

## **Travel Tips**

To make your trip to India comfortable and safe, GRAVIS has compiled a few guidelines for you. It is hoped that you will find the information handy.

### **Clothing:**

Keeping in mind the weather conditions during the period of your stay in Rajasthan, India, we recommend you to bring some warm clothes along. During summer (April - June), the temperature soars to 45 degree centigrade. The weather becomes dry and hot. So, light cotton clothes are the best outfits to wear in summer. In winter, the temperature ranges from 5 to 25 degree centigrade. The weather will be pleasant during the daytime and chilly at night. Therefore, you may bring along a sweatshirt, a couple of woolen pullovers, a cap, and a pair of gloves. Otherwise, cotton clothes are most comfortable.

We recommend women should dress conservatively. Please avoid tank tops or short skirts / shorts. The best outfit for both men and women would be a T-shirt worn with loose cotton trousers. To feel more in tune with the local people, you may also try wearing Indian outfits like 'salwar-kameez' for women, and "cotton kurta" for men. There is no need for bringing formal clothes unless you wish to appear in formals somewhere.

Regarding footwear, it is advisable that you wear comfortable shoes/flip flops/sandals. In December, it gets quite cold in Rajasthan, so, we advise wearing footwear that covers your feet. Don't forget to bring a few pairs of socks as well. In addition, a sleeping bag may prove to be helpful.

### **Foods and Drinks:**

At GRAVIS, we advocate vegetarianism. So, kindly cooperate by being on a strictly vegetarian diet during your stay with us. There is a variety of vegetarian foods available in India that range from seasonal vegetables, different kinds of breads, rice, pulses, sprouts, to dairy products like "paneer" ( a kind of tofu), yoghurt, "lassi" or yoghurt milk, buttermilk etc. Fresh fruits, dry fruits, and nuts are also a common part of Indian vegetarian diet.

If you wish to explore Indian cuisine further in restaurants and other food joints, we recommend going to the more expensive places that will have a better quality control. However, when you visit GRAVIS, restaurants are accessible only in Jodhpur city, where GRAVIS headquarters is placed. In the GRAVIS field centers, foods are limited to the field center kitchen and pantry only. Nonetheless, you are welcome to lend a hand in the GRAVIS kitchen, or to cook any vegetarian food of your choice.

### **Health Precautions**

Here is a quick list of a few health precautions you should take while in India

- It is advisable that you have prophylactic doses of anti-malarial medicines before coming to India.
- Always drink bottled or boiled (sterilized) water.
- For the first few days it might be advisable to clean your teeth in bottled or boiled (sterilized) water.
- Eat fruits you can peel.
- Always wash fruits and vegetables well before eating it.
- Wash your hands before and after eating.
- Rajasthan is extremely dry, so bring enough lotion and chap sticks
- Always keep a tube of mosquito repellent with you.

### **Social Interaction**

- Greet people with a "namaste" (hands pressed together at chest level as if in prayer).
- Please take off your shoes before entering a place of worship.
- Avoid addressing individuals older than you by their first name. To show respect while addressing others (except children) add "ji" (pronounced as jee) after a person's first name or last name.
- Refrain from showing physical affection to each other in public.

### **Shopping**

Try to shop only in government handicraft shops. There the prices are fixed and the quality is certified. If that is not an option, check the prices at a few shops before making a choice. Bargaining is standard and is enjoyed by all. If possible, take a local along when you go shopping.