

# COMPLETE TRAVEL GUIDE FOR VISITING INDIA



This comprehensive guide will assist you in navigating your journey through India—from planning your trip to fully immersing yourself in the cultural experiences that await you. Whether you're trying to understand India's rich festivals, packing for diverse climates, or figuring out how to stay connected, this guide covers everything.

Here's what you need to know:

---

# 1. Pre-Departure Preparations

## a. Visa Documentation:

Do:

**Apply for an e-Visa:** Most nationalities can apply for an e-Visa online. Always use the official Indian government website to avoid fraudulent intermediaries.

**Keep Copies:** Print and store both digital and hard copies of your visa and passport. Share copies with someone you trust back home.

**Check Passport Validity:** Ensure your passport is valid for at least six months beyond your stay and confirm you have a round-trip ticket.

**Download SafYatra:** Safely back up your visa, passport, and essential documents on the SafYatra app for easy access.

Don't:

- **Don't Delay:** Start the visa process early. Processing times can vary, especially during peak travel seasons.
  - **Don't Forget Travel Insurance:** Travel insurance is essential for covering unexpected incidents, like medical emergencies or trip cancellations. SafYatra can help you find trusted insurance options.
-



## **b. Packing Essentials:**

For Women: Modest clothing is highly recommended, particularly in rural areas and at religious sites. Lightweight fabrics such as cotton or linen are ideal for the hot climate. Consider buying a local kurta or scarf, which are both comfortable and culturally appropriate.

For men: Lightweight, comfortable clothing is key. A mix of short-sleeved shirts for daytime and long-sleeved shirts for sun protection or cooler nights will serve you well.

Seasonal Considerations: For visits during the monsoon season, pack a waterproof jacket or buy one locally. In the northern regions, winter can be quite chilly, so bring layers or warmer clothing.

### Toiletries & Medications:

Essentials: Bring any prescription medication along with a doctor's note. Consider packing a basic first-aid kit, hand sanitizer, sunscreen, and insect repellent.

Buying Locally: Most essentials can be purchased in India at affordable prices, so don't worry about overpacking.

### Travel Gear:

Technology Must-Haves: A portable charger, a universal travel adapter, and a reliable backpack for daily excursions are necessary. SafYatra offers a feature to store emergency contacts and essential travel documents.

---

## 2. On Arrival

### a. SIM Cards & Connectivity:

Do:

- **Buy a Local SIM Card:** Upon landing, purchase a SIM from providers like Airtel, Jio, or Vodafone-Idea. Make sure your phone is unlocked to use the local SIM.
- **Ensure Connectivity:** With a local SIM, you'll have access to navigation apps, translation tools, and emergency contacts.
- **Recharge Easily:** Apps like Paytm and Google Pay allow easy top-ups for your SIM card.

**Use SafYatra:** The app offers offline maps, emergency contacts, and region-specific tips to make navigating India seamless.

Don't:

- **Don't Depend on Wi-Fi:** Free Wi-Fi networks are often unreliable and insecure. A local SIM ensures better connectivity.

## 3. Navigating the Culture

India's vibrant cultural diversity is a unique experience, and understanding local customs will make your trip smoother and more enjoyable.

### a. Cultural Do's and Don'ts:

Do:

- **Respect Local Customs:** Remove shoes before entering homes, temples, and some shops. Greet with a "Namaste" (folded hands) to show respect.
- **Dress Modestly:** In rural areas and religious sites, modest dress is important. Women should avoid short skirts or sleeveless tops; men should avoid wearing shorts.
- **Use the Right Hand:** Use your right hand for eating and exchanging items, as the left hand is considered unclean.
- **Consult SafYatra:** Get region-specific cultural tips, especially when visiting sensitive areas like temples or rural villages.

Don't:

- Don't Engage in Public Displays of Affection: Public displays of affection are not socially acceptable in most parts of India.
- Don't Point Your Feet at People or Objects: Feet are considered impure, so avoid pointing them at others or religious items.
- Don't Refuse Food: If someone offers you food, it's polite to accept at least a small portion, even if you aren't hungry.

## b. Festivals:

India's festivals are a vibrant part of its culture. Plan your travels around these events for an immersive cultural experience. SafYatra's festival calendar can help you time your visit.

- Holi (March): The festival of colors is an explosion of joy and community. Wear old clothes, as you'll be covered in vibrant powders.
- Diwali (October/November): The festival of lights is marked by fireworks, sweets, and prayers. Be mindful of air quality in urban areas during Diwali.
- Durga Puja (September/October): Particularly prominent in West Bengal, this festival celebrates the goddess Durga. Experience cultural performances and grand celebrations.
- Onam (August/September): Kerala's harvest festival features flower carpets, traditional dances, and a grand feast.
- Eid (Dates Vary): Celebrated across India, Eid includes prayers, feasts, and charitable acts, especially at the end of Ramadan.

## c. Hidden Gems and Unique Experiences:

Discover India's lesser-known treasures: SafYatra curates off-the-beaten-path destinations that offer a more intimate travel experience.

