



Holiday Blues

It's an open secret that credit card holders are an easy target of local cheats, for one may end up paying thrice the amount for the goods bought. Tourists are easy targets of local thugs who are looking for opportunities to make quick money. Here are few ways you could be cheated while holidaying this season:

Taxi Thugs: It's best to avoid taxi drivers who are willing to offer you a lower fare. These at your service drivers will in all likelihood drive you down the unwanted lanes and by-lanes before they finally reach to your destination. In the process you end up shelling out even high-

er fare. It is better to take some extra effort to choose a right taxi at a reasonable price so to avoid embarrassing situation after the journey.

Sharp Shopkeepers: Planning to buy some local handicrafts, beware you may be cheated. If you are looking for some authentic gems, avoid shopkeepers who not only show you false gems and cook-up great stories around its origin and fancy names, and quote huge price. Making things worse, they wouldn't even fear charge customers a hefty tax to make things look more real. If you feel they target only foreigners, think again for you could be

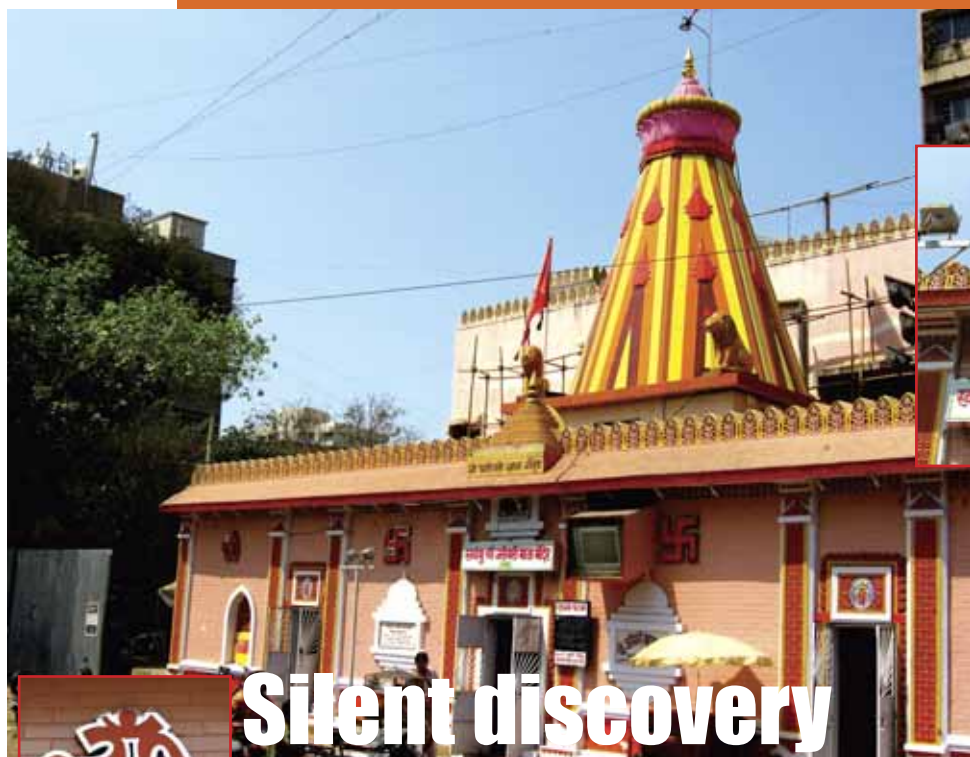
IF YOU HAVE ALREADY MADE TRAVEL PLANS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, AND ARE PREPARING TO MAKE THE BEST OF YOUR TIME, THEN BEWARE! DO NOT BE TAKEN FOR A RIDE BY THE CLEVER LOCALS, WARNS **RICHA DESAI**



on the way to most well-known temples you are

likely to find several tiny little temples where you are made to queue-up for no reason and shell out donations to seek blessings. Moreover, in many temples local touts advice unnecessary 'puja' at a cost of few hundreds. Most of the time, these men do so because of their strong nexus with the temple authorities. The best bet would be to simply refuse them because their ploy is to fool tourists. A few cheats can completely ruin your holiday and put you in an embarrassing situation. It is best to not get drifted away, and always be on a guard from such unsolicited problems. A little awareness and knowledge about the place and it is locals would go a long way in saving oneself from all the above troubles.

richadesai@gmail.com



Silent discovery

Bandra is a unique concoction of different religions, communities and languages. Different faiths and ideologies are not only respected but also venerated in this queen of suburbs. There are many temples, mosques and churches in Bandra that give you the feeling that Bandraiters are a very god fearing lot!

Few steps away from the bustling Bandra station on S V road is located the Jarimari temple, one of the oldest temples in the city of Mumbai. Painted with vibrant colours, the temple catches your attention immediately. Even the flashy advertising hoarding present on its top does not camouflage the sparkling 'Kalash' of this temple.

Built in 1696, this 311 year old holy place has been renovated recently. It is quite disheartening that people do not know about this historical temple. "People know about Mount Mary, which is one of the most visited places in Bandra, but very few are aware of the temple, which also happens to be the rarest sacred place that remains unexplored" says Aaron D'mello an observant Christian. A believer in different forms of God, Aaron says, "God is too big to be contained in one religion."

On 9th January, 1996 this temple of goddess Jarimari completed 300 years of its existence. People throng this place and their belief in this goddess is very intense. The idol is said to be swayambhu which means 'self originated'.

The temple has a small Mandapam (hall); the wooden doors are carved with images of different gods and demigods. There is a shivling in the temple and the idol of Goddess Jarimari is located in the central sanctum, carved in a rock. People come here to seek the blessings when they start a new venture or when they get married.

"I have been coming to this temple ever since I was in school, especially before my exams. Even today when I find myself in a dilemma, this place beckons me" says Amit Naik, who is a regular visitor to this temple for more than twenty years. I cannot agree more with Amit. The place really exudes a calm and serene atmosphere. As the evening draws closer, devotees get ready for the aarti. As the rendition reaches the peak, the devotees get so enthralled that they are oblivious to everything around them, even the deafening noise of traffic outside the temple. Such is the mesmerising power of Goddess Jarimari!

- PRATHAMESH JADHAV
pratham.r.jadhav@gmail.com