

GOA · 19-23 AUGUST 2026

Five Days in Goa

with the friends who go way back

Julien Day School, Elgin Road · Kolkata — Batch of 1996, celebrating 30 years
Monsoon Goa · Airbnb villa in Arpora, North Goa · eleven friends

The crew

Dwaipayan Mojumder	Pritam Kumar	Poulomi Saha
Avro Mukherjee	Prasenjit Daw	Amrita Sen
Maya Chowdhury	Nabanita Sarkar	Tanushree Dutta
Rajneel Sengupta	Pallav Mitra	

Where we stay

[Airbnb villa, Arpora](#) — [view the listing](#) · [booking confirmation](#)

Every distance below is approximate and drive times are padded for August rain. Tap any “Directions” link to open the leg in Google Maps.

Day 1 · 19 Aug 2026 (Wednesday)

Arrival & Coastal Soft Landing

Check-in, then a gentle first evening at Candolim / Sinquerim

Route: Goa Airport → Arpora stay → Candolim / Sinquerim Beach

Free evening: Evening kept deliberately unhurried — no fixed plan after dinner. Reunion adda at the villa, music, cards, whatever the mood is.

Distances & driving directions

Leg	Distance	Drive time	Map
Manohar Intl Airport (Mopa) → Arpora villa Prepaid taxi / GoaMiles counter at arrivals. If you land at Dabolim instead, it is ≈ 42 km / 75–90 min via the Zuari bridge.	≈ 33 km	50–65 min	Directions
Arpora villa → Candolim / Sinquerim Beach Via Saligao–Candolim road. Evening traffic near Candolim market is the only slow bit.	≈ 7 km	18–25 min	Directions

The day, hour by hour

10:50 · Depart Kolkata (CCU)

Main group flies out of Kolkata at 10:50. Dwai & Pritam reach earlier and will be at the villa by around 16:00.

- › Web check-in the night before and travel light on cabin bags.
- › Keep a printed/offline copy of the Airbnb address and host number.

14:35 · Arrive Goa Airport (Mopa / Dabolim)

Collect baggage and transfer to the stay in Arpora. Prepaid taxi counters are reliable; app cabs can be patchy at the airport.

- › Pick up local SIM/data if needed
- › Grab cash from an airport ATM — many shacks are cash-only.

16:00 · Check-in at the Arpora villa

Freshen up, claim rooms, and order lunch/snacks on Zomato or Swiggy so nobody loses beach time to a restaurant queue.

- › Do a quick inventory of the kitchen and pool area
- › Agree on a common kitty for shared expenses today itself.

17:30 · Candolim & Sinquerim Beach

A 15–20 minute drive to a wide, calm stretch of sand that is far less frantic than Baga or Calangute — the perfect opening evening.

History: Sinquerim sits directly below Fort Aguada; the headland here has guarded the Mandovi estuary since 1612. Candolim grew as the quiet Portuguese-era village next door.

- › Sunset is around 18:55 in August — reach by 18:00 for the good light.
- › Hookah, coconut water and a slow stroll; swim only where locals are swimming.

19:30 · Dinner at a beach shack

First proper Goan meal — try prawn balchão, rechad mackerel, chicken cafreal and a plate of fish curry rice.

- › Ask the price before ordering seafood by weight
- › Feni is strong — respect it.

21:00 · Back to the villa · Book tomorrow's car

Non-negotiable action item: confirm the self-drive car for the North Goa trail tonight. Morning bookings get expensive and scarce.

- › Photograph existing scratches before driving off

› Check helmet/fuel level and get the owner's number on WhatsApp.

Do's	Don'ts
✓ Confirm the self-drive car for Day 2 before sleeping. ✓ Keep the villa's exact pin location shared in the group. ✓ Carry cash — many shacks don't take cards.	✗ Don't plan anything heavy on arrival day; travel fatigue is real. ✗ Don't swim after dark or after drinking. ✗ Don't leave bags unattended on the beach.

