



# movies



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## INDIA THROUGH FILM

India loves its movies and the movies love India right on back. Bollywood (the film industry of Bombay/Mumbai) makes more movies every year than even good old Hollywood. While the country is especially partial to musical melodramas and historical epics, India has also produced one of the 20th century's most critically acclaimed directors, Satyajit Ray, while international filmmakers are drawn to India's history and energy. Here's a few ideas about seeing India through cinema.

### A LOCAL LENS

#### **KAL HO NAA HO**

**TOMORROW MAY NEVER COME (2003)**

Bollywood musical dramas are hugely popular not only in India but amongst the Indian diaspora around the world. If you want to see what they're all about, try this tear-jerker/comedy with song and dance starring "the King of Bollywood," Shah Rukh Khan. Set in New York, it's about a stressed-out MBA student who falls in love with a terminally ill man who lives next door.

#### **MONSOON WEDDING (2001)**

This romantic comedy-drama that pleased crowds and critics. It's an exuberant yet subtle portrayal of a modern but traditional family. A middle-class clan gathers together in Delhi to celebrate the arranged marriage of the uncertain Aditi to Hemant, a computer programmer who lives in Houston.

#### **PADMAAVAT (2018)**

A big-budget, extravagant epic about warring dynasties in the 13th century which may remind some Jewish viewers of the story of Masada. It generated controversy in India with both Hindu and Muslim groups protesting at its depictions of historical and mythic figures.

#### **PATHER PANCHALI**

**SONG OF THE LITTLE ROAD (1955)**

Made on a tiny budget, this film is lauded by many film buffs as a milestone in modern cinema. Director Satyajit Ray launched his remarkable career with this humane, lyrical portrayal of life in an impoverished village in the 1910s. Not for those looking for fast-paced thrills.

#### **THE LUNCHBOX (2013)**

A young woman and a retiring widower find friendship and perhaps something more after a mix-up in Bombay's famed lunchbox system (where food from home is transported to loved ones at work).



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### **HOLLYWOOD COMES TO INDIA**

#### **GANDHI (1982)**

An epic film – 3 hours 11 minutes in length – about an epic life. This Oscar-winner stars Ben Kingsley as India's iconic advocate of independence and non-violence. It provides a solid introduction to key events in Gandhi's political and spiritual evolution.

#### **SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE (2008)**

Another Oscar best-winner, this "rags to Rajah fable" is about a young Muslim living in a Mumbai slum. He aims to strike it big on the Indian version of the "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" TV quiz show. It combines powerful scenes of poverty with an exciting Hollywood meets Bollywood drama.

#### **THE BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL (2011)**

A gentle, feel-good comedy. A group of British retirees come to India looking for affordable, comfortable accommodation. What they find is something both less and much more than they expected.

#### **THE DARJEELING LIMITED (2007)**

Director Wes Anderson takes his quirky view of the world and his favorite actors (including Owen Wilson and Bill Murray) to India in this offbeat comedy-drama about three brothers who embark on a train trip across the country.

#### **WATER (2005)**

Critics described this as a harrowing but beautiful picture about British-occupied India in the 1930s. After a child-bride just eight years old becomes a widow, her family sends her to an ashram for unwanted and outcast women. The third of a trilogy of films by the Indo-Canadian director Deepa Mehta.