



# India

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# HISTORY





India has an incredibly long history that reaches back to the beginning of human civilization. Artifacts from 500,000 years ago have been found there. From the emergence of Hinduism during the Vedic period (1750–500 BCE) to the impressive art and architecture created during the Mughal Dynasty (early 16th century to the mid-18th century) to British rule (1858 to 1947) to present-day independence, India has a rich and fascinating history that could take a lifetime to study and understand.







**MONEY**





The official currency is the rupee.

Getting change can be challenging. When you exchange money, request smaller denominations (₹10, ₹20, and ₹50 notes). Change leftover rupees back into foreign currency at the airport.



## Credit Cards

Large hotels, shops, and restaurants will usually accept international credit cards.  
Small shops usually take only cash. Before departing, find out if your card is valid in India.

## ATMs

Depending on the location, ATMs could be difficult to find and will almost always incur a fee.  
Keep some cash on hand.

HELPFUL INFO

## Climate

India has a tropical climate overall, but some regions have a semi-arid climate.

December through early March are the best months to visit most of the country.

Summer months (March-June) can get extremely hot. Monsoon season (July-September) can get extremely wet. The mountainous regions can get very cold with snow during the winter (December-February).

## Electricity

India operates on 230 volts and 50Hz and uses plug types C, D and M.







# Technology & Communication

India's digital economy generates approximately \$200 billion annually.

The Indian telecom sector is the second largest in the world by the number of subscribers. Almost 100 percent of telephone use is wireless. The Indian Government has embarked on various projects to further expedite the growth of internet-based ecosystems.

# Infrastructure & Transport

The Indian government has a goal of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2070.

While the country has been working on improving its roadways, the quality of the infrastructure is still poor. You can travel almost anywhere in the country by train, but expect the experience to be confusing and take a long time. The best way to cover long distances is by plane. For short distances, taxis and auto-rickshaws are readily available.







# In Case Of An Emergency

General 112

Police Emergency 100

Ambulance 108

Fire 101

Tourist Helpline 1363

U.S. citizens can call the embassy or consulate for emergencies.

## Language

There's a saying in India: "Indian language changes every few kilometers just like the water."

There is no national language, but there is a list of 22 official languages, including Hindi, the most spoken language, and English. The Constitution stipulates Hindi and English as the official languages for government communication.







## LGBT Travel

Because India is a conservative country, respecting local customs and exhibiting a general sense of modesty is recommended for all travelers. LGBTQ+ visitors may feel heartened that India decriminalized homosexuality (again) in 2018 and, in 2014, granted legal recognition of a third gender.

## Religion

Throughout its history, India has been a refuge for members of persecuted religions, and all the world's major religions are practiced there. The vast majority of the population, however, is Hindu. The next most prevalent religion is Islam, followed by Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism.



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## Getting There

Most international travelers fly into Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi. The next busiest airport is in Mumbai.

## Driving

When you combine less-than-stellar roads, chaotic conditions, and driving on the left side of the road, you might prefer to hire a driver or use a rideshare app instead of driving yourself.

Note: It's still unusual for women to drive in India.

THE EXPERIENCE







## Culture

India is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world with a population of almost 1.4 billion and more than 700 ethnic groups, which are recognized as Scheduled Tribes.

The economy is growing, but poverty is still a major challenge.

Overall, people are incredibly friendly and welcoming.







## Bucket List

Visit the Taj Mahal

Attend a Ganga Aarti—an ancient ritual along the Ganges river—in Varanasi

Cruise Kerala in a houseboat

Take tea in Darjeeling

Admire the architecture in Jaipur

Go beach hopping in Goa

Try tiger spotting in Bandhavgarh







# Family Travel Highlights

Searching for wildlife at Sariska National Park

Going glamping

Exploring the bustling bazaars of the cities

Learning the art of Rajasthani pottery in a wheel pottery workshop

Taking family-friendly guided tours of iconic sites







# Tourism Authority

Ministry of Tourism

Phone: +91-011 23311237

Websites: <https://tourism.gov.in/>,

<https://www.incredibleindia.org/content/incredibleindia/en.html>

Email: [info.mot@gov.in](mailto:info.mot@gov.in)







## Foods To Try

Samosa – Imagine an Indian calzone

Dhokla and Khaman – Vegetarian dish made from a fermented batter of rice and legumes

Chaat – Sweet, spicy, and tangy street food







## Drinks To Try

Masala Chai – Black tea, whole milk, sugar, and spices

Toddy – Alcoholic beverage made by fermenting sap extracted from palm trees

Neera – The nutritious, non-alcoholic version of a toddy

Lassi – Yogurt mixed with sweet or savory ingredients

# Photography Hotspots

Taj Mahal

Patrika Gate in Jaipur

Banks of the Ganges River in Varanasi

Munnar Tea Plantations in Kerala

The beaches of Goa







## Souvenirs To Buy

Traditional blue pottery from Jaipur

Kashmiri carpets

Kolhapuri Chappals (leather sandals)

Traditional paintings

Curry powder

Assam silk

Sandalwood carvings from Kerala

\*Bargaining over prices in the markets is customary.