Day 2 · 20 Aug 2026 (Thursday)

North Goa Forts, Cliffs & the Baga Night

Aguada → Chapora → Vagator/Anjuna → Morjim → Baga sunset

Route: Fort Aguada → Chapora Fort → Vagator / Anjuna (lunch) → Anjuna Beach → Morjim → Baga

Distances & driving directions

Leg	Distance	Drive time	Map
Arpora → Fort Aguada	≈ 10 km	25 min	Directions
Fort Aguada → Chapora Fort Coastal road via Calangute-Baga-Anjuna; slow but scenic.	≈ 17 km	40–45 min	Directions
Chapora → Vagator / Anjuna (lunch)	≈ 4 km	10–12 min	Directions
Anjuna → Morjim Beach Over the Siolim bridge across the Chapora river.	≈ 14 km	30–35 min	Directions
Morjim → Baga Beach	≈ 20 km	45 min	Directions
Baga → Arpora villa	≈ 4 km	12 min	Directions

The day, hour by hour

08:30 · Breakfast & departure

Breakfast at the villa, car rolls out by 09:45. Fuel up on the way.

- › Download offline Google Maps for all of Goa
- › Carry a dry bag — August showers arrive without warning.

10:00 · Fort Aguada

A monumental laterite fort on the headland where the Mandovi meets the Arabian Sea. Ramparts, a four-storey lighthouse and a giant freshwater cistern. Entry ₹25/person; allow 60–70 minutes.

History: Built by the Portuguese in 1612 as their strongest coastal defence against the Dutch and Marathas. Its cistern stored 2.3 million gallons of water — the reason passing ships stopped here ('agua' = water).

- › Go early, there's almost no shade
- › The lighthouse side has the best sea-facing frames.

11:30 · Chapora Fort

The 'Dil Chahta Hai' fort — a short, easy climb rewarded with a 270° sweep over Vagator beach, the Chapora river mouth and Morjim on the far bank. ~45 minutes.

History: Originally a Muslim-era stronghold (Shahpura), rebuilt by the Portuguese in 1717. It changed hands with the Marathas repeatedly before being abandoned in 1892.

- › Grip shoes — the laterite gets slippery in monsoon
- › Sunset here is stunning, but it's on the plan for Baga today.

13:00 · Lunch at Vagator / Anjuna

Seaside cafés with cliff views — Curlies, La Plage, Thalassa (Greek, sunset views, book ahead) or a no-frills local Goan joint.

- › Thalassa needs a reservation even in monsoon
- › Anjuna's Wednesday flea market is seasonal — ask locally.

14:30 · Anjuna Beach

Black-rock coves, far less crowded than Baga, and the spiritual home of Goa's 1960s hippie era.

Watersports (parasailing, jet ski) run only if the sea allows.

History: From the late 1960s Anjuna was the epicentre of the hippie trail and later Goa trance; the flea market began as travellers selling their belongings to fund the trip home.

- › In August, always confirm watersports with the operator on the day
- › Rip currents are real in monsoon — respect red flags.

16:15 · Morjim / Vagator detour (optional)

'Little Russia' — a wide, quiet, wind-swept beach at the mouth of the Chapora, and a nesting site for Olive Ridley turtles.

- › Best for photos and a quiet walk, not for parties
- › Skip if energy is low; Baga is the main event.

17:30 · Baga Beach finale

Sunset, live music, shacks and the famous Tito's Lane energy. Dinner at any pub or sea-facing restaurant here.

- › Fix a return time and a designated driver before the first drink.
- › Tito's Lane can be pushy — stay together as a group.

22:00 · Return to the villa

Wind down; tomorrow is a heritage day with an early-ish start.

Do's	Don'ts
✓ Wear grippy footwear for the fort climbs. ✓ Carry a rain shell and a dry bag for phones. ✓ Confirm the next day's car again tonight.	✗ Don't drink and drive — Goa's checks are strict and fines are heavy. ✗ Don't ignore red flags or swim at unmanned stretches. ✗ Don't ride two-wheelers without helmets.

