With or without you...

If you live in Mumbai, it’s hard to escape Bandra. And if you are in Bandra, it’s hard to escape a few places that seem an inseparable part of this suburb. From sitting on the rocks by the sea to shopping endlessly for shoes, from gorging on yummy freshly baked Danish pastries to reminiscing the city’s old village culture, Bandra gives something to every visitor.

While we tried to understand how Bandrites celebrate their suburb, we asked the frequent visitors of Bandra - What would be the 5 things without which, Bandra wouldn’t be Bandra? What came up on the charts are:

Mount Mary Basilica Church
Being a pre-dominant Catholic suburb, a whole lot of churches are situated here. But the church which earns the title of being the most visited of them all is the renowned Mount Mary Church.

Counting the number of visitors and tourists that flock to this church, Mount Mary’s could easily be termed as one of Bandra’s most popular sites. Even if you are not a Catholic, you cannot help but visit the church at least once. A structure so marvellous, it appears as though it has just walked out of a history book. “Mount Mary Church is the symbol that glorifies the Catholic spirit that Bandra is usually associated to,” believes Khusbhu Kausal, 24, an advertising professional who lives in this suburb.

For the residents nearby the church, it forms an inseparable part of their lives. For some, it’s hard to pass through their daily routine without turning around and give one look at the structure. Moreover, who can miss out on the Bandra Fair that happens every year? Well, if you have, then you’ve got to be kidding for there is nothing else that brings Bandra alive than having the world-famous celebration of the Mount Mary Fair in September!

Narrow by-lanes
While Mumbai is working hard to become the new Shanghai, there are some elements of its historical past that we wished were best left untouched. One such major chunk of Bandra resides in the 22 villages that still exist in this suburb, each with its own heritage and a story to tell.

Driving through the narrow by-lanes in Bandra may not be a good idea but a walk into these lanes that weave through old buildings and Portuguese style houses would transport you to a world that is distant from the crowded city.

"Narrow winding by-lanes through the Goan-styled villages are what has retained the charm of ethnic Bandra," adds Parul Menon, 23, one of the organisers of the Celebrate Bandra Festival.

Linking Road
From the Nike’s, The Pepe’s to the ‘Sasta Aur Tikao’ street wear, anybody who’s a shopaholic can quell his thirst at the Linking Road. Neither the residents nor the visitors of Bandra can imagine calling it a day without shopping or checking out the latest things selling in the market. Moreover, one cannot help noticing the different types of people from all walks of life who come here. "Linking Road to me is a cultural melting pot that truly represents Mumbai for what it stands. I get to see different people from different religions, races and classes of society just shopping away to their heart's content," says Khusbhu.

J. Hearsch Co. Bakery
Being the restaurant suburb of Mumbai, Bandra boasts about a range of cuisines that it offers to gourmet lovers. Once in Bandra, one hardly feels the need to step outside.

Hearsch Bakery, a name famously associated with freshly baked bread, pastries, chicken puff is a place that has remained a crowd puller, amongst both young and old alike. The aroma of tasy burgers and the Chinese rice & noodles cooked in typical Bamabia style make the people revisit this eating joint over and over again, thus making it an eating joint that Bandra cannot possibly do without!

Bandstand
An endless promenade by the cool and breezy seaside, Bandstand can be the ultimate destination to unwind oneself in a city where it is not so easy to find open spaces. It’s a place which is more popular amongst the love-birds of Mumbai who come from all parts of the city. But what makes this place more unique is its GG. Indeed, it is the ‘Glouram Quotient’ attached to it because along with the staggering view of the Arabian Sea, it also gives visitors a close view of the Bollywood celebs who reside in every nook and cranny of this place. To name a few – Shah Rukh Khan, Rekha, John Abraham, Sushmita Sen and Subhash Ghai.

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