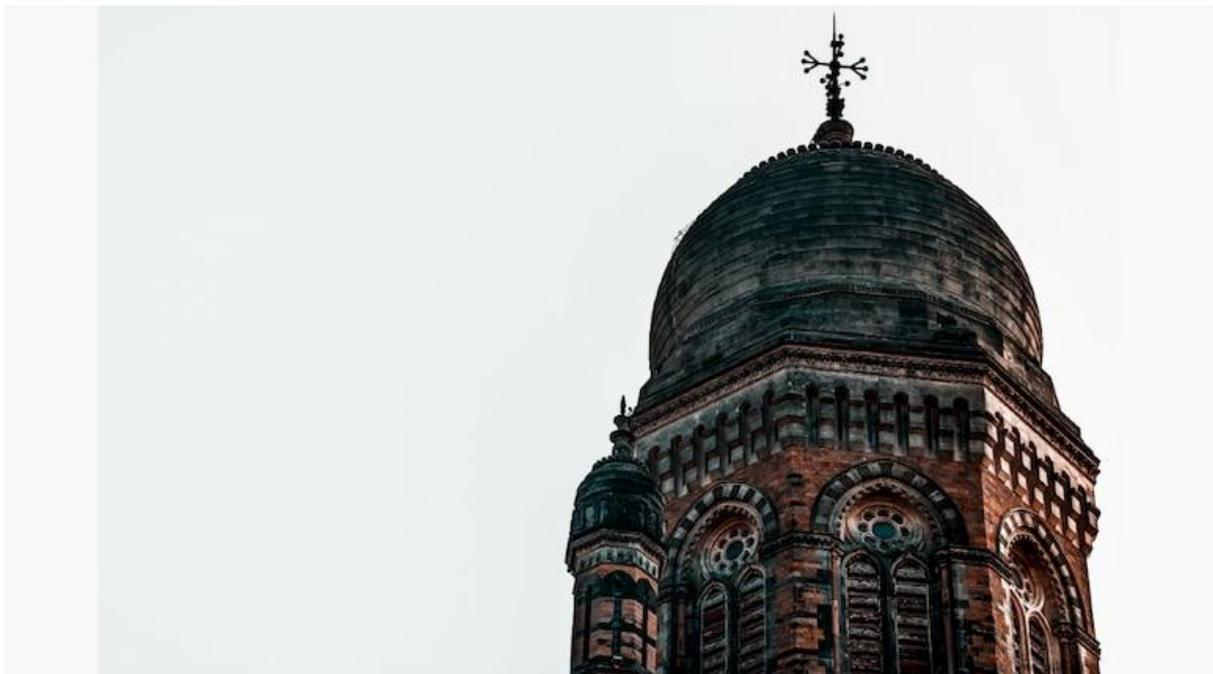


India heritage tours | Unusual things to do in Mumbai

From lip smacking street food to art deco buildings that functioned as war offices during World War II, mysterious palaces and haunted homes...some unusual Mumbai tours.

NIVEDITA JAYARAM PAWAR MAY 16, 2022 / 10:01 PM IST



Examples of Art Deco architecture in Mumbai include the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Eros Cinema, the Bombay High Court, the Gateway of India and at least 35 buildings along Marine Drive. (Image: Md Mahdi via Unsplash)

Mumbai is a city of dreams and shocking realities. And in-between Bollywood bling and bumper-to-bumper traffic are oodles of art, heritage, culture, mystery and sumptuous food. The best way to get to know Mumbai is to get out and explore.

Luckily, we have some experts who can shine a light and show us the city as we have never seen it before. Here some of the best offbeat tours of Mumbai:

Grisly Girgaon walk by Khaki Tours

Dare to venture into the haunted lanes of Mumbai and become a ghost buster? Then join this walking tour around Girgaon in south Mumbai.

Organised by Khaki Tours, the 2-hour walk takes participants on a exploration of the old buildings and graveyards which come alive through the stories associated with them.

“My maternal side of the family is from Girgaon and I have been hearing these stories from childhood. The idea is not to scare anyone but to introduce people to the evolution of Girgaon, its culture and architecture and make them connect with the past,” says Bharat Gothoskar, founder, Khaki Tours.

The walk starts at 11 pm from Charni Road station and winds its way through Pimpalwadi, Kandewadi and other areas where people once buried the dead.

Participants get to see a haunted theatre built on a graveyard, a lane which has dead bodies buried under it (it was originally a graveyard which was later taken over by the BMC which removed the grave stones but the bodies are still there), a cursed stone from the 18th century and even a grave called ‘Maskewale baba’ where people make offerings of butter for the fulfillment of their wishes. Stories of strange noises and apparitions are common.

Along with the stories and buildings, participants are also shown old photos and maps of the area. The walk culminates at 1 am at Khotachi Wadi, a heritage village. The darkness of the night coupled with the eeriness of the lanes and the spooky storytelling makes this trip an irresistible draw for thrill seekers.

Cost: Rs 1,000 per person

To book Call: +91-8828100111. Open to people above 12 years of age.

