

About Delhi

Delhi is a city that bridges two different worlds. Old Delhi, once the capital of Islamic India, is a labyrinth of narrow lanes lined with crumbling havelis and formidable mosques. In contrast, the imperial city of New Delhi created by the British Raj is composed of spacious, tree-lined avenues and imposing government buildings. Delhi has been the seat of power for several rulers and many empires for about a millennium. Many a times the city was built, destroyed and then rebuilt here. Interestingly, a number of Delhi's rulers played a dual role, first as destroyers and then as creators.

The city's importance lies not just in its past glory as the seat of empires and magnificent monuments, but also in the rich and diverse cultures. No wonder chroniclers of Delhi culture - from Chand Bardai and Amir Khusro to present days writers - have never been at a loss for topics. In Delhi, you will discover that the city is sprinkled with dazzling gems: captivating ancient monuments, fascinating museums and art galleries, architectural wonders, a vivacious performing-arts scene, fabulous eating places and bustling markets.

Delhi has been the political hub of India. Every political activity in the country traces its roots here. This was true even of the mythological era. The Pandavas of the Mahabharata had their capital at Indraprastha, which is believed to have been geographically located in today's Delhi.

Delhi Facts

Area: 1,483 sq km

Latitudinal parallel: 28.3°N

Longitudinal meridian: 77.13°E

Altitude: 293 m above sea level

Population: 13.85million (Census 2001)

Average Temperature: 45°C (Max) - usually in May - Jun, 5°C (Min) - usually in Dec - Jan

Desirable Clothes: Woollen for winters and light cotton for summers

Rainfall: 714 mm

Monsoon: July to mid-September

Population: 13.85 (Census 2001)

Season: Extreme climate with very hot summer and very cold winter

Best time to visit: October to March

STD Code: 011

Languages: Hindi, English, Urdu and Punjabi

Religions: Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, Christianity, Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Bahai Faith

Delhi Tourism



Delhi, the political capital of one of the world's largest democracies, has always occupied a prominent place in Indian history. It is a city of many layers where the past co-exists with the present. It bridges two different worlds. Old Delhi is a labyrinth of narrow lanes lined with hand crafted havelis and formidable mosques. In contrast, the imperial city of New Delhi is composed of spacious, tree lined avenues and imposing government buildings. The city's importance lies not just in its past glory as the seat of empires and magnificent monuments, but also in the rich and diverse cultures which enrich its character that pulsates in its daily life.

Scratch the surface and you will discover that the city is sprinkled with drizzling gems, captivating ancient monuments, fascinating museums, art galleries, architectural wonders, a vivacious performing-arts scene, state of art venues, hotels in all budgets matching international standards, fabulous eating places and bustling markets with shopping galore.

A microcosm of the diversity and contradictions that is India, Delhi is a perfect starting point for venturing into the heartland of India and variety of interesting tours will be planned for the conference delegates and accompanying persons. Exploring Delhi can be a fascinating and rewarding experience.

Attractions



The Red Fort: A 17th century fort complex, constructed in the walled city of Old Delhi, it dates from the very peak of Mughal Power. Built by the Mughal Emperor, Shahjahan in 1648, it is a grandiose of pomp and power. Designated as the UNESCO World heritage site, the planning and aesthetics of this Fort represent the zenith of Mughal creativity which prevailed during the reign of Emperor Shah Jahan.



The QutubMinar: A fine example of early Afghan architecture, its construction started immediately after the defeat of the last Hindu kingdom in Delhi in 1193 as a symbol of victory. It is surrounded by several other ancient and medieval structures and ruins, collectively known as the Qutub complex.



The Humayun's Tomb: Declared as UNESCO world heritage site, it was commissioned in 1562 AD by the Mughal Ruler, Humayun's grieving widow. It was the first mature example of Mughal architecture and the first structure to use red sand tone at such a scale.



The India Gate: The India Gate is the national monument of India. Situated in the heart of New Delhi, the India Gate was designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, inspired by the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. It was built in 1931. Originally known as the All India War Memorial, it is a prominent landmark in Delhi and commemorates the 90,000 soldiers of the Indian Army who lost their lives while fighting for the Indian Empire, or more correctly the British Raj, in World War I and the Third Anglo-Afghan War.



