

Located in the West region, **Maharashtra** [1] (<http://www.maharashtra.gov.in/>) is the third largest state of India by size and the second largest by population. It stretches from the west coast to the interior regions and its climate too varies with its geography. Maharashtra contains India's most industrialized region, the Mumbai-Pune belt. Agriculturally too, the state is one of India's more advanced and well-irrigated. The northern and eastern parts of the state, however lag behind the western region.


Regions

For administrative purposes, the state is sub-divided into six **divisions** and further into 35 **districts**. Officially, all divisions save one are named after the district where the headquarters of the division is located. But the divisions are also popularly known by other names and that is how they are listed here. The official names of the divisions are given alongside in brackets.


- **Desh** (*Pune Division*)
- **Marathwada** (*Aurangabad Division*)
- **Vidarbha** (*Amaravati Division*)
- **Konkan** (*Konkan Division*)
- **Vidarbha** (*Nagpur Division*)
- **Khandesh** (*Nashik Division*)

Cities


- **Mumbai** — the capital of Maharashtra, also the commercial capital of India
- **Ahmednagar** — 500+ years history, with traces of Nizamshahi, Shahjahan and Peshwas
- **Amravati** — Educational hub in east Maharashtra, the home of Goddess Ambadevi
- **Aurangabad** — the city of 52 doors, famous for its Mughal monuments
- **Kolhapur** — the home of Goddess Ambabai



Location



Flag



Quick Facts

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Capital | Mumbai |
| Government | Indian State |
| Currency | Indian rupee (INR) |
| Area | 307,713 km ² |
| Population | 112,372,972(2011 est.) |
| Language | Official: Marathi Regionally Spoken: English |
| Religion | Hinduism 82.5%, Islam 13.4%, Other 4.1% |
| Electricity | 230V/50Hz, Indian (Old British)/European plugs |
| Time Zone | UTC +5:30 |

- Nanded — holy city of Sikh Religion
- Nagpur — the city of Oranges, at the geographical center of India
- Nashik — the city of pilgrimage - The Grape city
- Pune — cultural capital of Maharashtra

Other destinations

- Ajanta — Buddhist caves, a complex of caves representing some of the best of early Buddhist art, World heritage site
- Ashtavinayak — 8 Auspicious Temples of Lord Ganesha (Ganapati)
- Ellora — world famous for its caves of three religions, total 30 caves are divided into Buddhist, Hindu and Jain caves, World heritage site, Ellora is also adobe of Grishneshwar, the 12th Jyotirlinga in India
- Lonar — This place has Earth's only meteor crater in basaltic rock
- Mulshi — major dam
- Bhimashankar — one of the 12 Jyotirlinga in India
- Ichalkaranji — textile capital of Maharashtra
- Aamby valley city
- Solapur — the world's second-largest and Asia's largest spinning mill

Talk

The principal language spoken is Marathi. Hindi and **English** are widely spoken and understood. Mumbai is fairly cosmopolitan, with many languages, including English being spoken. Konkani is a minority language closely related to Marathi, spoken by the eponymous Konkani community. Though Konkani are common in the Konkan region, they are a minority everywhere.

Get in

All the cities of Maharashtra are well connected by rail, air and road.

By plane

Maharashtra has five airports - Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur, Nashik and Aurangabad among which Mumbai is the busiest airport in India.

By train

Maharashtra is also well connected with other parts of India by the Indian Railways. Mumbai is the headquarters of the Central and Western railways while Nagpur, which is close to the geographical centre of India has rail connectivity with all the metro cities of India.

By car

Many national highways through Maharashtra.

Get around

One can easily get around the state from any one city to another using swift transportation available locally. However, it is advised that cabs should be pre-booked to avoid any kind of inconvenience. Vayu Travels (<http://vayu.travel/>) is a good transportation provider and will also assist with itinerary planning in case of new or

unaware travelers. They can be contacted for cab booking at ☎ +91-971-100-8524 (*hello@vayu.travel*). . They are the best bet for comfortable and timely transportation services with English-speaking chauffeurs.

See

Beach resorts

Coastal Maharashtra (Konkan) has some of very beautiful beaches. With a 720 km coast line, there are beautiful beach destinations almost every 50-100 km, starting from Dahanu in the Northern part of the State to Sindhudurg, at the Southern tip.

