

# Land and Climate

The Himalayas, the world's highest mountains,

extend for 1,550 mi. across the north of India. Just

south of the Himalayas, the land is very flat. Most of

India's population live in this area because plenty of

food can be grown here. The soil is rich, and the

Ganges River provides water.

The Deccan Plateau takes up much of southern

India. It is an area of flat-topped high ground, very

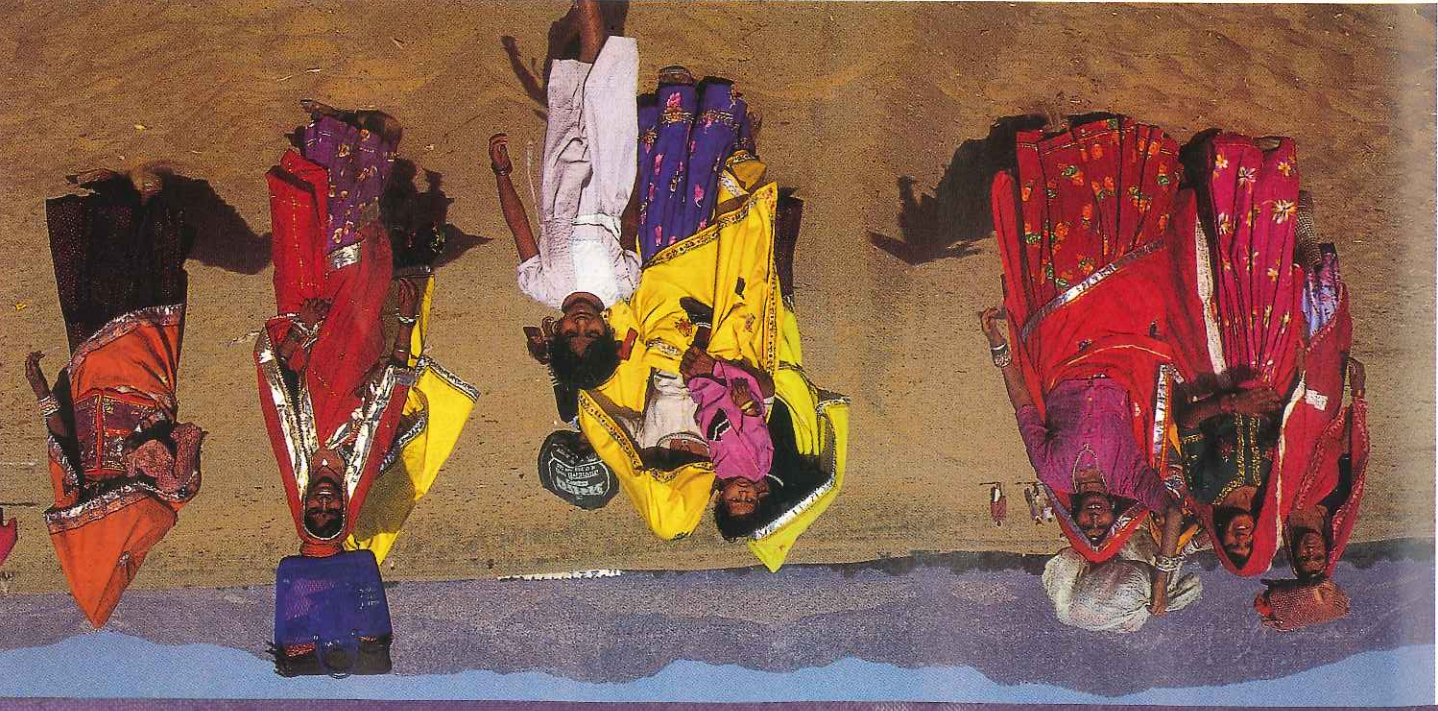
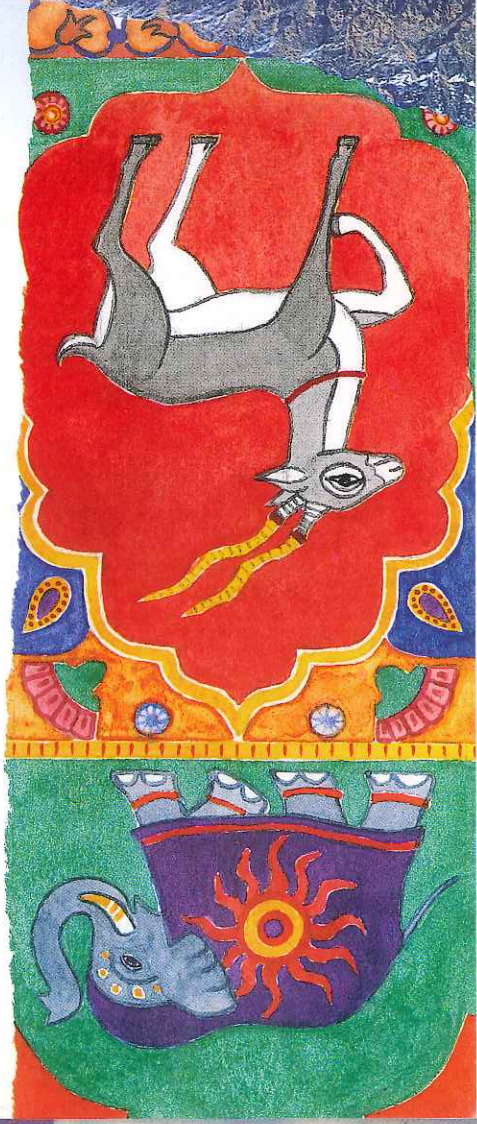
different from the spiky peaks of the Himalayas.

