

Kid Friendly New Delhi

New Delhi, 1 Day

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: You have ticked off the list of must-see places in Delhi, ogled at stone structures that are centuries-old, taken a whiff of strong spices at Khari Baoli, even fallen in trance listening to the soul-stirring qwaalies at Hazrat Nizamuddin. But, what about your kids? Sulking in the hotel, endlessly swapping channels, ordering food as a ruse to fight boredom. Come off your high-culture, history-seeking perch. See things from your kids' perspective. Give them the Delhi that they want. It is actually easy. And a whole lot of fun.

The first thing to do is to shift to a kid friendly hotel, like the Nirula's. They have a restaurant that serves delicious pizzas, burgers, footlongs and some of the best ice creams in Delhi.

Follow up this sudden increase in your popularity with a day out that will have your kids saying, 'What's next', instead of 'What now'...



Day 1 - New Delhi

DAY NOTE: Start off the day with prehistoric dinosaurs, throw in a touch of colorful puppets, travel back in time with giant, old steam engines, eat lunch at a revolving restaurant perched high above the city, meet the animals, a dash of history, a touch of Punjabi food, a walk down the India Gate lawns with ice cream for dessert...can we do this again, mom?

	National Museum of Natural History Pre-historic animals
	Shankar Dolls Museum Dolls everywhere
	National Rail Museum Old Steam Engines
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	National Zoological Park Bengal Tiger
	Safdarjung Tomb Mughal art
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	India Gate Lutyen's vision



Day 1 - New Delhi

QUICK NOTE

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contact:

tel: +91 11 2331 4849 http://nmnh.nic.in/

location:

Federation House, Tansen Marg New Delhi DL 110001

hours:

10a-5p Tu-Su



National Museum of Natural History

DESCRIPTION: Located in midst of the elite institutions of the city, this museum can be easily recognised by a large dinosaur statue in front of its gates. The museum displays a mind-boggling number of fossils, stuffed animals and birds. Film shows, lectures about plant and animals- this place organises it all. Children can partake in activites organised in the well-equipped discovery room. © wcities.com

contact:

tel: +91 11 2331 6970 fax: +91 11 2372 1090 http://www.childrensbooktrust

location:

Nehru House, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg New Delhi DL 110001

hours:

10a-6p Tu-Su

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Shankar Dolls Museum

DESCRIPTION: You guessed it right...it's a doll house. And there are no less than 6, 000 dolls on display, not only from India but from all over the world. There is a huge collection of antique dolls from Britain and Eastern Europe. This place also has a well-stocked children's library, and films are frequently organised for children every Saturday. No wonder kids love his place... Admission fee: Rs. 10 for adults, Rs. 5 for children. © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of v venkataraman007

contact:

tel: +91 11 2688 1816 fax: +91 11 2688 0804 http://www.nationalrailmuseu m.org

location:

Shanti Path, Chanakyapuri New Delhi DL 110021



National Rail Museum

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

A must visit, you will chug right back to your childhood.

DESCRIPTION: Set amidst a sprawling park, this museum is a must not just for the train buff. A compact but informative indoor museum displays a range of interesting objects, but the main attractions are old steam engines parked outside. The star attraction is the Fairy Queen, made in 1855 and considered to be one of the best preserved steam locomotive engines of her age. The line-up of other old coaches include Prince of Wales Saloon, built in 1875, Maharaja of Mysore Saloon, built in 1899, and the Nilgiri coach, built in 1914 for the the local travellers. Children can take a ride on the toy train, which circles the museum yard. On your way out, don't miss the handsome Fire Engine, built in 1914 for the Nizam of Hyderabad.



Photo courtesy of Carlton Browne

Admission fee: Rs. 10 © wcities.com

contact:

tel: +91 11 2372 1616

location:

22 Kasturbha Gandhi Marg New Delhi 110001

hours:

Daily 12:30p-11p



Parikrama

DESCRIPTION: Parikrama, has more than just one interesting feature which makes it a must visit. This centrally airconditioned eatery, is located on the 24th floor of the Antriksh Bhawan and is the highest revolving diner in India. Enjoy the panoramic view of New Delhi as you gorge on the delicacies served here. An extensive menu which features cuisine as varied as North Indian, to even Chinese and Continental. The bar has a wide range of exotic liquor on offer. Dine as you savor the panoramic views of the city! © wcities.com



Photo courtesy of LoveLeLisa

contact:

tel: +91 11 2435 8500 fax: +91 11 460 2408 http://www.delhizoo.org

location:

