

Goaing for it

Lucky boy Rob Mitchell went to Goa for rage and dragged along Justin Canning to take the pictures.

Goa is a resort whose reputation precedes it and whose mention can make even the most hardened traveller dew eyed. Situated in India but not really Indian, it has everything anyone could ask for of a resort. People return year after year, in some cases with such frequency that they end up never leaving at all. For years it has been notorious as a hippy resort, and for full-time travellers it is a link between East and West where home commodities are more freely available. Now though, it is becoming less of a link and more of a facsimile of a Western holiday resort. Its attractions have not gone unnoticed by more conventional tourists, and travel companies and hotel developers are falling head over heels to cater for them - putting up hotels and grabbing land while it still cheap.

This has given Goa something of an identity crisis, although it s



quite clear in which way it is likely to be resolved. The cards are stacked in favour of the thicker wallet, and in a few years the hippies will have moved on, their resort ruined by breadheads. Once again they ll be selling hippy wigs in Woolworths.

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Now there is of course a sizeable chunk of arrogance to this opinion, as there commonly are with opinions held by Goa types. Package tourists are not highly favoured by them and they try to keep themselves at arm s distance, although they ll find that this will become increasingly difficult to do. At the moment the territories are fairly clearly marked: hippies and budget travellers favour Aranbol, Vagator and especially Anjuna in the north, while the higher end of the market prefer Baga, Fort Aguada and Calangute.

Looking round these communities you can almost see the dollar signs light up in the travel companies eyes. These are turning into real dollars as we speak: for every existing hotel and apartment complex, there seem to be at least five in construction. The problem with the people who frequent Anjuna and Vagator is that they don t spend enough. Package tourists on the other hand do. Most of them are on holiday for two or three weeks once a year and they intend to enjoy themselves. If this means shelling out a bit then fine, it s part of the holiday process. In addition

to this many of them never leave the confines of their hotel, where food and drink are invariably more expensive than outside. You can however guarantee that the staff who serve them will not be earning any more than usual.

If you intend to visit Goa as a budget traveller, or want to sample the leg-



The Cab to the pub

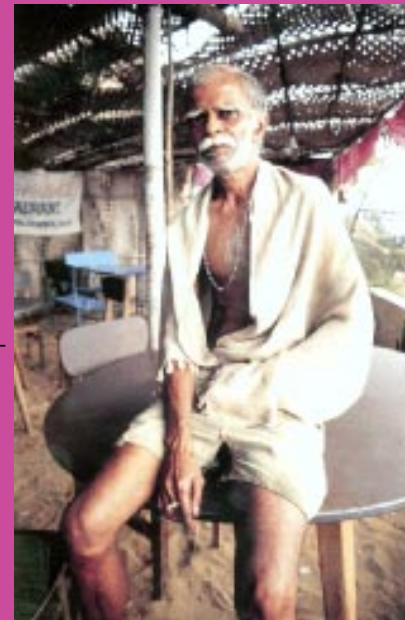
endary party scene, then do it as soon as possible. The future is certain to belong to the affluent package tourist, purely because they bring in more money and do not perpetuate what the Goan authorities consider as the resort's rather salubrious reputation. As

is now happening in Thailand, many people foresee a clampdown on Goa's famous party scene, and without it many regulars would begin to look elsewhere. If the police can dissuade enough people from visiting then they can concentrate on making the resort into another Phuket.

This is in one sense good for Goans, at least in the short term. The kind of tourists that frequent the new hotels bring in hard foreign currency and provide many with an

The Landlord

income that was not available to them before. Prices are increasing, so bar and restaurant owners are doing well, but the upshot of this is that eventually the price of everything else will rise, meaning that those not involved in the tourist industry will fall on hard times as they find themselves having to pay the



inflated cost. More importantly the natural beauty and charm of the place and its residents will soon be lost.

To compound this a railway is currently under construction that will run from Bombay to Goa, and the locals' reaction to this is one of unease. Easier access is certain to bring with it a huge influx of migrant workers, traders and beggars attracted by the presence of rich Westerners and the ongoing projects to cater for them.

