

# 91 India travel tips to Guide you through ( with Free PDF )

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Planning a trip to India ? Clueless about what this mysterious land has in store for you. Don't worry because we have compiled the best tips and insights that will guide you through your journey. You can even download these epic tips as a PDF to refer to it later.

A lot of our foreign clients coming to India ask us what should they know upon arrival. It made us realize that there is lack of information online about what you should do and expect when coming to India.

So we got to work right away and produced this fantastic piece of content to help everyone have a trip of their lifetime in India.

## Hotels and transportation

1.If you are from one these [113 countries](#)



eligible for visa on arrival and intend to stay in India for fewer than 30 days, then **applying for an etourist visa is a no brainer**. Here is the most [in-depth guide](#) that will help you with your etourist application from start to finish. The guide is divided in 5 sections and you can switch between with the horizontal menu given just below their logo.

2.Upon your arrival:

ordering a taxi from a prepaid terminal inside of the airport is safer than hailing one on the street, and worth the slightly higher cost.

3.The

second best option is to call your hotel of residence and ask if they offer transportation from the airport. Most will do it for free.

4.To **use Uber in India**

, you can use your current account. The only difference will be how you pay – Either through cash or PayTm wallet. Uber runs in the following 22 cities –

- *Bangalore*
- *Ahmedabad*
- *Bhubaneswar*
- *Chandigarh*
- *Chennai*
- *Coimbatore*
- *Guwahati*
- *Hyderabad*

- *Indore*
- *Jaipur*
- *Kochi*
- *Kolkata*
- *Mumbai*
- *Mysore*
- *Nagpur*
- *Nashik*
- *New Delhi*
- *Pune*
- *Surat*
- *Thiruvananthapuram*
- *Vadodara*
- *Visakhapatnam*

If its one-off ride, then I suggest you to pay by cash in INR, but if you plan to use Uber more than once, I suggest linking it to PayTM mobile wallet. You can seamlessly link your Uber account to the PayTM account and add money using your credit/debit card for a hassle free payment method.

5.

Trains are recommended for short distance travel and 3,2 or 1 tier AC offers a more comfortable journey. Even Chair will suffice but I can't say the same of the general compartment. The musty smell, unsanitary toilets, and lack of personal space that makes a lot of tourists feel down right harassed make the [general compartment](#) worth avoiding.

6.Keep in mind that trains are the most affordable form of transport in an overpopulated country with [high poverty rates](#), So you should get your tickets early or risk not getting them at all. Take advantage of 90 day advance booking for railroads.

7.If major cities are the main focus of your trip then booking domestic flights is a great Idea. If you buy the tickets well before the date of travel (2-3 months Before ), you will find that the train fares are on par with the their flying counterparts. So it makes more sense to fly given the time saving even if the airfares are a tad bit costlier.

## **Hotels**

8.

Negotiate the rate quoted by a hotel when making a reservation by yourself, over the phone or in person. Nine times out of ten you will get one because there is no shortage of hotels anywhere in India.

9.

When checking into a hotel, keep your passport handy as norms require hotels to check your passport number, visa number and issue/expiration dates. Expect to spend a good 15 minutes just for checking in.

10. Whenever you reach a budget hotel or hostel, make sure you fill a bucket of water as soon as you arrive so that you can use in case the water supply is cut. During the off season, many budget hotels cut power and water supply at a fixed time every day to save some money. Ask the reception if they do it too and if yes then at what time, so that you can plan your day accordingly.

11.

Tip the room service staff small amounts if you want to have a hassle-free experience at the hotel. Hotel staff is an underpaid lot and by tipping them little amounts of money, you make their lives a hell lot easier, and they reciprocate that by providing swifter service, local knowledge, and gratitude.

After resting for an hour or two, you decide to explore the city. Depending on your traveling style, there are many to navigate the cities to choose from –

### 12. Private Taxi

– Can be arranged by a travel agent or the hotel itself. Expensive but you gives a lot of freedom and flexibility.

