

The background features a series of concentric circles in a vibrant blue color. These circles are not solid but are composed of many small, slightly offset segments, creating a dynamic, almost optical illusion-like effect that suggests motion or a film reel.

**GFS GOA FILM
SERVICES**

**PRODUCER'S SURVIVAL
GUIDE TO INDIA 2023**

BY

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India is a veritable treasure trove of unique content and genuinely stunning film locations but has earned itself a somewhat less than favourable reputation as being a 'difficult' place to shoot. India just operates differently to many other countries and when you understand these cultural differences, and account for them in your approach and planning, things will run smoothly.

This guide aims to arm you with information, tips, and advice to help get you started. Shooting in India is an unforgettable adventure for most people. This amazing country usually leaves a lasting impression.

"India is a country where one of the greatest pleasures for a foreigner is that you're constantly surprised. Everywhere you look is something that is either funny, or very moving, but there is always so much that is unexpected. That's part of the reason why people who like it tend to love it." - Wes Anderson -

LOCAL ADVICE

Probably the most important thing you can do is to get local advice as soon as you are actively considering a TV or film production in India. This can save you wasting many hours planning things that aren't practical or possible. Of course, the wrong advice can be catastrophic so choose wisely. Your Production Services Company, Fixer, or Local Producer should have extensive experience working on international productions. Ideally, they should also have worked outside India so that they have an



international perspective. You will then be communicating with a professional that understands India inside out but also understands where you are coming from and how to prepare you and your team properly.

It's also worth bearing in mind that India is an incredibly diverse country. In fact, it's a federal union of states with each state differing in many respects. These differences can extend to most facets of life including politics, legislation, taxation, dominant religion, cuisine, climate, altitude, and language. It's advisable to choose a local advisor who understands the significance of these nuances and has team members, or associates, who are native to each state that you plan to film in.

VISAS, PERMITS, & PAPERWORK:

All foreign productions are required to seek permission to shoot in India prior to applying for cast and crew visas. Your local advisor should be fully conversant with these processes and help guide you through them. There are different routes for different types of production, and some serious pitfalls that could significantly delay your project or even prohibit it from taking place at all.

As the subject can be a little complicated we have made a separate [free e-book, 'Permits & Paperwork Guide 2023', click here to download it.](#)

The guide covers everything you need to know about permits, permissions, visas, and customs clearance.

INSURANCE & OTHER LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

You should ensure that your local advisor has experience of complying with the legal requirements laid out in your Production Services Agreement (PSA). Don't present your PSA at the last minute. Send your boiler plate agreement early on in your



negotiations to ensure that things like insurance, releases, and NDA's aren't overlooked. India is one of the most under insured countries on the planet. It's unlikely that your Production Services Company or Fixer

in India will have adequate annual Public Liability Insurance to satisfy the terms of your PSA. Insurance companies often express surprise when asked to underwrite a \$10M+ PLI policy for a shoot. Having said that Film Insurance policies are available from several companies in India. You should note that it is rarely possible to insure foreign cast, crew, and equipment via an Indian insurance company and when it is possible it's very complicated to achieve. Most productions are insured on a case-by-case basis and are underwritten according to the specifics of each production. As well as your cast, crew, imported equipment, and weather insurance from your home country you will typically need some of the following from an Indian insurance company: Public Liability, Workers Compensation including Personal Accident cover for Indian cast & crew, and All Risk Equipment cover for Indian rental equipment.

Releases for locations, appearance, cast, and crew; health & safety; and risk assessments are not given a high priority in India. A good test of your local advisors' competence to handle international productions is to ask questions to ascertain their knowledge of these issues. You might even ask them to send examples from previous productions which, will not only reassure you that they have worked on international productions, but might also give you a good starting point when it comes to writing your own paperwork. Why reinvent the wheel?

