



Basilica of Bom Jesus Church



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Basilica of Bom Jesus Church, Goa

Basilica of Bom Jesus Church has the grave of Saint Francis Xavier. The church is located in Old Goa which was under Portuguese rule. The construction was started in 1594 and ended in 1605. The church is considered as one of the oldest in Goa and India. The church was built on the basis of Baroque architecture.

This tutorial will let you know about the history of Basilica of Bom Jesus Church along with the structures present inside. You will also get the information about the best time to visit the church along with how to reach there.

Audience

This tutorial is designed for the people who would like to know about the history of Basilica of Bom Jesus Church along with the interiors and design of the monument. The monument is visited by many people from India and abroad.

Prerequisites

This is a brief tutorial designed only for informational purpose. There are no prerequisites as such. All that you should have is a keen interest to explore new places and experience their charm.

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1. Basilica of Bom Jesus – Overview

Basilica of Bom Jesus is a church situated in **Old Goa**. The church has been listed in the list of **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. Bom Jesus means **Holy Jesus** or **infant Jesus**. The outer walls of the church were plastered by using lime plaster but was later stripped off. The church has the tomb of Saint Francis Xavier who died while he was on his way to China.



Goa

Goa is a state in India and comes under a coastal region named **Konkan**. Many tourists from India and abroad come to visit the place due to its beaches, churches and other monuments. The history of Goa dates back to the Mauryan rule. After Mauryas, Goa was ruled by many dynasties and last of them were Portuguese.



Visiting Hours

The church can be visited from 9:00am to 6:30pm from Monday to Saturday while on Sundays the timing is 10:30am to 6:30pm. The church also opens on the public holidays. It takes around one hour to visit the whole church.

Tickets

There is no entry fee to visit the church. Tourists can come here any time during visiting hours and visit the church.

Best time to visit

As Goa is situated on the sea shore so tourists can visit Goa and the church any time. The best time to visit Goa is between October and January but the months of monsoon from June to September make Goa more beautiful.

Where to Stay?

There are more than 1400 hotels in Goa where tourists can get their accommodation. The hotels range from inexpensive budget hotels to expensive five-star hotels. Tourists can also stay in resorts and guest houses which provide a comfortable stay. Good service is offered in all kinds of hotels. Some of the hotels in Goa are as follows:

- **Five-Star Hotels**
 - Hotel Park Prime located at Panjim
 - Chances Resort & Casino located at Dona Paula
 - Bogmallo Beach resort located at Bogmalo

- Dona Sylvia Beach Resort located at Cavelossim
- Novotel Goa Shrem Hotel located at Bardez
- **Four-Star Hotels**
 - Pinto Rosario Square Resort & Spa located at Bardez
 - Estrela Do Mar Beach Resort located at Calangute
 - De Alturas Resort located at Candolim
 - Sukhmantra Resort and Spa located at Candolim
 - Aromiaa Villas located at Arpora
- **Three-Star Hotels**
 - Palacio De Goa located at Panjim
 - Tangerine Resort located at Calangute
 - Joia Do Mar Resort located at Calangute
 - Paradise Village Beach Resort located at Calangute
 - Annapurna Vishram Dham located at Baga
- **Budget or Two-Star Hotels**
 - Treebo XEC Residency located at Margao
 - The Rivasa Resort located at Calangute
 - Hotel Sai Baga located at Baga
 - Atlanta Beach resort located at Calangute
 - Rahi Coral Beach resort located at Calangute
- **Cheap or One-Star Hotels**
 - Hotel Blessings located at Panjim
 - Sangolda Greenz located at Bardez
 - Goan Café n Resort located at Morjim
 - Divar Island Retreat located at Divar
 - Colva Residency located at Colva

2. Basilica of Bom Jesus – History

Basilica of Bom Jesus is a big and one of the oldest church in India which was constructed during the Portuguese rule in Goa. Bom Jesus means good Jesus or infant Jesus and the church is dedicated to him. The construction of the church was started in 1594 and ended in 1605. The church was declared as sacred in 1605 by **Alexio de Menezes**.

Saint Francis Xavier

Saint Francis has been buried in the church. He died in **Sancian island** or **Shangchuan island** when he was going to China. His body was taken to Portuguese Malacca but after two years it was brought to Goa. It is said that the saint's body was fresh when it was brought to Goa.



