

TRAVEL TIPS FOR INDIA

PRE-DEPARTURE FORMALITIES

Visas and Passport

You will need a passport (with a minimum of six months before expiration) and appropriate visas to enter India & Nepal. You need multiple entry visas if you are returning to India for your flights from Nepal. To obtain your own visa we will furnish you with the necessary forms, which you may process directly at the Consulate closest to you.

If you wish Our Personal Guest to obtain your visa, please indicate so at the time of booking. There is a service charge per visa in addition to the actual cost of the visa. Courier charges and special delivery will be extra.

Medical Information

No compulsory inoculations are required if you are arriving from the United States, Canada or Europe. If you are entering from Africa or parts of Latin America, certification of Yellow Fever inoculation is required.

General recommendations for travelers to India are:

- Anti-malarial medications
- Tetanus
- Gamma-Globulin, and
- Viral Meningitis inoculations.

For further information contact your local physician or the travel information service of the Center for Disease Control at (404) 639-3311.

PREPARING FOR YOUR TRIP

Baggage Allowance

- ♦ On your **international flight** between USA and India you are allowed two pieces of checked baggage, neither bag exceeding 62 inches or 70 lbs. In addition to the above, one piece totaling not more than 45 inches may be carried on board, provided it fits beneath the seat.
- ♦ On **domestic flights** within India and Nepal you are allowed 44 lbs (30 kg). for checked luggage, and one carry-on bag. There are baggage restrictions on smaller aircrafts in the domestic sectors hence make note of it

We are not responsible for any excess baggage penalties, which will be charged at the listed rates directly by the airlines.

Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that you purchase travel insurance, in the event that you have to cancel your trip. Insurance should be purchased directly from a licensed vendor. Enclosed is a brochure from Access America. All queries related to travel insurance should be directed to the company concerned.

Clothing

- ◆ Dress informally while on tour. Carry lightweight clothes that can be laundered easily. For evening dinners and events, a blazer or suit for men and appropriate evening wear for the ladies.
- ◆ In North India during winter, you will need light woolens, sweaters, a light jacket and wool wrap. Dress in layers, so you can strip down during the warmth of the day when temperatures average 70 degrees. It is cold in cars and indoors, as there is no central heating. From March onwards, summer clothes will do everywhere except in mountainous regions.
- ◆ In South India the weather is hot and humid. Light cotton clothes are most comfortable.
- ◆ Women should remember that the Indian Subcontinent is conservative. Avoid short shorts, mini-skirts, and Lu-c backed sun dresses in public, particularly in the smaller towns. Pants and Bermuda length shorts are perfectly acceptable.

Useful items to take on your trip

- ◆ Personal toiletries
- ◆ Prescription medications with their generic names
- ◆ Flashlight
- ◆ Insect repellent
- ◆ Face towels (smaller places may not be adequately supplied).
- ◆ Packets of moist towelettes
- ◆ A small insulated flask for hot & cold drinks.
- ◆ Plastic cups and straws
- ◆ Facial tissue and extra roll of~ toilet paper
- ◆ Swimsuit, hat, sunglasses, sun block
- ◆ Comfortable walking shoes.
- ◆ Slipper socks — the kind the airlines hand out— you will need them at all the temples.

WHILE YOU ARE IN INDIA

Arrival In India

On your arrival, you will be met at the airport by a representative of Our Personal Guest or by a representative of the hotel listed in your itinerary.

Flight Delays

Should any flight delays or changes occur, our local agents will do everything in their power to minimize the inconvenience caused. However, we must stress that we have no control over the airline schedules.

Airport Security

On domestic flights, your entire carry-on luggage must be tagged with a hand baggage tag available at the check-in counter. The tag will later be stamped by security.

Greeting:

Namaste is the all purpose greeting and welcome. Fold your hands in front of your chest, with a slight bow of the head.

Language

Everyone you will meet will speak English, however there are many languages in India and therefore there may be some difficulty with the accents.

