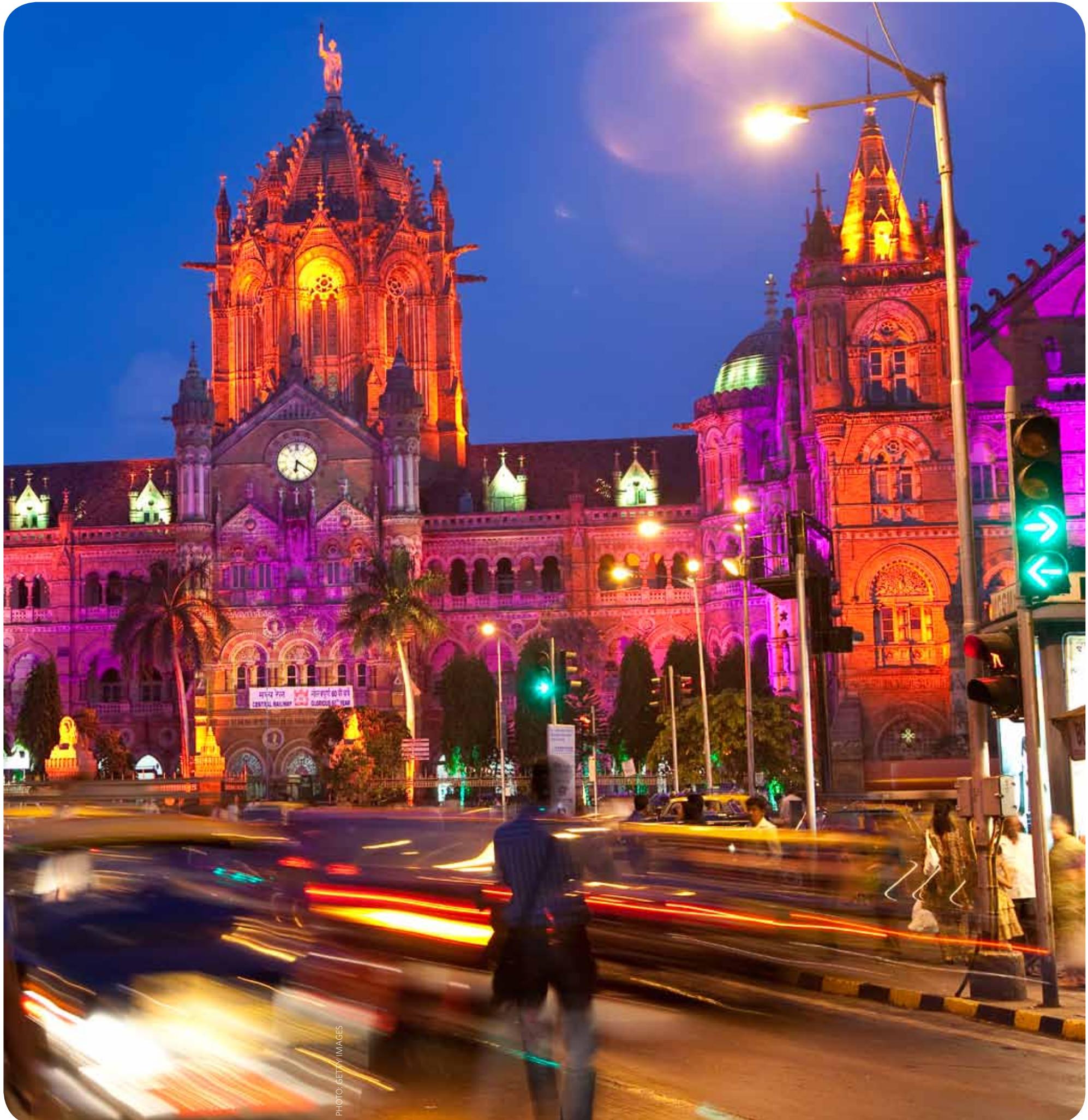


# the fab 15

INDIA'S MOST POPULOUS CITY, MUMBAI BOASTS AN ASTOUNDING ARRAY OF ATTRACTIONS. **FAH THAI** HIGHLIGHTS THE TOP SPOTS FOR THOSE SEEKING AN IN-DEPTH EXPERIENCE OF THIS URBAN MELTING POT