Day 3 · 21 Aug 2026 (Friday)

Heritage Day — Old Goa & the Latin Quarter

Basilica → Sé Cathedral → Panaji → Fontainhas → Miramar / Dona Paula

Route: Old Goa churches → Panaji lunch → Fontainhas walk → Panaji Church → Miramar / Dona Paula

Free evening: Back by ~19:00 with the rest of the night free. Suggested: a laid-back Mandovi river cruise, or simply order in and take over the villa terrace.

Distances & driving directions

Leg	Distance	Drive time	Map
Arpora → Basilica of Bom Jesus, Old Goa Via NH66 and the Mandovi bridge — leave by 09:45 to beat the Panaji rush.	≈ 27 km	50–60 min	Directions
Bom Jesus → Sé Cathedral	≈ 0.4 km	5 min walk	Directions

Leg	Distance	Drive time	Map
Old Goa → Panaji (lunch) & Fontainhas Park at the Panaji municipal lot; Fontainhas is best done entirely on foot.	≈ 10 km	20–25 min	Directions
Panaji → Miramar / Dona Paula	≈ 3 / 7 km	10 / 20 min	Directions
Dona Paula → Arpora villa	≈ 22 km	45–55 min	Directions

The day, hour by hour

09:45 · Drive to Old Goa

A scenic 40–45 minute run along NH66 with river crossings and monsoon-green hills.

10:30 · Basilica of Bom Jesus

UNESCO World Heritage Site and the most revered church in Goa. Extraordinary Baroque façade in exposed laterite, gilded altar, and the tomb of St. Francis Xavier. ~50 minutes.

History: Consecrated in 1605. The saint's body, brought back from China in 1554, lies in a silver casket above a marble mausoleum gifted by the Medici of Florence — displayed publicly only once a decade.

- › Shoulders and knees covered
- › Photography allowed outside; be quiet and discreet inside.

11:30 · Sé Cathedral

Directly across the lawn — the largest church in Asia, with a vast barrel-vaulted nave and the 'Golden Bell'. ~35 minutes.

History: Begun in 1562 under Portuguese King Dom Sebastião and completed in 1619. One of its two towers collapsed in 1776 and was never rebuilt, giving it that distinctive lopsided silhouette.

- › Don't miss the Chapel of the Cross of Miracles inside
- › The Archaeological Museum next door is a good 20-minute add-on.

12:45 · Lunch in Panaji

Classic Goan lunch — Ritz Classic (fish thali), Hotel Venite (first-floor balconies), or Viva Panjim in Fontainhas itself.

- › Ritz Classic gets a queue; put your name down early
- › Try sol kadhi to cut the spice.

14:00 · Fontainhas Latin Quarter walk

Goa's most photogenic neighbourhood — ochre, indigo and lime houses, oyster-shell windows, narrow lanes, tiny galleries and century-old bakeries. Allow 60–75 minutes on foot.

History: Founded in the late 18th century on reclaimed marsh by a Goan expat who returned from Mozambique. Tradition holds that homes are repainted every year after the monsoon — which is exactly when you're visiting.

- › Wear comfortable walking shoes; carry cash — cafés here are often cash-only.
- › These are lived-in homes: ask before photographing people or doorways.
- › Confeitaria 31 de Janeiro for bebinca; Café Bodega for coffee.

15:30 · Church of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception

The iconic white church with its zig-zag staircase above Panaji's town square, then a stroll along the Campal promenade.

History: Built in 1541 as a chapel where sailors gave thanks on arriving from Lisbon, long before Panaji became the capital. The great bell was moved here from Old Goa's ruined Augustinian monastery.

- › The staircase is the shot — go slightly wide and low
- › Evenings are floodlit and even better.

16:30 · Miramar & Dona Paula

Where the Mandovi and Zuari meet the Arabian Sea. Miramar's golden crescent for the walk, Dona Paula's jetty viewpoint for the sunset.

