

# Travel Guides and Tips: Navigate Your Adventures with Confidence

*Embark on your journey with the confidence and knowledge needed to make the most of every moment. At Odysseer, we believe that well-prepared travellers have the most enriching experiences. Our comprehensive travel guides and tips are designed to equip you with the essential information and insights needed to navigate any destination like a pro.*

We have arranged the India Travel Tips into various sections like Visa and Passport, Medical Information etc. Please review the details mentioned below so that you can make your travel hassle-free and set the expectations right for the trip.

Here you will find all the useful information and general tips about travelling to India. For any further information you may require, please reach us to your Private Travel Expert or reach us at [connect@odysseer.com](mailto:connect@odysseer.com)

## **E-Visa:**

### **How to apply for Indian Tourist E-Visa on Arrival:**

- If you want to get Visa soon with not much paper work. You will get VISA in 2 to 3 days. It can be applied within 120 days from the date of arrival.
- Please follow the link for more details with terms and conditions – <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>.
- Fill in the form with basic details and upload your photograph along with the first page of your passport.
- Pay the visa fees online via debit card or credit card.
- You will receive ETA on your mail id which shall be downloaded and printed. This is an important document.
- As you arrive in India, present your ETA to the custom officers.
- There are nine international airports that can act as your gateway to India- Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Mumbai, Kochi, Goa, Bengaluru, Hyderabad and Thiruvananthapuram.

### **Who can apply for an Indian E-Visa?**

Travellers from 166 Countries are eligible for the E-Visa. It includes USA, UK, Australia, Canada, Brazil, Finland, France, Germany, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Philippines,

Republic of Korea, Russia, Singapore, UAE and more. For more list of countries, please refer - <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>

### **Validity of the Indian Tourist Visa on Arrival**

The tourist visa for the arrival of India is valid for 30 days from the date of approval. This validity cannot be converted or extended. However, if you want you can apply for a visa twice per year. E-visa India for USA travellers is a multiple entry tourist visa and may be granted for 10 years with the condition that 'continuous stay in India during each visit will not exceed 180 days and registration not required'.

### **How to know if you are eligible to apply for tourist visa on arrival**

- You are a resident of a foreign country visiting India solely for sightseeing, recreations, meeting relatives or friends, medical treatment (for short duration) or casual business visit.
- The validity of your passport shall be at least six months.
- You must have your confirmed tickets for return or onward journey.
- Only people with separate passports can apply. The visa is unavailable for those who endorse on spouse's/parent's passport.

If you wish to seek more information regarding the visa on arrival, speak to your Travel Specialist or alternatively, you can reach at the official website - <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>

### **Health**

- Yellow Fever – Vaccination Certificate is required if arriving from an infected area.
- Cholera/Typhoid – Inoculation recommended.
- Malaria – No certificate required, but advisable to have a course of pills.

Medical treatment in India is affordable compared to European or North American standards, yet the country boasts some of the best doctors in the world. Many hotels provide access to a doctor on call. However, intense heat—during the summer months—digestive issues, and insect bites can all potentially disrupt your trip. To ensure a smooth experience, it's essential to take a basic precautions.

We suggest you to consult your family physician/ doctor to get proper advise on any other medical help regarding travel to India.

## **India Travel Insurance**

We strongly recommend you purchasing travel insurance, as there are frequent changes in flight schedules and cancellations. We suggest you getting in touch with top travel insurance firms in local countries. Your banks can help you in getting the right insurance product for you.

## **Climate**

India is predominantly a tropical country, but the climate varies greatly depending on the region and time of year. The coolest period runs from mid-November to mid-March, which also marks the peak tourist season. In the southern regions and along the coasts, daytime temperatures can reach the mid-20s Celsius during these cooler months, although nights remain comfortably cool. In central India and the southern hills, winter nights can see temperatures drop below 10°C. In the northern plains, winter temperatures can dip close to 0°C, and in the Himalayan areas, they often fall below freezing. Summers can be extremely hot, with temperatures soaring above 40°C in parts of southern and central India as well as the northern plains. The monsoon season, characterized by heavy rainfall, extends from June to October, with rainfall intensity varying across regions. The West Coast and northeastern areas receive the most rain, with some places in Meghalaya competing for the title of the wettest location on Earth.