The tourist season in Goa runs from November to April. Outside of these dates it is either too hot or too wet for most people to visit, and few places remain open. But throughout the winter, both party people and package tourists in their thousands convene on the resort. As somewhere to relax, live cheaply and meet interesting peo-



The regulars

ple, it is very difficult to beat. You'll have fun there, believe me. Just try not to think of what it is going to be like in ten years time.

The party scene in Goa is what many people come for, and like the New Age festival scene, it too has benefited and hugely expanded as a result of dance music. Also like the festival scene, however, it is beginning to suffer from it. Because of the diversity of people that dance music attracts, the scene no longer attracts just hippies. The parties are starting to look more and more like clubs on the beach, with ravers, dealers, D.J.s and hippies all treating it like their own huge convention. Goa even has its own particular strain of dance music, fittingly known as Goa Trance. This is hard, very psychedelic techno that favours Eastern type melodies. Recommended listening available in the UK: Dragonfly label's excellent compilation *Order Odonata*, the Tip label (and parties), and clubwise, *Return to the Source* in London, which basically resembles a Goa-style party, only in a less exotic environment (currently *The Fridge* in Brixton).

In the 94-5 season, I was told, there were more parties in Goa than ever before, but they are becoming increasingly difficult



Auntie Nell and the author

to put on. The usual routine is for the organisers to pay the police to turn a blind eye - usually the equivalent of about £500 - but recently they have been demanding much more than that or simply keeping the money and then not allowing the parties to happen. On 1st May the last party of the season was due to take place. The organisers had been up for three days pulling it together, the police had been paid off, but at the last minute they demanded an extra £500. The organisers couldn't come up with the extra money, so they lost the deposit and the party was cancelled. Let's hope this isn't the way they intend to play things next year.

The police of course do have the upper hand, as the way the organisers make their money back is not surprisingly by selling vast quantities of Ecstasy and acid. All Class As are imported from Europe and hence they are costly, especially by comparison to everything else in India. You can expect to pay about Rs 250 (£5) for a trip and Rs 800 (£16) for an Ecstasy. With parties at the height of the season attracting as many as 4,000 people, one or two people are doing quite well out of them.

Several people finance their year-round holidays by making one profitable but extremely risky business trip to Europe each year. One French guy I spoke to had been doing this for five years, and on the money he made enjoyed a very lavish lifestyle. Each summer he bought 1000 Ecstasy in Amsterdam at £4 each - netting him £11-12,000 on return.

If you are going out to Goa to party you will most likely spend a good deal of your time in Anjuna, a beach resort to the north of the province. Aside from the parties it is perhaps best known for its flea market, which takes place every Wednesday. Traders come from all over India, Nepal and Tibet during the season to hawk their wares, principally selling textiles and jewellery. As a guide to prices,

you can expect to pick up a woven double bedspread for about Rs. 200 (£4), and shirts for around Rs. 100. The Sea Breeze Bar, set just back from the market is a good place to escape the heat and avoid the temptation to buy more - and if you're in Goa for a while you can be guaranteed to see the same faces.

Just along the coast, and within easy access as the action in the market winds down, is the Shore Bar. Its huge sound system pumps out the latest Goan Trance until 11.00pm (whether the early closing hours of many bars are influenced by the folly of British licensing laws is unclear), when if there is a party happening most people will head off to that, and if not drift off to a number of late bars - in Anjuna The Primrose and The Paraiso are recommended. These usually remain open as long as there are enough customers to warrant it, after which everyone climbs shakily aboard their Enfields and tries to avoid the frequent police roadblocks that ring the bars.

This is not as much of a problem as it might sound. The police who set up the roadblocks are usually on foot and off-duty; not surprisingly they can make much more money stopping tourists than they can carrying out their usual



The local market at Calangute

duties, so they do a bit of lucrative overtime. Even if you think you have everything in order (in theory you need to have an International Driver's Licence to ride a motorbike in Goa), they will find something to warrant you handing over a few hundred rupees. The trick is not to get stopped in the first place. The usual method of stopping you is to hold a wooden stick out in the road and wave a flashlight about a bit. Your method of avoiding them is to slow down to a near standstill leading the stick-wielding officer to believe you are about to stop, thus lowering his stick, then at the last minute you open the throttle and wave good-bye. Somehow they fall for it every time. If they know your face then they probably won't even expect you to stop. Their most profitable customers are always

going to be tourists who have just arrived.

