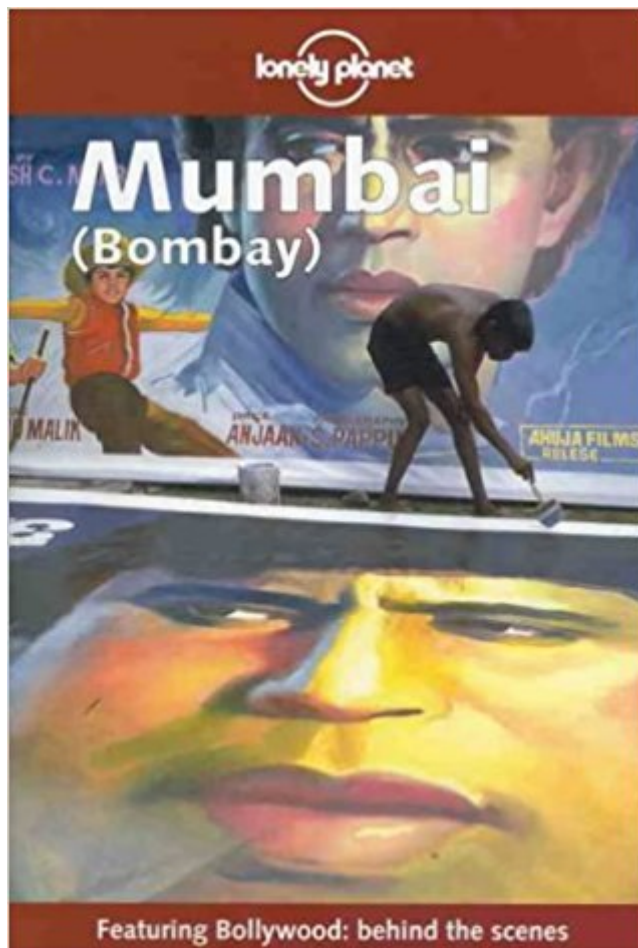




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# Lonely Planet Mumbai Bombay



## Synopsis

Only Lonely Planet covers the financial capital of India (formerly known as Bombay) from the glamour of Bollywood to the chaos of Asia's largest slums. The guide includes coverage of short trips from the city, walking tours of Mumbai's major attractions, reviews of the city's best dining spots, and tips on doing business.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As usual the guidebook standard is set by Lonely Planet-- Outside

This is possibly my fault for not reading the fine print, but I was disappointed to find that the edition the vendor sent me is from the 90's. I'm not sure how reliable the information is going to be! I wish they would have been more explicit about the publish date in the product description... now I pretty much need to buy a second copy of this one.

This is a good if somewhat inadequate guide to Bombay. It focuses mainly on the Southern sections of Bombay - namely Colaba, Fort, Kalbadevi, Bhuleshwar, Malabar Hill and Breach Candy. These neighbourhoods are collectively referred to as "Town" by many Bombayites. However much of the population of greater Bombay lives in the areas north of town along the western and central railway suburban lines. It used to be that all of Bombay's best attractions and restaurants were in town but these days a lot of the more interesting places and restaurants are found outside these areas and in

the suburban city neighborhoods. The book has a good list of accommodation, places to eat and interesting sights. The maps are good but do not capture all of the narrow side streets and alleyways in Bombay that make city life so interesting. Finally in a city as chaotic as Bombay things are constantly changing and some of the information here is already out of date. Yet this remains one of the few practical guides to this giant and rather chaotic city. Bombay does not offer much in itself for tourists but it is a great place to experience the full variety of life in India. Bombay is also a good location from which to start travels in India. The Bombay - Delhi overland route passing through Rajasthan and Agra is fascinating and very rewarding for the adventurous traveler.

There are several problems with this "guide" to Mumbai. When you visit a city, you usually want to experience it through the eyes of someone who loves it. Someone who can share their enthusiasm for the city and the cultures and artifacts that make that city interesting. When I go to foreign countries I like to meet the local people who are best at sharing their culture, or at least someone who gives it some respect, dignity and balance. The worse aspect of this book is to consistently read Collins' distaste for Hinduism. It is nearly Talibanistic and overall very ignorant. He sums up complex political, cultural and religious ideas into very simplistic, ignorant and negative statements throughout. He is also very ignorant of the Hindi film industry and yet insists on being a so-called expert by providing a section on it. Though he admits that he finds "Bollywood" (I am not too comfortable with this term myself but I see that the locals seem to accept it) films to be not to his taste, he shows his ignorance by making some obvious generalisations. This film industry is rather quite big and many popular films do come out that are innovative in many aspects, cinematography, narrative, etc. But just like Hollywood, there are also films that are very commercial. Though these more commercial films get greater international distribution, they are not representative of most of the films that actually do come out of Mumbai. I personally find that there are great films that are consistently coming out of that region. But I tend to explore foreign films in general with more depth than maybe most. In the end I would much rather there be a guide that celebrates the multiculturalism, diversity and tolerance that makes Mumbai one of the most enigmatic cities in that part of the world. There is enough of a propaganda campaign against the pacifist Hindus and Buddhists. India is possibly the most inclusive country and government that exists. And it is because it IS a free country that many are allowed to publish so much negativity against it unhampered. There is a market for a positive guide to Mumbai for someone who loves the city, culture and people. I for one would look for it.

We bought this book on the strength of our previous Lonely Planet guide books, and it proved itself to be every bit as valuable. We were only in Mumbai for 4 days, but during that time we were able to visit all the places that we wanted to go, thanks to the clear directions and advice. Although when we arrived at our hotel and shown the first room it was difficult not to giggle at the truth of Lonely Planets description "the paint is not always attached to the walls as firmly as it could be"! The description of the caves on Elephanta Island were invaluable. A good, comprehensive guide on every thing you need to know from prices to hotels, don't leave home without it

I read this book on my way to Mumbai and when I arrived I thought the plane landed in another country or city. The book was great for Mumbai proper, but once you get out to the suburbs, where people actually live, the book was useless.

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