Don't forget to ensure that release forms, and area release signs, are available in the local language and script. This won't always be English and Hindi as there are 23 official Indian languages. An ink pad is handy for thumb print 'signatures' on release forms in case of illiteracy.

SCHEDULING TIPS:

India runs entirely on its own schedule. Things are habitually done at the last possible minute. This is especially true of government organisations and bureaucrats. It's a good idea to drive things forward and track progress regularly. Never assume that anything important is underway without evidence.

India has a bewildering array of festivals and public holidays some of which are national, state specific, or only celebrated in small communities and villages. Local advice about events and holidays that might cripple your schedule is essential. Keep an eye on the local news too. The death of a prominent local politician or movie star could mean

local services shut down and unexpected public gatherings. Things can sometimes get heated around election time so it's a good idea to know where any local flash points might be, and avoid them, if your schedule coincides with one.

Seek local advice when working out travel times rather than using Google maps. Google has become more accurate over the years but



there are so many factors that affect transport times in India that it's best not to use Google to plan a precise schedule.

When booking your international flights don't overlook the fact that India now has international flights to many

regional airports and not just the major hubs of Delhi and Mumbai. You can fly in and out of the most convenient airports for your schedule. If you are using a Carnet make sure that your port of entry and port of exit can facilitate them. Full list of all Indian airports here...

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_airports_in_India

DOMESTIC FLIGHT TIMES ON MAJOR ROUTES

Delhi (DEL) to Mumbai (BOM): 2hrs 10 mins

Goa (GOI) to Mumbai (BOM): 1hr

Mumbai (BOM) to Kolkata (CCU): 2hrs 45mins

Delhi (DEL) to Kolkata (CCU): 2hrs 10 mins

Chennai (MAA) to Delhi (DEL): 2hrs 55mins

Thiruvananthapuram (TRV) to Delhi (DEL): 3hrs 40mins – longest direct flight in India.

If moving equipment by air always book, and pay for, excess baggage in advance. This is easy to do online, saves money, saves time at the airport, and means that your baggage will most likely travel on the same flight as you.

Expect all modes of transport to be delayed during the monsoon if the wind and rain is particularly heavy. In winter airports in the North of the country are quite often affected by delays due to fog. This is particularly true of Delhi. If travelling at high altitude roads can become blocked by landslides during the monsoon and snow during the winter. Some roads that traverse mountain passes remain closed throughout the winter.

Unit moves can take longer than expected when moving large trucks on minor roads. Power and telecom lines are often hung low overhead across roads and it's sometimes necessary to have someone walk in front of vehicles



pushing up cables with a long wooden pole to let your trucks pass. This means that your entire unit moves at walking pace part of the way unless you ensure all smaller vehicles move out from the previous location first. When considering a unit move in these circumstances always schedule the move in the early hours of the morning to avoid creating traffic chaos. You'll need high powered flashlights to see the overhead cables at night.

India has a different range of daylight hours from North to South. If you're moving around don't get caught out by this. The variation can be as much as two hours. When working in the mountains usable light can occur later and finish sooner than published sunrise and sunset times if the sun must climb above high peaks in the morning or disappear behind them in the evening.

Midday light can be intense and extremely flat. For demanding scenes, many local DPs and Gaffers like to shoot wide at either end of the day and close in the middle of the day so that it's easier to shape available light with modifiers.

CLIMATE & ALTITUDE

Don't underestimate India's climate. One of the common mistakes people from the Northern hemisphere make is to forget about the monsoon. They assume that the summer months of June to September will provide clear blue sky when in fact these months are marked by heavy rain throughout the country. The Indian summer precedes the monsoon from March to mid-June when it's not uncommon for the temperature to rise to 40-48c with very high humidity in low lying areas. In the North winter mornings and evenings can be crisp and chilly on the plains and sub-zero in the mountains. Early morning visibility can be a problem on the Northern plains due to fog.

The great news is that outside the monsoon season, and occasional winter fog, you are practically guaranteed good light and no rain for eight months of the year.