More of a serious problem is being stopped for possession of any drug, even hash or grass. Chillums are very much in evidence in any traveller bar you go into and in the space of two days we had been offered every major controlled substance imaginable. This leads you to think that possession is legal or at least highly tolerated, but this is not the case at all. Westerners with money can usually escape serious penalties by handing over a wad of foreign currency, but if you are importing or dealing, then don't expect the repercussions to be so slight. There is a mandatory penalty, officially ten years. You'll need to have a lot of money to get out of that one, and in the case of larger quantities, you may not be able to get out at all.

Despite the risks, drugs are everywhere, especially chillums. For these the bigger the better is a good general rule. For a hollowed out piece of wood with a little stone in it, this little accessory can be taken mightily seriously and there are earnest faces all round when smoking them. On our third night in Goa, we were invited back home by a lifelong Goan resident called Rajesh, to partake in some proper smoking. Evidently Rajesh was not

particularly impressed with the London style toothpick spliffs Justin and I had happily been rolling.

On arrival at Rajesh's house, a huge villa in Calangute containing no furniture whatsoever, he produced his prize possession, an Italian designed chillum that he said retailed for \$100. Now whether or not this was wise investment is not clear, but one thing certainly is - either it or the concoction he filled it with was particularly effective. So effective, in fact, that the next thing I remember is waking up at 7am, approx. four hours later, on the porch, someone having kindly inserted a pillow under my head. Let's just say that they take a little getting used to.

Calangute, where we ended up that morning, is a market town as well as a growing tourist haunt a few miles south of Anjuna. It is probably the best coastal town to find bike repair shops, batteries, medical supplies and other essentials. Also the beach bars and the scene in general tend to be a bit more easygoing than in Anjuna. The Western Goa regulars you find there can be a bit stifling frankly. Their look, rituals and attitude can often be a closed shop unless you've lived in Goa longer than it



Sunset at Goa - or one man and his dog

took the earth to cool, and this can be very of fputting. I certainly wouldn't mind if I never see another



Pedro

er dreadlocked casualty muttering Boom Shiva as he takes a huge lug on a chillum again. My advice to them is - loosen up and drop the f**king act.

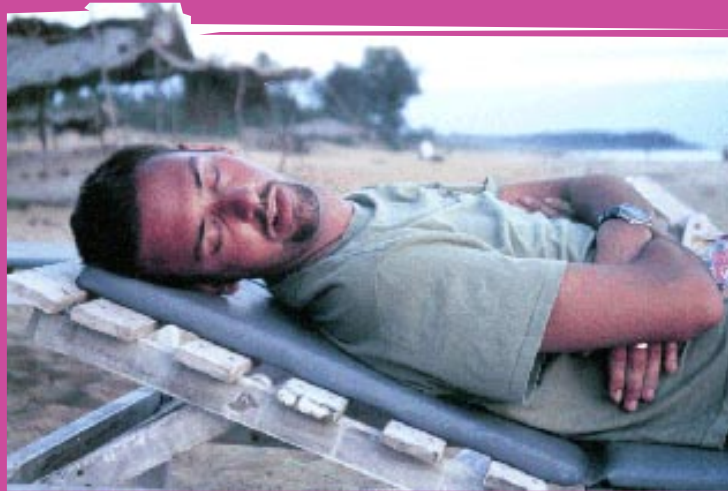
This contrasts considerably with the openness and natural charm of the locals themselves. Even Rajesh became a good friend once we had apologised for our behaviour on his porch. For what little many of them actually have, they are prepared to give an awful lot, and they are possessed of a trust that you almost never see in the Western world. On our first day in Goa we were trying to find somewhere to rent a motorbike. The first place we asked was a beach bar called Pedro's, and within an hour one of the waiters, Simon, had found us a Honda Kinetic which his brother happened not to be using. Now normally in England this process would have involved proof of I.D., hefty deposits, etc. etc. - but in Goa, Simon just said 'Take it for as long as you need it - just pay me when you get back.' He had only spoken to us for couple of minutes. On the whole trust breeds trust, so most westerners behave the same way in return, but it'll only take a few to spoil the relationship that currently exists.