Pragati Maidan Road New Delhi 110003

hours:

Apr-Oct: 9a-4:30p, Nov-Mar: 9:30a-4p, Closed F

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National Zoological Park

DESCRIPTION: Spread over an area of 176-acre, the Delhi Zoo is surrounded by beautiful gardens and a hill on one side, and a picturesque lake on the other. A favoured spot for the migratory birds, it also holds numerous exhibits and enclosures of rare animals and birds. The zoo is a favorite with the kids and a popular picnic place for Delhiites. Do yourself a favor and don't go on a Sunday, it is spilling over the brim with visitors. It also has an early 17th century Kos Minar, built by Jehangir, son of emperor Akbar, at every kos (four miles) between Agra and Lahore.

Admission fee for foreigners: Rs. 50 © wcities.com

contact:

tel: +91 11 2332 0005

location:

Lodhi Road New Delhi DL 110003



Safdarjung Tomb

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Another great example of the charbagh (fourgarden) layout, this is one of the last of Mughal monuments to be erected in Delhi.

DESCRIPTION: Safdarjung Tomb was built as a mausoleum for the Viceroy of Awadh, Safdarjung, in 1754. The main structure, built in red sandstone, is surrounded by many other smaller pavillions like Jangli Mahal (Wild Palace), Moti Mahal (Palace of Pearls), and Badshah Pasand (King's Favourite). It is a beautiful piece of Mughal architecture, and the endless lush green gardens and manicured lawns are sure to take your breath away. Admission: Rs. 5 for Indians, Rs. 100 for foreigners. © wcities.com



wcities

contact:

tel: +91 (0)11 2328 1802 / +91 (0)11 2327 4580 (India Tourism)

location:



Sound and Light Show

DESCRIPTION: An extraordinary sound and light show is organised every evening at Red Fort. Inaugurated on October 2nd, 1996, it is perhaps the biggest of its kind in India. It recreates the events of Indian history particularly related to the fort. Red Fort is believed to be the site of the first



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Red Fort New Delhi DL 110006

hours:

Hindi: daily Sep-Oct 7p-8p, Nov-Jan 6p-7p, Feb-Apr 7p-8p, May-Aug 7.30p-8.30p. English: daily Sep-Oct 8.30p-9.30p, Nov-Jan 7.30p-8.30p, Feb-Apr 8.30p-9.30p, May-Aug 9p-10p city of Delhi. The high rise walls and imposing entrances to the Quila (fort) are credited to emperor Shershah Suri. Massive halogen lights reflected from the mammoth, red sandstone walls and sound effects from hidden speakers evoke such an effect that the show has been a hit with the local crowds as well as the tourist for years. It takes place in Hindi and English for an hour each. Tickets Rs 50 (children Rs. 20). © wcities.com

contact:

tel: +91 11 2338 7070

location:

11-12, Pandara Market Road New Delhi DL 110003

hours:

Call for details



Have More

DESCRIPTION: Have More packs in the boisterous Punjabi spirit of Delhi and dishes out the favourite mutant version of Mughlai food. There is never any calm here; waiters are rushing, families are restless and crazy from greed, and waiting in a line is imperative. In the midst of barbecued meats, vegetarian kebabs, biryanis and fish, the most foreign soul is assured to be thoroughly Indianised. © wcities.com

MY NOTE: Order the 'Butter Chicken'. The 'Tandoori Chicken' is also recommended.

contact:

tel: +91 (0)11 2464 7005 fax: +91 (0)11 2469 7352 / +91 (0)11 2461 0500 (Tourist Information) http://www.tourism-of-india.co

m/india-gate-newdelhi.html

location:

Rajpath New Delhi DL 110001



India Gate

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Right behind the India Gate is an empty canopy that once housed the statue of King George. The road between India Gate and the President's House is call Rajpath. The ceremonial Republic Day parade is held here. The lawns are abuzz with locals every evening out for a stroll.

DESCRIPTION: India Gate is usually the first stop in a traveler's itinerary. It is a majestic structure, which stands high at the end of Rajpath amidst plush, green manicured lawns and water fountains carved in sandstone. Designed and built by Lutyens, it was originally called the All India War Memorial. This structure was built in honor and memory of the scores of Indian soldiers who died in World War I, the North-West Frontier operations, and the Afghan war in early 1900s. India Gate is truly unique as each martyred soldier's name is inscribed in its walls. Under it burns the eternal flame of 'Amar Jyoti'; burning since 1971. The area is especially breathtaking in the evenings when India Gate and the sparawling lawns are dramaticly lit with floodlights. Just behind the main structure of India Gate is a canopy made in sandstone. In front of it is the magnificent Rashtrapati Bhavan, the residence of the President of India. This is one of the most beautiful localities in the city and is favourite spot for picnics and outings all year round. © wcities.com



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MY NOTE: Take a walk down from India Gate toward Rashtrapati Bhavan. The lawns are full of Indian families out for a quick stroll or an ice cream treat before turning in for the night.