*Words Vicki Williams Photos Money Sharma*





## Crawford Market

### SHOPPING WITH THE LOCALS

Crawford Market and the streets and lanes around it bustle with life. Completed in 1869, the massive, 22,471m<sup>2</sup> market building is the place to buy everything from fruit and vegetables to spices and even animals. The many adjacent lanes are home to take-home bargains – household furnishings, homeware, handmade paper products and other stationery, bed linens, beautiful textiles and saris. Note: be prepared to bargain hard for the best deals. [crawford-market.com](http://crawford-market.com)



## National Gallery of Modern Art

### EXPLORING THE ART OF INDIA

The National Gallery is considered one of India's best art galleries. It's home to a large collection of modern and contemporary Indian art (from 1850 onwards) by noted figures from across the style spectrum, as well as works by top international names. Featured artists include Gaganendranath Tagore, MF Hussain, FN Souza, Amrita Sher-Gil and Pablo Picasso. Closed on Mondays and public holidays. [ngmaindia.gov.in](http://ngmaindia.gov.in)

## Marine Drive

### A MAGICAL WATERFRONT WALK

Marine Drive is known locally as the Queen's Necklace because the buildings along this semi-circular road next to the Arabian Sea glitter like jewels at night. Stroll along the 3km promenade and enjoy the sea breezes as you take in a stunning sunset or admire the numerous (and somewhat run-down) art deco buildings, which remind some of those in Miami. It's a popular spot for an evening walk and part of its charm is the diverse crowds it attracts. *Marine Dr, Colaba*



## Trishna

### WORLD FAMOUS SEAFOOD

Neither a hidden gem nor a glamour spot, Trishna is an Indian seafood restaurant with a focus on southern Indian cuisine. Still, it's often mentioned in travel guidebooks and remains a firm favourite of foodies here. The reason is simple: the high quality and unparalleled flavours of Trishna's many seafood dishes, including its fantastic butter pepper garlic crab, tandoori prawns and its barbecued fish dishes. [trishna.co.in](http://trishna.co.in)



## Taj Lands End

### SUNSET COCKTAILS AND FAB FOOD

After exploring Bandra, head to Taj Lands End hotel for drinks and dinner. At Vista, enjoy a glass of Indian wine (which is as good as New Zealand's wine, trust me) as you watch the sun set over the Arabian Sea. Follow that up with some of the best Indian food in the city at Masala Bay, a contemporary Indian restaurant that focuses on light and flavourful dishes. Recommendations include seafood *shorba*, a delicately spiced seafood soup, and *kareli gohst*, an aromatic dish of tender lamb that highlights the executive chef's mastery of spice use. [tajhotels.com](http://tajhotels.com)



## Bungalow 8

### WHERE THE FABULOUS AND FAMOUS SHOP

Mumbai's first concept store is spread over three floors in a heritage building dating back to 1857. It specialises in stunning, Indian-inspired fashion and home interior products with global appeal. There are offerings from up-and-coming designers and vintage finds. There's also an in-house range. Don't forget your credit card. [bungalow8.com](http://bungalow8.com)



## Taj Mahal Palace

### TRAILBLAZING IN THE REALM OF LUXURY FOR OVER A CENTURY

Hotels rarely achieve landmark status but the luxurious Taj Mahal Palace, completed in 1903, is an undisputed icon. It's the owner of many firsts, including first hotel in India with electricity, first with a licensed bar and first to open a contemporary Japanese restaurant. It remains the accommodation of choice for VIPs, many of whom appear in photos displayed here. Original artworks, period furniture and antiques add to the sense of history. With its 11 F&B outlets, The Taj is also a popular choice for a meal or a drink. Try the Zodiac Grill, home to French fine dining, and Souk, which serves excellent Middle Eastern cuisine against a stunning harbour backdrop. [tajhotels.com](http://tajhotels.com)