### 13. Metro

– Affordable and fast, the Metro currently runs in 6 cities Delhi, Kolkata, Bangalore, Mumbai and Jaipur and Chennai. However, only Delhi and Kolkata Metro have an extensive reach. Use Metro whenever possible. Not only are they fast but they also run for almost 17 hours a day from 06.00 hrs till about 23.00 hrs. Most tourist spots have a metro station nearby, which is a plus. Tip the room service staff small amounts if you want to have

You can download the following apps to get all the essential information about metro –

[Delhi Metro](#)

[Mumbai Metro](#)

[Bangalore Metro](#)

[Kolkata Metro](#)

[Jaipur Metro](#)

### 15. Buses

– Plenty of buses ply on a route. But it is of no use till you know the route on which your destination lies and the bus number of buses running on that route.

4 Ways you can learn about both –

1. Call The tourist helpline set up government of India
2. Use Google Maps to get detailed information about any journey.
3. Enquire at the hotel's reception
4. Ask the locals at the bus stop.

16.

Auto Rickshaws and Cycle rickshaw – Described by some as “3 Wheeled Rollercoaster”, these are one of the best ways to see the city. Their small size enables them to squeeze through the traffic and leave you at the doorstep of your destination. Just like everything, they have their cons too – infamous for rash driving and unethical way of charging fares, the rickshaws are not for you if you hate haggling and a bumpy ride.

**Some tips to make your auto rickshaw ride a lot less bumpy –**

**17. Reading a Rickshaw Meter:**

is deceptive to foreigners because though it says Rupees and Paise on the meter...that's not what it means. There is an initial charge at the beginning of a ride, then the price increases in proportion to the distance which is what the meter measures.

18. It's best to

ask for a conversion card known as a 'tariff card' before paying up, which converts the reading of the meter to Rupees and tells you your exact fare.

**19. Rickshaw without a meter:** You can

Either wait for a Rickshaw with a meter or if in a hurry, negotiate a price before you accept their service. It's good to know the general rates in the area before negotiating with them. But never make the mistake of reaching your destination then asking how much, that's just asking to be fleeced!

20.

Opt for a 'Pre-Paid' rickshaw at Airports or Railway stations. Rickshaws at these places are notorious for going by their own fares and refusing passengers if they don't want to go a certain distance. So the traffic-regulating authorities have set up pre-paid services to prevent such incidents. All you need to do is pay a predetermined fare to a central authority before boarding the auto rickshaws, which will take you to the destination.

21.

Another tactic employed by the auto drivers is to claim that very few people frequent your destination, and he will have to return with an empty auto. He may be lying, or he may be not, so it is better to ask a couple of other drivers before you board one.

22.

If you are traveling at odd hours, rates will suddenly go up by double or triple as the auto driver knows you need them more than they need you. Taking advantage of this fact, they may try to “take you for a ride” (pun intended) although the law states that fares can be increased only after midnight. But who can wait for that?

23.

Since the meter goes by distance, your auto driver will take advantage of this and if you don't know the way it's hard to catch them doing so. Once again, we will recommend using Google Maps if possible, so that you know if your driver is taking an undesired detour.

**24. Cycle Rickshaws**

– Made for small distance transport, usually within a locality, these all side open vehicles are omnipresent. They have a seating capacity of 4, 2 on the front and 2 on the back. However, seating 2 fully grown adults in the back can

tople the rickshaw. Therefore, only 2 children or a single adult should be accommodated at the back.

25.Keep some small notes like Rs. 50, 20, and 10 to pay the driver. Do not forget to carry a scarf to cover your face to protect your face and lungs from dust and pollution while you are stuck in traffic.

26.Despite the British influence, the power sockets you will find here are 2 and 3 pronged ones (BS – 546) that you find in most of the Europe. Carry a high-quality voltage converter like [this](#) if you don't want to blow up your device. Travelers from Countries with 110 V currency will need to buy a voltage converter while someone from a 230 V zone need not buy one.