## **Clothing**

We recommend wearing light, casual clothing while traveling in India. For winter months (October to March), especially in North India, temperatures can drop significantly. It's advisable to pack light woolens and dress in layers, as temperatures can fluctuate throughout the day. Mornings and evenings tend to be cooler, while afternoons can warm up, so wearing layers allows for easy adjustments based on your comfort. In Mumbai and Kerala, woolens are generally unnecessary as the weather remains pleasant year-round.

For those travelling to the hills in the south or mountainous regions, a light jacket may be needed in the evenings or on overcast days, even during warmer months. In summer, light cotton clothing, sun hats, and sunglasses are essential to protect against the tropical heat. During the monsoon season, we suggest packing light, quick-drying clothes, along with a raincoat or umbrella to stay dry in case of sudden downpours. Women should avoid wearing revealing clothing to prevent unwanted attention and ensure a comfortable experience.

## **Financial Caution:**

When exploring crowded areas in India, avoid carrying large amounts of cash and multiple credit cards to minimize the risk of pickpocketing. Keep a record of your credit card issuer's contact information handy so you can quickly report and freeze any lost or stolen cards.

## **Currency and Financial Guidelines:**

The currency in India is the Indian Rupee (INR). Travelers should note that bringing Indian rupees into the country is not permitted for non-residents. Residents of India may bring up to INR 25,000.

As a visitor, you are allowed to bring foreign currency in cash or traveller's cheques, and it is advisable to carry a bank card for withdrawals. You must declare any amount exceeding USD 5,000 in cash or USD 10,000 in cash and traveller's cheques combined upon arrival.

When converting currency, ensure you use authorized exchange services to avoid counterfeit notes. It's crucial to retain all currency exchange receipts for reconversion when departing India. Most hotels, restaurants, and some shops accept major credit cards such as American Express, Diners Club, Visa, and Mastercard, which is usually indicated by signage.

#### **Gold and Silver Restrictions:**

There are restrictions on the amount of gold and silver you can bring into India. Duty-free allowances for gold are limited to INR 50,000 (20 grams) for male passengers and INR 100,000 (40 grams) for female passengers, provided it is in the form of jewellery as part of their baggage. These rules are subject to change, so check the latest guidelines on the official customs website here. Note that our company will not be responsible for any damages or compensation arising from these regulations.

### **Domestic Flight Baggage Allowance**

A key travel tip for India is to be mindful of the baggage allowance on domestic flights, which is generally less than what is allowed on international flights. Typically, most domestic airlines permit 15-20 kg of checked baggage per passenger, along with an additional 7 kg for hand luggage. It's advisable to confirm the exact baggage limits with the airline or consult with us prior to your India tour, as these allowances can vary.

### **Cuisine**

Indian cuisine is as diverse as the country's culture, with each region offering its own distinct flavours and specialities. While Indian food is often associated with being spicy, it doesn't have to be overwhelmingly hot, and not every dish is a "curry." Many dishes with a sauce or gravy are referred to as curries, but each is prepared with a unique blend of spices, known as masala. Common spices in these masalas include coriander, cumin, garlic, ginger, turmeric, chillies, cardamom, nutmeg, black pepper, cloves, cinnamon, bay leaves, saffron, mace, and more. These aromatic spices are what made India a significant destination for traders for centuries.