MAIN PHOTO: CORBIS; INSET PHOTO: COURTESY OF BUNGALOW 8



## Bombay Electric

### HIGH-END DESIGNER FASHION

Bombay Electric is the place to find cutting-edge Indian designer fashion, including the creations of big names like Manish Arora and Rajesh Pratap Singh. Its range includes clothes for men, women and kids, from eveningwear and punk streetwear to handmade jewellery and accessories, rare collectibles and vintage goods. There's even one-off, artisan-made silk and pashmina scarves. It has been likened to luxe department store chain Barneys New York.

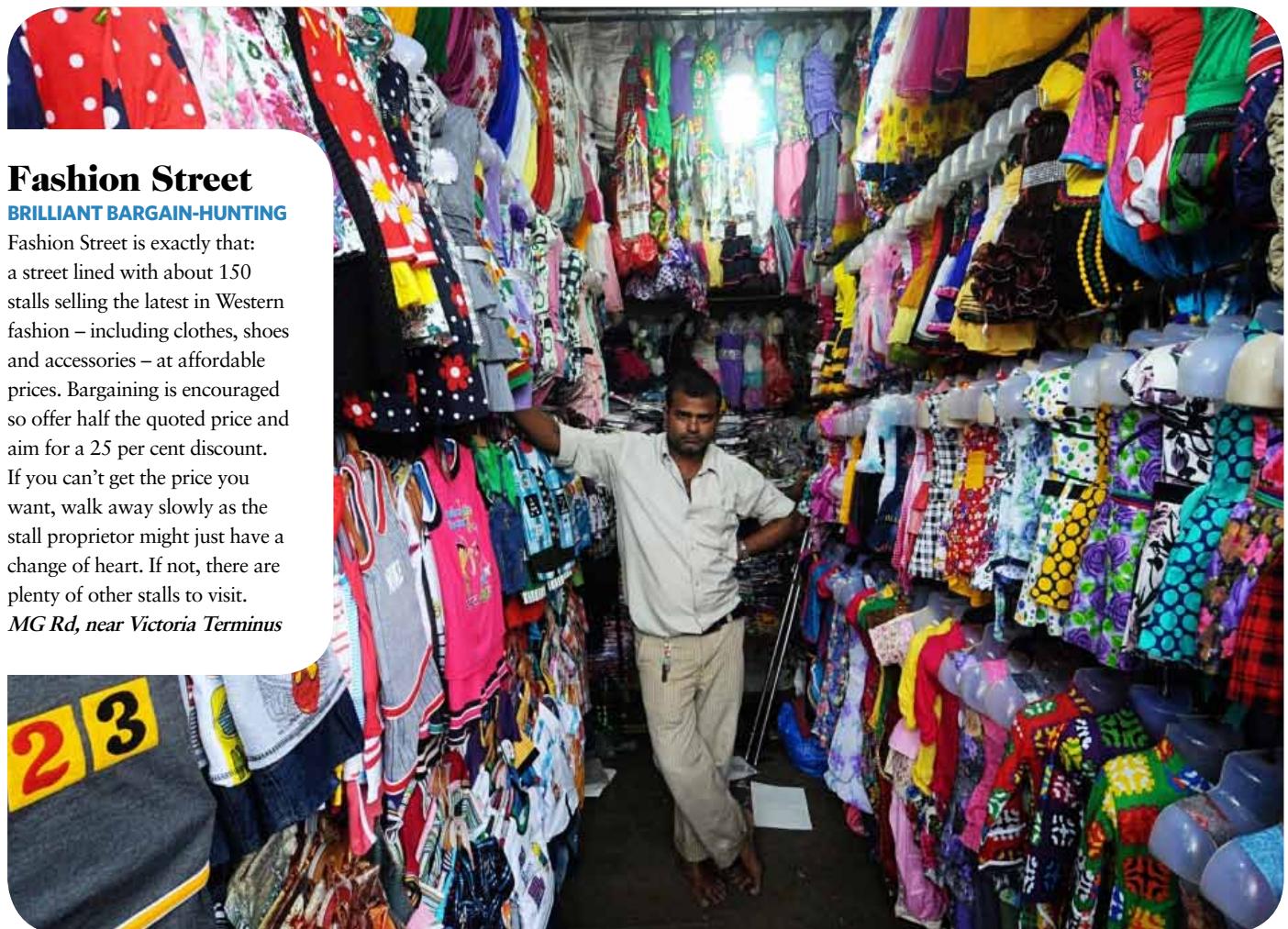
1 Reay House, Best Marg, Colaba, T: +91 (0)22 2287 6276



