

INDIA

PRE-DEPARTURE GUIDE

traveltalk
adventure travel company



India is the second most-populous country with over 1.2 billion people. The country is bursting with an eclectic mix of ethnicity, a combination of tradition and innovation and an abundance of varied landscapes and scenery. Feel the complete diversity from the bustling, vibrant streets and spectacular architecture to the simple and modest villages. Be amazed by the geography from the highest mountain peaks to the chilled out, tropical beaches and lush rainforests. Learn about the oldest and most important of religions and visit the famous sites including the magnificent Taj Mahal. Taste the deliciousness of the traditional cuisines and curries made with the seasonal selection of the locally grown herbs and spices. All of these attributes combined make India a real feast for the senses and an impressive and pleasing eye-opener for even the most seasoned traveller.

VISAS

Please ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months after the last day of your trip as some countries may refuse entry if there is any less. All foreign nationals entering India are required to hold a national passport with a valid visa issued by the High Commission of India. All individual visa seekers are requested to apply for an Indian visa online. The duly signed physical copy of the application form is to be completed and submitted at your nearest Indian Visa Application Centre (IVAC) or directly to Indian Mission/ Post, on the scheduled date of interview along with the required supporting documents. All the necessary instructions for completing the form and scheduling the appointment can be found online. For list of the countries eligible for online visa application & up-to-date regulations, please check the link:

<https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is mandatory for all passengers to have comprehensive personal insurance before the trip departs which covers for the duration of the trip. For your benefit your insurance should cover cancellation, all medical and repatriation costs, damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and public liability.

Unless coming from a yellow fever country, India does not officially require any vaccinations for entry into the country, but the further off the beaten track you go, the more necessary it is to take precautions.

It is recommended that you seek medical advice at least six weeks before travelling and discuss your requirements with your doctor. Plan ahead and schedule your vaccinations as some require more than one injection, while others should not be given together.

THE WEATHER

Generally speaking India's climate is defined by three seasons; the hot, the wet (monsoon) and the cool, however the climatic conditions in the far north of India have little relation to those in the extreme south. The most pleasant time to visit most of the country is during the cooler period between November and mid-February.

The weather in India varies depending on region, (see the Fast Facts boxes for the best times to visit specific regions). If you are travelling India during the hot summer and wet, humid monsoon season, cool relief can be found in the northern Himalayan region.

Monsoon Season in North of India Please be aware of monsoon season take place around 15th of June to 15th of September around North of India and peak months are July and August. Monsoons is a weather phenomenon that bring lot of rain with it. During this time rains are frequent and results in water logging, traffic jams, etc. and it's quite difficult to visit a monument if rains are heavy moreover its makes it difficult to take photographs.

ESSENTIALS

Before you leave your country, we recommend you to make sure you have followings with you ;

- Passport
- Airline or transportation tickets (where applicable)
- Traveltalk Tour voucher: this is sent to you via email, and you can just have a digital copy no need to print it.
- Travel Insurance policy
- Visas (where applicable)
- Labels and or locks on your travel bags
- Pre-departure information
- Credit cards, cash, travellers' cheques
- Conversion plug

WHAT TO WEAR

Summer in most parts of India lasts from March to June and from April to July in the northwest region. The summer season is hot with temperatures reaching 50 degrees and higher. We suggest packing light, cotton clothes such as loose shirts and singlets, and baggy pants. Lightweight long-sleeved tops and pants are useful for protection from mosquitoes. Take a sun hat or scarf to cover your head in the heat and don't forget sunglasses.

Indian winters are from October to February and can be quite cold, particularly in the north. It is advised to pack clothing you can layer; a few thin sweaters, long pants and cotton tops. The monsoon season starts on the Kerala coast in June and carries on until September. The conditions are characterized by intense downpours broken up by hot, sunny spells with high levels of humidity. An umbrella is a good idea as rain jackets will be uncomfortably hot.

MONEY

The Indian Rupee (₹) is the official currency of the Republic of India. The currency can be divided into 100paise (p) but only 50-paise coins are currently in use. Banknotes are available in the denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 and Rupee coins come in 1, 2, 5, 100 and 1,000. You are unlikely to come across paise coins, but you will find it difficult receiving change for notes larger than ₹100.

