



Delhi

Includes ➔

Sights	60
Activities.....	76
Volunteering.....	78
Courses	78
Tours	80
Sleeping.....	81
Eating	87
Drinking.....	93
Entertainment.....	94
Shopping	95
Greater Delhi	102

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Hotel Saravana Bhavan (p89)
- ➔ Bukhara (p91)
- ➔ Monsoon (p91)
- ➔ Gunpowder (p92)
- ➔ Alkauser (p90)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Imperial (p84)
- ➔ Devna (p85)
- ➔ Manor (p87)
- ➔ Claridges (p85)
- ➔ Hotel Amax Inn (p82)

Why Go?

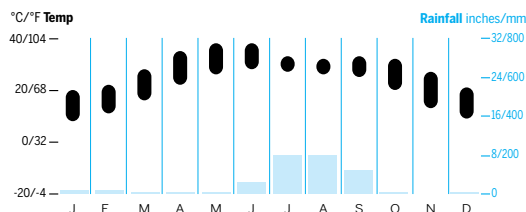
Mystery, magic, mayhem. Welcome to Delhi, City of Djinns, and 16.7 million people, where the ruins of Mughal forts and medieval bazaars are scattered between the office blocks, shopping malls, and tangled expressways.

Like an eastern Rome, India's capital is littered with the relics of lost empires. A succession of armies stormed across the Indo-Gangetic plain and imprinted their identity onto the vanquished city, before vanishing into rubble and ruin like the conquerors who preceded them. Modern Delhi is a chaotic tapestry of medieval fortifications, Mughal mausoleums, dusty bazaars, and colonial-era town planning.

Navigating Delhi's seven cities (or 12, if you include British-built New Delhi and the satellite cities of Noida, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Gurgaon) is made easier by the metro. With a smart card, you can minimise the hassle, and maximise the time spent in the city's magnificent museums and monuments, its stellar restaurants and its eclectic emporiums.

When to Go

Delhi



Oct–Mar Delhi at its best – warm, not hot, with clear skies, but morning fog can play havoc with flight schedules.

May–Aug The months to avoid – hot, humid and uncomfortable.

Jun–Sep Monsoon season sees high temperatures and regular rain – a sticky combination.

Top Tips

- ➔ Ensure your taxi or autorickshaw driver takes you where to want to go, rather than a hotel, souvenir shop or unscrupulous travel agent masquerading as a tourist office.
- ➔ Be dubious of chatty young men who hang around touristy spots claiming to be students wanting to improve their English – the conversation is usually the preamble to a scam.
- ➔ Don't believe the helpful gents who try to direct you to a 'tourist office' around Connaught Place. There is only one Government of India tourist office, at 88 Janpath.
- ➔ Carry small denomination bills (below ₹50), as rickshaw drivers rarely have change.
- ➔ Ignore touts who surreptitiously dirty your shoe and offer to clean it at a price.

DON'T MISS

Wandering the medieval bazaars of **Old Delhi**, where whole streets are devoted to the sale of kites, tin pots, wrapping paper, saris, fancy brocade and pretty much anything else you could imagine.

Top Festivals

To confirm dates contact India Tourism Delhi (p99).

- ➔ **Republic Day** (🗓️ 26 Jan; Rajpath, p69) Displays of national pride and a spectacular military parade.
- ➔ **Beating of the Retreat** (🗓️ 29 Jan; Rajpath, p69) More military pageantry to mark the end of the Republic Day celebrations.
- ➔ **Independence Day** (🗓️ 15 Aug; Red Fort, p61) India celebrates Independence from Britain and the prime minister addresses the nation from the Red Fort.
- ➔ **Dussehra** (Durga Puja: 🗓️ Sep/Oct; citywide) Hindus celebrate the victory of good over evil with parades of colourful effigies.
- ➔ **Qutb Festival** (🗓️ Oct/Nov; Qutb Minar, p102) Several days of Sufi singing and classical music and dance performances at Qutb Minar.
- ➔ **Diwali** (🗓️ Nov/Dec; citywide) Fireworks across the city for the festival of light.
- ➔ **Delhi International Arts Festival** (🗓️ Dec; citywide) Three weeks of exhibitions, performing arts, film, literature and culinary events.

MAIN POINTS OF ENTRY

- ➔ Indira Gandhi International Airport
- ➔ New Delhi, Old Delhi and Nizamuddin train stations
- ➔ Kashmere Gate, Anand Vihar and Sarai Kale Khan bus terminals.

Fast Facts

- ➔ **Population:** 16.7 million
- ➔ **Area:** 1483 sq km
- ➔ **Area code:** 011
- ➔ **Main languages:** Hindi, English, Urdu & Punjabi
- ➔ **Sleeping prices:**
\$ below ₹1000, \$\$ ₹1000 to ₹5000, \$\$\$ above ₹5000

Planning Your Trip

Best to book accommodation ahead – see the website hotels.lonelyplanet.com – and call your hotel to confirm the day before you arrive. Book train tickets for longer journeys at least a week ahead.

Resources

- ➔ **Delhi Tourism** (<http://delhitourism.nic.in>) Free advertising city maps are widely available; for street-by-street detail, seek out the excellent 245-page *Eicher City Map* (₹340)
- ➔ **Lonely Planet** (www.lonelyplanet.com/india/delhi) For planning advice, author recommendations, traveller reviews and insider tips