



My Must Do

Prahlad Kakar



YOGEN SHAH

- **MUST SEE:** Clinique Island is a favourite. It is really pristine with beautiful coral reefs and fish. When I go to Andamans I look for what is under the water.
- **MUST EAT:** I have eaten really good seafood at the shacks by the beach at various islands.
- **MUST STAY:** The forest cottages of Andaman and Nicobar Islands Environmental Team (ANET) in Wandoor are lovely.

PORT BLAIR, ANDAMANS

Mix adventure with a dash of culture and get charmed. **BY PALLAVI PASRICHA**

● **DAY 1:** Check into Hotel Sinclairs Bay View (tel: 03192-227 824) at South Point, close to the airport, overlooking the Bay of Bengal. After breakfast, spend the morning at Cellular Jail, better known as Kaala Pani, where British deported Indian freedom fighters. For lunch, dig into seafood at New Lighthouse Restaurant, about 10 minutes away. Then make your way to Mount Harriet, 55 km away, the highest peak in South Andamans. The garden here has spectacular views of the islands and Port Blair. After this, visit Corbyn's Cove, a secluded beach, to watch the sunset. Have dinner at Waves restaurant on the beach before heading back to your hotel.

● **DAY 2:** Keep the day for watersports. After breakfast, go to Mahatma Gandhi Marine National Park at Wandoor, 30 km away. This is one of the best spots for scuba diving and snorkelling with a variety of coral reefs. Visit Lacadives Diving School (www.lacadives.com) for basic diving

lessons. They will teach you what to do under water in a swimming pool before taking you to the ocean where you will be transported to a completely different world with colourful fish and reefs. This will take up most of your day. Have dinner at your hotel.

● **DAY 3:** Ross Island, 15 minutes by ferry, is first in line for the day. This was the administrative headquarters till an earthquake destroyed quite a bit of it. After looking around for some time, return to Port Blair and have authentic Bengali lunch at Adi Bengali Hotel at MA Road. Visit the Anthropological Museum, 10 minutes away, and learn about the various tribes here. For shopping, head to Sagarika Emporium and pick up sea shell products.

● **DAY 4:** Wake up early to visit Baratang island, 100 km away. Part of the drive is through the forest reserve area of the Jarawa tribe, one of the few tribes remaining on this island. You may spot a few tribesmen on the road, but it's illegal to take pictures and cars are not allowed to stop there. Go to the limestone caves. To reach close to the caves take a 40-minute speed boat ride where the narrow water channel also

goes through the dense mangrove forests. Back in Port Blair, explore Aberdeen Market and have dinner at one of the restaurants there.

● **DAY 5:** Check out of the hotel and take the ferry to Havelock island, one hour away. It is home to white beaches, mangroves, paddy fields and banana plantations. Check into Barefoot at Havelock (tel: 282 151), located at Radhanagar beach. After an early lunch, head to Elephant Beach, 40 minutes away by boat. The shoreline was affected by the tsunami but the tree stumps in the water provide a dramatic backdrop against the sea. Snorkelling is a popular activity here. In the evening go to Radhanagar beach to watch the most spectacular sunset in the island. Enjoy a moment of solitude and then make your way for dinner to Swapan's Restaurant at Village Number 3. It serves fresh catch of the day. It would be the perfect ending to your holiday.