- Meghalaya: Explore the living root bridges of Cherrapunji and the stunning waterfalls in this serene northeastern state.
-

- Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh): Known for its intricately carved temples, Khajuraho offers a deep dive into India's architectural heritage.
- Western Ghats: Trek through these biodiverse mountains, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and enjoy wildlife safaris.

## 4. Travel Tips for Each Region

### a. Northern India:

- Delhi: Visit iconic landmarks like the Red Fort and India Gate. Explore bustling markets like Chandni Chowk for an authentic experience.
- Rajasthan: Marvel at the palaces of Jaipur, the desert landscapes in Jaisalmer, and Udaipur's lakes.
- Kashmir: If you're visiting in the winter, enjoy skiing in Gulmarg or the lush valleys during summer.

### b. Southern India:

- Kerala: Enjoy houseboat tours on the Alleppey backwaters and explore Munnar's tea plantations.
- Tamil Nadu: Visit the ancient temples in Madurai and the colonial charm of Pondicherry's beaches.

### c. Western India:

- Mumbai: Explore the modern energy of this bustling metropolis alongside its historic sites like the Gateway of India.
- Goa: Relax on the beautiful beaches, explore spice plantations, and enjoy the mix of Portuguese and Indian heritage.

### d. Eastern India:

- Kolkata (West Bengal): Enjoy cultural festivals like Durga Puja and visit the Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest.
  - Darjeeling: Take a ride on the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and enjoy the stunning views of the tea plantations.
-

## 5. Safety and Health

### a. General Safety Tips:

- **Emergency Numbers:** Always have a list of emergency contacts, including your embassy, the local police (dial 100), and medical services (dial 102).
- **Keep Documents Secure:** Back up your passport, visa, and other important documents using SafYatra's document vault feature.
- **Health Precautions:** Only drink bottled or filtered water. Avoid ice from street vendors, and check that bottled water seals are intact.
- **Vaccinations:** Consult your doctor about necessary vaccinations (e.g., Hepatitis A, Typhoid) well before your trip.

## 6. Local Transport

### a. Getting Around:

- **Auto-Rickshaws and Taxis:** Always negotiate fares before starting the ride, or ensure the driver uses a meter. Use apps like Ola and Uber for reliable transport.
  - **Trains:** India's rail system is vast and ideal for long-distance travel. Book tickets in advance through the official IRCTC website.
-

# India Travel Checklist 🌍✔

## 1. Pre-Departure Preparations

- ❑ Apply for an e-Visa online and save digital and hard copies.
- ❑ Check passport validity (at least 6 months remaining).
- ❑ Book a round-trip ticket or have proof of onward travel.
- ❑ Purchase travel insurance for emergencies and trip cancellations.
- ❑ Download the SafYatra app for secure storage of travel documents and safety alerts.
- ❑ Inform a family member or friend of your travel plans and give them copies of your important documents.

## 2. Packing Essentials

### Clothing:

- ❑ Lightweight, breathable fabrics (for hot weather).  
Modest clothing for religious sites and rural areas.
- ❑ Rain jacket for monsoon season or warmer clothing for winter (North India).

### Toiletries:

- ❑ Prescription medications with doctor's note.  
First-aid kit, hand sanitizer, insect repellent, and sunscreen.

### Travel Gear:

- ❑ Portable charger and universal travel adapter.  
Reliable daypack for day trips and excursions.

## 3. On Arrival

- ❑ Buy a local SIM card at the airport (Airtel, Jio, or Vodafone-Idea).  
Download local apps like Paytm for payments and Google Maps for navigation.
- ❑ Check emergency contacts (embassy, local police, medical services).
- ❑ Access SafYatra for local tips, emergency contacts, and translation tools.



#### 4. Cultural Awareness

- ❑ Dress modestly, especially in rural areas or at religious sites.
- ❑ Use your right hand for eating and receiving/giving items.
- ❑ Remember to say "Namaste" as a polite greeting.
- ❑ Respect local customs—take off shoes when entering temples or homes.

#### 5. Travel Logistics

- ❑ Confirm your accommodation bookings and local transport plans.
- ❑ Research transport options (Uber/Ola for cities, trains for long-distance travel).
- ❑ Have some local currency (INR) on hand for small purchases.

#### 6. Health and Safety

- ❑ Drink only bottled or filtered water.
- ❑ Be cautious with street food—stick to busy, well-known vendors.
- ❑ Keep your emergency documents (passport, visa, insurance) safe and secure online via SafYatra.

#### Bonus Tips:

- ❑ Mark your calendar for festivals you may encounter: Holi, Diwali, Durga Puja, etc.
- ❑ Plan trips to hidden gems like Meghalaya's living root bridges or Rishikesh for yoga retreats.

With the SafYatra app, your journey through India will be seamless. From visa assistance to navigating local customs, safety tips, and hidden gems, SafYatra is your all-in-one guide to traveling India safely and smartly. Download today and embark on your Indian adventure with confidence!

*Thank you!*