Much is made of the Portuguese influence in Goa - usually reflected

in Guide Books by the mention of colonial churches and the enduring Christianity of most of the province's inhabitants. The Christian influence is a key factor in allowing much of what goes on in Goa to take place, which might seem perverse, but is perhaps more of a reflection of their perception of us. Unlike most of India, alcohol is very freely available. In addition many young Goans are involved in the party scene -either as small-time dealers or just as participants -although these were noticeably almost exclusively male.

One party devotee we met was a very likable Goan called Mickey. Mickey was a regular feature at Bob's Inn in Calangute, haunt to a group of twenty odd Westerners who had made Goa their permanent home and several locals. Every night this group would convene around the same table, drink fenny and smoke chillums and then disappear until the following night. Mickey had got himself into a tight spot the previous year, when he had been arrested for possession of a small amount of charris (potent Indian hash). He spent six months in prison as a result. It should have been ten years but his friends put together 70,000 rupees and made sure that it got to the right person.

Baksheesh (paybacks) is a national occupation, and cannot



Hard day at the office dear ?

really be avoided at any level.

Mickey once drove us down to a place about three hours south of Anjuna called Palolem Beach. Set in a small cove it boasts the calmest waters of anywhere along the coastline and a steep tropical island that you can walk across to at low tide. A couple of enterprising Goans have set up the Palolem Beach Resort there, which consists of ten or fifteen Lawrence of Arabia-style tents that you can rent for 100 Rs. a night. This is currently the only place to stay in Palolem and during the season you will be lucky to get hold of one. People who are growing disheartened with Anjuna are migrating to beaches such as Palolem that are more

remote, quieter and less hassle.

Another growing attraction, but lying in the far north of Goa, is Arambol. One of its most pleasant features is a freshwater lake set just 100m back from the beach. Just an hour's drive north of Anjuna, including a short ferry ride, it has begun to see the first signs of enterprise, but so far most of it is very low-key. There are now a few bars, but as yet nowhere really to stay, unless you count the huge banyan tree in the forest behind the beach which has been home to some of Goa's more unhinged Western throwbacks for years.

If the party crowd move out to the more remote areas such as Arambol and Palolem, this will keep them separate from the kind of tourists that the authorities and developers are trying to attract, which may allow them to be left alone to get on with what they've been doing for years. As it stands the two Goas cannot coexist for much longer, as they are simply incompatible. The development of Goa is an inevitability - it is too beautiful a place -and frankly it is a surprise it hasn't happened earlier. It would however be a shame for all concerned to let this happen wholesale, as it would eventually be ruined for everybody.

In the third of our 70 s
 Deconstructions Colin
 Hamilton looks at the
 Bilko copying Bosscat
 The copyright law is very inconsis-
 tent. In most cases it is wrong to
 steal other peoples ideas. Earlier
 on this year Elastica settled out of
 court with The Stranglers who
 claimed that one of their songs
 bare more than a passing resem-
 blance to one of Elastica s releas-
 es. Lawyers representing Wire are
 believed to be considering action
 against Elastica too. Atari, creators
 of the video
 scrolling system
 which allows char-
 acters to move a
 greater distance
 than the screen
 width has also been
 copyrighted and law
 suits are expected
 any day now. Even
 David Letterman,
 the originator of
 the chatshow for-
 mat which has been
 copied by the likes
 of Jonathan Ross
 and Danny Baker ,
 is playing the copy-
 right game. He
 couldn t copy-
 right the fomula



which involves wearing trainers
 with a suit, moving backwards and
 forwards during the opening com-
 ments and exchanging pre-
 arranged remarks with the band-
 leader. He has, however, managed
 to have his Top Ten List idea
 copyrighted.

The world of cartoons does not
 have problems with the copyright
 law. They copy anything and every-
 thing. The Wacky Races was
 based on a Jack Lemmon film enti-
 tled The Great Race. Not allegedly;
 the makers of the cartoon, Hanna
 Barbara, openly admit it. The
 Flintstones cartoon series is
 based on an old American
 sitcom called The
 Honeymooners. Recently
 The Flintstones film was
 released, based on the car-
 toon series and starring
 John Belushi with other
 real people. So will cre-
 ators of the cartoon see
 any of the profits generated
 even though they stole the
 idea? You bet your life they
 will. Do the creators of the
 Hoonymooners see any-
 thing seeing as it was origi-
 nally their idea? They won t
 see a penny. Cartoons
 have their own copyright
 law. They are free to steal
 and pay nothing but are

happy to collect if the idea is
 passed on.