The Lotus Temple: The Bahá'í House of Worship in New Delhi is popularly known as the Lotus Temple due to its flower-like shape. It was completed in 1986 and serves as the Mother Temple of the Indian subcontinent. It has won numerous architectural awards and has been featured in hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles.



The Akshardham Temple: Also referred to as Delhi Akshardham or Swaminarayan Akshardham, the complex displays millennia of traditional Indian and Hindu culture, spirituality, and architecture. The temple, which attracts approximately 70 percent of all tourists who visit Delhi is designed in accordance with ancient Vedic text known as the Sthapatya Shastra and is a blend of architectural styles from across India.

Market

From medieval period, Delhi has always been the most important trading center in Northern India. Many of its localities, like Sheikh Sarai and Yusuf Sarai, derive their names from the ancient trading towns of Delhi. No wonder today it is a shopper's goldmine. The vibrant and exotic atmosphere of Delhi markets can make shopping lots of fun. To know the real culture and traditions of city, the best way is to stroll or wander around through its market places, for it is here that contemporary culture is most visible to the visitors. In fact, Delhi has the best markets in India, with handicrafts from all over the country. These top markets in Delhi are a treasure trove of goods waiting to be discovered.

ChandniChowk: ChandniChowk is one of the oldest and busiest markets in Old Delhi. Built in 17th century by Shah Jahan and designed by his daughter JahanAra, the market was once divided by canals to reflect moonlight, hence the name Chandni. A pure pandemonium, an exploration of its winding, narrow alleyways is certainly an adventure. It is a must visit, when in Delhi.

Delhi Haat: This huge vivid food and craft bazaar has been deliberately made to feel like a traditional weekly village market, called a haat. It is one of Delhi's most adored leisure spot beautifully reclaimed on a storm water drain. It offers an exotic blend of delicious regional foods, shopping and events.

Janpath Market: This very popular and bubbling Delhi market has something for everyone. This touristy strip sells the usual trinkets from everywhere in India and Tibet, and it's a great place to shop for things to take back home. Haggle hard.

Connaught Place: Shaped like a horse-shoe this place is meant to be lucky for both the shoppers and shopkeepers. It has been modeled after the Royal Crescent in Bath, England and was made by the Britishers in 1931. No trip to Delhi can be complete without a shopping spree in CP, the heart of Delhi.

Khan Market: The market for the elite, it has been rated as the costliest retail location in India. It is situated in one of the greenest pockets of the city, very close to the famed Lodhi Gardens.

Restaurants



From age-old eateries in the by lanes of the Walled City to glitzy, specialty restaurants in five-star hotels, Delhi is a definitely the restaurant capital of India. A foodie's paradise, it offers a choice of Indian and International Cuisines in different ambiances to suit varied budgets. For epicures, Delhi is synonymous with Mughlai and Frontier Cuisine. The best of Mughlai cuisine can be enjoyed at Karim, (both in Jama Masjid and Nizamuddin) where the recipes, dating from the times of the Mughals have been the closely guarded secrets of generations of chefs.



Delhi ka Aangan (Hyatt Regency), Darbar (Ashoka Hotel), and Corbetts (Claridges) are among the many options available in the expensive range, while Gulati Restaurant (Pandara Market), Angeethi (Asiad Village) and Degchi (Regal Building) are among those catering to more modest budgets. The finest Frontier cuisine is available at the Bukhara (Maurya Sheraton), Frontier (Ashoka Hotel) and Baluchi (The Hilton). At the other end of the scale, there are many popular roadside eateries around Jama Masjid and Nizamuddin where kababs, rotis and biryani are the order of the day. For the more intrepid, eateries such as those at Pranthewali Gali, or chaat at Bengali Market and Sunder Nagar, bhelpuri at Greater Kailash and sweetmeats from Annapoorna and Ghantewala can be part of the gastronomical tour of Delhi. It is also synonymous with the omnipresent tandoori chicken and tandoori roti, which, when freshly prepared from the tandoor, makes a delicious meal.