When shooting at altitudes over 2,500m in the Himalayas don't forget to build in sufficient acclimatisation time for your crew. Local labour, accustomed to the altitude, are worth their weight in gold to shift heavy equipment while you're having trouble just walking around and breathing. Detailed useful information about Acute Mountain Sickness can be found here... <http://goafilms.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Acute-Mountain-Sickness-Prevention-Treatment.pdf>

BUDGETING TIPS:

The first mistake most Line Producers make is to assume that India is a cheap place to shoot. You get what you pay for just like anywhere else. If you want international standards to be maintained you can expect nearly international budgets. You can get rock bottom rates for most common line items, but you won't have a good time working with these services and you'll probably find that your savings have rapidly diminishing value. Some things are cheaper e.g. car rental, budget accommodation, meals in restaurants, some crew rates (especially manual workers), and equipment rental. But savings are often offset by expensive locations and large crew sizes.

When renting equipment in India you will find that it comes with crew attached. You will be obliged to take these crew members and there's

not a lot you can do about it. You can try to negotiate the numbers down but even then, crew sizes in India are larger than you would expect almost anywhere else. A camera kit comes with three assistants, lights can come with a 'Lightboy' each, a generator comes with a staff of three, all trucks have a staff of two, and a grip team is at least three or four. This will hit you especially hard if your locations are not in a city that has film infrastructure as all the crew will need to travel, stay in a hotel, be catered for, and have a per diem paid. There are many situations when you'll be pleased to have the extra crew on board. It's often impossible to get close to where you want to shoot, because of narrow streets and intense traffic, so you'll need people to carry equipment in and out. When it's hot, or you're working at altitude, extra bodies to divide manual labour are essential for an efficient schedule.

As well as crew travel, board, and lodging costs don't forget to budget for equipment transport. This can be a significant expense if your locations are far from a city with film infrastructure and it's necessary to transport heavy gear long distances by road.

For smaller documentary and TV shoots it often works out cheaper to bring in equipment and crew who will multi-task from your home country.



A local Production Accountant or Line Producer who knows the complex Indian tax system is important to avoid nasty gotchas a few weeks into your schedule.

Despite recent government initiatives, to push

the country towards digital payments, cash is still essential. Lots of cash. Don't get caught short on days when you need to pay a lot of extras or crew per diems.

Locations can be expensive. I wouldn't be surprised if Mumbai is one of the most expensive cities in the world to shoot in. Once you have paid municipal fees, police fees, other local authorities, and your local

production team's time to run from office to office acquiring the permits, you won't get much change from \$2,300 per location per day for a feature film shoot in the city. Thankfully, Mumbai is an exception but don't underestimate how much locations and associated expenses will run to.

When shooting in busy public locations make sure you budget for adequate crowd control and security. It's not unusual for film shoots to attract attention anywhere in the world but in India crowds can reach epic proportions.

If you need toilets for an outside location its worth considering hiring a double door vanity van instead. 'Vanity Van' is the term used to describe a converted coach used in place of a trailer/Winnebago etc. There aren't really dedicated

Honeywagons in India and each double door vanity van comes with two dressing rooms and two washrooms. They don't cost a great deal more than two portable toilets to rent and you get two air-conditioned dressing rooms/offices into the bargain. You will need to pay for a genny to power them.



If you're shooting with lights always budget for a genny as the power supply can be erratic in India. LED lights that run off the mains and batteries are great if you want to avoid the cost of a genny on smaller shoots.

If you are shooting in India and plan to release the film here don't forget to budget for Animal Welfare of India (AWI) clearances when shooting with animals. A film shot in India featuring animals cannot be theatrically released in India without AWI clearance.

CREW & EQUIPMENT:

The Indian film industry is huge. By volume of films, it's the largest film industry in the world. Finding talented English-speaking senior crew, with international experience, is not difficult. However, crew with this profile are obviously at the top of their game and therefore not the cheapest. The more junior crew positions can be filled with less expensive talented people who speak little or no English. This isn't a problem if their HoD or supervising senior crew member speaks English as you can communicate via them.