Hills called the Western Ghats and the Eastern Ghats

poke out on each side of the Deccan Plateau and

slope down to the coast.

▲ Terraced fields lie around tiny villages high up in the Himalayas. The Himalayas cut off India from the rest of the Asian continent.



▲ Women in the Thar Desert. Their scarves are traditional dress, and they also help protect against the hot sun and dust of the desert.



## THE MONSOON

"Monsoon" is the name of the wind that brings rain to India. Between June and September, it blows across India from the southwest. In October, it changes direction and blows from the northeast. The monsoon is very important to India's farmers, who need the rain it brings to make their crops grow. In some years, the monsoon brings a lot of rain and floods occur. In other years, there is very little rain, and crops and animals die.

Mawsynram in northeast India is one of the wettest places on earth. It receives 457 in. of rain a year. It rains there about 147 days every year.

India has three seasons—hot, wet, and cool. From February to May is the hot season. On the plains of the Ganges River, temperatures often soar to a baking 120° F. Temperatures become more comfortable during the wet season, which lasts from June until November. Most of India receives rain then, with some areas getting much more than others.

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February, India is at its driest

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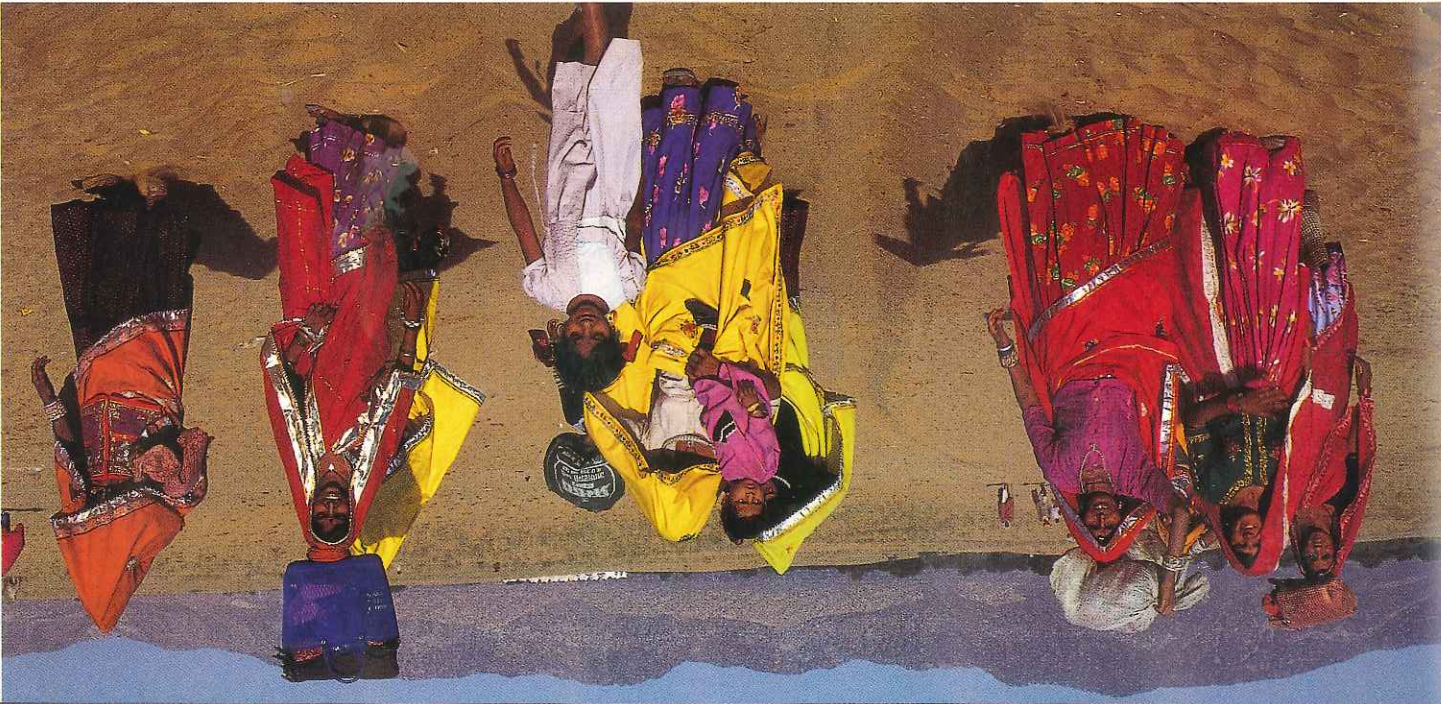
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# A PLEASANT CLIMATE

The British liked living in Bangalore because of its pleasant climate. It is neither too hot nor too cold. Bangalore is situated on top of the Deccan Plateau, 3,018 ft. above sea level. Because it is higher, it is always cooler during the hot season than cities nearer sea level.