Boss Cat is one of the most obvi-
 ously ripped off cartoons. The pro-
 gramme is based on The Phil
 Silvers Show or Bilko as it is com-
 monly known. Top Cat represented
 Bilko. Both are leaders of men (or
 cats in Top Cat s case) and both
 have heavily involmment in get rich
 quick money making plans. But
 even with the best ideas, they
 would get close but, something last
 minute would crop up and spoil
 everything. As is the way with such
 programmes the equilibrium would
 be maintained ready for the start of
 the next episode.

Top Cat lived in an alleyway which,
 for some reason lost in the depths
 of time, he was in charge of keep-
 ing tidy. Of ficer Dibble would
 inspect it on a regular basis and try
 to make Top Cat s life a misery. Top
 Cat, of course would run rings
 around him which added to
 Dibble s resolve make him suffer
 next time.
 Unlike most cartoons, which gener-
 ally have intensely stereotyped
 characters, Dibble was not por-
 trayed as the bad guy . Dibble was
 more the inept and frustrated
 underachiever who was just trying
 to do his job. His main aim in life
 was to be promoted. In one memo-
 rable episode he achieved his

ambition. He didn't realise that, behind the scenes, Top Cat had been a major mover on his behalf. Top Cat had thought life would be easier without Dibble around interfering with his money making schemes. He was delighted with his work until he saw Dibble's replacement, a far more aggressive man than the rather meek Dibble. T.C. as his close friends get to call him, lost no time having Dibble demoted back to the alleyway.



And this was the status quo, Top Cat was the leader of the alley. He ran card schools and roulette wheels in which he always won money from his friends. If gambling should be seen on a programme whose viewing age starts at below five years old is a debateable matter. As Top Cat always won it could be argued that it was demonstrating that you should never gamble with a card shark. Also debateable on a programme seen by children so young, was Top Cat's frequent disregard for the law. Though he didn't commit violent acts or steal directly, he thought nothing about not paying to enter night clubs or going on free cruises. In one episode Benny, the small fat cat

modelled on Dwayne Doberman, won a cruise. Top Cat, and a number of his friends stowed away in his luggage, in order to go on the cruise too. This fraud was not portrayed as morally wrong. Only if the relevant authorities caught them would anything unfair have been depicted as far as Top Cat's creators were concerned. The fact that type of behaviour increases the price for the rest of the travellers was not addressed. Top Cat also made full use of the police phone which was conveniently located directly

above his living quarters (a rather small bin). Top Cat treated this phone as his own, often becoming upset when some of the calls were for officer Dibble. He may well have been preventing urgent police business from being carried out. Allowing criminals to roam free due to the police being unable to relay the information to Dibble. What about the phone bill? Again, the fact that this was increasing the community charge in his area, was entirely ignored. Judging by the state of the alleyway, he lived in a deprived area whose residents could ill afford the extra cost incurred by Top Cat's lack of respect for the law. Top Cat was portrayed as a loveable rogue in a similar way that the

Kray Twins are presented by the media today. The fact that he committed endless crimes was conveniently forgotten. He often used the phone to mislead the police about where officer Dibble was or what he was doing. He regularly gambled on public property which, judging by their response when Dibble arrived, was also illegal. He committed a whole host of other crimes such as fraud and deception which were all glossed over by the cartoon makers..

It can only be a matter of time before the Top Cat defence is used in court as a mitigating factor in some sort of credit card fraud. I would like to state that my client saw repeated episodes of Top Cat as a child and as a result of this felt that it was reasonable to steal thousands of pounds from old ladies and impersonate a policeman. Hanna Barbera should consider investing in some sort of fund so that they are prepared for the inevitable law suits which are surely just around the corner. In the mean time Top Cat should be removed from children's TV and be only shown after the nine o'clock watershed with a warning about its content announced before it starts. Otherwise a moral decline of epic proportions can only be around the corner.