## Mani Bhavan Gandhi Museum

### WALK IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF BAPU

Fascinating insights into the private and public life of a legend can be found at Mani Bhavan. Gandhi called this three-storey residence home whenever he was in Mumbai and it's where he launched several key initiatives between 1917 and 1934. The house, once owned by a friend of the nationalist icon, has served as a research centre and museum since the mid-1950s. Gandhi's sparsely furnished room has been preserved and even today it's easy to picture him sitting at his spinning wheel. The terrace where he was arrested in 1932 "for sufficient reasons" features an inscribed bronze plaque. Also of note is a display of miniatures capturing about two dozen key moments in Gandhi's life. The library here contains over 40,000 works either written by Gandhi, about him or about independence movements in general, with many rare and out-of-print pamphlets preserved for posterity. Photo-taking is permitted. [gandhi-manibhavan.org](http://gandhi-manibhavan.org)



## Fashion Street

### BRILLIANT BARGAIN-HUNTING

Fashion Street is exactly that: a street lined with about 150 stalls selling the latest in Western fashion – including clothes, shoes and accessories – at affordable prices. Bargaining is encouraged so offer half the quoted price and aim for a 25 per cent discount. If you can't get the price you want, walk away slowly as the stall proprietor might just have a change of heart. If not, there are plenty of other stalls to visit.

MG Rd, near Victoria Terminus



## Mahalaxmi Dhobi Ghat

### LAUNDRY – MUMBAI STYLE

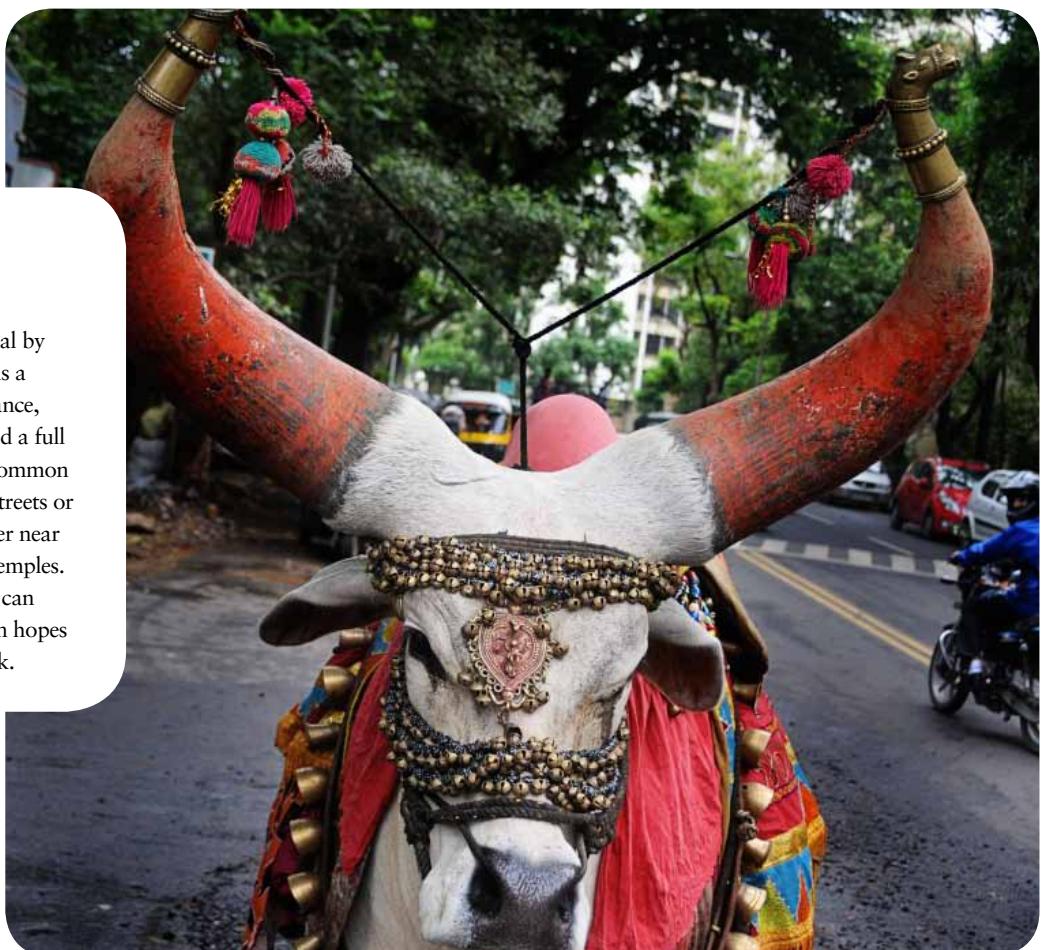
An outdoor laundry might seem an odd choice for this list, but Mahalaxmi Dhobi Ghat is the world's largest open-air laundry and the... err... pounding heart of the city. The 800-plus stone washing cubicles here have been used for more than 100 years and about a million items are washed, hung and ironed here each day. Miraculously, everyone gets their own washing back. Dhobi Ghat's long-term future is uncertain, so visit now. *Saat Rasta*, near the Mahalaxmi train station