£1 (GBP) = ₹90 (INR) approximately



EATING AND DRINKING

Traditional Indian foods all have their own distinct taste and are full of flavour and spice content. A lot of travellers visiting India become familiar with the term, "Delhi Belly", used in relation to an upset stomach. If you are not a big spice eater then you should go easy on trying spices for a few days before you become more accustomed. Eating out in India is not very expensive although it is advisable not to eat from the road stalls other than some renowned 'Dhabas' or other hygienic vendors your tour guide can recommend. A visit to a Dhaba (a small, generally roadside shop, with their own earthen oven to cook bread) is generally a 'must-do' for any traveller. Although a lot of new restaurants have come up with Dhaba-look and feel, it is advisable to check out some authentic ones.

Some traditional Indian dishes to sample at Dhabas include Black Dal (cooked lentils in a spice base), Palak Paneer (Spinach with cottage cheese) and Shahi Paner (cottage cheese in spice base with turmeric). Different breads include Lachha Paratha (bread with butter) and Methi Paratha (bread with coriander and herbs), which are different versions of Naan bread. Dosas are an Indian specialty from the south, which is a fermented crepe/pancake that can be served with many variations of spices and toppings. Masala Dosa (crepe with potatoes) is generally served with coconut chutney and sambar (a form of lentil). Chicken Tikka, Mutton Korma and Biryani (fried rice dish) are the other delights for the food lovers.

There are wide selections of popular drinks in India that are both unique and refreshing. According to Indian ethnic culture, there are only a few alcoholic, traditional drinks that are prepared with locally available ingredients. Indian beverages are often referred to as sherbets and are non-alcoholic and prepared to combat the heat of the sultry Indian summer. Some of these drinks include Aam Panna, Jal Jeera, Thandai, Lassi, Chhanch and Nimbu Paani. In the winter, warmer drinks like tea and filtered coffee are more standard. Tea and Chai tea is exceptionally popular and the most common form of drink in India, especially in the north region.

SHOPPING

India is a shopper's paradise. There is an astonishing variety of dazzling handicrafts, textiles, jewellery, furnishings, art, spices and much more on display in the winding bazaars, busy markets, state emporiums and street stalls; at ancient historical sites and shining new malls. The country produces both traditional and modern goods, and sometimes a compelling mix of both; such as designer fashions inspired by traditional costumes. Bargaining is very important and even expected part of any shopping trip at the markets in India. You need to make sure you don't pay too much. As a general rule for the street markets, don't pay more than half the initial asking price for any item. Sometimes it's possible to pay less, especially if you buy more than one item. Shop keepers consider the first sale of the day to be lucky, so if you are up early enough you may be offered an even better deal.

OPENING HOURS

Banks are open from 10am-2pm, Monday through Friday and 10am-12.30pm on Saturdays. Cashing of traveller's cheques usually ceases 30 minutes before the official bank closing time. Shops also remain closed on particular days of the week according to their location in a city, but usually Tuesdays.

ELECTRICITY

Electricity in India is 240 Volts, alternating at 50 cycles per second. You will require a voltage converter if you are carrying a device that does not accept 240 Volts at 50 Hertz. To adjust your device according to the power and voltage in India.

TIPPING

Tips are a common reward for service staff in India. Your tour guide and crew will be especially appreciative and honoured with this kind of traditional gratitude at the end of your tour

DISTANCES

The following information will give you a better idea of the times travelled to help you plan your day:

- ➔ Delhi-Jaipur : 6 hours
- ➔ Jaipur-Dausa: 1,5 hours
- ➔ Dausa-Agra: 4 hours
- ➔ Agra-Delhi: 4,5 hours

ARRIVAL

Please [click here](#) for arrival hotel details;

Guide Meeting

Please note that your guide will meet you for a briefing about the days ahead at 06:30pm on day 1 at your arrival hotel, unless otherwise notified

AIRPORT TRANSFER

A complimentary airport transfer from Delhi airport to the Travel Talk Hotel will be provided on Day 1 of the tour (the arrival day of the tour) between 05:00 am & 23:00 pm and a departure transfer from the Travel Talk hotel to airports on the departure day of the tour available from 05:00 am until 23:00 pm and you can book it with your guide.

Please note your accommodation starts 13.00 on Day 1 and so early arrivals will be required to book pre tour accommodation if an early check in is required.