History: Dona Paula is named after a Portuguese viceroy's daughter, whose legend of a doomed romance with a local fisherman still gets retold to every visitor.

- › Sunset ~18:55; stay for the blue hour
- › Miramar water is not great for swimming — keep it to a walk.

18:00 · Return to the villa

Free evening. Dinner nearby or delivered in.

Do's	Don'ts
✓ Dress modestly for the churches (shoulders and knees covered). ✓ Carry cash for Fontainhas cafés and bakeries. ✓ Keep water and a foldable umbrella in the car.	✗ Don't use flash or make noise inside the Basilica. ✗ Don't wander into private courtyards in Fontainhas. ✗ Don't park casually in Panaji — use the paid lots to avoid towing.

Day 4 · 22 Aug 2026 (Saturday)

The Serene South Goa Journey

Cabo de Rama → Agonda → Palolem → Butterfly Beach → Patnem

Route: Arpora → Cabo de Rama Fort (optional) → Agonda → Palolem → Patnem → back

Distances & driving directions

Leg	Distance	Drive time	Map
Arpora → Cabo de Rama Fort NH66 south past Margao, then the Canacona road. Last fuel pump before the fort is at Betul.	≈ 72 km	1 hr 45 min – 2 hr	Directions
Cabo de Rama → Agonda Beach	≈ 15 km	30 min	Directions
Agonda → Palolem Beach	≈ 9 km	20 min	Directions
Palolem → Patnem Beach	≈ 2.5 km	8 min	Directions
Patnem → Arpora villa Start back by 18:00 — the NH66 stretch is dark and wet after sunset in August.	≈ 78 km	2 – 2.5 hr	Directions

The day, hour by hour

07:30 · Early breakfast, 08:45 departure

South Goa is a 1.5–2 hour drive. The early start is what makes this day work — and the Western Ghats route in monsoon is glorious.

- › Pack swimwear, towels and a change of clothes
- › Fuel up in the north; pumps thin out down south.

10:15 · Cabo de Rama Fort (optional)

A dramatic clifftop fort with sweeping ocean views and almost no crowds. Roughly 40–45 minutes including photos.

History: Named after Lord Rama, who legend says sheltered here during exile. It predates the Portuguese by centuries, passing through Hindu rulers and Adil Shah before Portugal took it in 1763 and later used it as a prison.

- › The cliff edges are unfenced and slippery in monsoon — stay well back.
- › Skip this if the group would rather have longer at Palolem.

11:30 · Agonda Beach

A three-kilometre arc of clean, quiet sand backed by palms — repeatedly rated among Asia's best beaches. Perfect for a slow walk and a long brunch.

History: A fishing village that resisted mass development; building restrictions here are why it still feels empty.

- › Currents can be strong — swim only near the lifeguard posts
- › Turtle nesting stretch: don't disturb marked areas.

12:45 · Lunch at Agonda

Beachfront shacks and cafés — grilled catch of the day is the move.

14:15 · Palolem Beach

The famous crescent bay — calm, shallow, sheltered water. Kayaking, swimming and dolphin-spotting boats all operate from here.

- › Negotiate kayak rentals per hour, not per trip
- › Ask about the silent-disco headphone parties if the group is up for it.

15:30 · Butterfly Beach by boat (optional)

A secluded, near-circular cove reachable only by sea. Shared boats from Palolem run ₹300–400/person, roughly 20–25 minutes each way.

- › Do NOT drive there — the last stretch of road is genuinely terrible.
- › Agree the return pickup time with the boatman before you get off.
- › No shacks on the beach: carry water and take your trash back.

17:30 · Patnem Beach (optional)

Five minutes from Palolem — one of Goa's cleanest and calmest beaches. A short walk and a coffee before the drive back.

18:00 · Return journey

1.5–2 hours back. Dinner en route or near the villa around 20:30.

- › Drive carefully — Ghat roads after dark in rain demand full attention.
- › Split the driving if anyone is tired.

