

Travel Info

As you start to plan your trip (for those of you that are not local), we wanted to share some tips with you. Hopefully, these will help to make your trip more fun and less stressful.

FOR THOSE TRAVELING FROM ABROAD

- You will need a tourist visa for India so factor that into your plans. Here's a link to the visa website (<https://www.indian-visa.com/get-a-visa>) for those traveling from the US
- Airfare for December is pretty high so book as early as possible
- If you plan on traveling within the country, consider flying into one city and out of another (like fly into Mumbai, attend the wedding, go see the Taj Mahal in the north of the country, and fly home from Delhi rather than backtracking to Mumbai)
- DO NOT fly Air India if you can help it. They are going through a spot of trouble right now and tend to cancel international flights at short notice. Also avoid Kingfisher Airlines
- The most reliable Indian airline is Jet Airways. It has non-stop service between Mumbai and London. It also operates a service between Newark and Mumbai with a halt in Brussels
- United has a non-stop flight from Newark to Mumbai. If you prefer to break your journey, most major airlines are an option (Emirates is a great airline and you can spend a couple of days in Dubai if you like!)
- If you plan to visit other countries from India, please note that the Indian tourist visa does not allow you to re-enter the country for two months once you leave. Please factor that into your plans
- You will be required to fill out an immigration and customs form (there is only one form with a tear-away Customs section - please DO NOT tear it yourself) which is usually handed out on the plane. The immigration officer will stamp the form and return the Customs section to you. Please retain this as it needs to be handed over to the police officer at the exit point
- Please use the Green Channel of the Indian Customs if you have no goods that attract duty (unless you are carrying a ridiculous amount of cash or valuable jewelry, you'll be fine). All bags are passed through the scanner even for the Green Channel
- Indian authorities are big on stamping stuff. Some people are paid to just check the stamp and others to re-check the checked stamp. So keep the page of your passport with the most recent stamp open to make a quick exit

WELCOME TO MUMBAI!

- Once you hand over the Customs slip to the police officer, you are done. Follow signs to the exit. You will see counters for Taxis. If you need one, be sure to select a pre paid taxi. Air conditioning is NOT standard so you will need to specify that you need a taxi with air conditioning (which costs more but not ridiculously so). Do not talk to any people that offer you help. Just head for the counter and let the people there help you
- You will need local currency to pay for the taxi. There are a number of exchange counters that you can use (One USD = 50 Indian Rupees approximately). You shouldn't need more than twenty dollars worth of cash to get to a hotel anywhere in the city
- If you are staying at the Kohinoor Continental (which is where the wedding will be), they offer free airport pickup and drop-off. Please coordinate with the hotel ahead of time to arrange transportation. The hotel is very close to the airport - no more than a 10 minute ride even with traffic

GETTING AROUND MUMBAI

- Mumbai has good public transport but the sheer number of people makes using it a challenge. You can use taxis and rickshaws (called tuk tuks in some countries- they seat a maximum of three people). They are metered but the meters are old. Hence, drivers have to use a conversion chart to arrive at the correct fare. Do not be alarmed - they are not fleecing you
- Our recommendation is to hire a car with a driver to get around. Most hotels can set this up for you. If you let us know ahead of time, we can put you in touch with a couple of reliable services so you can relax. The approximate rate for an 8 hour hire with a ceiling of 80 kilometers for the day is two thousand rupees (USD 40 approx)

MUMBAI SIGHTSEEING

- Depending on the number of people interested (and we'll know this well in advance of the wedding), we may arrange a day long bus tour for exploring Mumbai. There really isn't that much to see unless you are interested in the Slumdog Millionaire Tour or the Dhobhi Ghat (where a ton of clothes are laundered daily in a public setting)
- If the trip doesn't work, we'll come up with a suggested itinerary for a daytrip that can be done using a hired vehicle mentioned above

ARRANGING TRIPS TO OTHER PARTS OF INDIA

- We recognize that this may be the first trip to India for many of you. Even if it isn't, you may want to explore other parts of the country (you really should since you are coming all the way). India is a vast and beautiful country and there is much to see
- We especially recommend exploring the state of Kerala in the south of the country (which includes the tea plantations in Munnar, the houseboats in the backwaters of Allepy and the renowned holistic healing centers spread all across the state) and Rajasthan in the north-west (includes many wonderful cities like Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur and Jaisalmer with palaces and camel rides in the desert)
- The Taj Mahal is in the city of Agra in the north of the country. It is close to Delhi. A very popular itinerary is called The Golden Triangle and covers the cities of Delhi, Jaipur and Agra. It is definitely worth considering
- Here is the contact information for two travel services that we have used and can vouch for:
 - Skylark Travels - Mr. Vinay (Phone: +91 93240 45849, Email: skylarktrvls@gmail.com)
 - Copper Sky Journeys - Mr. Abhi (Phone: +91 99586 77856, Email: info@copperskyjourneys.com, Website: <http://copperskyjourneys.com/>) These guys have some unique offerings and will work with you to customize your experience

INDIA CONTACT INFO

Once in India, you can reach us at the following numbers:

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