New Delhi Snapshot

Local Info

Historically significant, politically dominant and culturally vibrant, Delhi is not an easy city to bracket. As India's capital it enjoys the privileges of power. Its continuous thread of rich history is a mother lode that throws up riches wherever you go. Delhi can be thought of as a layer of successive cites that followed one-another in the wake of time. A simpler way to look at modern Delhi is to follow the nine-district division of 1997. These districts are: Central, North, South, East, West, North-East, South-East, North-West, and South-West District.

Central/New Delhi:When the British decided to shift the capital from Kolkotta to Delhi in 1912 they envisioned a capital city that would be a true reflection of British imperial power. Thus were conceived buildings to project imposing grandeur. Today, in this part of Delhi you can view the results of this vision. The President's House, the India Gate, the Parliament House, Connaught Place are a few examples. This area of Delhi is characterized by wide-open boulevards and a generally low skyline.

North Delhi: The moment you head north of Connaught Place, the city seems to close upon itself. The streets become narrower, the roads winding, the traffic chaotic. This is the part of the city whre you will find Shahjahahnabad or the 'Old City'. With the Chandani Chowk, Jama Masjid and the Red Fort as your focal points you can launch into walks that take you through narrow winding lanes and throw up surprises at almost every turn. Paharganjthe backpacker paradise and the University further north are the other significant areas.

South Delhi/South-East Delhi:Full of high-end stores, happening nightspots, plush residences, specialty restaurants and a bevy of 5-Star hotels this is the hip part of town. The roads are generally wide, you get a sense of green almost everywhere

you go. This part of town also boasts of the Qutub Minar, Tughlaqabad Fort, the Lotus Temple, the Hauz Khas ruins and the Lodhi Gardens.

West Delhi/North-West Delhi: Primarily residential, this area does have a few points of interest. There is a new Delhi Haat at Pritampura that's next to theNetaji Subhash Place Metro station. This area has also recently seen a number of swank new malls come up, especially in the Rajouri Garden area. Even the Hilton has opened recently in Janakpuri.

East Delhi/North-East: Primarily residential till recently, this area has seen a spurt of building activity recently. With the Akshardham Temple built on the banks of the Yamuna and the Commonwealth games Village next door, East Delhi is certainly on the tourist map.

© NileGuide

History

Delhi has not always been the capital of India but has played an important role in Indian history. One of the fascinating aspects of the city has been the visibility' of its historic past. If not for the demands of urbanization, large portions of the city could well be earmarked as archaeological sites. This is because the rulers of the dynasties from the 13th and 17th centuries established eight cities in different parts of Delhi. The first four were towards the south where the Qutub Minar stands. The city's history dates much further back than the 13th century. Excavations have proved that the Old Fort site was inhabited 3,000 years ago. And fine pottery dating back to 1,000 BC, from the time of the Hindu epic of Mahabharata, called the Painted Grey Ware, has been found. The excavations also cut through houses and the streets of the Sultanate of Rajput, Post-Gupta, Gupta, Saka-Kushan and Sunga periods reaching down to the Mauraya dynasty(300 BC). The association of Emperor Ashoka(273-36 BC) has come to light after the discovery of the Minor Rock Edict in one of the city's

districts. However, the core of the first city was created by Anangpal Tomar in the 12th century. He built Lal Kot, the first ever fort in Delhi. Prithviraj Chauhan, the successive king, added massive ramparts and gates, and constructed the Quila Rai Pithora. Today, only the ramparts are visible near Qutub Minar.

The second city, called Siri, was built by Alauddin Khilji in 1303. Nothing remains but the embattlements. He also dug a vast reservoir, Hauz Khas, to supply water to his people. Many historians consider the Delhi of yore as a "rival to Cairo, and even equal to Constantinople!" The Khiljis were replaced by the Tughlaq dynasty in 1321. Of its eleven rulers, only the first three were interested in architecture and each of them established a new city. Tughlaq architecture is more austere in comparison to the ornate structures built by the Khiljis. Ghitasuddin Tughlaq built the fortified town of Tughlagabad, which lies eight kilometers east of the Qutub Minar Complex. Though partially in ruins, it is still worth a visit.