Small Town Heroes

Hasi interviews up and coming rockers Small Town Heroes from the comfort of rage s rooftop hideaway

If Sunderland based Small Town Heroes make it big no one can accuse them of being spoilt one hit wonders. These guys have grafted, playing their brand of rock in heavy working men's clubs up north to audiences that may as well be two men and a parrot as lead guitarist Baz Warne jokes.

Small Town Heroes lead singer Chris Warne and his brother Baz gave an exclusive interview to Rage at their snazzy Balham HQ - not the first time they'd visited the gateway to the South - they used to play the Balham Hotel when they were gigging for their beer.

The guys were full of high spirits, despite the fact that Chris had managed to cover his egg and chips in sugar for the second day in a row. In case this interview looks tipped in Baz's favour, it isn't intentional honest. Baz is the gabby big brother who you'd defo want in your gang at school, Chris is the shy, cute one who dons his shades rock style for the photo-shoot.

Small Town Heroes hit the headlines when they recently released their first single on CD-ROM - a risky move and a world first. The gamble, however, has paid off. They've got extra column inches out of it and their single Moral Judgement has gone down a storm, especially in Ireland which is quick to reject muso-trash on its home territory.

The Small Town Heroes are now creeping up the rock star ladder, getting cabs ordered for them instead of hopping on the bus, thanks to their record company EG Records, which also boasts Killing Joke and ex-Pink Floyd bassist Roger Waters.

They really believe in us which is great, chuckles Chris. Unlike most record companies you go in feeling

shit and come out feeling like a star.

As with all legends no one is really sure who came up with the CD-ROM concept, the guys say it's their manager Harvey Lee, whose fond of dabbling in cyberspace. He

claims it was the guys. Who ever came up with the brainwave it's worked.

Unlike Gabriel, Bowie and Prince who've all wallowed in multimedia, the Small Town Heroes decided to go for a basic approach - CD DA audio tracks complete with on-screen lyrics if you fancy some

karaoke, a clutch of QuickTime videos, including previously unshown footage of the band.

It was a logical step to tap



into new technologies,

explains Baz. We didn't want to make it techno and complex, we wanted to give it some warmth and integrity.

The guys are honest. It has definitely been a great marketing tool, cracks Chris.

But it has also achieved its aim of getting out to a wider audience, although their next single is unlikely to come out on CD-ROM. It was very time consuming and we're very busy, says Baz. It was a feeler to get to kids who are buying computers today who might have dismissed us, and it's worked.

Priced at £5.49, Moral Judgement is more expensive than a single CD, but the boys don't think it's a problem. Peter Gabriel's cost £50 quid, at least ours is cheap enough to try out, says Baz.

I remember saving up and going home with my vinyl under my arm, laughs Baz.

Aside from bringing in the punters, the CD-ROM has also attracted the eagle eyes of the music biz, which never misses a punch. Yeh, the industry have picked up on it and they are watching our ass, laughs Chris.



The guys have just been on tour with the Jeff Healey band and despite being slightly sceptical of being billed with a blues type band, they had a groove and drank more than a few towns out of Newcastle Brown. We expected to be playing to 35 plus hippies, but we were surprised, they weren't, says Baz.

Considering we were billed as rockers we went down very well.

As the guys explain their music is difficult to pigeon-hole. They've been likened to the Alarm, the only similarity in reality is that the boys' Sunderland accent is about as impenetrable as Welsh. Their influences are eclectic. Our roots are in a lot of stuff, explains Baz.

I'm punk at heart, you know bands like the Clash, but people call us rockers cos they can't think of anything else. They might not want to be seen as rockers, but Baz is still

a sucker for the Stray Cats.

I love them, they really influence my guitar sound, he confesses.

The guys have just come back from a publicity tour of Ireland, where they've

been racing up the charts. So do they see themselves as the next



U2. Jesus, the only similarity is that no one understands what they say and no one

understands what we say, screams Baz in his broadest Geordie.



Interview over.

After endless cups of coffee and a long wait for a cab the guys disappear into the distance, destined to spend the night in a recording studio hammering out their next single. Do they fight like the brothers Gallagher? We've had a few fisties, but not many, admits Baz. Yes, these guys are total salt of the earth and if anyone deserves to make it they do just cos you know that even if they were massive they'd still be down the greasy cafe and not hanging out at some poncey cocktail bar.