Some popular beaches are:

- **Dahanu-Bordi**
- **Gorai-Madh**
- **Juhu**
- **Girgaon Beach (Chowpaty)**
- **Alibag**
- **Nagaon**
- **Kashid**
- **Murud-Janjira**
- **Diveagar**
- **Harihareshwar**
- **Ganpatipule**
- **Guhagar**
- **Tarkarli**
- **Vengurla**
- **Terekhol**
- **Devgad beach**
- **Taramumbari**
- **kunkeshwar beach**

While the beaches in Bordi, Gorai, Juhu, Alibag, Kashid and Murud-Janjira are well-developed, with multiple accommodation choices, the rest remain still off the tourist circuit. The primary reason is lack of good accommodation choices. At most of the other beaches, the only decent stay options are properties owned and managed by the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), a govt. organisation. These MTDC resorts have amazing location with great views, but being govt. run, these are not among the best in service, activities and food.

Hill Stations

Popular hill stations in Maharashtra are -

- **Matheran**
- **Mahabaleshwar**
- **Panchgani**
- **Chikhaldara**
- **Bhandardara**
- **Amboli**
- **Raigad**

Other sites

- **National Parks**
- **Meteor Crater**

- **Prince of Wales Museum, Mumbai**
- **Astavinayak yatra**
- **Shirdi**

Do

- **River rafting, Mountain Biking and Kayaking at Kolad [2] (<http://koladrafting.com>)**

Trek the Sahyadri

The Sahyadri range of mountains is an impressive hill range in the western parts of maharashtra running north to south. There are many peaks in these ranges with medium height, highest being 'kalsubai' peak. Many of the hills have been converted into Forts by Chatrpati Shivaji and later maratha rulers, some forts are even older. Many of the forts are in ruins, but still there is a lot to see and experience. Trekking the forts and hills in the sahyadri's has a charm of its own. Especially in the monsoons, its a place to die for, with lush greenery and pure waterfalls abundant in the hills. The treks range from very simple to absolutely tough. These western ghats are accessible from major cities like Mumbai, Pune and Nashik.

Eat

There are lots of snack and side dishes in Maharashtrian cuisine. Some quintessentially Maharashtrian dishes are:

- **Vada pav:** Popular Maharashtrian dish consisting of fried mashed-potato dumpling (vada), eaten sandwiched in a bun (pav). This is referred to as Indian version of burger and is almost always accompanied with the famous red chutney made from garlic and chillies, and fried green chilles. Interestingly rarely vada pav are home made.
- **Misal Pav:** This is made from a mix of curried sprouted lentils, topped with batata-bhaji, pohay, Chivda, farsaan, raw chopped onions and tomato. Also some times eaten with yogurt. Bread is a must.
- **'Chivda:** Spiced flattened rice. It is also known as Bombay mix in Foreign countries especially Great Britain.
- **Pohay:** pohay or pohe is a snack made from flattened rice. It is most likely served with tea and is probably the most likely dish that a Maharashtrian will offer his guest. During arranged marriages in Maharashtra, Kanda Pohe (literal translation, pohe prepared with onion) is most likely the dish served when the two families meet. Its so common that sometimes arranged marriage itself is referred colloquially as "kanda-pohay". Other variants on the recipe are batata pohe (where diced potatoes are used instead of onion shreds). Other famous recipes made with Pohe (flattened rice) are dadpe pohe, a mixture of raw Pohe with shredded fresh coconut, green chillies, ginger and lemon juice; and kachche pohe, raw pohe with minimal embellishments of oil, red chili powder, salt and unsauteed onion shreds.
- **Upma or sanja or upeeth:** This snack is similar to the south Indian upma. It is a thick porridge made of semolina perked up with green chillies, onions and other spices.

Surali Wadi: Chick pea flour rolls with a garnishing of coconut, coriander leaves and mustard. Lots of items actually..further delicacies can be obtained in any typical maharastrian home.

- **Matar-usal- pav'** :It is a dish made of green peas in a curry with onions, green chillies and sometimes garlic. Its eaten with a western style leavened bun or pav. Another form of Matar usal is made in konkan areas or by brahmins especially in Pune - this has a gravy of coconut, coriander, ginger-garlic and green chilly ground together and then fried into a Phodni. Some water and green peas are added and boiled till the peas are cooked and have absorbed the taste of all the condiments.
- **Misal Pav**:Quintessentially from Kolhapur. This is made from a mix of curried sprouted lentils, topped with batata-bhaji, pohay, Chivda, farsaan, raw chopped onions and tomato. Also some times eaten with yogurt. Bread is a must.

