

MOTHER INDIA

Photograph workshop with Shobha in India

Stories of women

MARCH 8 TO 18, 2009

Hindu, Muslim, Catholic women, migrated from Karnataka and untouchables of the villages, gentle and mysterious, like goddesses, they fill Goa's land with colour and poetry. In this strip of India it is the woman who is the great protagonist.

Women are those who get water for their houses from deep wells and carry it on their heads, women are those who organize the fish market, they are little girl mothers who grow up with their children. They walk slowly and in a graceful way on the long paths through the rice-fields, they wear jingling ankle-bangles, coloured bracelets on their thin wrists and flowers in their hair.

At sunset they silently stop for prayers at the temple. At the same time Catholic women from villages near the sea, gathered in a circle, recite the rosary.

Modernity and tradition melt together, different cultures meet: mini-skirts and saris, high-heeled shoes and bare-feet painted with henna.

A great innate spirituality, deeply-rooted in everyone's memory, makes Goa the Mother Earth who welcomes everybody and everything.

From revolutions to maternity, from mafia to anti-mafia, from aristocracy to enclosure convents, in 27 years of journalism as a photo reporter and a foreign correspondent, Shobha has always looked to the female world and to India, country where she has spent most of her life since the age of eighteen. The idea of the workshop really began from the interest that Shobha has always cherished for a beloved land and for a world of values tied to the figure of the woman.

Through a full immersion, in a country where the feminine with all its symbols and values is the centre, in two weeks seven women, fascinated by photography, will have a unique possibility: to speak about the beauties and the harmony of Indian women. Each of them, according to their own single creativity, will choose a point of view to carry out their own photographic project. Each photographer will work individually during daily photographic excursions, to obtain, at the end of the workshop, seven different stories, seven different ways to speak about the Indian women.

A common working place and a succession of group meetings will enable each photographer to be followed by Shobha in every phase of the production and to compare their own work with that of the others.

When not working outside, the working place is a big Portuguese house with a garden in Candolim, Goa: a place set apart and ideal for concentration, close to the sea and beneath a palm forest, but at the same time near all necessary things.

A video maker will film the backstage and the photographers at work. The workshop will close with an exhibition of the photographs and, following this, the publication of a catalogue.

General organization of the workshop

- During the first meeting, Shobha will introduce a photographer's work, she will show some of her work, she will speak about the photographic language and how the project begins and is constructed.

An entire day will be dedicated to a group excursion, during which Shobha will lead the photographers

in a reportage experience in which women are the protagonists: observing Shobha at work, with her fascinating and unpredictable way to make the most of situations and to interact with people, is a unique experience.

- The next day the photographers will go out on their own to find out about the project to follow and the same evening they must present an idea or series of suggestions.

- Every day, from 6pm to 8pm, Shobha will be available, inside the working place, to supervise all the project's stages and to select the images that the photographers have begun to choose.

Her assistants will help with the research work on the land and for any technical problems.

Exceptionally it will be possible to be escorted and assisted for one day. Every photographer will be given a map with all the most important sights noted and will receive all the necessary information. The project will be carried out in an autonomous and individual manner, therefore, especially for the photographic excursions, renting a scooter is the best choice to move quickly. The choice of the means of transport depends on the requirements of each single project, other ways of transportation are mototaxi (driver driven scooter), public transport, taxi rickshaws.

- From the second week an afternoon a day will be given to selection, editing and post-production: each photographer will have a space inside the Portuguese house where she can concentrate and work. Inside each project, a section will be dedicated to portraits.

The final project has to be accompanied by a written text, which can be a caption or, an example of a travel diary.

At the moment of registration every photographer will receive some suggestions to be prepared for the workshop and to the journey to India.

The setting of the workshop includes all the main stages which form a photographic project:

4Preparation/documentation: stage which precedes the choice of the project topic, which is important to begin before reaching India. This stage includes reading, viewings of films and any type of source which could provide knowledge, information and stimulus.

5Choice of the project to develop.