27.The power can sometimes be unreliable with surprise outages and surges. Be cautious about leaving electronics on charge when you leave your room: [power surges when generators are switched on](#) can ruin sensitive devices such as phones and laptops.

28.

Carry your hotel's business card so that after a long day sightseeing you can hand over your driver the card and reach the place without any problem.

## Health and sanitation

29.Chai is a close cousin of tea only more tasty and healthy. A powerful blend of tea, herbs and spices, chai has been cherished for centuries in India to preserve health and increase immunity. Chai enhances the immune system, fights inflammation and has antioxidant properties. It has also been found that chai has antibacterial and anti-cancer effects. Need I say more to convince you about drinking Chai.

30.

You will come across Many drinks in India like "Lassi", "Chach" that are tasty and safe to drink in India, but water is certainly not one of them. Especially tap water.

31.Always check and

make sure that the seal of the water bottle cap is intact. Many sellers just buy junk bottles and fill it with water. Always keep your guards when it comes to water.

32.Stay well hydrated and

carry with you a 1-liter water with you at all times. You won't realize how quickly your body loses water to the heat.

### 33.Filter your water

. When coming to a country with sketchy water sources, a mini water filter is your best friend. We recommend Sawyer's water filters as they are small, light and compatible with most water bottles and pouches. It also removes harmful bacteria and protozoa like E. coli and giardia or you can carry Steripen medicine to purify water on the go.

### 34.Pack a basic medical kit

with antibacterial ointment, antihistamines (for hay fever and allergic reactions), aspirin, plasters, blister pads, ibuprofen, and sunscreen.

35.Health-wise, make sure you have coverage for medical emergencies and treatment. Confirm that your policy covers your destination. Also, consider coverage for lost or stolen luggage, and trip cancellation. Delhi belly is a big problem, and you don't want to end up spending big bucks getting cured or failing to get good medical care because

of the lack of money.

36. Just like any Indian movie, where the good guy beats the bad guy and saves his lady from the baddie, good bacteria ( probiotics ) can fight off the bad bacteria and save you from diarrhea. Therefore, don't forget to take a probiotic pill or drink daily.

37. A nifty tip which can keep you safe from delhi belly is to **eat where there are crowds**; a faster turnover means fresher food and a healthier you.

If you are buying fruits or vegetables in India, wash them well before consuming to get rid of toxic pesticides on their skin.

38. When backpacking your way to different cities, make sure that you have the numbers of the English speaking hospitals along your intended route. This way you can get proper medical care in case of an emergency.

### 39. Carry toilet paper with you

. If you are coming from a western country, chances are you don't know how to use a squat toilet which is prevalent in India. Why carrying a toilet paper is necessary? Because squat toilets do not have toilet paper. You will have to use your HANDS and a bucket of water to finish the job. But don't be paranoid as most tourist points have western style toilets to cater to foreign tourists. Similarly, you will have no problem with any decent hotel.

40.

Consult your doctor 5-7 weeks prior to coming to India about the vaccinations you need to take. This will usually depend on –

- current health and health history
- Immunisation records
- your itinerary

The 2 vaccinations you consider getting before landing in India are typhoid and hepatitis A, both transmitted through contaminated water or food. You can Read [this informative article](#) about vaccines to consider before coming to India, if you want to know more.

## People, Communication, and culture

41.

Fun fact – The language spoken in India is not Indian. Most of the north India speaks Hindi while the south Indian states have their own regional dialects. You will be surprised to know that There are 22 major languages in India, written in 13 different scripts, with over 720 dialects.

42.

India is not a land of snake charmers as the **uniformed western media around makes it out to be**.

Frankly, there is a very little chance you will come across one when you come to India. Consider yourself lucky if you do find one.

43.

Don't expect personal space in India. With a population density of over 400 people per kilometer who always shoved into one another, Indians have developed this strange habit of giving up our personal space willingly.