Do's	Don'ts
✓ Start on time — this day collapses if you leave late. ✓ Carry cash for the Butterfly Beach boat. ✓ Keep a full tank and a phone power bank.	✗ Don't drive to Butterfly Beach. ✗ Don't attempt cliff selfies at Cabo de Rama. ✗ Don't rush the return leg at night in the rain.

Day 5 · 23 Aug 2026 (Sunday)

Slow Morning, Souvenirs & Farewell

Check-out, last beach walk, and the flight home

Route: Villa → local café / market → Goa Airport → Kolkata

Distances & driving directions

Leg	Distance	Drive time	Map
Arpora villa → Mapusa / Calangute market	≈ 6–8 km	15–20 min	Directions
Arpora → Manohar Intl Airport (Mopa) Leave 3 hours before departure — monsoon showers slow the NH748 climb to Mopa.	≈ 33 km	50–65 min	Directions

The day, hour by hour

08:00 · Breakfast & packing

Unhurried breakfast, final packing, settle the kitty and check out.

10:00 · Last-minute shopping (optional)

Cashew feni, Goan spices and masalas, bebinca, port wine, chorizo, handicrafts and fridge magnets. Calangute market or the Mapusa market if timing allows.

- › Feni and alcohol: check your airline's and destination state's rules before buying.
- › Buy sealed, labelled bottles — loose feni won't clear security.

12:00 · Drive to the airport

Leave a generous buffer for monsoon traffic. Return flight to Kolkata (CCU).

Do's	Don'ts
✓ Do a final sweep of every room and the pool area for left-behind items. ✓ Return the self-drive car with the agreed fuel level. ✓ Photograph the villa before handover.	✗ Don't buy alcohol at the last minute at the airport counter — it's pricier. ✗ Don't cut the airport buffer thin on a rainy Sunday.

Essentials, safety & the monsoon rules

What to pack

- Light quick-dry clothes + one full-sleeve set for evenings
- Rain shell / poncho and a compact umbrella (August is monsoon)
- Grippy sandals or trail shoes for slippery fort steps
- Dry bag or zip pouches for phones, cash and documents
- Swimwear, quick-dry towel, spare change of clothes in the car
- Reef-safe SPF 50, sunglasses, cap — the sun bites between showers
- Mosquito repellent and after-bite cream
- Power bank, car phone mount, multi-plug extension for the villa

Medical kit

- Personal prescriptions with a copy of the prescription
- ORS sachets, anti-diarrhoeal, antacid, paracetamol
- Motion-sickness tablets for the Ghat drive and boat ride
- Antiseptic cream, band-aids, crepe bandage
- Antihistamine for jellyfish stings or allergies

Documents

- Government photo ID for every guest (mandatory at check-in)
- Driving licence for anyone driving the self-drive car
- Airbnb booking confirmation + host contact saved offline
- Flight tickets and travel insurance details
- Adequate cash — Goa runs on cash outside the big restaurants

Monsoon safety

- Swim only at flagged, lifeguard-patrolled stretches — monsoon rip currents are lethal.
- Never swim after drinking, and never after sunset.
- Zero drink-driving. Goa Police run frequent night checks; fines and detention are real.
- Helmets are mandatory on two-wheelers, including pillion.
- Emergency numbers: 112 (all-in-one), 108 (ambulance), Drishti lifeguards 1800 121 8100.
- Keep one shared WhatsApp live-location on during day trips.
- Photograph the rental car's existing damage before driving off.
- Don't carry or accept drugs — penalties in Goa are severe and non-negotiable.

Money & budgeting

- Carry ₹8,000–10,000 cash per person; shacks and Fontainhas cafés are cash-only.
- Run a shared UPI kitty for fuel, entries and group meals.
- Confirm seafood prices before ordering — it's often billed by weight.
- Fort Aguada entry is ₹25/person; Butterfly Beach boat ₹300–400/person.

Prepared for the Julien Day School 1996 reunion trip · itinerary by Dwaipayan Mojumder · ea4itorg.online