Ghiyasuddin's successor, Muhammadbin-Tughlaq built Delhi's fourth city, Jahanpanah. It largely comprises a walled enclosure between Quila Rai Pithora and Siri. Nothing from this time survives, and the Sultan is best remembered for his eccentric schemes, the strangest one to shift the capital from Delhi to Dulatabad in the Deccan region and back again to Delhi.

Firoz Shah Tughlaq, a man interested in history, hunting, architecture and irrigation created the fifth city, Firozabad, situated in the current Firoz Shah Kotla. Its ruins include the Ashoka Pillar and a mosque. Delhi's growth remained stagnant under the reign of the Sayyids and the Lodhis. The only notable architectural pieces by them were tombs, the best of which can be seen at Lodhi Gardens.

The last king of the Lodhis was defeated by Babur, the founder of the Mughal Dynasty. He shifted the capital from Delhi to Agra. The first six Mughal rulers were extraordinary men, and their rule witnessed a powerful resurgence in Islamic



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Architecture and culture. Babur's son, Humayun, built the sixth city of Delhi called the Purana Quila or Old Fort, which is off Mathura Road.

In 1638, the fifth Mughal emperor, Shah Jahan shifted the capital back to Delhi while he was building the Taj Mahal in Agra. The foundations were laid for the seventh city, Shah Jahanabad, on the banks of Yamuna river. It took nine years to complete. Many monuments remain intact today Red Fort, Jama Masjid, and Chandni Chowk.

Finally, the eighth city, New Delhi, was constructed by the British. The site chosen was a wilderness of Raisina, while the city was designed by the architect Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker. It took 20 years to build and cost 15 million pounds. All of central Delhi- Connaught Place, India Gate, Rashtrapati Bhavan, is a testimonial of their creativity. In 1947, it became the capital of partitioned India, and Hindu and Sikh refugees poured in from Pakistan. Many have invaded Delhi through the ages. Tameerlaine attacked it in the 14th century. Babur occupied it in the 16th century and the Persian emperor, Nadir Shah, sacked the city and took the Kohinoor Diamond(now a part of the British royal family's crown jewels) and the famous Peacock Throne off to Iran. The British captured Delhi in 1803, but during the uprising of 1857, it became the center of resistance against the British.

Hotel Insights

From the most expensive 5-star to the basic room-only accommodation, New Delhi offers it all. Whatever be the nature of your trip, it is advisable to stay either in and around the central business district – Connaught Place(CP) or in South Delhi. Connaught Place is well connected to every part of the city, the main metro station(Rajiv Chowk) is bang in the center, the railway station is nearby, and with the metro airport line nearing completion, even the airport will be just a 20-minute ride away.

From colonial grandeur to boutique chic. From upscale modern to wallet-friendly. CP has a range of options when it comes to hotels. You are sure to find what you

are looking for. The Imperial, The Park, Le Meridian, The Metropoliton Nikko, The Lalit are the more upscale properties. Hotel Hans Plaza, Hotel Janpath and are comfortable and affordable. Hotel Alka and Marina are located right in the middle of the shopping district.Marina still exudes an old-world charm whileAlka could be a hotel from anywhere. Choose them only if you do not want to spend much on the room and want to be a few steps away from the shopping. If you are on a tight budget, travel a few minutes by rickshaw or by foot from CP to backpacker nirvana - Paharganj. The metro station for Paharganj is: Ramakrishna Ashram.

Paharganj

Tightly packed and bustling with young tourists, the Pahargani area is the place to go to if you are not finicky about the size of the room, the quality of linen, or the view. Rooms start at around\$10 for the most basic. If you decide to walk-in and book, make sure you see a couple of properties. Always insist on seeing the room they are offering before paying up. Avoid 'friendly' people on the street who offer to 'help' you find a hotel. Always be extra careful of your belongings. Some of the hotels you can consider in and around Pahargani are:Pallavi Palace,Metropolis Tourist Home andChand Palace. On the road connecting CP toJama Masjid isHotel Broadway. It has a famous restaurantChor Bizzare and some rooms with a view of the old city and Jama Masjid.

B&B, Guest Houses

Mostly found in posh, South-Delhi colonies, these offer a convenient location, mostly for business visitors. You can check out the list of top B&B and Guest houses in New Delhihere.

