



SUNDARBANS Here's your chance to be a part of a unique mangrove experience and possibly spot the Royal Bengal Tiger too! **BY** Nature Knights **WHEN** October 8-11 **LOG ON TO** www.natureknights.net



HERITAGE

Every devote Jain hopes to climb up to this huge Palitana temple complex (near Bhavnagar) at least once in his lifetime



Ajanta caves carved from volcanic lava in a crescent-shaped hillside, were lost for centuries until it was discovered by British officers



A sculpture at Ellora; the site has among the finest cave temples in the world, carved between 350 AD and 700 AD



West India's wonders

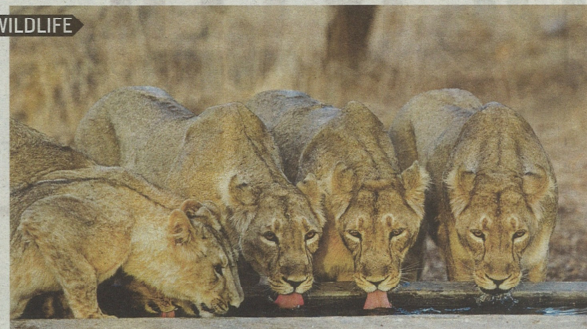
Maharashtra's coastline and the Konkan region are wonderful. And where else can you see such formidable sea forts. Tadoba Tiger Reserve is also impressive but the biggest highlights have to be the Lonar Meteorite Crater and the Ajanta and Ellora caves.

- BOB RUPANI, JOURNALIST



The Janjira fortress is an architectural marvel. Built by the brave Siddis, it was never taken in battle despite attacks from the Portuguese, British and Marathas

WILDLIFE



Gir is the last refuge of the Asiatic lion, and other than Africa, it is the only place in the world that has wild lions

PHOTO STORY
Framed!
Lens on India's 100 best destinations

Journalist Bob Rupani's latest title offers glimpses of India from a well-travelled lens that spans its wildlife, heritage, culture and attractions. Soma Das caught up with the intrepid traveller to find out more about his 360-degree spin on India's most picturesque sights and sounds

Narayan aka Bob Rupani, a veteran automobile journalist, started his career with the Indian Auto Journal in 1986. Over the years, he has been executive editor of several magazines, including BBC Top Gear (India) and Auto India. Thanks to his love for cars and a passion for long-distance driving, he has travelled across the country. He is also keen on wildlife photography and has visited most of India's tiger reserves and national parks.

Rupani's latest coffee table book is titled India's 100 Best Destinations, and gives picturesque views of what the country has to offer along with candid wildlife shots. Excerpts from an interview with Rupani:

What made you set out on a journey documenting the country's 100 best destinations?

I love to travel and explore. India has so much to offer and though many of its destinations are well-known, there are several lesser-known destinations as well. So, I thought about coming out with a book that includes both; and I ended up compiling India's 100 Best Destinations.

time did the travelling take place? Was it spread across several years?

I have been traveling all over India for over 25 years and this book is the result of my travels and experiences over this period.

Which were your personal favourite destinations and why?

I love Ladakh due to the majesty of the Himalayas and the high altitude desert terrain that humbles you. I am fascinated by Rajasthan due to its forts, palaces and friendly people. But my favourite destinations have to be our wildlife sanctuaries and national parks as they give us a glimpse of the huge natural wealth that our country once possessed.

What were the major challenges that you faced on a project like this?

India is really incredible and the challenge actually was what to include and leave out in the book. My book is about India's 100 Best Destinations, but you could easily do a book about 500 destinations. So, the challenge actually was in selecting the 100 best destinations.



(Above) The blackbuck is one of India's most graceful and fastest creatures (seen at Velavadar National Park, near Bhavnagar);

(Right) Cheetal at Sasan Gir (Gir National Park) get frisky in the rutting season



India's 100 Best Destinations, Bob Rupani, Rupani Media, ₹1,950



The tiger (at Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve) has quite an audience and seems to be enjoying all the attention

Over how long a span of

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