Pav bhaji: This speciality dish from lanes of Mumbai has mashed steamed mixed vegetables (mainly potatoes, peas, tomatoes, onions and green pepper) cooked in spices and table butter. The vegetable mix is served with soft bun shallow fried in table butter and chopped onion. Sometimes cheese, paneer (cottage cheese) are added.

- **Kothimbir vadi'**: Coriander (Cilantro) mixed with chick pea flour and Maharashtrian spices. There are plenty of variants of this dishes some deep fried, some stir fried and some steamed.

Saoji curry is special gravy mainly used in preparing non-vegetarian (chicken and mutton dish); But can also be used to prepare vegetarian dish (Potato, Paneer or Soya Chunk). Saoji chicken or Mutton is famous for its spicy taste and is highly recommended to all the spicy food lovers.

Soups

- **Solkadhi** - prepared from coconut milk and Kokam
- **Tomato saar** - Maharashtrian spicy tomato soup
- **Kokam saar** - Soup prepared from dried fruit of *Garcinia indica*
- **Varan** - plain non-spicy or lightly spiced daal lentil with split Pigeon pea (Toor dal)
- **Katachi Aamti** - Sweet, hot and sour soup prepared from Chana or Chickpea dal

Pickles

- **Ambyache lonche** (mango pickle)
- **Limbache lonche** (lemon pickle)
- **Awlyache lonche'** (amla pickle)
- **Mohoriche lonche** (mustard pickle)
- **Ambe-haladiche lonache** (fresh turmeric pickle)
- **Mirachiche lonache** (Chilly Pickle)

Sweets

- **Puran Poli**: It is one of the most popular sweet item in the Maharashtrian cuisine. It is made from jaggery (molasses or gur), yellow gram (chana) dal, pain flour, cardamom powder and ghee (clarified butter). It is made at almost all festivals. A meal containing puran poli is considered "heavy" by Marathi people.
- **Gulachi Poli** : Made specially on Makar Sankranti in typical Brahmin households, the Gulachi poli is a heavy meal similar to the Puran Poli. It is made with a stuffing of soft/shredded Jaggery mixed with toasted, ground Til (white sesame seeds)and some gram flour which has been toasted to golden in plenty of pure Ghee. The dish is made like a paratha i.e. the stuffed roti is fried on Pure ghee till crisp on both side. Tastes heavenly when eaten slightly warm with loads of ghee.

- **Modak:** is a Maharashtrian sweet typically steamed (ukdiche modak). Modak is prepared during the Ganesha festival around August, when it is often given as an offering to lord Ganesha, the elephant-headed God, as it is reportedly his favorite sweet.
- **Karanji:** is a deep fried dumpling with a filling of grated coconut sweetened with jaggery and flavoured with powdered cardamom seeds. It is also known as Kanavale. It is one of the popular sweets prepared for Diwali celebrations.
- **Gulab Jaam:** are balls made of dense milk (Mava/Khava) and bleached wheat flour fried in ghee (clarified butter) and then dipped in sugar syrup.
- **Shevaya chi Kheer:** is prepared by cooking shevaya (vermicelli) in milk. The preparation is sweetened with jaggery or sugar, flavoured with powdered cardamom seeds and finally garnished with chopped nuts. Kheer is also made of Rice, Semolina, and Dudhi (white gourd).
- **Anarsa :** It is made from soaked powdered rice, jaggery or sugar.

Adventure/off the beaten track

- Ride the Mumbai Locals in peak hours! Or at least visit CST railway station in peak hours.

Drink

- Coconut water is very famous
- The most pure form of water on earth
- Kokam Sharbat (Sharbet)

Stay safe

Crime is low in most cities, but use good judgement.

Touts

Recently, there has been a great rise in the number of complaints about harassment of innocent tourists in various destinations around the country. The Ministry of Tourism has adopted a strategy of introducing Audio Guide Devices at various places of interest around the country such as the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, etc. to provide reliable and factual information to tourists. It is wise to hire such devices as you can avoid being ripped off or ambushed by desperate touts itching to make a buck. The Ministry of Tourism has also announced its partnership with AudioCompass, a company specializing in creating Audio Tours of all places of interest in the country including Mumbai & Goa, in the form of Audio Devices available at the monuments and Smartphone apps that can be download from the App Store.

Get out



*This article is an **outline** and needs more content. It has a template, but there is not enough information present. Please plunge forward and help it grow!*

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