5 Star Hotels

Apart from CP, New Delhi has 5-star properties almost everywhere. Here is a rough area-wise listing of the top 5-star hotels. North Delhi:Oberoi Maidens. Central Delhi:Taj Mahal,Claridges,The Ashok. South Delhi:ITC Welcomgroup,Taj Palace,Hyatt,Jaypee Vasant Continental,Radisson,Sheraton. Gurgaon:The Trident.

Most hotels offer online bookings. It makes sense to book early, especially during peak tourist season. If you are planning to visit during the off-season, hunt for offers and discounts on the web. Almost all hotel chains have one offer or another going. Better still, use ouradvanced hotel search to find exactly what you are looking for. © NileGuide

Restaurants Insights

Delhiites love to flaunt their heritage of Maharajas and dynasties. And hence it is one of the prominent cities when it comes to the art of dining out. The city is full of restaurants, and almost all the upscale ones have a grand and regal air about them. The most favored cuisine is Indian, i.e. Mughlai and Tandoori. Still, international cuisines are thriving in Delhi like never before. Although a step behind Mumbai's nightlife, Delhi is fast catching up and finally breaking the five-star monopoly. With the choices spilled all over the extensive city, here are a few pointers.

South Delhi/Greater Kailash/South Extension

This is the fashionable district and people aspire for an address in this area. It has shopping centers, designer boutiques, coffee shops, malls, and some pretty good restaurants and clubs. Most of the city's nightclubs and bars are situated here. There are many designer resto-bars too, such as Shalom, Olive Bar and Kitchen, Buzz, Diva, Suede, and Punjabi By Nature. Be it a restaurant in the middle of the scenic deer park(Park Baluchi), a bar amidst a rural village(The Rooftop Bistro), or a nightclub next to McDonald's and a cinema hall, the dining and drinking culture is very successful in adapting itself to Delhi's diverse mini-habitats.

Central Delhi/Connaught Place

Most of the bars and restaurants in the high-rises offer a spectacular panoramic view of Delhi. Be sure to dress up and bring plastic money when dining at The Imperial or enjoying spirits at Patiala Peg. Head towards Nirula's for its 21 varieties of ice



creams or to the Yellow Brick Road, an allnight coffeehouse with the best pastries in town. For an after dinner drink, go to Agni at The Park or any of the five-stars' elegant lounge bars with live music.

North Delhi/Chandni Chowk

Get a real flavor of Indian hospitality at the street-side cafes of the historic Chandni Chowk where some restaurants are more than a hundred years old. Or visit the oddest, most eccentric Chor Bazaar, a restaurant named the "Market of Thieves," serving Indian cuisine at Hotel Oberoi Maidens.

Dilli Haat

This complex houses many small shops displaying extraordinary traditional Indian crafts. But in addition, it is a powerhouse of regional cuisines. Kiosks run by different Indian states offer their authentic food. You can find Assamese, Tamil, Gujarati as well as Goan cuisine here. While you may savor Punjabi food at Punjabi By Nature, you'll see that everyday is a carnival at Dilli Haat.

Nightlife Insights

The cultural capital of the country, Delhi has many key centers and foundations that keep the art pulse of the city high. Music recitals, dance programs, theater, book readings and art exhibitions are just a small part of all that's on offer.

Art Exhibitions

Step into India Habitat Centre, India International Centre, Art Today, Lalit Kala Academy, or Dhoomimal Art Gallery to find the latest and the oldest in Indian contemporary art. Photography exhibitions, art installations, mixed media, or ceramic works, Delhi is truly a vibrant center for all art activity. If it is a bit bourgeois for your taste, visit the thriving artisan bazaar of Dilli Haat or live in studios of artists and painters at Garhi Studio, where you can witness live art processes.

Music/Dance/Theater

Numerous concerts, performances and plays are organized almost everyday.

Mostly concentrated in central Delhi, the centers, such as India Habitat Center and Triveni Kala Sangam have become patrons for the Indian performing arts. Classical Indian music is so popular here that famous Indian musicians perform Morning Ragas, live in Nehru Park, under a sprawling tree in the early hours of Sunday mornings.

Museums

There are countless fascinating museums dedicated to preserving the history of India in New Delhi. The National Gallery of Modern Art has one of the best collections of contemporary Indian art, while The National Museum has ancient as well as contemporary works in painting, sculpture, ceramics and metals. The Crafts Museum has one of the most interesting collections of folk tribal art, textiles and crafts. Then there is the Rail Museum, which has engines dating back two hundred years. Tibet House, Natural History Museum, Red Fort Archeological Museum, Field Museum, and Gandhi Smriti are also definitely worth the visit.