6Research on the land/organization.

7Production: individual direction of the shootings and interaction with people and places.

8Editing: selection, putting photos in correct sequence, editing a written comment.

9Presentation and delivery of the final project.

Structure of the photographic days:

DAY ONE:

Arrival at Candolin (Goa) and settling in the accommodation; welcome dinner with Shobha.

DAY TWO:

Free morning.

From 3pm to 9pm meeting with Shobha, presentation of the programme and its aims, introduction to the photographer's work. Portfolios will be viewed.

DAY THREE:

Group excursion with Shobha.

DAY FOUR: Morning: individual excursions.

From 6pm to 8pm each photographer will have to present the title and the subject of their own project or a series of possibilities. Shobha will give advice on the choice and on the setting of the work.

DAY FIVE- SIX- SEVEN: Morning: individual excursions.

From 6pm to 8pm Shobha will view the work and will meet the photographers.

DAY EIGHT: Morning: individual excursions.

From 5pm to 8pm meeting of the working team: each photographer will speak about her experience and will present the work done so far.

DAY NINE-TEN: Morning: individual excursions.

From 6pm to 8pm Shobha will view the work and meet the photographers.

DAY ELEVEN-TWELVE-THIRTEEN-FOURTEEN: Morning: individual excursions.

From 4pm: photos selection, post production, editing.

DAY FIFTEEN:

Editing, conclusion and presentation of the photographic work.

Goodbye dinner.

Every evening is free, there will be the possibility to share experiences and amusements together, group trips or viewings of Indian films.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The cost includes:

- 7nights in Goa and Gokarna.
- cabs from Candolim to Gokarna and back
- cab from Goa airport (Dabolim) to Candolim
- assistance for the entire project
- welcoming dinner
- final dinner

The cost does not include:

- all meals, including breakfast, but the welcoming dinner and the final one
- all the extras, activities and all moving, which are not part of the project.

Shobha lives part of the year in Goa, where she uses the same workshop's working space for many different activities. On demand, the possibility for individual photographic sessions is offered, for those who would like to show Shobha their own work and receive advice.

NOTES ON GOA:

Goa is a South Indian State, it's an ex-Portuguese colony. The Catholics majority have always lived peacefully with the Muslims and Hindus, in a place where different realities meet and melt together, giving life to suggestive moments of sharing. Famous for its long white beaches, it is the favourite destination for the youngest for its festive atmosphere, however, at the same time, it is loved by those who seek spirituality, silence and meditation.

Time is different here in. It is true, I've been told but I didn't believe before going there. It's not like days are longer, is more like time is more intense, as it wants to hold you. Who gets there tries to carry his own Western distractions with him, but there's no way. It's more like something; It is like someone

or something is holding your hand, whispering “Look over there. It’s particular, Goa. There’s too much, than the too less I expected. Too many things to take back with you”.

Ivan Cotroneo, writer and journalist, on 2006 he realized for Max a reportage with Shobha about Goa

ADMISSIONS:

The workshop is opened to those who already have a good photographic preparation. To be admitted to the workshop it is sufficient to own a digital reflex camera and to have a basic photographic preparation. It is compulsory to bring a personal laptop.

Each photographer has to present her personal book, those regarding stories of women are preferable, and they should not exceed 15 photos on digital or printed paper.

Participants should not be under 21 years old.

It is compulsory to enclose a CV with the application form (to send via e-mail) to specify the level of own photographic knowledge.

For information regarding questions concerning the journey or any other questions, you can call these telephone numbers: +39 3396746218 (Anna, Milan), or you can send an e-mail to:

shobha@libero.it ; anna.bernasconi2@virgilio.it

SHOBHA:

Bibliographical note

Shobha, a photographer from Palermo, is the daughter of Letizia Battaglia, in 1980 she began to photograph for the “Ora” local newspaper. Her images have always represented social and international issues, with a special interest in the feminine world. In 1998 she won the “World Press Photo” prize, with a work about the Sicilian aristocracy “Gli ultimi Gattopardi” (The last Gattopardi).

