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In-depth Understanding of Goa History by Sofia Jennie

Article published on March 2nd 2012 | Travel Tips

Goa with its fresh shape and size is a new construction dating only from 1987. Before that, the state was ruled by Portuguese from roughly 1510. Even prior to that, it was under the administrations of petty chiefs, Hindu dynasties and Muslim swayers from over the centuries. History of Goa is really impressive, and has been well-documented from the information available. Hereâ€™s Goaâ€™s history outlined below, that may provide you an in-depth understanding of Goan culture and identity.

Mythological origin of â€˜Goaâ€™

Itâ€™s believed that in the later Vedic period when the great Hindu epic â€˜Mahabharataâ€™ was scripted was known as â€˜Gomantakâ€™: a Sanskrit word that means the â€˜Region of Cowsâ€™, and signifies th fertility of this region. Itâ€™s said that the region was established by a renowned sage â€˜Parashuramaâ€ perform fire sacrifices. However, the name â€˜Goaâ€™ was given by the Portuguese who later on built the realm in the state.

The Early Hindu Era:

Goa was a division of Mauryan Empire ruled by the great Emperor Ashoka. It was known by different names in different communities like Aparant, Gomant and Gopakpuri among Indians, Chersoneses or Nelikinda among Greek and Sindabur among Arabic communities. For the next 700 years, the state was controlled by the various Hindu dynasties including the Abiras, Batpura, Bhojas, Chalukya and Rashtrakutas. From 1006 AD to 1356 AD, it came under a local dynasty named â€˜the Kadambasâ€™ who are credited with constructing the first settlement in Goa in the middle o 11th century. After the death of the last Chalukya king in 1198, Goa got the presidency of Muslim rulers that took place continuously after that.

The Muslim Era:

In mid-13th century, Goa witnessed an invasion in which the institutions of Hindu religions were completely destructed by the Bahamini Kingdom. Temples were destroyed, priests were murdered and their wealth were systematically looted. Though Bahaminis were once defeated by the emperor of Vijyanagar, they returned back in 1470 and won the entire Goa region. Bijapur, one of the Goa kingdoms, was ruled by Sultan Yusuf Adil Shah Khan.

The Portuguese Era

Headed by Alfonso de Albuquerque, Portuguese laid siege upon Goa in 1510. They entered the city when Sultan Adil Shah, ruler of Goa at that time, was engaged somewhere else with his force. So, Portuguese met a little resistance. When Sultan came back and attacked on Portuguese, they had to flee from the city. But later on, Alfonso de Albuquerque shook hands with a Hindu leader â€˜Timojaâ€™ and made another attempt to acquire the realm. In that fight, Sultan Adil Shah died and Portuguese got entry in Goa. By 1543, after some small bloody battles, Portuguese had extended their control over Mormugao, Salcette and Bardez. And with passage of time, the entire Goa became the jewel of Portuguese Eastern Empire. They ruled the state over 450 years, and established a number of buildings reflecting their unique cultures and architecture designs. Not only the buildings and cultures but also the cuisines and lifestyle of Goan seem highly influenced by Portuguese, even today.

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Article Keywords:
trip to goa, goa packages, goa holiday

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