Film/Misc

The PVR multiplexes in Vasant Vihar, Saket and Naraina have introduced a new culture of entertainment to the city. The nightlife is incomplete without a film on the evening itinerary. Regular film festivals are also organized here.

Nightclubs

Clubbing has taken off in a big way and the demand has spurred a number of nightclubs. Smaller, more creative and less expensive places have become the hangouts of the city's young. Try out Steel, Djinns, Turquoise Cottage and Capitol.

Shopping

A shopper's delight, Delhi is considered one big market. Shopping is the new pastime and department stores, shopping arcades(Ansal Plaza) and markets(Khan Market, South Extension, Karol Bagh) all compete to attract customers. For traditional textiles and fabric, visit Dilli Haat, Central Cottage Emporium, or The State Emporia. For antiques, Sundernagar is an ideal place to shop. The Hauz Khas

Village has over 100 shops dealing in designer clothes, carpets, artifacts, old silver antiques and furniture. You can find Indian traditional textiles at Khadi Gramodyog Bhavan. The underground market of Palika Bazaar in the heart of Connaught Place sell an incredible range of electronics, photo equipment, music and DVDs.

Spiritual

De-stress, detox, or achieve nirvana with the help of the abundant spiritual and meditation centers. Attend daily yoga sessions at Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Nataraja Centre or Osho Rajyoga Meditation Center, dabble in astrology at Future Point, or practice Reiki and Pranic healing at Center of Light.

Things to Do Insights

Delhi is a big city. Many spend weeks here, and yet only manage to scrape the tip of the iceberg. Numerous travel agencies and tour operators organize day trips to the various monuments and attractions of the Delhi. The Delhi Tourism board also offers a wide spectrum of services to tourists. Assistance centers and tour offices are set up in various corners of the city. The Government of India Tourist Office+91 11 332 0005 New Delhi Railway Station,+91 11 336 4004,+91 11 373 2714 Indira Gandhi International Airport,+91 11 565 2011,+91 11 565 2021 Or visit the official New Delhi Tourist website, www.delhitourism.com

The city is so vast that it doesn't allow for simply walking during the sightseeing tours. However, the small feat can be accomplished by bunching tourist attractions close to each other.

Connaught Place

Connaught Place is not only the commercial hub of the city but a cherished symbol of Lutyens grand architecture. It is a mammoth circular building, and has inner and outer circles where numerous shops, restaurants, clubs and showrooms are located. In the middle of this circular giant lies the lush central park. On its side



is the underground shopping market of Palika Bazaar. On emerging from the airconditioned underground, walk towards Art Today in the inner circle. It is a gallery, which showcases valuable contemporary works of Indian artists. Nearby is Jantar Mantar, the ancient observatory built in 1725 to determine time and positions of the planets.

India Gate

Take an auto-rickshaw or a cab from Connaught Place and head towards India Gate. This structure is a tall gate made in sandstone to commemorate the soldiers of the Indian army. It is surrounded by vast manicured lawns with marble fountains, which lead to the Rashtrapati Bhavan(the President's Residence) on one end and the National Gallery of Modern Art on the other. The whole area is surrounded by Lutyen's buildings like The Secretariat, The National Museum and Shankar's Dolls Museum. The museums have massive collections and deserve at least a few hours each if not more.

Lodhi Garden

The Lodhi Garden is located in south Delhi. It is almost a botanical garden with hundred-year-old trees and rare plants, and beautiful Lodhi tombs and bridges from the 1500s. It is spread over many acres complete with manicured grass lawns, wooden benches, red mud pathways and jogging tracks. There are many tombs here and visiting all of them takes many hours. On the left of these gardens is the impressive Safdarjung Tomb. Located in the midst of a sprawling complex, it is one of the most beautiful pieces of architecture from the Mughal era. On the right of the Lodhi Gardens is India Habitat Centre and India International Centre. They are the two foremost cultural hubs of the city. Daily music, dance and literary performances, plays, book readings and art exhibitions are organized here.

Nizamuddin

The Nizamuddin area is full of ancient dargahs(Muslim shrines), which are not just popular tourist destinations but also revered pilgrimage sites. The

most spectacular is Nizamuddin Auliya's dargah, which lies amidst a maze of small village-like lanes. On Thursdays, live Sufi music(Nizamuddin's qawwali) is performed in front of the shrine. The awe-inspiring Humayun's Tomb is also nearby.