A traditional Indian meal often includes a variety of dishes served on a large metal plate called a 'Thali.' The Thali typically comes with several small bowls filled with different curries and accompaniments, reflecting the culinary traditions of the region it represents. In the northern parts of India, these meals are usually accompanied by unleavened bread like roti or naan, while in the southern regions, rice is the staple. For those seeking international flavors, most upscale hotels and restaurants in major cities offer a range of global cuisines, including Italian, Chinese, Thai, Japanese, and Mediterranean, among others.

Though alcohol is not typically consumed with meals in many parts of India, it is available in most large hotels and licensed restaurants. You might instead find locals enjoying a glass of buttermilk, a soft drink, or simply water with their meal. While India's wine industry is still developing, it is

gradually reaching international standards, and imported wines and liquors are widely available, though often at a premium.

It's worth noting that Gujarat and Bihar are currently the only dry states in India, meaning alcohol is prohibited there. However, foreign visitors can obtain liquor permits either before arriving in India or at designated tourist offices in major cities like Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, or Kolkata.

India is also renowned for producing some of the world's finest teas. While you might encounter overly sweet, milky tea made from powdered leaves in some areas, quality tea is still served as it should be in better hotels. India also produces excellent coffee, particularly in the southern states, where it is a popular beverage.

When it comes to drinking water, it's essential to be cautious. Tap water in India is not purified for drinking, so it's advisable to stick to bottled water, tea, coffee, or other beverages provided by your hotel. If you plan to be out for an extended period, consider carrying a bottle of purified water with you.

## **Language**

English is widely spoken across India, especially in tourist areas, though accents and grammar can vary significantly. While Hindi is the most commonly spoken language in the country, it too has regional variations. India is a linguistic tapestry, with 22 officially recognized languages and over 1,600 dialects. We ensure that our clients are always accompanied by guides who speak their preferred language.

## **Communication**

India has both GSM and CDMA cellular networks, and reception is generally reliable in urban areas, though it may be spotty in remote regions. If you plan to use your mobile phone in India, check with your service provider about international roaming options, or consider purchasing a local SIM card for your trip. We can assist you in choosing the best plan for your stay.

Landline calls to most countries are now direct, and internet access is widely available in cities and tourist centres. While most hotels offer internet access, the cost can vary significantly, with five-star hotels often charging more than local cyber cafes. However, some hotels now provide free Wi-Fi. The Indian postal service is extensive, with post offices even in remote areas, and most hotels offer services to help you send mail.

## **Electricity**

In India, the standard voltage is 220 volts AC, 50 Hz. While most areas use this standard, it's possible to encounter different voltages in some remote areas, so it's a good idea to bring a universal adapter and a voltage converter if necessary. Many hotels provide adapters, but it's safer to have your own, especially if you're travelling to rural or less developed regions.

## Shopping

India is a shopper's paradise, offering a vast array of handmade goods, including textiles, jewelry, carpets, and more. Each region has its own unique specialties, often crafted using traditional methods passed down through generations. Whether you're exploring bustling bazaars, upscale hotel arcades, or modern shopping malls, you'll find a wealth of beautiful and affordable items. Remember that bargaining is common practice in markets and smaller shops, so don't hesitate to haggle for the best price. If you make significant purchases, many reputable establishments offer shipping services to send your items home, although delivery times can vary.

Be aware that Indian law prohibits the export of antiques over 100 years old. Make sure to keep sales receipts and certificates of authenticity to avoid any issues when leaving the country.

## Internet Access and SIM Cards

Internet access is widely available in hotels throughout India, with some offering it for free and others charging a nominal fee. If you wish to stay connected during your travels, you can easily obtain a local SIM card. We can arrange for a visit to a local service provider to help you get set up. You will need a valid ID, such as a passport, and two passport-sized photos.

## Tipping Guidelines

Tipping in India is discretionary, but here are some general guidelines:

- Drivers: INR 300-700 per day (approximately USD 4-10)
- Bell Boys: INR 50 per bag
- Restaurants: 5-15% of the bill
- Guides: INR 400-1000 per day (approximately USD 6-14)

