Fact Sheet

India

Welcome

Where is India?

India is located in southern Asia, on and around the piece of the continent known as the Indian peninsula. It Borders Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh.

Time difference

South Africa is 3.5 hours behind India.

Population

India has the second-highest population of any country in the world (1.9-billion people).

Economy

The Indian economy is in an upswing, and is set to become the third-largest economy in the world in 2030.

Language

Hindi mainly, and a little English.

Indian manners

Indians are very particular about the food they eat, so choose quality Indian restaurant options.

Meal choices usually exclude beef and pork, so check with your guests before including these dishes on the menu.

Around 40% of Indians are vegetarian – make sure you have a substantial choice of non-meat dishes on the menu.

Indians are among the world's lowest consumers of alcohol, but the trend is changing, especially among the youth. Always enquire about drink choices before placing wine bottles on the dinner table, for example.

Trade statistics on Indian travellers in South Africa

In 2010 alone, 72 234 Indian travellers arrived in SA.

The Indian traveller profile in 2010 was 90% male; 10% female; age 25 to 34; average stay: 25 nights; spend: R1 000/day; 69% travelled alone; 53% stayed in hotels.

The e-commerce market has increased by 287% since 2007. It is an ideal means of reaching your potential market and encouraging online booking.

The online travel industry accounts for 80% of transactions, mostly domestic air and rail. Use a familiar method of holiday bookings to leverage outbound visits to SA.

Increasing trend to research travel trips online, in 2010 84% of outbound bookings made via travel agents.

Outbound travel is seeing rapid growth – 22.5-million trips expected by 2015 – this is a massive potential market, plan your strategy early.

2010 traveller activities: 91% shopping; 89% nightlife; 70% business; 34% natural attractions.

Business travellers represent the majority of travellers to SA, and spend the most. Ensure they are able to conduct business efficiently, with Wi-Fi access and place to meet clients.

Most time is spent in Gauteng and Western Cape provinces, followed by KwaZulu-Natal and the North West.

Main reasons for visiting SA: to experience a different country; wildlife and safari; natural scenery.

They often travel as a family, with young children, teenagers and elderly members making up the group. Select entertainment options to suit all ages.

Young travellers love to visit hip and happening nightspots. Assist by organising transport there and back.

Shopping is an important part of the traveller's holiday itinerary – always allocate sufficient time for this pastime.

Accommodation and shopping comprises 46% of total expenditure, so plan a variety of shopping excursions to expose different options on offer, from malls to flea markets.

Travel within a country being visited comprises 16% of total expenditure, so plan one or two interesting trips, perhaps a Big Five and must-see scenic attraction.

Their favourite travel months are May and July, coinciding with the summer school holidays and stifling heat in India. These are our winter months, so plan outdoor activities during the warmest part of the day and indoor events for colder evenings to ensure guests' comfort.

MAKE SOMEONE'S DAY TODAY

How to make an Indian person's day

Older travellers enjoy family holidays, particularly age-appropriate fun, safe experiences.

Elderly travellers really appreciate the small touches, so surprise them with masala chai tea in the mornings.

Meals are eaten with the hands, so always provide a finger bowls and napkins at the table.

Plan a visit to watch a cricket match, as this sport is very popular,

Theme parks are a favourite among younger travellers; add them to your itinerary.

Family adventures are also popular, scuba diving and hiking in particular.