Kebab and Curry Walk by No Footprints

If you are a hardcore non-vegetarian, you simply must visit Bohri Mohalla. The flaming hot kebabs, spicy curries and neon-coloured sweets here will land you straight into gastronomic dreamland.

The tour is conducted in the traditional Bohri khara and meetha format, alternating between sweet and savoury dishes. Get ready to dive into Bohri delicacies such as the 12 pot curry, sherbets, chana batata, boti kebab, offal chat, biryani with a twist (without the rice), meaty Bohri sandwich and the famous 'aflatoon'.

The best part of the walk is the hand-churned ice-cream at a 120-year-old shop. This is a 10-course meal that starts at 7:30 pm and wraps up at 9:30 pm. Make sure you wear your most stretchy pants. Conducted on Sundays.

Cost: Rs 1,150 per person

To Book Call: 9619952576



Hand churned ice cream.

Old Bombay architecture tour by Art Deco Mumbai

Those interested in architecture, design and history ought to check out this walking tour conducted by architects.

The tour starts at Oval Maidan, where you look into key buildings that display Victorian Gothic and Art Deco architecture including the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, Eros Cinema, the Bombay High Court and the Gateway of India. The storytelling really brings the glamour and intrigue of these buildings alive.

The tour then moves to Marine Drive, where there are around 35 Art Deco buildings including Soona Mahal, Seksaria Building and Tapporevala Aquarium. Participants can also talk to some of the original residents of these buildings. Apparently, many famous Bollywood stars and movie moguls of yesteryears hosted lavish parties in these Art Deco buildings. And some of these functioned as war offices during World War II.

It's a small group and the tour lasts for about 60 to 75 minutes.

To book: email info@artdecomumbai.in

Chor Bazaar tour by Mumbai Magic

If you are someone who loves all things retro, then this guided tour through Mumbai's famous Chor Bazaar (Thieves Market) is a must. This is where film set designers go to find things like retro telephones, radios, posters and antique furniture. There's a saying here that "if you lose anything in Mumbai, you can buy it back from Chor Bazaar".

The tour takes you through the chaotic streets flanked by shops that sell anything from Ming vases to old ship parts, grandfather clocks, gramophones, old English tea sets and crystal chandeliers. Your tour guide will help you bargain too. Mind your wallet!

Cost: Rs 1,250 per person

Call: 919867707414

Byculla Bylanes by Khaki Tours

This jeep tour will open your eyes to Byculla's less-explored bylanes which used to be a place where the wealthy of Mumbai built their homes. It has a lot of lavish mansions.

The sprawling Masina hospital in Byculla used to be the Sassoon Palace of Sir David Sassoon. There is also a mini Taj, a Taj Mahal-like structure, which is the mausoleum of Aga Khan the spiritual head of Khoja muslims.

The tour starts at Byculla station with brun maska and tea at an Irani café before heading to a temple that is actually a 66-million-year-old volcanic eruption, ancient baobab trees, a Chinese temple, ancient fort and even the institute where a vaccine was developed to inoculate Bombay's residents against the Bubonic plague of 1896.

The tour operates on Sunday from 8 – 10:30 am.

Cost: Rs 8,000 for a jeep for 5 people.



Food Walk Through Matunga Market by Mumbai Magic

If you love all things food and would love to know about the rich culinary legacy of Mumbai, this tour is for you.

The walk starts in Matunga, a traditional middle-class area settled in the 1930s and '40s as the city grew northwards from its original southern beginnings. Formerly known as the 'Mylapore of Mumbai', present-day Matunga still has some of the

South Indian restaurants and temples in the city. Get ready to hear stories of how South Indians migrated to Mumbai and made it their home and about the first Udupi restaurant of Mumbai.

The walk starts at Astika Samaj, one of the most popular temples in the area, and proceeds to the local markets and the famous flower market. Shopping for fresh jasmine is a must here. There is also a stop at a popular local store selling a dazzling array of snacks and treats. The tour ends with a visit to a popular restaurant for coffee and a South Indian snacks.

Cost: Rs 1,250 per person

Call: 919867707414

Kimayagar of Mumbai Midnight Cycling Tour by The Legend of Bombay Bards

This experiential tour by Priyank Deshmukh traces the life and times of controversial stockbroker Premchand Roychand in the 1850s. With 318 members and a membership fee of Re 1, Roychand along with other founders established the Bombay Stock Exchange. This was when trading was conducted under the shade of a banyan tree in front of the Town Hall. He even financed the construction of the Rajabai Clock Tower as a tribute to his mother (the clock tower was after her), and to remind her to take her meals on time. But it wasn't an easy journey for Roychand as he faced many ups and downs, including bankruptcy in 1860. The tour traces his journey in Mumbai through some of its iconic structures. Pay close attention because at the end, there's a quiz and the winner gets a souvenir from The Legend of Bombay Bards. Tours are

typically held on Saturday or the night before a weekend or other holiday.

Cost: Rs 1,499 per person. Cycles, helmets and reflective jackets are provided.

Call: 9833855671



<https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/trends/travel-trends/india-heritage-tours-unusual-things-to-do-in-mumbai-8508241.html>