Qutub Minar

The Qutub Minar complex lies in the southern-most part of the city. And a few kilometers away lies the border to the neighboring Harvana state. It is a sprawling complex with some of Delhi's most famous monuments, such as the Qutub Minar tower, the Iron Pillar, Tomb of Iltutmish, Alai Darwaza, and Alai Minar. A little away from the complex is Mehrauli. Ancient monuments like Bhulbhulaiyan, Gandak ki Baoli, Hathi Gate and Jamali Kamali are scattered all over this village-like area. Finding them all may be a bit difficult. therefore, it is advisable to carry a very good map or a guide.

Tughlagabad Fort

On the southern edge of Delhi lie the eerie ruins of the Tughlagabad Fort. It stretches for over seven kilometers and is a popular place for picnics or day treks as the climb up to the various parts of the fort can be quite adventurous. Nearby is the Asola Wildlife Sanctuary and the 11th century water tank of Surajkund.

Lotus Temple

If you prefer the sanity of civilization but don't want to miss the historical and tourist sites, visit the Lotus Temple. Here you'll find the bustling designer Hauz Khas Village, the allegedly haunted Chor Minar, and a charming sports complex of Siri Fort. The Lotus Temple announces its presence from miles away. An intimidating white structure in the shape of a lotus, it has been designed as a temple symbolizing the unity of all religious faiths. People from all religions are invited to meditate silently under the massive flower.

Old Delhi

On the other extreme of the city is Shah Jahanabad or Old Delhi. Rich in monuments of ancient dynasties, spend a day at the historic Red Fort(Lal Quila) or

try delicious Indian fare at Chandni Chowk. Jama Masjid, the pinnacle of Mughal mosque architecture, lies close by and there are many interesting ancient Baolis strewn across the busy lanes.

Travel Tips

Getting There:

By Air:

Indira Gandhi International Airport(+91 11 565 2011) is located in the Southwestern region of the city. The airport has a bureaux de change, tourist information counters, snack bars, duty-free stores, a restaurant, 24-hour taxi counters and car rental booths. It is safer to book a taxi at the prepaid counter at the airport, as most taxi drivers in Delhi do not adhere to the standard meter. The approximate flying time from Delhi to Toronto is 18 hours, to New York is 16 hours, and to Sydney, 17 hours. The following airlines have counters at the airport:

Air Canada(+91 11 565 2850/ http:// www.aircanada.ca)

Air France(+91 11 565 2294/ http:// www.airfrance.com)

Air Mauritius(+91 11 565 2050/ http:// www.airmauritius.com)

Delta Airlines(+91 11 565 2093/ http:// www.delta.com)

Gulf Air(+91 11 565 2065/ http:// www.gulfairco.com)

KLM(+91 11 565 2922/ http://www.klm.com)

Korean Air(+91 11 565 3304/ http:// www.koreanair.com)

Kuwait Airways(+91 11 565 2295/ http:// www.kuwait-airways.com)

Lufthansa(+91 11 548 2283/ http:// www.lufthansa.com)

Malaysian Airlines(+91 11 565 2395/ http:// www.malaysiaairlines.com)

Swiss Air(+91 11 565 2531/ http:// www.swiss.com)



The Domestic Airport(+91 11 329 5126) at Palam, is about 5 kilometers away from the International terminal. This is an important hub for International travelers who wish to travel within the country. The main domestic airlines that operate through this airport are Indian Airlines(http://indian-airlines.nic.in), Jet Airways(http://www.jetairways.com), Sahara Airlines(http://www.airsahara.net), Kingfisher Airlines(www.flykingfisher.com) and Go Air Airlines(http://www.goair.in). They offer flights to more than 40 cities across India. The airport has a prepaid taxi counter, tourist information counter, business center and car rental booths.

By Train:

New Delhi is the main hub for Indian Railways(+91 11 334 8787). Unlike Mumbai, Delhi does not have its own local train system, but its extensive national network connects it to all the major and small towns across the country. It has two major stations, one in Old Delhi. located about 7 kilometres from Connaught Place, and another in New Delhi, East of Pahar Ganj. The stations have ample waiting areas and food stalls. However, travelers should be careful with their luggage as chances of theft are high. Ticket reservations can be made at the IRCA building on Chelmsford Road, Pahar Ganj. There is a separate counter for tourists at the International Tourist Bureau(+91 11 334 6804). New Delhi station. You can also make online bookings, or get further information from the official website of the Idian Railways, www.indianrailways.com.

