautiful example of Maratha architecture. **Navagraha Mandir (Triveni)** dedicated to the nine planets, attracts large crowds on new

moon days falling on Saturdays. **Mahakaleshwar**, the presiding deity of time, Shiva, in all his splendour reigns eternal in Ujjain.

Gourmet's Delights

There are a number of places to eat, like **Chanakya**, **Sudama**, **Ankur**, at Hotel Atlas and **Nauratna Restaurant** at Shipra Hotel.

Dewas: 36 km from Indore on the National Highway No. 3, Dewas is famous for its hill-top temple of Devi



MADHYA PRADESH

Ashtamukhi Pashupatinath Temple

Chamunda. **Agar:** 66 km from Ujjain, is an ancient archaeological site. **Nagda:** 60 km away, is an industrial town with ancient temples. **Sailana:** 21 km from Ratlam, is famous for its

Madhya Pradesh

cactus garden with over 1200 species of cactii. **Maksi:** 39 km from Ujjain, is



Gandhi Sagar Dam

famous for Jain temples. **Mandsaur:** 84 km from Ratlam, is known for the **Ashtamukhi Pashupatinath Temple** situated on the river Sivana. **Gandhi Sagar:** The river Chambal has been dammed at Gandhi Sagar, situated 91 km from Neemuch, at the border of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The water spread is extremely scenic and picturesque.

Bhanpura: 127 km from Mandsaur, it has a museum depicting the popular arts of Mandsaur.

Facts at a Glance

Access: By Air: Nearest airport is Indore (55 km) which is connected by flights with Delhi, Gwalior, Bhopal and Mumbai. **By Rail:** The overnight Malwa Express is the fastest link with Delhi. It takes 15 1/2 hours to New Delhi, via Bhopal, Jhansi, and Agra. A daily express connects Ujjain with Indore, Bhopal, Jabalpur and Bilaspur. For Mumbai, you need to change train at Nagda. **By Road:** Regular bus services connect Ujjain with Indore, Bhopal, Ratlam, Gwalior, Mandu,

Dhar and Omkareshwar. A few buses connect Ujjain with Kota in Rajasthan.

City Code: 0734

Home Away From Home

Ujjain Hotel Shipra: 2551495-96,
Yatri Niwas: 2511398, Welcom-
Heritage Fort Amla – a 45 minute
drive away: (0731) 5070451.

KANHA NATIONAL PARK

Thick sal forests, tall bamboos, swaying grasslands and meandering rivers – this is what Kanha is all about. Located in the Mandla district of



Tiger at Kanha National Park

Madhya Pradesh, **Kanha National Park** is a tiger reserve that extends over an area of over 1940 sq km. This is the place that has been described by Rudyard Kipling in 'The Jungle Book'. A horse-shoe shaped valley, bounded by the spurs of the Mokal presents an interesting topography. Steep rocky escarpments along the edges offer breathtaking views of the valley. The park was created in 1955 by a special law and since then has dedicated itself in preserving a variety of animal species. Many endangered species have indeed been saved here. A landmark at Kanha is the preservation of the hard ground Barasingha even as gaur, the Indian bison and dhole, the Indian wild dog, roam here freely.

There are 22 species of mammals, three-striped squirrels, monkeys and apes, hyena, wild pigs, deer and black bucks. The Indian jackal, jungle cat, leopard, blue bull can also be spotted here. There are almost 200 species of birds in Kanha. Take a forest department guide to go around the park who will take you to the exact locations where animals can be seen in their natural habitat. Touring is usually on jeeps. These jeeps can be hired from the MPTDC. Elephant safaris are mainly to spot tigers. Jeeps can be hired from the MPTDC manager at Kisli and Mukki. Remember to book the jeep one day before. And while there, do visit **Bamni Dadar**, the sunset point.

Facts at a Glance

Access: By Air: Jabalpur is the nearest airport (170 km) but is usually closed. Nagpur is the second-best choice, at 270 km. **By Rail:** Jabalpur again is the most convenient railhead with services from many parts of the

country. **By Road:** From Jabalpur, take the road to Mandla (95 km), and then the highway to Seoni till Chiraidongri. Turn off to Khatia, the entrance to the park, and Kisli, another major tourist centre in the park. You can also come from Nagpur side via Bhandara, Balaghat and Baihar, to Mukki, the second entrance to the park. Just remember entry is prohibited after dark. **Temperatures:** Summer: Min 24°C, Max 40°C; Winter: Min 11°C, Max 24°C. **Best time to visit:** February to May. The park remains closed from July to October.

City Code: 07637

Home Away From Home

WelcomHeritage Kanha Jungle Lodge: 216015, Royal Tiger Resort: 216028. **Inside the park:** MPSTDC's Baghira Log Huts: (07649) 277227, Tuli Tiger Resort: 277221, 2534784-88 and Tourist Hostel.



Tiger at Bandhavgarh National Park

Initially this park was the royal hunting ground for the rulers of Rewa. At present, the Bandhavgarh Park covers 448 sq km though in 1968 it had an area of 105.4 sq km. The density of tigers is among the highest at this park. They once roamed freely but thanks to extensive hunting (Maharaja Venkat Raman Singh shot 111 tigers by 1914), their population came down drastically. The last known capture of the white tiger was in 1951, Mohun, believed to have fathered many a cub in Indian zoos and outside. 'Mohun' is now stuffed and on display in the palace of the Maharaja of Rewa. Bandhavgarh is densely populated



Bandhavgarh Hill

with other animal species too. The great *gaur*, the Indian bison, the *sambar*, barking deer and *nilgai* are also common sights in the open areas of the park. At the centre of the park is the **Bandhavgarh Hill**, surrounded by many smaller hills separated by valleys, ending in small swampy meadows called *bohera*. Bamboo is found all over the park. The ancient **Fort of Bandhavgarh** adds grace to the park. Climb the fort to get a bird's eye view of the park. The vegetation is dry deciduous. About half of the park

is covered with sal trees. There are mixed forests in the higher reaches of the hills. Grassy meadow patches occur in the valley and along the *nalas*. The park sustains all those species which are typical to Central India.

There are 22 species of mammals which include *langurs* and *rhesus macaque*; the jackal, bangal fox, bears, ratel, mongoose, hyena, jungle cat, leopard and tiger form the core carnivore population. The animals frequently sighted are wild pig, spotted deer, sambar, dhole, the small Indian civet, palm squirrel and lesser bandicoot rat. The park holds some 250 odd species of birds along the streams and marshes. Reptilian fauna include cobra, krait, viper, rat snake, python, turtle and a large number of lizard varieties, including *vanarus*.

Travel Advice

* The park can be entered on elephant back and/or in a jeep and/or by car. Then you may go for a safari. Always accompanied by a forest department guide. The best time to visit the park is early in the morning or after 4 p.m.

Facts at a Glance

Access: The best option is Khajuraho (210 km), from where it is a 5-6 hours drive. **By Rail:** Railheads like Jabalpur (164 km), Katni (102 km), Satna (120 km), Umaria (35 km) facilitate access to Bandhavgarh. **By Road:** You can come via Jabalpur, Katni or Satna. Buses and taxis are available from these places. **Temperatures:** Summer: Min 35°C, Max 42°C; Winter: Min 4°C, Max 18°C. **Best time to visit:** November to