44.

Try to use as much Hindi as you can . This will help you strike a bond with the locals. People will often go out of the way to help you when they see you making the extra effort to speak their language. A [Hindi phrase book](#) will prove highly useful.

45.India is a conservative society and women are expected to **dress modestly**. Dressing modestly in the Indian context means you should cover your shoulders and legs till the knees.

Travelers to India may be tempted to wear shorts, as the weather can be hot and humid in many areas, even in Fall and Winter. Opt for light, cotton floor length skirts and light cotton blouses and shirts.

46.

Don't bring many clothes with you. Rather buy some ethnic Indian clothes – kurta pajama for men and salwar kameez for women from any Indian store. Not only are they light but they will also help you blend in a bit more easily.

47.If you have been reading other blogs to prepare yourself for India, you might have come across something like “Indians are something rude with a strange habit of staring.”

But let me tell you something, the stares you will get will be out of curiosity, not out of rudeness. Jessica of [curiositytravel.org](#) puts its best by saying – “just the way I want to gaze at all the women’s saris and take their pictures, they just want to do the same with me.”

48.Have you ever seen the indian **head wobble** ?

Ofcourse, you have !!

Do you know what it means ?

I don't think so.

The world famous Head wobble from India has confused foreign tourists for ages. But it is time to demystify it for once and for all.

A head wobble from side to side means “I understand”

An upward head wobble means “whatsup” whereas a downward headwobble means “come here” and also used to acknowledge someone’s presence when some enters.

The following Viral video does an incredible job of explaining the head wobble in a fun way –

49.

Avoid taking pictures of police, security personnel and women. Thrown into a jail for being a spy will not only ruin your trip but can make your life a lot more difficult. Taking pictures of women without asking them may not land you up in jail but can lead to a quarrel with their family members.

## **Ettiquetes**

50.Each country in the world has some social ettiquetes and mannerisms which set it apart from rest of the world. India is no different. Keep in mind the following ettiquetes and you are less likely to upset your hosts.

51.**Do not eat with your left hand**

because it is considered as unclean.

Most Indians still use squat toilets and wash their backs with the.....you guessed it right, left hands. Unsurprisingly, many people will assume that even you perform your bathroom matters with your left hand.

52.

Most Indian homes do not keep alcohol so make sure that your host is okay with the fact that you are bringing alcohol as a gift.

53.

Never point your feet at another person as feet are considered unclean. If you are trying to imagine what you are, then please don't. Feet are considered dirty for another reason. They are considered unclean as they come in regular contact with ground. That is it.

On the other hand, it's a sign of respect to bend down and touch an elder person's feet in India.

## Shopping

54.

If you are on a tight budget then avoid eating at restaurants near temples, and other famous places. They are expensive as hell. Like 2 X the normal price.

**55.First time In India ?**

### **Want some Chai ?**

These two deceptively simple questions asked by shop owners can make you spend more. Saying yes to any of these questions will immediately switch on their "greedy" mode.

Sellers of any high priced good which requires showing some variety to the customer use this tactic. An example of someone playing this trick on you is garment showrooms or handicraft shop owners.

**56.Know your pin codes**

as signing has been phased out around the country. Make sure no one is peeping over and enter the details while keeping the machine close to you.

57.

Never pay the full amount upfront. Giving anyone the full amount before availing the service, you also give him the power to dictate the terms of the service while it should be the other way around.

58.Whether you like it or not but there are not many places where you can use your Credit Card. Only big hotels and restaurants accept them. Even most of the tourist points don't have them. Keep enough cash on you.

**59.In India, Negotiate on everything**

. Taxi driver quotes you price, negotiate. Local gem seller asks for a 100 bucks, offer 50. Fruit seller asks 60 bucks for 1 kg mango, ask for 1.25 KG for the same price. 9 out of 10 times, you will strike a deal.

60.