- Please forward your flight details to us, at least 10 days in advance, to info@traveltalktours.com email address, including the information below :
- Traveltalk booking number
- Date of flight
- Flight number
- Local arrival time
- Name of traveller/s to be picked up



ACCOMMODATION

The hotel selection on Travel Talk India tours is 4 and 3 star locally rated and the main criteria in the hotel selection process is cleanliness, private bath-room facilities, usually but not always centrally located. If you are travelling on your own, you'll be allocated a twin or triple room with other group members of the same gender. Travellers who have paid a single supplement will stay in single rooms. We can not guarantee the availability of double beds for couple travellers. Your Tour Leader will organise the rooming arrangements when checking into the hotels according to the rooming lists. Therefore we can also not guarantee any last minute changes to suit personal requirements of our passengers.

PRE&POST TOUR ACCOMMODATION

Should you require pre or post tour accommodation, please notify us (or your agent) at the time of booking. This information has to be also clearly stated on your voucher (check-in date, check-out date, number of travellers etc). Unless a room is immediately available, your room may not be allocated until midday.

TRANSPORTATION

You can simply count on comfort and reliability of our modern coaches and mini buses. Most of our vehicles feature air conditioning and panoramic windows, comfortable seats, safe and secure luggage storage and sound system.

TOUR LEADER

Your Tour Leader's role is to ensure that all aspects of the trip run smoothly. He/she will share their local knowledge, advise you on ways to spend your free time and coordinate the day-to-day running of the tour. Occasionally your Tour Leader may require your patience and understanding should something not go according to plan. If you have any problems on the tour, please let your Tour Leader know so that the correct action can be taken to rectify the situation. Please also bear in mind that, when you travel on any of the combination programs, you will be travelling with different tour groups and have different tour leaders during each leg of the combination.

ENTRANCE FEES

The entrance fees to museums and sights are not included in the tour price. Please find below the approximate costs provided in USD:

- ➔ Humayun's Tomb (Delhi): \$8
- ➔ Mehtab Bagh (Agra): \$3
- ➔ Qutab Minar(Delhi): \$8
- ➔ Red Fort (Delhi): \$8
- ➔ Jantar Mantar (Jaipur): \$3
- ➔ Amber Fort (Jaipur): \$8
- ➔ City Palace(Jaipur): \$6
- ➔ Hawa Mahal (Jaipur): \$3
- ➔ Agra Fort(Agra): \$8
- ➔ Fatehpur Sikri(Agra): \$8
- ➔ Itmad Ud Daula(Agra): \$3
- ➔ Sikandra (Agra): \$3
- ➔ Taj Mahal (Agra): \$23

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Wildlife SOS Village visit (Agra): \$18
- ➔ Bear Rescue site Agra \$27
- ➔ Visit to Chowki Dhani with Dinner Jaipur \$42
- ➔ Cooking demo & dinner with local family
- ➔ Jaipur \$30

MISSED YOUR WELCOME MEETING?

Being avid travellers ourselves, we know that the unforeseen can always arise. If you miss your welcome meeting on day one, please don't stress and check the info board in the hotel lobby for the next day's programme. Should you arrive on day two or later, please call the emergency number who will be able to put you in contact with your tour leader to make arrangements.

LANGUAGE

Below you'll find some important phrases that will make your travel easier :

Hello	Namaste
Me	Mai
I am from Australia	Mai Australia se hum
Who	Kaun
Who are you	Aap kaun hai
Clothes	Kapra
Tea	Chai
I need a cup of tea	Mujhe ek cup chai chahiye
Water	Paani
I need a bottle of water	Mujhe ek bottle paani chahiye
Food	Khana
Do you speak English	Kya apa English bolte hai
Yes	Haa
No	Nahi
Please	Kripya
Thank you	Dhanevaad
How are you	App kaise hai
I am fine	Mai thik hu
Nice to meet you	Aap se milkar khushi hui
What is your name	Aap ka kya naam hai
My name is Mariellen	Mera naam Mariellen hai
Where are you from	Aap kaha se hai
I am from Canada	Mai Canada se hu
Where is the station	Station kaha hai
I want to buy this	Mujhe ye kharidna hai
How much is this	Ye kitnay ka hai
Lower the price	Daam kum kijiye