In 2001 she received the prestigious “Hansel Mieth Preis” recognition, with a reportage “Chiese e Mafia” (Church and Mafia), together with the journalist Petra Reski.

In 2001 she won the “World Press Photo” prize again, with a reportage about African fashion by the stylist Oumou-Sy. In the same year she was invited to the “Festival Internacional de Fotografia Femininos” in Madrid. For many years she has been travelling around the world, doing reports for important newspapers names like Geo, Park Avenue, Sunday Times, Die Zeit, Vanity Fair, Io Donna, Venerdi di Repubblica, Max, L’Espresso.

She does social work, this year she achieved a workshop with a group of Down children with an exhibition and the edition of the book “Storia d’amore” (Love Story).

At the moment she lives between India and Italy. She is represented by “Contrasto”.

ABOUT THE TRIP

FLIGHT

The flight from to India, there and back, is about 1000 euros, but there can be found offers by booking on time.

Domestic flights for Goa leave either from Delhi or Mumbai (Bombay), they are expensive and can be booked on: www.spycejet.com

There it will be needed to spend one night next to the airport in case of landing in Delhi or in Mumbai.

VISA

It is needed to get a Visa before to get there. In Italy it is released by the embassy in Rome or the consulate in Milan or by an agent travel

There must be requested a tourist Visa, which is about 50 euros.

Candolim

Candolim is a quiet town next to the sea, well furnished (internet, phones, supermarkets pharmacies).

It is safe and there are no risks: Indians are generous and welcoming.

It is placed in a strategic place to get several interesting places. The capital, Panjim, is just half an hour away, with its old fashioned portuguese style, and with offices for every need, Italian consulate, bookshops, libraries, modern cinema with interesting movies (from Bollywood to Indian ones), art exhibition, museums and cultural festival.

Splendid shores like Baga, Vagator, Anjuna, Morjim e Arambol, are close and full of young people from all over the world and offer relax and lots of fun.

Three main markets, full of color, noises and fun, important for social life, are not far away.

Candolim beach is white and long. At night dinner is served under the stars, cheap and in small shack, with tables next to the sea.

There are also restaurants for every taste, expensive or not. Better ones will be suggested, even though practically all of them are clean and good.

MEDICAL PRECAUTIONS

Vaccination are not needed, but some caution to hygienic rules is required: use only water in bottles to drink or to brush teeth, do not use ice, bring Amuchina, disinfect water or wash fruit or vegetables.

There are no mosquitoes, but bring some precaution as well.

TIME

In India time is four hours forward than in Italy.

WEATHER

Goa is a tropical country and has two seasons, a dry and a rainy one. The best time is from October to March, when the weather is dry.

COMMUNICATIONS

There are several Internet café, where you can link your laptop.

As well as is easy to find phones where you can make cheap international phone calls.

You can even use your cell phone or buy a new one (sim card 100RS and charge from 100 to 3000RS)

Indian number: 0091

Goa number: 0832

TRANSPORTATIONS

It is possible to rent a scooter at 200/300RS per day for it is funny and it gives you the chance to move faster and to see more and new places. But remember always to be careful because streets in Goa might be dangerous.

For those who want to rent a car, an international driving license is required.

Public transportations offer cheap connections with the smaller cities of the country.

SUGGESTIONS

Bring an electric plug converter: holes in 3-out 2.

Bring a light, in fact there's no light in street from the beach to the hotel.

Bring a locker to close and protect your personal safe.

Like in the rest of the country it is important to wear properly and soberly: no nudity at the beach, or nude legs in the street.

Best choices are cotton large clothes.

MONEY

Indian currency is Rupia. (1Rs=0,57 euros)

Euros can be changed easily. Do not take U.S. Dollars.

Accomodations

Rooms are close to where the workshop takes place (Candolim, Goa, Monteiro Road) in simple guesthouses, run by families; close to the sea, but protected by the tree, which create a natural protection from the beach. Rooms are clean and comfortable.