People of all communities can come here to visit the church as it is believed that saint has miraculous power of healing. People are given a chance to see the body of the saint after every 10 years.

Feast of Saint Francis Xavier

Every year on 3rd December, feast of Saint Xavier is celebrated in which many pilgrims come to visit the church. A pilgrimage is made to the church nine days before the feast or on the day of the feast is a must. Non-Christians also come to visit the church during this period.



Alexio de Menezes

Alexio de Menezes was the archbishop of Goa who declared the church as sacred in 1605 after its construction. Alexio lived from 1559 to 1617. He was also the archbishop of Braga in Portugal and also the viceroy of Portugal during the rule of **Philippine dynasty** in Portugal. He became the archbishop of Goa in 1595 and of Braga in 1612. After his death in 1617, he was buried in **Populo Church**.

3. Basilica of Bom Jesus – Architecture

The church was constructed with laterite stone that was brought from **Bassein** which is 300km away from Goa. Since the laterite stone gets stronger with time, a Portuguese conservationist removed the lime plaster that was done on the outer walls of the church. Currently it seems that the walls are deteriorating.

Mausoleum of Saint Francis Xavier

Mausoleum of Saint Francis Xavier is here. There is a silver casket on top of it in which body of the saint is kept. **Giovanni Battista Foggini** was the architect and designer of the mausoleum and it took around ten years to complete its construction. The mausoleum was constructed on a base of Jasper which is red and purple coloured and has been adorned with marble.



Bom Jesus Basilica Art Gallery

Bom Jesus Basilica Art Gallery was constructed in front of the tomb and it has the books written by **Dom Martin** who was a painter in Goa. It is one of the largest art galleries in Asia having 36 paintings.

Professed House

There is a professed house nearby the church which is a two-storey building and has lime plaster on the outer walls. The church and the house are linked through a colonnaded

arcade. Jesuits built the house in 16th century whose façade was built by black granite. The construction of the house was started in 1585 and completed in 1589.



Chapel

There is a chapel with twisted columns and floral decorations. The remains of Saint Francis Xavier is kept here. People can see the carvings and paintings in the interior of the chapel which tells about the life of the saint.

4. Basilica of Bom Jesus – How to Reach?

Tourists can reach Goa by road, rail and air transport. The airport is around 29km away from Panaji. Goa doesn't have its railway station but there are three stations nearby from where tourists can reach Panaji through road transport. Goa is well connected to various cities through road transport.



