



October 2012

ceo compass



Shopping for Nirvana

by Anita Rosenberg

Guide to Oils

- *Magra*- bath and massage makes room smell good
- *Shiva Flower*- relaxing mind and body
- *Sandalwood*- concentration, protection
- *OPM Flower*- sleep (I love this stuff, not sure what it is)
- *Amrit Dhara*- clears sinus, headache, sore throat (I used it a lot during trip)

“It’s important to step outside your comfort zone and see with your own eyes what’s really going on in this amazing place.”

I grew up in a YPO-WPO and CEO family – my father, **Marvin Rosenberg**, has been a CEO member since 1985, and my brother Barry is a YPO member. When I was young, my parents would return home from their exotic YPO trips with tales of camel racing and dining with princes and kings. My siblings and I were captivated. The enlightened workshops and motivational experts would be the topic of dinner conversations, and it was those lecturers that excited me the most. I put it in the back of my mind that one day I wanted to be one of those speakers.

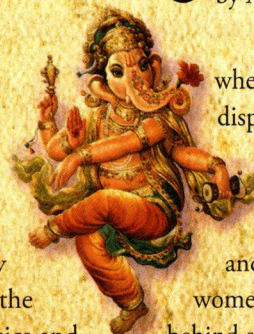
Many years and a few career reinventions later I found myself being invited to speak at YPO events, and last November I was asked to speak to YPO-WPO chapters in Delhi, Punjab, Kolkata and Bengaluru.

Having been to India twice in the last few years,

I’ve found it one of the most fascinating and enlightening places I’ve ever visited (most likely because I work in the world of metaphysics and spirituality).

In March 2013, CEO will take a group to India, and I want to share with you some of my travel insights to help those travelers have an amazing time and possibly hook some others. In a nutshell, my biggest travel secret is to encourage you to experience Indian hospitality through the eyes of locals. It’s important to step outside your comfort zone and see with your own eyes what’s really going on in this amazing place.

India had been on my to-do list for ages – it seemed like an expansive surrealistic Arabian mystery where painted elephants could stampede at any moment (actually cows stampeded me on the sidewalk in Bengaluru) and beggar’s breath would fog every car window (actually I only got beggar fogged in the parking lot of the Taj Mahal)...



where men proudly displayed colorful turbans (I am still perplexed by the various colors and meanings) and women hid their faces behind silk brocade (you must pick up some silk magic for yourself). “Shopping for Nirvana” in India is about shopping for souvenirs and keepsakes, meeting interesting people and gathering once-in-a-lifetime experiences. The point is to keep your eyes open and listen with your heart.

Warning! You will catch Ganesh Mania!

India is the Land of Om. It is also the Land of Ganesh, and everyone who visits catches Ganesh Mania! He is the elephant-headed Hindu god of prosperity who removes obstacles and blesses new beginnings. Embraced by everyone no matter their religious or spiritual preferences, Ganesh rules India. Make it a point to pick up an important piece carved in jade or quartz. He will bring good luck home with you.

How do you pick out the perfect Ganesh? You

don't – Ganesh chooses you. Once he has called you over, look into his eyes. When hunting for Ganesh it is all about the expression – the eyes and the face. Does he feel right? Each Ganesh has its own unique utterance, and this is the secret to the Ganesh statue.

In Delhi, hire a guide to take you to Old Delhi and Chandi Chowk market, which is an outrageous assault on all your senses but provides the ultimate India experience. You will be led down the winding roads where bridal parties shop for their supplies. There is a tiny turn off (you must ask around) called Naughari Lane, a historic alley with Heritage buildings where Jain families have lived for centuries. Ashish Nahar owns a small jewelry shop on the first floor of his family's colorfully painted house. He will give you a good price on stone-carved Ganesh – tell him I sent you!

Varanasi, the holy of holy cities

Nothing can prepare you for the nightly *Agni Pooja* or worship of the fire ceremony at Dashaswarmedh Ghat that puts the sacred Ganges River to sleep. You will be swept into the jungle of hawkers and beggars and a carnival of characters all rushing to the water's edge in anticipation. A group of priests prepare the 45 minute ceremony that is hypnotic, cheesy and creepy all at the same time. Recorded music plays over

tin-sounding speakers. It is complete incense overload, and I could smell the smoke in my hair for days. Don't point your camera at the Holy Men covered in burnt body ashes or you will get scolded (it was the best photo my friend took the entire trip).

