a journey of the Senses

see
touch
taste
hear
smell
“a Journey of the Senses”.

Travelling through India is about the sights and sounds. It is about taking in the smells and experiencing the emotions. India is about the people, the warmth of Indian hospitality and the genuine friendliness to guests. A Journey is about completely immersing your senses in the surroundings and letting the uniqueness of the country through India take over. A
Can words describe 3.2 million sq. kms of the Indian subcontinent?

Can pictures capture a terrain as diverse as verdant forests, golden deserts and the majestic Himalayan range?

Can stories tell you all you want to know about the complex cultures of the Indian people, their languages and dialects, their rituals and traditions?

To feel her magic, be touched by her spirituality, experience her intensity or join in her celebrations, you have to be in India.
India-syncracies......

India and its citizens simply do many things differently from most westerns. Below are some bizarre / annoying / misunderstood customs you might encounter.

Staring and invasion of personal space

Just being different is enough to garner a seemingly endless stare in India. You will find that any time you stop to take a photo, an incredible number of locals suddenly appear to observe your every move. When you open your bag or wallet, you'll find a local pretty much leafing through the rupees with you. What can you do? The first answer is not much. Personal space is not a concept in Indian culture, so staring and close contact should not be interpreted as rude behaviour.

Begging

Although the poverty in India is sometimes difficult to deal with, we ask that you not give anything to beggars. Simply, handouts are not going to solve anything (apart from maybe assuaging your feelings of guilt) because they decrease the chances of helping these people to become self-reliant. Be prepared for the pressure to give; tourists usually give at least ten times the amount that Indian nationals do, so you will be an appealing target. The following is a common scenario: you decide to give a few rupees / a candy / a pen to a lone child. Somehow, before you know it, ten more children are swarming around you with outstretched hands and pleading voices. Most likely, you will not have enough for everyone, and the memory you will have of the experience is of the children that did not get anything, and the resultant squabbling.

Unfamiliar Body Language

Perhaps the most common Indian trait that can be misinterpreted is the ubiquitous “head-bob”. In fact, there are two types of head-bob, and each carries its own meaning. The first is a kind of short side-to-side tilt of the head, and more or less means “yes”. The second is longer, slower, and more
undulating, and can be interpreted as “I see”, “maybe”, or even “uh-huh”. This type is worth learning, as it often works to ward off perspective hawkers and beggars. Hand gestures also carry various meanings. A quick twist of the wrist from palm-down to palm-up means “what do you want?”, “What are you doing?”, or “move along now”. A downward sweeping motion like somebody trying to fan fire means “stop, I want a ride”, or “I want to talk to you”. A good response to this one is the “uh-huh” head-bob described above.

And in general

Despite advance preparation, it is still likely that you’ll be baffled by India. The driving style, the seeming lack of organization, the way men touch each other more than their wives, the way women do the heavy lifting in construction sites while the men look on... the list of differences between the West and India is seemingly endless. Perhaps the best advice we can give is to avoid trying to understand it, and just experience it instead.

Further...

A word of warning about travelling in India. India is a country which is very different from anything you will have experienced before. Although this means it is not the easiest place to travel, this is also what makes it so special. Pollution, poverty and the crowds can result in initial culture shock but should be seen as an exciting new challenge.

In India there are very different attitudes to time keeping, public cleanliness, privacy and service. Trains will sometimes be late, plumbing can sometimes be temperamental and power will often just vanish. Optimistic menus turn out to have only one dish available and everyone, just everyone, will want to know your name. If you are able to travel with a lot of patience and a huge sense of humour, then we know that you - like all of us - will be captivated by what India has to offer.

Time Zone

India is +5.30 over GMT

Visas

It is compulsory that all foreign travellers must possess a valid visa for visiting India. All visas are the responsibility of the traveller and is to be obtained before arrival into India. If the tour involves more than one visit to any country (including transit) we recommend multiple entry visas should be taken. Visa fees vary from country to country. Please check with the local diplomatic mission of the countries to be visited.