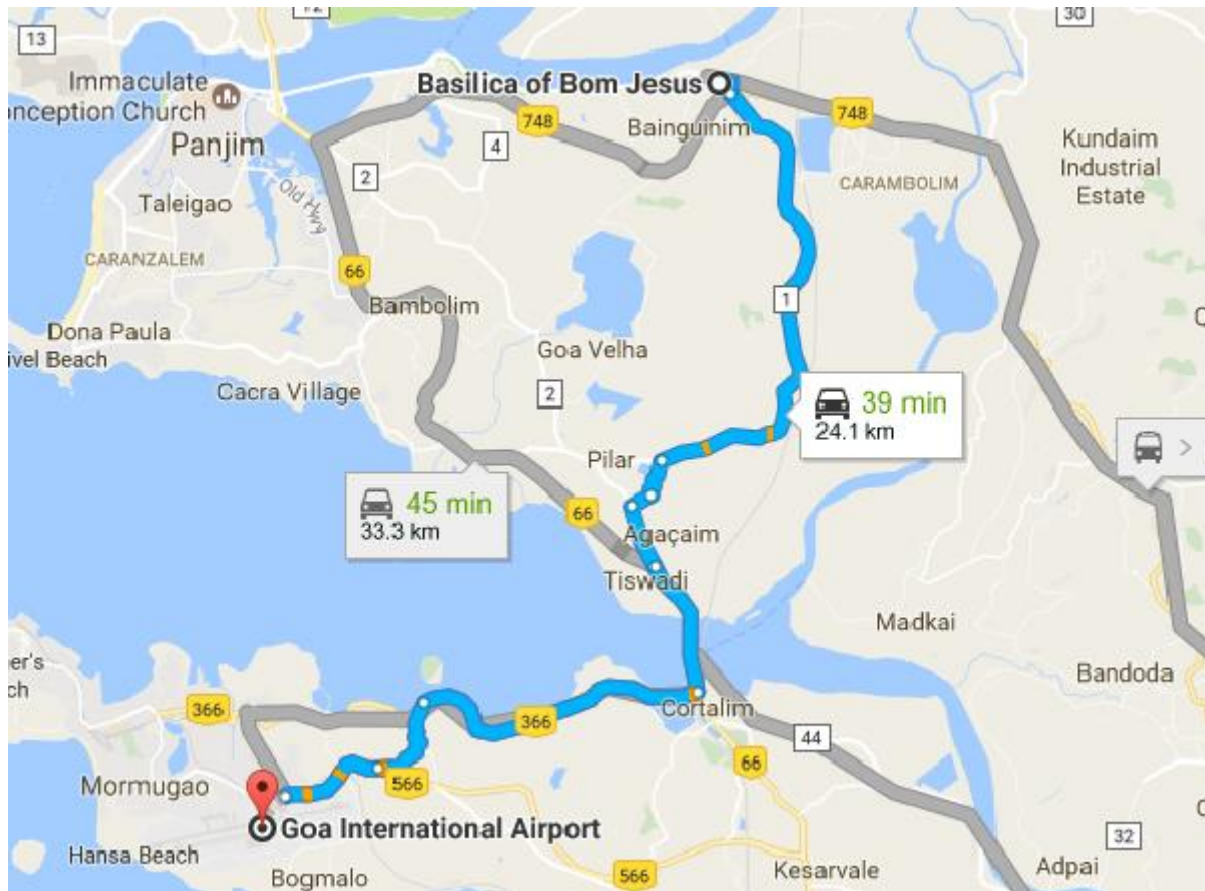
Some of the nearby places with their approximate distance from Goa are as follows:

- **Goa to Hubli**
 - By air – 117km
 - By rail – 173km
 - By road – 159km
- **Goa to Kolhapur**
 - By air – 154km
 - By rail – 354km
 - By road – 238km
- **Goa to Pune**
 - By air – 357km

- By rail – 492km
- By road – 473km
- **Goa to Mangalore**
 - By air – 283km
 - By rail – 362km
 - By road – 358km
- **Goa to Belgaum**
 - By air – 78km
 - By rail – 135km
 - By road – 130km

By Air

Goa has its airport situated in **Dabolim** which is around 29km away from Goa. The airport is called **Goa International Airport** or **Dabolim Airport**. The airport is also shared by military airbase named **INS Hansa**.



The airport has two terminals in which **Terminal 1** is for domestic flights while **Terminal 2** is for international flights. Domestic flights connect Goa to Hyderabad, Delhi Mumbai,

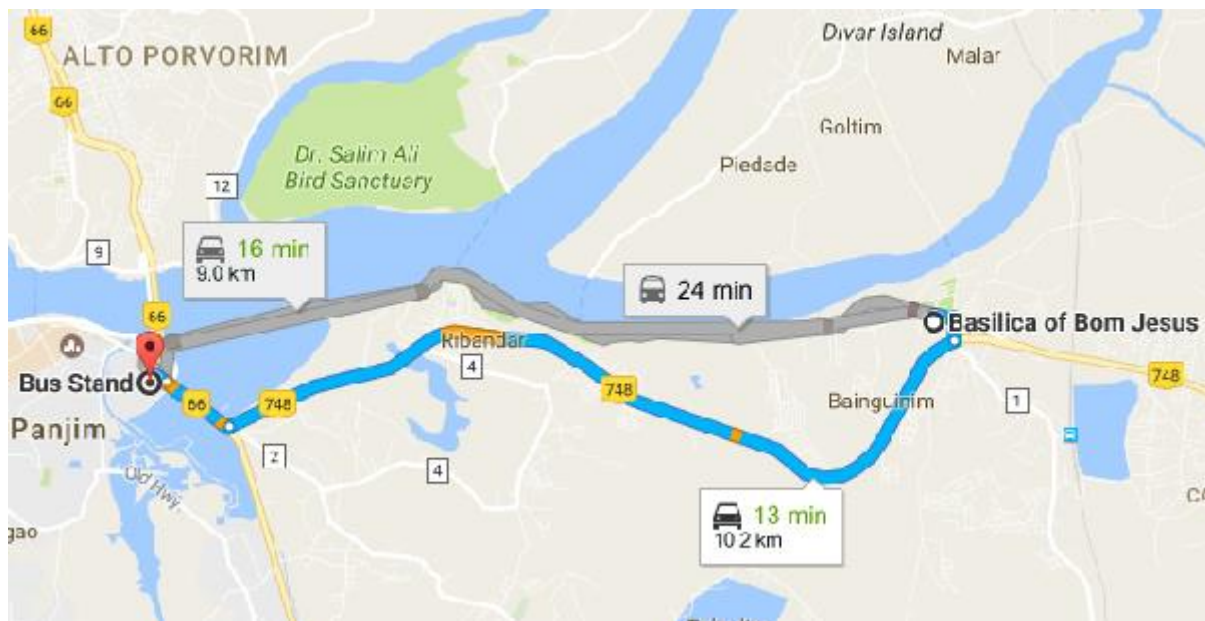
Kolkata, Bangalore and Chennai while international flights connect Goa to Gulf, Arab, Oman etc.