A good counter offer for most commodities is 50 percent of what is asked for . Work your way up from there. If you don't like seller's offer, walk away. Most of the times, he or she will request you to come back and buy at the desired price.

61.

Get hold of a wad of 10 and 20 rs notes – Request your hotel manager to arrange for it. Or go to a bank and get a fresh wad. Not only do they help in day to day purchases but they also help in bargaining as they are the smallest denominations of money in note.

## **Safety and scams**

62.In many religious towns like Pushkar and Vrindavan, sadhus ( Indian holy men ) will approach you to offer their blessings. This benevolent gesture quickly turns into an extortion of sorts as they start demanding money after they have either tied a red holy thread on your wrist or applied a tillak to your forehead.

63.

Some rapacious taxi and autorickshaw drivers tweak the meters of their vehicle which makes them run faster than the vehicle itself. This is a scam not exclusive to India and you may experience in other south asian and european countries as well.

64.

An innocent looking child or sometimes an adult will approach you and place a “insert a social cause” bracelet on your wrist. Once you have it they will start demanding money for it and if you refuse they'll start creating a scene. So it is better to just keep walking or give a stern look if anyone tries this scam on you.

65.Fake doctor scam is not so common but is a scam nonetheless and it is always better to be aware than being a victim. In this scam, a fake doctor will offer to make fake medical documents which supposedly will get you a lot of money from your insurance company. The problem is, companies are smart and already aware of this scam. You are more likely to get yourself into legal trouble than a room full of cash, if you try to pull this off.

### **66.Tourist help line number ( 1800-11-1363 )**

The 24/7 Free tourist helpline facility run by ministry of tourism is an incredible resource for tourists in need . You can get all sorts of information – how to get from point A to point B, phone numbers of near by hospitals, advice in case of an emergency, you get the idea.

Although you can any information with a basic google search but Internet connection is almost a privilege in some areas and you won't always have that privilege.

Moreover, It provides support in 12 languages – English, Hindi, Arabic, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin (Chinese), Portuguese and Russian.

67.

Carry a door stopper if you plan to stay in a cheap hotel or hostel . Don't be surprised to find the door locks broken or the door stopper missing.

68.During monsoon, most Indian roads turn into swimming pools faster than a seemingly unrelated group of people turn into a flash mob, thanks to water logging. Therefore, it is advised to keep a pair of slippers to get around when the water is logged.

69.

Another danger one faces is falling into open pot holes when the water is logged. Although, they are left open to drain the water faster and improve the situation, but a mishap can take place if an unsuspecting person falls into it.

70.

Be Extra Careful while clicking selfies near dams, cliffs and similar places. There have been cases of people getting washed away with a strong current of water or falling of the cliff. Unfortunately, not many could be saved due to lack of safety measures at these Tourist points. As strange as it may sound, but [most of the selfie-related deaths](#) happened in India.

71.

Don't carry food in hand when monkeys are around. There is a monkey menace in a lot of Indian cities and towns like dharamshala, vrindavan, and jaipur. They snatch away your food and may even hurt you while doing so. Something similar happened with Jonny blair. Read more about his experience [here](#).

72.

Lock your day backpacks with number locks because many travelers report that petty thieves often try to open the bags from behind. This usually happens when you are in a crowded tourist place. It is a good idea to use number padlock instead of key and lock ones because there is no risk of losing the keys.

73.India is a very religious country and people can go to extremes when it comes to their religion.

**Always know the do's and don't**

before going to a sacred place like a temple. There has been an instance where a [Russian tourist was beaten to pulp](#) for hurting the sentiments of the locals by ringing the sacred bell at the wrong time of the day. This is a extremely rare case which should not happened but it does teach us something – one should be careful with religious matters.

74.

If you reach a city or town without an hotel reservation, and want to get one, then don't ever take the advice of the auto rickshaw drivers. Their commission to bring you to the hotel is passed on to you and you will have no idea how far is the place from the main tourist points. Not saying that every one of them is a liar or selfish but you cannot distinguish among them either.