The lowest temperatures occur between November and February. At this time of the year, the evenings and early mornings can be chilly. The people of Bangalore often wake up to a city covered in thick fog during these cool months.

The hottest part of the year is from March to the end of May, when temperatures can climb to 95° F in the daytime. Fans and air conditioners are switched on at full power, to make homes and offices more bearable.

“I like December and January best because I can ride my bike around all day. Just before the monsoon comes it's too hot to go outside.”—Sadig, 10 years old (left)

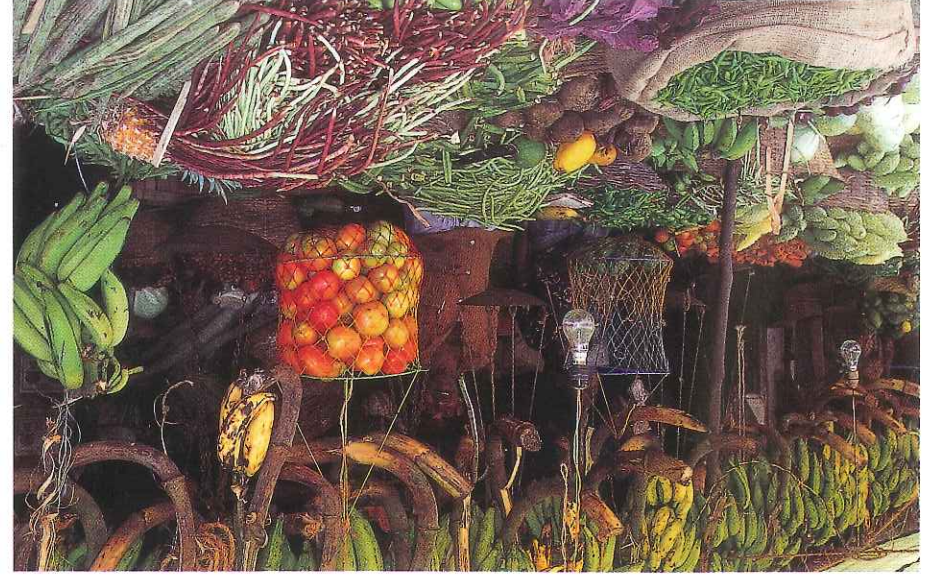


▲ *Ulsoor Lake is 0.6 sq. mi. It stores water for the city, for use in the dry months at the start of each year.*

Everyone breathes a huge sigh of relief at the end of May. They know that the southwest monsoon will arrive soon

and lower the high temperatures. From June to September this wind brings rain to the city every day. Most of it falls in a single, long burst between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. The heaviest rains, though, are brought by the northeast monsoon in October and November. For the rest of the year (December–May), Bangalore is dry.

▲ *A wide variety of fruit and vegetables is grown in the countryside around Bangalore and sold in the markets.*



<b>Average rainfall:</b> 37 in. per year
<b>Average minimum temperature:</b> 60° F (January)
<b>Average maximum temperature:</b> 91° F (April)
<small>Source: Bangalore This Fortnight (November 1996)</small>

## BANGALORE'S CLIMATE



# GREEN AND HOT



The villagers of

Thrickodithanam tell visitors that anything will grow in their land. "Push a walking-stick into it," they laugh, "and in a year you will have a tree!" While this may be a joke, it is certainly true that Thrickodithanam is very green, like the rest of the state of Kerala. Every bit of land seems to have something growing on it, whether it is a coconut or rubber tree, a pineapple plant, or a row of vegetables.

The village farmers are helped by the climate and the rich soil. There is plenty of sunshine, and it is hot all year round, with the temperature dropping to only 68° F during the cool nights of December and January. There is rain all year round, too, unlike other parts of India. The heaviest rain is brought by the southwest monsoon, with about 12 in. falling in June alone. Less rain is brought at the end of the year by the northeast monsoon.

**THE VILLAGE'S CLIMATE**

Average rainfall:	72 in. per year
Average minimum temperature:	72° F (December–January)
Average maximum temperature:	91° F (March)

Source: Manorama Yearbook 1996



▲ The state of Kerala is crisscrossed by rivers, which provide water for farmers and are useful for transportation.

"We get hot and sweaty in this of tea and water while we are working."—Isaac Pathrose, stonemason (below, left)