By Rail

Goa does not have its railway station but nearest railway stations are Madgaon, Vasco da Gama, and Thivim. Madgaon is 28km away from Goa while Vasco da Gama is 46km away. The distance between Thivim and Goa is 60km. All the stations and especially Madgaon is well-connected to many parts of India.

By Road

Goa is well-connected to different cities through road transport. Tourists can catch bus from Pune, Belgaum, Kolhapur, Mangalore, etc. and reach **Kadamba bus stand** at Panjim. Tourists can also book taxis and come to Goa.



Local Transport

There are many modes of local transport which the tourists can use to roam around Goa. There are **motorcycle taxis** where the rider called **AOPilot** takes you for a trip inside Goa. These motorcycles are black in colour with yellow mudguards. Auto rickshaws are also available to move around Goa. Besides these, rented bikes, rented cars and taxis are also available.

5. Basilica of Bom Jesus – Nearby Places

Goa is popular for forts, churches, and beaches. Besides visiting Basilica of Bom Jesus church, tourists can also visit other places nearby. Some of these places are as follows:

Church of Saint Francis of Assisi

Church of Saint Francis of Assisi was built by Portuguese who came to India in 1517. The church was built in the form of a small chapel in 1521 and was made sacred in 1602. This building was replaced by the present structure in 1661.



The outer portion of the church is simple but the inner structure is lavishly decorated. The interior of the church was built on the basis of Baroque architecture.

Chapel of Saint Catherine

Chapel of Saint Catherine is situated nearby Church of Saint Francis of Assisi. **Alfonso de Albuquerque** constructed the church in 1510 on **Saint Catherine's day**. **Pope Paul III** granted it the status of cathedral in 1534. Alfonso built the church to commemorate his victory over **Adil Shah**, king of Bijapur. The church was enlarged in 1550 and was rebuilt with laterite stones in 1952.



Chapel of Our Lady of the Mount

The Chapel of Our Lady of the Mount church was built in 1510 by Alfonso de Albuquerque to commemorate his victory over Muslim ruler **Yusuf Shah**. People can view beautiful **Divar** and **Charao** islands, forested hills and many other things. The Chapel has been white washed brightly and was renovated in 2001.



Candolim Beach

Candolim beach is 20km away from Basilica of Bom Jesus and 15km away from Panjim. It is considered to be one of the longest beach and is very calm and peaceful. The beach has

many shops and restaurants. The sand of this beach is white in colour and has scrub-covered dunes.



Shantadurga Temple

Shantadurga Temple is around 33km from Aguada fort where **Goddess Shree Durga** is worshipped. The goddess is considered as the **kuldevi** of **Goud Saraswat Brahmi** clan.



The idol of the goddess is installed on a mud shrine which was converted into temple whose construction was started in 1730. According to Hindu mythology, **Shantadurga** mediated between **Lord Shiva** and **Lord Vishnu**.