Morning bathing in the Ganges cleans away sins and souls. The Hindu cremations take place at Manikarnika Ghat. When one dies in Varanasi, his ashes are scattered in the Ganges. It is called *Moksha* (salvation), and it means that you break the cycle of reincarnation – birth and rebirth. There are 5,000 years of dead body burnings and garbage in the murky waters so let the water touch your skin at your own risk!

Make sure you walk into the Old Town, with its winding streets and lots of cows. If you see a Holy Man (he could be a pseudo Holy Man but who cares, he is still amazing), take his photo and give him a few RPS (rupees) as an offering. Try to find time to visit the Shankar Brothers shop and pick up some oils and incense (rumored to be a favorite shop of Goldie Hawn). I bought a Rudraksha seed necklace that protects from negative energy and they sent it next-door to the Golden Temple for a blessing (let's just hope they really did). Oils and incense from India are something really special to take home. ☺

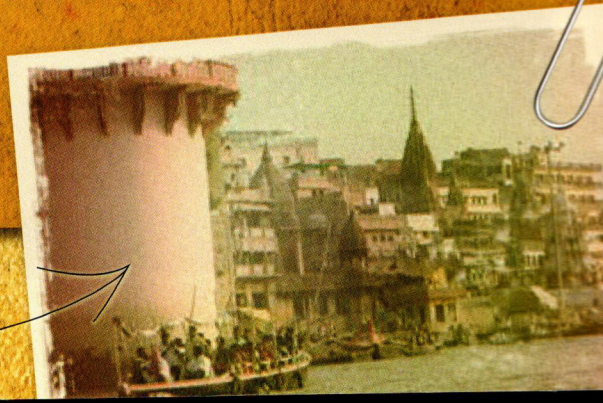
Sunrise on Ganges and Manikarnika Ghat

The Karmic Connection

Shopping is like collecting memories, moments and stories. When you walk away from a shop – undecided – only to return later when you realize you can't live without something, you've broken the cosmic karmic connection. It's never the same and you end up with buyer's remorse.

You are going to have your own list of must-see sites in India. There is so much to do and see – here are my top picks for an enlightened trip:

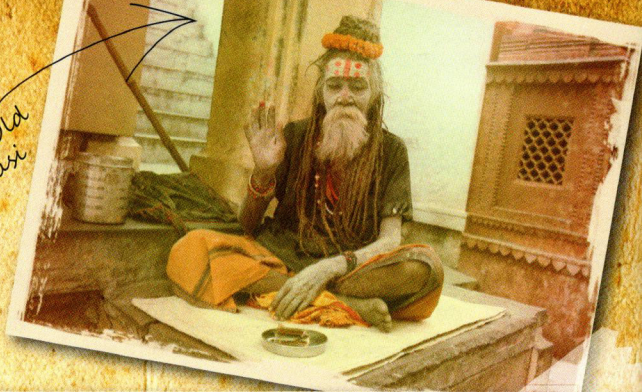
1. Glam lunch at the **Imperial Hotel** in Delhi to experience the old colonial days
2. **Chandi Chowk Market** in Old Delhi is the ultimate chaotic India experience
3. **Agni Pooja Sunset Ceremony** in Varanasi at Dasaswarmedh Ghat
4. **Sunrise Boat Ride** waking up the Ganges River
5. Old Town Varanasi – oils and incense at **Shankar Bros**
6. Photograph at least one Holy Man and give him a donation
7. **Taj Mahal** at sunrise is magical and crowded, make sure you stand in the famous photo spot with the Taj behind you
8. **Agra Fort** after the Taj Mahal will blow your mind
9. **Oberoi Agra Hotel** is uber chic (the shrimp Kerla was heavenly)
10. Have your fortune told by a **Barbella** (fortune teller, astrologer and palm reader all wrapped into one)
11. Photograph at least one **snake charmer** even if they freak you out
12. Ride an elephant to the **Jaipur Palace**
13. Buy art from a local artist at **The Palace School** in Jaipur
14. See at least one **puppet show** – puppets are handmade family businesses
15. **Gem Palace** (jewelers to the royal family since 1852) is a must in Jaipur, the city of jewels. Say hi to owner Sanjay Kasliwal for me. He has a regular table at Rambagh Palace so you might see him there
16. **Rambagh Palace** is ultra chic and romantic at any time of the day or night
17. **Niros** in Jaipur has been there since 1949, a local place with excellent food
18. Return home with a **red string** for your wrist blessed by a priest or Holy Man
19. Walk along **Marine Drive**, aka Queen's Necklace in Mumbai
20. See the famous traditional laundry – **Dobi Ghat**