The technical standard, creativity, and expertise of Indian crew is excellent if you know where to look. Wes Anderson worked with our favourite Key Grip on Darjeeling Limited and has flown him around the world for his productions ever since. Oscar nominated DP Jack Green met our Gaffer on The Letters and said, 'He's excellent, as good as I've ever worked with.'

A strange quirk of narrative film & TV production in India is that sync sound still hasn't been widely adopted. This could be because of the lack of soundstages or maybe because Indian cities are so incredibly noisy when shooting on location? Whatever the reason it does mean that good location sound recordists, with extensive narrative experience, are in short supply. There are a few but they're often booked up. Many foreign productions elect to bring their sound department and equipment with them.



Hair & Make-Up is another area lacking in international standard crew.

There are only a handful of talented artists with international experience who are capable of handling demanding high profile talent. Often local HMU crew

struggle when it comes to Caucasian skin and hair as they don't have many opportunities to gain experience. Beyond minor injuries and simple

aging techniques SFX make-up and prosthetics expertise is practically non-existent. For these reasons, many productions bring at least their HMU Supervisors with them.

Many foreign productions bring their stunt coordinators with them. Health & Safety standards in India might be different to those you expect at home. Some film insurance providers outside India will insist that you fly in internationally accredited coordinators to maintain standards.

It is entirely possible to bring only a few essential cast and crew with you and come away with excellent footage using cast, crew, and equipment available locally. It's well worth taking the time to investigate your options before flying in large numbers of people. Your local cast and crew will be used to the environment and climate, and many will know each other from previous productions. The value of local experience and knowledge should not be underestimated.

The highlight of shooting in India is often the kind-hearted, hardworking, resourceful Indian crew you will encounter. Many visiting crews form lasting friendships with their Indian colleagues. On one of our shoots this even resulted in a marriage.

RENTING EQUIPMENT

Most narrative productions rent much of their equipment in India as it makes economic sense when large volumes of heavy equipment are required over long periods. And, In the event of equipment failure, items can be replaced quickly by your Indian supplier.



For more sensitive critical equipment choose your supplier carefully. Some suppliers service cameras and collimate lenses in a laboratory environment after each rental and some don't bother at all until something goes wrong.

Imported electrical equipment attracts remarkably high import duty so some cheaper lighting suppliers use cheap Chinese knockoffs instead of their branded international equivalent which can yield unwanted results such as flicker and colour casts. You get what you pay for.

You will find most of the gear you use at home is available to rent in India. Some state-of-the-art gear is quite rare, but most things are available. The exception is dedicated helicopter mounts for cinema cameras. India has some talented grips who can rig a camera to shoot out of the side door using gimbals but if you need to shoot all round you'll need to bring a mount with you or use a heavy lifting drone instead.

LOCATIONS - SCOUTING OFF THE BEATEN TRACK:

India is an astounding, ever-changing, chaotic melting pot of ideas, religions, landscapes, and history that contribute to its mind-boggling diversity. Perhaps this is why so many creative minds have been attracted to the sub-continent over the years? It is impossible to run out of inspiration.

The country is so diverse that anything you write about it can be accurately contradicted by an equal and opposite statement. I will endeavour to give you a flavour of some of the endless possibilities for film locations in India beyond encyclopaedia stereotypes.

Firstly, it's important to understand that India is effectively a union of states under a central federal government, which is quite similar to the US model. All the states have unique cultures, which often include their own language, cuisine, legal framework, dominant religion, and geographical features. There are very few countries where you can shoot deserts, mountains, tropical jungles, white-sand beaches, remote tribal villages, sweeping plains and some of the most populous cities on Earth in one place. India offers all this and more.

