



UNIVERSAL YOGA TOURS

Tips for India Tour

Before you leave:

Check <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/indianrg.htm>. There are no required vaccines at this time. My doctor gave me immunoglobulin shots, and I had no problems. The malaria vaccine can make people sick, it is your choice to get it or not. I will not be getting one, and I am going in June, if I have any problems I will tell you. I will give you a travel waiver to sign, and I will need a contact for you in the United States.

Eating and Drinking:

You will be fine! (As long as you follow certain rules). Don't drink the water in the hotel room, unless it is bottled, AND ALWAYS check the bottle seal. Don't eat food from street vendors. In Dharamsala (17day tour) only eat at Chonor House, other places can be risky. Wash your hands before every meal with anti-bacterial wipes and after visiting crowded shops. Make sure food is cooked. Trust your instincts, if it looks curious, don't eat it, and remember we will be on LONG car rides. People share bottled water, but they never touch their lips to it. Just practice drinking your bottled water without touching your lips to the top. At the ashram you will enter the dining room and take a seat on the floor at your small table. Then go get your food, come back and eat it. This is an opportunity for you to be quiet and thankful for your food. Once you

have finished you place your dishes in the bucket and leave.

Bathroom and shower:

Ladies, this is where we have more of a challenge. In India, it seems men can use the restroom anywhere, but for women it is not the same. While traveling by car, frequent bathroom trip can be difficult, and bathrooms are not always what we are used to. Some are squatters, some are regular, but it will always be an adventure to use them. Honestly, I try not to eat too much or drink too much the day of car travel, especially in the morning. I even avoid too much water. The showers are what we are used to in Delhi, Agra, and Dharamsala. At the Ashram, we will have an Indian shower which is just a shower head in the wall, with a big bucket and a little bucket below. It is great! Water goes everywhere. You can fill the big bucket up and use the small bucket to rinse with. It will be a fun experience. You might like to bring some shower flip-flops.

Packing:

Please pack light. There is always help to carry your bags, but it will cost a few rupees for tip. We will be moving around often, AND you will be shopping. I like the REI backpacks that hold a sleeping bag, but if you don't want a back pack get a medium sized rolling suitcase. Remember, you can have your clothes washed at hotels (not too expensive), or wash by hand in the shower (free). You always want



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to know where your bags are, so if you can take your bag with you even better, get a few locks to put on your bags just in case. I have never had any trouble. A fanny pack or messenger bag is good for your essentials. I have also used the waist money holder but am not fond of it, it will be your choice. I bring a sleeping bag. Although you won't need it at these hotels, I always like to have it for my own comfort. Once in India, if you have bought a lot of things you can buy a big duffle bag for your purchased items for cheap (\$5 or \$10 USD).

Ladies bring your sanitary items.

Cell Phone rental:

Highly recommended! I will be arranging phone rental opportunities our first day in Delhi. This will allow you to have contact w/ friends and family while you are gone. We will not always be able to stop at a public phone. It will be about \$40-\$60 USD. If you are interested then please bring a small passport size photo for the application.

E-mail:

Most Hotels have internet access, but the ashram doesn't. There are many internet cafés near the ashram so you will have access.

Clothing:

I would recommend being comfortable. You don't have to wear a sari, you will always stand out, no matter what you wear, so it is best to be comfortable. The general cultural guidelines are no cleav

age, no crack, no ankles, and no shoulders. Here are some recommendations:

Inland Yoga sells some kurtas and long skirts, those are always good. Kurtas you can wear over jeans, or any pants and it looks good. Kurtas are long shirts, and usually go to your thigh. You can go to Target, or Old Navy and there are a lot of "Indian influenced" long tee-shirts (kurtas). As long as you are not exposing too much skin you are fine. You will probably want to buy clothes when you arrive there anyway. In mosques and Gudwaras cover your head with a scarf, you can get a scarf in India for about \$2USD.

Yoga clothes in India:

I think the same rules apply, try not to walk around the ashram in a skimpy tank and tight pants. This is a safe haven for boys, and a place of worship. I want our group to have a good reputation. If you wear clothes like this, just bring a kurta or a long top to cover up as you walk around the ashram and out on the street. If you are a clothing minimalist, just remember people will stare, and you may get more attention than you are used to.

Traveling around in India:

If you are going for a long walk or out shopping bring a friend with you if you can. It is best to travel in pairs. Try to avoid looking too confused, or lost.

Essentials:

Passport, and Visa (w/ 6 months left on it), ID, any



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necessary medication, Anti-bacterial hand washing cloths and/or gel, Immodium AD, Pepto bismal tablets, Scope (you could use this in the place of water when you brush your teeth), band-aids, anti-bacterial ointment for cuts, small rolls of toilet paper, bug repellent, shampoo, bars of soap, soap for washing clothes at ashram (trial size/samples are perfect), nutrition bars, anti-inflammatory or Tylenol (for headaches, travel aches), small scissors, nail file, plug adaptors if you need one for razor, or US cell phone charger. Ladies bring your sanitary items. Camera! Don't forget it. Also, for fun, a Polaroid, people will love to take photos with you, and it is nice to sometimes give them the picture.

Little Extras:

You can have clothes made if you like special kurtas, or Indian Suits. If you plan ahead, we could get them made in a day or so. Often, you can pick the clothes and have them fitted and then they will deliver them to your hotel before you leave. Small trinkets are fun to bring for people. You will always meet someone that helps you out. It is a nice gesture to bring them a T-shirt, Pen, Hat, sticker, key-chain that says USA or Disneyland or something. So, go to rite-aid and get a few items, you will be very glad you have them to give.