## Bandra

### SHOP - AND "STAR-SPOT" - TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT

This cosmopolitan suburb by the sea is where the Bollywood stars live, including the King of Bollywood himself, Shahrukh Khan. It's home to numerous Catholic churches, having once been occupied by the Portuguese, and has more of a European feel than other parts of the city, thanks in part to its Western-style bakeries and delis. The shopping and dining in Bandra are great and one could easily spend the day exploring the myriad options.



## Sacred Cows

### THE QUINTESSENTIAL SNAPSHOT

Considered a sacred animal by Hindus, the humble cow is a symbol of wealth, abundance, strength, selfless giving and a full earthly life. As such, it's common to see them roaming the streets or stopped next to a caretaker near busy markets or outside temples. For a small fee, passersby can feed the cow some grass in hopes that it will bring them luck.



# Leopald Cafe

A MUMBAI INSTITUTION

Operating since 1871, Leopold Cafe (or Leo's), is known for its colourful clientele — and great for people-watching. It was a central feature in the cult-novel *Shantaram*, and author Gregory David Roberts is often seated at his regular table when in Mumbai (he'll happily sign copies of the book brought by fans that go to the cafe as if on a pilgrimage). It was also one of the first places attacked during the 2008 terrorist tragedy and some bullet damage remains as a remembrance badge of honour. The cafe serves an all-day international menu and is fully licensed. [leopoldcafe.com](http://leopoldcafe.com)

# **Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus**

## OUTRAGEOUSLY STUNNING ARCHITECTURE

Featuring an unusual combination of over-the-top gothic revival and Mughal architecture, this UNESCO World Heritage Site was completed in 1888 and boasts an impressive admixture of domes, turrets, pointed arches, gargoyles and lavish interiors (which have seen better days). It's still referred to by its former name of Victoria Terminus by many Mumbaians and is the headquarters of the Central Railway serving both as a long-distance and suburban terminus, with an estimated three million people using the station each day. Other than its architectural appeal it affords a fascinating and vibrant peek into Mumbai life, which if you are in the right spot at the right time can make for fantastic photos. It also has underground walkways lined with shops selling inexpensive goods.

*Dadabhai Naoroji Rd, South Mumbai*