Traditionally, productions have come to India only if they want to shoot India. In the last 25 years, however, the infrastructure has improved at an exponential rate. India has significantly outpaced its neighbours and is almost certainly the best option for scripts requiring locations elsewhere on the sub-continent.

It's possible to double India's cities and landscapes for Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet, Bangladesh, Burma (Myanmar) and countries even further afield. India has a huge well-equipped film industry with excellent talented crew. Productions in neighbouring countries often need to import resources from India at great expense so it makes sense to use India as a location double if possible.

Kathryn Bigelow shot *Zero Dark Thirty* in Chandigarh and nearby Mani Majra, which doubled as Lahore and Abbotabad in Pakistan. Mira Nair extensively doubled Delhi for Lahore while shooting *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and we successfully doubled Goa for 1940s Calcutta, Italy, Ireland, Norway, and Albania for the Hollywood Mother Teresa biopic [The Letters](#).



Ladakh, the furthest Northern Union Territory in India offers amazing film locations, landscapes, and culture. Shooting here can be a bit of a mission as cast and crew need to acclimatise to the high altitude and equipment needs to be flown in but if you want to shoot some unique scenes it's worth the effort. Ladakh has more in common with its neighbour Tibet than the rest of India and no place on Earth would make a better location double. Ladakh's gompas (Buddhist temples and monasteries) are remarkably like those in Tibet, complete with monks, Tibetan murals and calligraphy. The landscape is also identical. Part of the Tibetan plateau is in Rhupsu in Ladakh and the huge Pangong Tso lake is half in Tibet and half in Ladakh. Many Tibetans live here in exile and the indigenous Ladakhis look more or less identical. Ladakh would also double for other high-altitude mountain deserts such as the Atacama in Chile.

The Raan of Kutch in the western state of Gujarat is a massive salt desert whose landscape is distinctly other-worldly. In some areas you can shoot for miles to the horizon across a perfectly flat brilliant white landscape.



In Rajasthan you can find a similar surreal landscape at Sambar Lake salt flats which has long been a favourite location for domestic film and TV Commercial shoots in India. Both these locations are excellent for dramatic vehicle shoots.

Goa, on the west coast, is very much on the tourist map but offers unexpected off-the-beaten track location opportunities. During a recent Hollywood feature film shoot we extensively used obscure villages, colonial mansions, and a slum area to double many different international and domestic locations. There are beautiful hidden beaches, remote villages, wildlife sanctuaries, spice plantations and a jungle-covered range of hills and mountains, all within a two-hour drive. This keeps the cast and crew happy because at the end of the day they can retreat to an international hotel by the beach.



The Munnar tea estates in the tropical Southern state of Kerala have a surreal beauty. Ask a child to draw rolling green hills and they would draw Munnar. If you have a commercial for tea in the pipeline, this should be top of your list.

For those interested in religion and culture my advice is to follow the Ganges. Many of the most holy sites in India are situated along the banks of the river. The bathing ghats, temples, festivals and rituals make

great images. The source of the Ganges is at Gaumukh, a three-day trek from Gangotri in Uttaranchal. It's a beautiful place surrounded by lofty peaks and a glacial valley.

The Ganges emerges onto the plains in Haridwar which is one of the venues for the largest gathering of humanity the Kumbh Mela. Near Delhi you can find the ghats of Mathura on the Yamuna River, which is sometimes a good location double for



Varanasi due to its proximity to the capital. It has a similar look and feel although on a smaller scale. Then, in the central plains of Uttar Pradesh, the hustle and bustle of the big brother of Ganges locations, Varanasi which is famous as the most auspicious place to die for Hindus. Also, on the Ganges but often overlooked, is India's least developed state Bihar. Often referred to as India's Wild West, Bihar is surprisingly beautiful and a treasure trove of ancient culture. Highlights include the colourful street art in the capital Patna, the ruins of Nalanda the World's oldest university, and Bodhgaya the place where Buddha found enlightenment. This is a pilgrimage centre for Buddhists from around the World. For those interested in Sufism, Bihar is the cultural centre in India and has many monuments and entire villages dedicated to numerous Sufi saints from the area. The religious order still thrives in the state to this day and you can easily witness its ceremonies, dance, and music.