By Road:

Five National Highways pass through New Delhi. The Grand Trunk Road(National Highway 1) is used most frequently as it leads to the North of the country, towards Amritsar and Agra; National Highway 2 goes towards Calcutta in the East, and National Highway 8 passes through Jaipur in the West. Driving licenses require a minimum age of 18 years, and foreigners with international licenses can drive in the city without additional documents. Most cities and towns are located close to Delhi, and are well connected by road. The driving

time from Delhi to Agra and Jaipur is under three hours, to Amritsar is under five hours, and the to the hill stations of Himachal Pradesh is under eight hours.

Bus Services:

Local buses are very congested, and are often not the preferred mode of transportation for the middle-class. Taxis and rickshaws are usually favored. However, the inter-state bus services are quite comfortable. They offer air conditioned, deluxe and ordinary buses to all major destinations around Delhi. The Interstate Bus Terminus(ISBT) is located at Kashmir Gate, North of Old Delhi Railway Station. The following state operators provide bus services in and around the city: Delhi Transport Corporation(+91 11 386 8836), Haryana Roadways(+91 11 296 1262), Himachal Pradesh Roadways(+91 11 251 6725), Punjab Roadways(+91 11 296 7842), Rajasthan Roadways(+91 11 252 2246) and Uttar Pradesh Roadways(+91 11 251 8709).

Getting Around:

Public Transport

New Delhi now boasts of its first metro network. The metro will be partly underground and partly elevated; and will extend up to 62 kilometers and more in the future.

By Bus:

The public buses in Delhi are uncomfortable and over-crowded. The Delhi Transport Corporation(+91 11 331 7445) has a centralized network of buses that have 300 routes across the city. A general All-Route Pass can be availed from any of the terminals at Red Fort, Delhi Gate and Shahdara Terminal.

By Tax

The most convenient way to move around is by taxi. Following a Government anti-pollution policy, all taxis now operate on CNG(Compressed Natural Gas) engines. Some taxis have electronic meters, but most taxis operate on a prior bargained

rate. It is best to negotiate a price before stepping into one.

By Rickshaw:

Rickshaws too, form an integral part of the city's transportation. Widely-used, they also follow the same principle as the taxis. It is better to negotiate a rate before boarding this transport though. Four- and six-seater motorcycle rickshaws run on fixed routes at fixed prices, mostly between the Red Fort and Palika Bazaar at Connaught Place.

Car Hire:

Driving on Delhi roads can be quite a challenging task, as motorists often do not heed to traffic laws. The best option is to hire a car with a local driver to take you around town.

Some of the major car hire services are: Europear Inter-Rent(+91 11 688 3498) Hertz(+91 11 687 7188), Eco Rent A Car(+91 11 462 3261)

Jai Jawala Tourist(+91 11 26252924).

Fun Facts

Green Facts:

- 1. Delhi is one of the greenest cities in the world with a green cover of almost 20%.
- 2. The entire public transport of the city runs on environment friendly Compressed Natural Gas.

Interesting Facts:

- 3. Qutub Minar in Delhi is the world's tallest brick minaret.
- 4. The walled city of Delhi originally had fourteen gates. Five are still standing. Here's the provenance behind their names. Ajmeri Gate: Facing Ajmer in Rajasthan; Lahori Gate: Facing Lahore in Pakistan. Kashmiri Gate: Pointing North to Kashmir. Delhi Gate: Road to earlier cities of Delhi Turkman Gate: Named after pious saint Hazrat Shah Turkam.
- 5. In between the rubble of the fifth city of delhi – Freoze shah Kotlastands the 3 century B.C. Ashokan Pillar. Emperor Feroz Shah Tughlaq brought this 27 tonne pillar



to Delhi from Topar in Ambala, where the great Emperor Ashoka erected it.

Weird Fact:

6. Delhi has an International Toilet museum.

Spicy Fact:

7. Khari Baoli is the Asia's largest wholesale spice market. A must visit for the once-in-a-lifetime overdose of a spice cocktail high.

Random Facts:

- 8. Traffic in Delhi is like traffic in London. Drivers sit on the right side of the car.
- 9. Three-wheeled contraptions called Autos are a great way to see the city over short distances. And test your faith in God.
- 10. Delhi has not always been the capital of India. Under the British, Kolkotta had the honor for a long time till Delhi was reinstated in 1912.

11. Delhi has a rail museum with steamage behemoths.

Fun fact:

- 12. Every Delhite is ever ready to help you out with directions. They will direct you even when they do not know what you are talking about. So check, crosscheck. And check again.
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