

Safaris are the best way to see the wildlife.

GET TOTALLY WILD IN KANHA NATIONAL PARK.



LAND OF THE JUNGLE BOOK

RACHELLE MACKINTOSH DISCOVERS THE WONDERS OF CENTRAL INDIA

Lying smack-bang in the centre of the country, the state of Madhya Pradesh is often called the 'heart of India' – and on a trip there you'll instantly see why, thanks to its incredible historic sites, lush jungles and pulsating cities. Here are a few experiences not to miss.

EYE A TIGER

Madhya Pradesh's wilderness areas inspired Rudyard Kipling to write *The Jungle Book*, and Kanha National Park was a key influence. From rolling meadows, shrouded in mist, to dense forests, the area is the perfect setting for the real wildlife drama that unfolds here – with tigers, monkeys, sloth bears, jackals and deer all in starring roles. The best way to explore the park is on a safari drive, which you can easily arrange through your hotel. There are also several other scenic national

parks and tiger reserves in the area to discover, including Bandhavgarh, Panna, Pench and Satpura.

See: kanhatigerreserve.com.

HIT THE CITY

If you are flying to Madhya Pradesh from Australia it's likely you'll land in the state capital of Bhopal, or in Nagpur (in neighbouring Maharashtra), and both cities are worth exploring for a few days. Bhopal has several museums to discover (don't miss the Tribal Museum or the Museum of Humankind), but its natural attractions such as Upper Lake and Lower Lake are the real tourist highlights. In Nagpur, make a beeline for the Nagpur Central Museum to see local fossils and fascinating Mughal artefacts. The Raman Science Centre is a must for adults and kids, thanks to its impressive planetarium.

Check out: rscnagpur.gov.in.

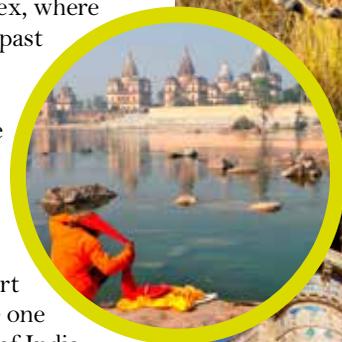
EXPLORE HERITAGE SITES

Across the state there are many historic landmarks to enjoy. If you have plenty of time, head to the 16th century ruins at the Orchha Fort complex, where the opulence of the past is still visible in the preserved artworks and decadent palace architecture. Nearby Gwalior is also a drawcard thanks to its sprawling hilltop fort – it is thought to be one of the largest in all of India. Also, the Khajuraho Group of Monuments should not be missed. A UNESCO World Heritage site, Khajuraho features ancient temples built between 950 and 1050AD, famous for their incredible carvings – including a few adults-only scenes from the Kama Sutra.

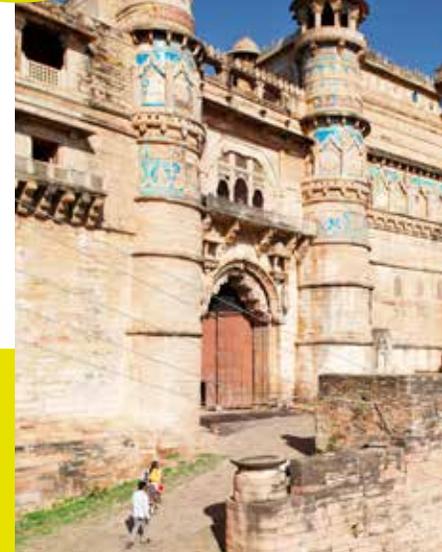
Visit: mptourism.com.



A spotted deer on the run in the Kanha meadows.



Historic Gwalior is well worth the detour.



TO GO

For more info about central India, see: incredibleindia.org.

EXPLORE THE WORLD HERITAGE TEMPLES OF KHAJURAHO.