The North Eastern states which border Bangladesh, China, and Myanmar are the final frontier for film locations in India. The lack of infrastructure and proximity to sensitive border areas, with associated paperwork headaches, has left the region underexplored by international film makers. Those with the perseverance to shoot here will be rewarded with some truly memorable footage of incredible jungle landscapes and encounters with unique tribal cultures.

PROTOCOL, ETIQUETTE & USEFUL TIPS

You and your crew should be aware that India has some quirky cultural differences particularly if you are coming from a Westernised country.



Indians are very tolerant people who will easily forgive a foreigner's mistakes but to save yourself some embarrassment you could keep the following points in mind...

- 1) Always leave your shoes outside of a temple, mosque or gurudwara. You can keep them on in most churches.
- 2) If asked about your religion, you might find it easier to say you are a Christian rather than saying Atheist or Agnostic. Having no religion in India is incomprehensible to some people.
- 3) Always offer to leave your shoes outside of a home or shop especially if you see other shoes there. If you are invited to enter with your shoes on then go ahead.
- 4) Don't eat with your left hand. (this is reserved for toilet duties!)
- 5) Don't pass anything to anyone using your left hand. And accept things with your right hand. You can use both hands as a sign of respect if you are accepting something from someone you want to show great respect to e.g. handing over or accepting a business card to someone influential.
- 6) Take your shoes on and off with your left hand.
- 7) Shake hands with your right hand.
- 8) Men should not shake hands with an Indian woman unless she offers first.
- 9) When drinking from a bottle or cup that you are sharing with another do not let your lips touch the cup. Pour it in your mouth. The same applies with food. If you are sharing a chapati tear a piece off.
- 10) When sharing food never put the spoon or fork you are eating with into the shared containers. Use a serving spoon.
- 11) At a Buddhist stupa or temple always walk clockwise with the stupa or temple on your right.
- 12) Never take photos at a Hindu funeral. Do not obviously photograph Hindu deities.

- 13) Women and men must cover their heads at a mosque or gurudwara and women must cover their limbs.
- 14) When people invite you into their house, they will always offer you a soft drink, or tea and/or a biscuit/sweet. They take offense if you don't accept. If you feel that hygiene standards are too dodgy, and you really think it would be a bad idea to accept then feign a bad stomach.
- 15) Some people can be very direct and will ask you all sorts of questions or make remarks that you may consider rude, don't be offended it is just a cultural difference.
- 16) You should dress modestly in public places and especially in religious monuments i.e. no shorts or short skirts and vests revealing too much chest and shoulder. Vest tops, shorts, and leggings are considered under clothing.
- 17) Don't smoke or drink alcohol in public places only in private places or bars. It is banned in public. Be aware of local alcohol rules e.g. Bihar, Gujarat and some North Eastern states are 'dry' meaning possession and consumption of alcohol carries stiff penalties.
- 18) The Indian head wobble (a side-to-side movement rather than a nodding one) essentially means yes, or OK.
- 19) Do let your bank know you are coming to India if you are planning to use your ATM card, so they don't stop your card. The daily limit for most cards is INR40,000. Visa and Mastercard are the most widely accepted and you might find other cards redundant much of the time. Always carry some Indian Rupees in cash as cards are not accepted everywhere.
- 20) Take tissues with you for the toilet as paper is not always provided. If there is a bin throw the paper in the bin not down the loo.
- 21) When you arrive somewhere new do not stand in the middle of the street looking lost. If you need to look at a map do so at a tea shop, or somewhere discreet, then head confidently onto the street to avoid unwanted attention from scam artists.
- 22) If you want to photograph someone, ask their permission first.
- 23) To avoid getting lost take your hotel business card with you when you go out. Ask the hotel reception to write the address in the local language and script on the back. Also ask if there are any well-known local landmarks near to the hotel that will help you navigate back to the hotel.
- 24) When dealing with officials from government, state banks, post office etc you may find them very officious and rude. Avoid

raising your voice and getting upset as that is the effect the behaviour is designed to provoke and gives them an excuse to be obstructive. Be polite but firm and let them know that you are not going away and that they are going to have to help eventually. If all else fails, ask for the complaints book.