75.Both **Kashmir and leh**

are breathtakingly beautiful places. Almost Always covered in snow and surrounded by peaceful valleys, one should avoid these places near Indian national holidays due to increased risk of terrorist attacks.

76.

If you're being collected at the airport by a hotel driver make sure they have properly identified themselves before you set off.

77.

Keep your hotel room number confidential and make sure hotel room doors have chains, deadlocks, and peep holes. When possible, travel around the area with groups of friends rather than alone especially during the night.

78.

It's crucial to get a police report in India if you've had anything stolen; insurance companies may refuse to reimburse you without one.

79.“

When other travellers ask you what you do for a living and you're not sure if they can be trusted, tell them you're a policewoman on holiday. I do it all the time just to be on the safe side.”

This great tip was shared by Evelyn Hannon of the [journeywoman](#).

80.

If you plan to rent a car and drive by yourself then forget it. Simply forget it. Rent a car with a driver instead. India is notorious for its driving etiquette and traffic. Unlike, western countries where traffic flows smoothly, indian traffic is erratic at best. Not only erratic but dangerous as well thanks to lack of obedience to traffic rules. Only a driver brought up here can handle this traffic.

## Other Insightful Tips

### 81.Expect things to go wrong

. Even the best-planned trips will be thrown off course by traffic jams, bad weather, road closures and so on. Have a backup plan and remember: misadventures make the best stories.

82.

Carry multiple photocopies of your passport for Indian Sim card and bike rentals.

83.Grrrrtraveler who has been 3 Times to India recommends packing with you the following items –

- **Banjees wrist wallet**
- **Silk liner**
- **Sleeping bag because some parts of India get really cold**
- **Melaleuca spray for beds and train beds**

### 84.Carry earplugs

! Muffle the sounds of crying babies, drunk people, barking dogs, honking horns, dormitory sex, and more. A traveler's best friend.

85.**Do not entertain the beggars.** You give some alms to one and dozens more will start following you. Good luck getting rid of them. Even if you have no problem in giving some money to the poor, you must know that your money does not put food in their stomach but fill the pockets of human traffickers who force these people to beg.

86.Sometimes, they will ask you to buy them some milk from a nearby store. One might be tempted to do so. After all, the poor guy is getting something to eat, right ? wrong, the beggars often sell it back to the shop owners for a small commission. That is why, don't give in to any of their requests.

87.

Carry a scarf to cover your head because in states like Delhi and rajasthan the sun can be unrelenting .

88. India is a country full of [temples](#)

. Try to visit them all or even just the “major” and you will find yourself exhausted. Narrow it down to the big-hitters if you want to stay sane and get most out of your trip. Remember that India is about more than architectural splendour, the street-life and shopping are just as much a part of the experience.

89.

Your Indian tour cannot and should not end without a trip to Indian country side. Living here for even just one day will show you different side of India- a side with less chaos and more refreshing. A great way to experience the country side is by becoming a member of [woofing](#) for just \$25. You get to work on tea estates, coffee estates, and vegan agricultural communities and have your basic needs – food and accommodation met as well.

90.

If you want to tip anyone in any restaurant or hotel, give it to the person directly as the service tax included in the final bill goes to the Indian govt., not the service providers like waiters and hotel staff.

91. Do you know the best places to eat at in India ?

According to Prasad NP of the [DesiTraveler](#)

blog the best place to eat at are where the locals go. In his words

“Ditch the fancy places to eat, always find out where the local families go to eat to get the real food of the place at a much lower price”

This

is true to some extent. If you keep yourself to your hotel’s restaurant or just the fancy ones, you risk missing out on the authentic Indian food. But going all out and eating just about anywhere can land you in the hospital. So try to keep a balance.

## [Shaurya Jain](#)

A story Teller. An adventurer. An explorer. This and much more. Traveling is not my passion, it is my life. And when I am not traveling reading and writing about different places keeps me alive.