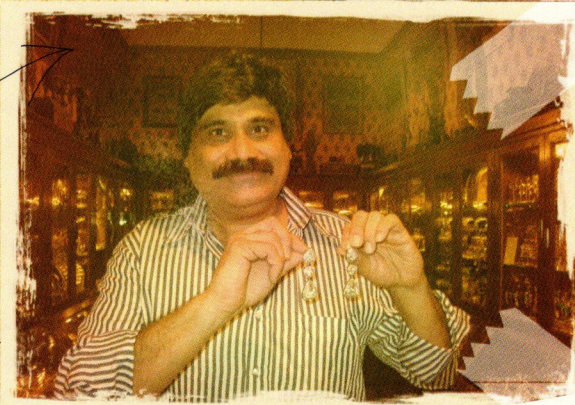
Secret Tips to make the most of your India adventure:

- 1 When offered a restaurant or a private home for dinner, always pick someone's home. It is an honor to be invited to an Indian home and you will have the best meal ever.
- 2 You will not find nirvana and be terribly disappointed if you allow your driver to pick lunch, dinner or shopping spots. Have your own list from sources you trust.
- 3 Avoid getting sick in India and only drink bottled water. No ice, no raw vegetables washed in water, no street food, no funky stuff and no strange meat. Eat plenty of yummy garlic naan bread and drink plenty of masala tea.
- 4 Don't let the overwhelming poverty and begging bother you by avoiding eye contact with all beggars, and never give them money. Don't allow them to enter your energy space. Once you meet their gaze it's all over – they have you emotionally.
- 5 Namaste is the universal greeting. With your hands together in a prayer mudra at your heart with head slightly bowed, it means "the god inside my soul says hello to the god inside your soul." Use it often.

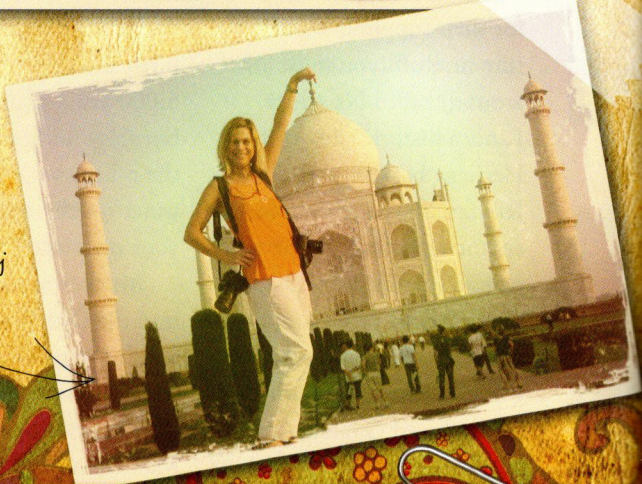
Holy Man in Old Town Varanasi



*Sanjay, owner of Gem Palace
"If these don't bring you nirvana, I have bigger ones."*



Me at Taj Mahal



india college



New Delhi, Agra, Khajuraho, Jaipur and Mumbai: 3-12 March 2013

Ishwar Subramanian and Lakshmi

Ishwar will take you on a 10-day journey exploring the Duality of

India. This inspiring trip will include an education rich exploration in New Delhi, high-speed train ride to Agra, searching for tiger stripes and exploring the amazing temples of Khajuraho, private air charter to the Pink City of Jaipur and learning how all that is old and new mesh together in Mumbai.

For more information, please e-mail events@ceo.org.

Anita Rosenberg is an artist, filmmaker, and expert in Feng Shui and BaZi Chinese Astrology who travels the globe "Shopping for Nirvana." Her adventures have taken her to over 50 countries where she lectures and works with clients. Anita is an award-winning author and graduate of the San Francisco Art Institute and New York University Graduate Film School. Director of chick flicks "Assault of the Killer Bimbos" and "Modern Girls," Anita's work has been exhibited at LACMA and MOCA. Her IPP Gold Medal book *Thursdays with Mom & Michael* is a mother/daughter project she wrote with her mother Elaine Rosenberg. All proceeds go to the Evelyn Lauder Breast Cancer Research Foundation. Anita lives and works in Hollywood.