Currency Exchange

It is not necessary to purchase local currency at the airport. You can change money at hotels in all major cities at the Government fixed rate of exchange.

- ♦ Major credit cards are accepted at city hotels and most shops. The Visa / MasterCard are more popular than American Express.
- ♦ Small places and bazaars will accept Rupees cash only.
- ♦ Purchase small denominations for tips etc.
- ♦ A general rule of thumb is to treat Rs 50.00 as \$1.00, Rs 10.00 as 20 cents, and Rs 5.00 as a dime. Keep cash money in these denominations handy.
- ♦ The Indian notes are well thumbed and worn, and when getting cash you will often get a pack of 100 bills stapled together. Ask for help in detaching these as they are a source of great frustration.
- ♦ Do not accept torn bills when changing money; some shopkeepers might refuse it.
- ♦ At the time of this printing, the U.S. dollar is equivalent to approximately 47 Rupees. There is 100 paisa in a Rupee.

ATM's

- ♦ There are ATM's at branches of all major banks, but they will give you cash in Rupees only. To get cash in Dollars you will have to go to American Express in Delhi or Bombay only. The local staff will help.

Internet access

- ♦ This is easily available now all over India, though not always high speed lines.
- ♦ The hotel business centers are the best bet, and all the hotels can set up the connection in your room for laptops.
- ♦ All the Vilas properties offer Internet access from special stations in the lobby.

Food

Each Indian state has its own history, culture, & food. To stay healthy keep to a diet of fresh cooked vegetables, rice and Indian breads. Sample the:

- ♦ Regional vegetarian cuisines.
- ♦ Grilled Tandoori food.
- ♦ In coastal areas try the fresh coconut water; it is safe, cooling and delicious.
- ♦ Freshly ground South Indian coffee.

Health Precautions

One should drink bottled water only and as much as possible to avoid dehydration. No ice.

- ♦ Eat cooked meals, avoid green salads.
- ♦ Do not buy food at street stalls.
- ♦ Eat fruit that you can peel yourself.
- ♦ Avoid seafood except in coastal areas.
- ♦ Local beer, wine, and soda are safe.

If an unexpected medical problem should arise, contact your hotel doctor.

Electric

Voltage in India is 220V/50 cycles. You will need to take a transformer and special plugs for American gadgets. In regards to the adapters, only round pin plugs are used in India. You can purchase them at any airport.

Gifts

Your hosts in India will appreciate gifts like cosmetics and perfumes, European chocolates, and small battery-operated gadgets.

Business Hours

Shops and offices are generally open from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm with a break for lunch between 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm Monday through Saturday.

Gratuities

With regards to gratuities we have outlined a suggested guideline based on 2 persons traveling together. For exemplary service please tip at your discretion, keeping in mind that the amounts listed are minimums. Our local representatives can handle this for you if you wish.

- ◆ Porters: Airports & railway stations: Rs 50 per bag.
- ◆ Drivers: Rs 250-500 per day.
- ◆ Bell Boys: Rs 50 per bag.
- ◆ Restaurants: 10-15%
- ◆ Guide: Rs 500 per day for local and approx Rs.800 for accompanying escort.

Begging

The government asks that you do not give handouts to beggars. Make a contribution at a Temple, Mosque or charity instead if you wish.

Communications

We will provide you with a list of hotel telephone and fax numbers related to your itinerary. India is 10 1/2 hours ahead of New York time except during the summer time change, when it is 9 1/2 hours ahead.

- ◆ **US Embassy in Delhi:** 2688-9033, 2611-3033, 2688-9175, 2687-8168
- ◆ **Country Code prefix** for India: **91**
- ◆ **City Code Delhi:** **11**
- ◆ **Dialing interstate** in India: 0 + City Code + Number

International Airport Departure Tax

Please note: This is included in your airline ticket.



Bon Voyage and Namaste!