Climate

The Indian sub-continent is large and the climate varies from one part to another. This gives you a wide selection of climates to suit your holiday needs - from the cold slopes of the Himalayas to the sunny beaches of the Goan coast. The region has three major seasons - winter, summer and the monsoon. The best months to visit India are September through April. Nepal is cool in summer. From October through March, the mountains are best for soft adventure options. Bhutan is beautiful throughout the year, with summer being the best time to take advantage of its cooler climates. Tibet can be visited from April through October/ November. During the monsoons, the beaches tend to get rough in Sri Lanka.

Health

Tourists coming to India via Africa and South America or any other yellow fever infected areas must
have a yellow fever vaccination certificate. Bottled drinking water is easily available throughout your tour. If you are taking any specific medication, it is advisable for you to bring it along as locally available formulations may vary. However, world-class medical facilities are available. Creative Travel is fully equipped and experienced to handle any situation if the need arises.

Language

The region has a plethora of languages, which vary from state to state. English is widely spoken throughout the sub-continent. Guides and travel professionals are available in most major international languages to make your trip more enjoyable.

Foreign Currency & Customs

Foreign Exchange can be brought in without limit. Large amounts many need to be declared on arrival and a certificate issued against this to facilitate easy reconversion on departure. Tourists are warned that changing money through unauthorized persons is not only illegal but also involves the risk of receiving counterfeit currency. There are 24-hour exchange facilities available at all big cites and international airports. Regarding customs, items for personal use can be brought in without any restrictions. Certain electronic items such as computers, video cameras, etc., may need to be certified for re-export to avoid any problems on your departure.

Electricity, Communications, Opening Hours.

Voltage in most places is 220 volts AC with points for 110 volts available in many hotels. You can fax and make international telephone calls from almost every place you visit. Banks are usually open from 10 am to 2 pm Monday to Friday and till 12 noon on Saturday. Many branches also offer extended banking hours. Many foreign money exchange outlets work later as well, with hotels offering round the clock money-changing facilities. General office working hours are 9.30 am till 5.30 pm. Shops usually remain open from 9.30 am to 7.00 pm.
Delhi - Local Sightseeing Programmes

Tour Name: Full Day City tour of Old & New Delhi
Time: 0900 – 1700 hrs

With a history going back more than 3,000 years, the capital of India is a seamless blend of tradition and modernity, where ancient monuments co-exist with ultra-modern high-rise buildings and commercial plazas.

With its glorious history, Delhi offers many tourist attractions with a harmonious blend of Mughal and British colonial architecture.

Your first stop is Raj Ghat and Shanti Vana, the cremation sites of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister. Continue to Jama Masjid, India's biggest mosque, and the Red Fort. Then, visit Chandi Chowk, an old and busy market, and peruse the many stalls selling various curious from spices to local handicrafts.

After lunch at Chor Bizarre - Hotel Broadway, you will visit New Delhi. Here you will see such sights as the impressive Qutub Minar – which is in red and buff sandstone & the highest tower in India. It has a diameter of 14.32 m at the base and about 2.75 m on the top with a height of 72.5 m. An historical construction of a landmark in 1199, Qutub-ud-Din raised the Qutub Minar either as a victory tower or as a minaret to the adjacent mosque.

Humayun's Tome (Humayun ka Maqbara) is the tomb of the Mughal Emperor Humayun's. The tomb was commissioned by Humayun's wife Hamida Banu Begum in 1562 AD, and designed by Mirak Mirza Ghiyath, a Persian architect. It was the first garden-tomb on the Indian subcontinent. It was also the first structure to use red sandstone at such a scale. The tomb was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993 and since then has undergone extensive restoration work, which is still underway.

You will also drive past the President's House, Parliament House, Government Secretariat buildings.

You will be returned to your place of stay at completion of the tour.

For more details in terms of pricing please write to Mr. Praveen Kokne at praveenkokne@planit-india.com