- 25) Organising things by phone is risky. If you meet in person, you have more chance of getting what you need accomplished. When speaking on the phone talk slowly and clearly in uncomplicated plain English as your accent will probably be difficult to understand on the phone even for a fluent English speaker.
- 26) If you are not using production transport and traveling independently always agree a price before getting into a taxi or rickshaw. If possible, find out the correct rate from someone local before starting your journey. Your driver almost certainly will not use the meter. At airports and large train and bus stations look for a government approved pre-paid taxi stand and keep the receipt until the end of your journey before handing it to the driver. These days the best option is Uber, or the local version Ola, to avoid overcharging. I still prefer pre-paid taxis or a hotel car pick-up (more comfortable but expensive) from the airport as queues for Uber can be horrendous and the pick-up points are not always easy to find.
- 27) When shopping in markets or shops without fixed prices always bargain. The chances of being given a fair price the first time of asking are very slim indeed. To get an idea of what you should pay check the price in a few places first. Then, when you find something you like, start bargaining but never show too much enthusiasm for the item. Try saying that you've seen one you also like cheaper elsewhere. Don't take it too seriously and try to maintain a good-humoured atmosphere between you and the vendor. Then, if you still can't get a 'last price' that you're happy with, say goodbye and head for the door. That usually does the trick.
- 28) When crossing the road never assume that a car will slow down or even try awfully hard to avoid you even at a marked crossing. Make sure you have enough time to make it across.
- 29) When walking on a road with no pavement stick to single file and stay near the edge of the road. Traffic will often drive uncomfortably close to you.
- 30) And finally, never ask a taxi or auto-rickshaw driver to go quickly unless you want an adrenaline rush or have suicidal tendencies.

OUTLOOK FOR FOREIGN PRODUCTIONS IN INDIA:

It is worth mentioning the vastly improved outlook for foreign film and TV productions in India. A few years ago, the Ministry of External Affairs relaxed the procedure for documentary and commercial applications and devolved the power to clear productions to their High Commissions and Consulates abroad thus significantly reducing the processing time. In 2016, the government set up the Film Facilitation Office in Delhi to handle Feature Film and Scripted Drama applications more efficiently. Their long-term goal is a 'single window' process for all the permits your script requires at both national and state level. In 2022 the government announced their long-awaited incentive scheme for international productions... [click here for full details](#). Taken together these initiatives represent significant improvements and are a clear indication that the government intends to welcome foreign productions to the country.

India should now be able to capitalise on its gorgeous locations, and unique fascinating culture, to become a force to be reckoned with in the international film industry.

THAT'S A WRAP

Many people have such a great time working here that they extend their stay after the shoot to allow themselves time to relax and explore further. Popular down time activities include touring on a classic Enfield motor bike or open top jeep; yoga on a tropical palm fringed beach; partying in Goa's crazy nightclubs; swimming in a waterfall in the jungle; mountain trekking & paragliding in the Himalayas; camel safaris in the Thar desert; scuba diving on paradise islands; tiger spotting in a National Park; or the perfect end to a great shoot day... an ice-cold Kingfisher and mouth-watering curry. Fantastic!

Written by Tony Cordeaux from Goa Film Services. Tony has more than 30 years' experience in the TV & Film Industry. He worked in London from 1989 to 2006 and has been working as a Producer and Fixer in India since 2006.

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