

Key Facts: India

Population	1.02 billion
Capital	New Delhi
Language	Hindi
Local Time	GMT +5½ Hours
Climate	Average Summer Temperature 31.5°C
Currency	Rupee

Why Invest in India?

India's ancient and diverse culture, sweeping back at least 5000 years, with successive waves of migration absorbed into the fabric of Indian life, has enriched over and over again to make a multi-cultural nation with a wide diversity of languages, customs, cuisines, religions, literature and arts. Within this kaleidoscope of immense variety there is a thread of continuity that has determined Indian civilisation and social structure.

India is the largest democracy in the world, the seventh largest country by area and has the second largest population. Located entirely in the Northern Hemisphere, it is bound by Pakistan, Afghanistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar and Bangladesh. The Arabian Sea, the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal border its coastline.

The nation's diversity is abundantly obvious with the bustling metropolis of Mumbai, the arid state of Rajasthan and the tropical beaches of Goa. The nation is vast and difficult to encapsulate in a few short words.

From a property perspective, Mumbai does present opportunities but it is also one of the most expensive real estate markets in the world. Most investors tend to focus on Goa which is an increasingly popular tourist destination and even retirement location due to the low cost of living. The former Portuguese colony feels unlike any other part of this giant country. It has a distinctly European air in many towns, although you never feel like you are anywhere other than India.

There are a number of small resort towns scattered along the idyllic tropical coastline that present potential opportunities for property investors. Places such as the popular market town of Anjuna, Margoa, Panji, Cavelossim, Palolem and many others along the coast have increasing numbers of interesting purpose built developments.

Travel Information

Health advice / risks

You are advised to contact your local GP before making any trips to India. Travel Insurance is essential.

How to get to & from the airport

It is best to arrange to be picked up from the airport. Your hotel would normally be able to set this up for you.

Taxis

The best way to travel around towns is by taxis. Yellow top taxis are generally easily available at stands, near commercial and residential areas and can be stopped on the roads. Visitors are advised to ensure that the meter is flagged down before starting the trip. A maximum of five passengers is generally permitted. Payment should be made according to the meter. Where meters are old, payments should be made in accordance with the revised tariff chart for the corresponding meter reading. Sometimes taxi drivers do not show these charts in order to charge higher amounts. Visitors are advised to insist that the revised tariff chart is shown.

In some cities, scooter rickshaws are also available and are more economical, at roughly half of taxi rates. These too are metered and should carry a revised tariff chart where applicable. A maximum of three passengers is generally permitted.

Night charges of 25% over and above the normal fare are payable for taxis and scooter rickshaws engaged between 23.00 p.m. and 05.00 a.m.

Private, non-metered taxis are available in most cities. They can be hired on a journey basis, or for the day. Hotels can also arrange taxis for the day depending on your requirements.

Pre-paid services are generally available at airports. All passengers can make use of these services by contacting the Pre-paid Taxi booth.

Car hire

Cars may be hired with or without a chauffeur. Renting a car with a chauffeur in India is relatively inexpensive. Visitors coming from the UK intending to drive need to hold an International Driving License. However, the facility of renting a car at one place and leaving it at another is not common in India.

Tipping**Hotels and restaurants**

The accepted practice is 10% of the bill for meals, except that when bills are large a reasonable amount should be given.

Cloakroom attendants

It is not a practice to tip cloakroom attendants. Being discretionary they may be tipped between Rs10 and Rs50.

Airport porters

Airline passengers generally use trolleys available at the airport for carrying their luggage. For excessive luggage, the services of porters may be used on the basis of Rs10 per item. No other tips are required to be paid.

Train porters

Train porters are generally paid on the basis of Rs10 per baggage. There is no other tipping.

Taxi drivers

Taxi drivers are not tipped where taxis are used for local commuting. However, where taxis are hired for the full day or for longer periods including long distance travel, tipping is optional and an amount between Rs50 to Rs200 is acceptable.

Hotel porters

Hotel porters are tipped on a discretionary basis, however, not less than Rs10.

Electricity supply

Voltage in India is 220V AC/50 cycles.

Sockets are the three pin-round variety, similar (but not identical) to European sockets. Though European round-pin plugs may go into the sockets, the fit is loose and connection is not always guaranteed. It is advisable to carry an adaptor with you. (Most hotels normally hold a limited supply of adaptors for guest use).

Hours of business**Places of business**

Normally 09.30 a.m. to 13.00 p.m. and 14.00 p.m. to 17.30 p.m. Monday to Friday, but these times can vary with some offices staying open much later. Some businesses are open on Saturday mornings.

Banks

For money transactions, banking hours generally are from 10.00 a.m. to 14.00 p.m. Monday to Friday and 10.00 a.m. to 13.00 p.m. on Saturdays. However, all banks do remain officially open in the afternoons generally up to 17.00 p.m. Monday to Friday for all other business activities. These business activities can also be conducted in the mornings during banking hours.

Shops

Normally 10.00 a.m. to 19.30 p.m. Monday to Saturday.

Social etiquette

While the universal language of a smile and gracious nod may result in an instant warmth in India, the most common social courtesy is greeting with hands folded as in a prayer, which is known as namaste. Women should generally be greeted with folded hands; shaking hands, except in westernised circles, should be avoided. However, when men greet each other, they usually shake hands. Etiquette requires the use of the right hand when giving or receiving.

India has good investment potential. We have therefore, selected a variety of investments which offer different advantages and cater for all types of investors depending upon what they hope to acquire and achieve with their investment.

The Overseas Investor carefully selects property investment opportunities from politically stable countries that indicate excellent economic growth, have internationally respected legal systems, stable currencies, attractive tax policies and will provide strong investment yield and growth.

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