**Welcome to India!**Dear Friend,

India is a land of contrasts – ancient traditions meet modern hustle, and every corner has a story. This kit is carefully curated to help you navigate, adapt, and connect. Let’s unpack it together!

**Your Essentials**

1. **Health & Protection**

* **ORS Powder:** Rehydrate fast in India’s heat. Mix with water – ideal after street food adventures!
* **Calpol:** India’s best brand of paracetamol, trusted relief for headaches, pain or fever. Do not take more than one tablet every four hours.
* **Norflox TZ:** For stomach upsets (common with new cuisines). Take twice daily as needed.
* **Razol DSR:** Spicy food = heartburn? This antacid helps, best to take on empty stomach before the meal. Maximum twice daily.
* **Dettol Sanitizer & Wipes:**  Stay germ-free in bustling places.
* **Odomos:** Mosquitoes here *love* newcomers. Odomos is DEET-free, effective *and*safe for children and babies (avoid applying it on their hands to prevent contact with eyes). Apply when going out to avoid dengue/malaria.

**(all these products are available at most chemists; basic medicines don’t need a doctor prescription)**

1. **Sanitary products**

* **Shampoo pouch and small colgate:** Did you know India has a lot of items in small pouches or small quantity? You can buy this and other small items at most local shops and chemists. Ideal if you travel and forgot something, or don’t want to carry a bottle in your travel bag.
* **Carrot soap and Neem shampoo:** The carrot soap is just an extra we put in, but we wanted to introduce you to Neem products, made from the ‘village pharmacy’ tree. Its leaves purify hair and skin – used in Ayurveda for centuries to fight infections. More on the neem tree on the back of this page.

1. **Taste of Indian Hospitality**

* **Namkeen & Goodday Biscuits:** In India, food = love. Whether you visit someone in a villa or a village home, you will get a plate of namkeen (savoury snack) and biscuits with chai.
* **Frooti pack:** India’s beloved mango drink – sweet, nostalgic and refreshing.
* **Tea bags:** Ask a neighbour, colleague or friend to teach you to make chai. Till then, explore some of the great Indian tea flavours with your tea bags.

1. **Practical Tools**

* **Metro card:** Preloaded with ₹200. Cheap, air-conditioned, and avoids traffic. This card helps you to explore the city by Metro **and** bus!
* **Water Bottle:** We advise drinking packaged water only or water filtered by RO system. In the heat you are advised to carry some water with you to stay hydrated.
* **LED Light:** You will encounter power cuts, be ready with this rechargeable LED light that also functions as a bottle opener.
* **Multiplug:** This plug lets you put in most international plugs into the common Indian outlet. Note carefully that here they use 220 Volts and you’ll need a transformer before using any American 110 V item. Also, did you notice there is a switch button next to the plug? Most plugs won’t charge if you don’t switch it on.
* **Reusable and washable shopping bag:** Plastic bags are officially banned in India. Help the environment by bringing your own bag.
* **Shagun box:** This is a luxury variant of a shagun (‘blessing’) envelope. It is common for Indian weddings to give cash. This helps the family to cover for the wedding costs. Would you prefer to give another gift, consider giving that once you visit the couple in their home after their marriage. Shagun envelopes are available at most stationary shops.
* **A page with basic Hindi phrases**
* **Some extra cultural information**
* **A few of the many markets, malls and restaurants to explore**
* **Information about us.**

**Additional information:**

1. **The Sacred Neem Tree**In India, every part of the neem tree is valued and utilized:

* **Leaves:** Crushed into paste for skin ailments, added to rice storage to repel pests, or boiled in water for antiseptic baths.
* **Bark:** Chewed for gum health or brewed into tea to purify blood.
* **Oil:**  Used in hair care (like your shampoo!), soaps and even mosquito repellents.
* **Flowers:** Symbolize purity – often offered in temples.

*Fun fact:* Neem is planted near homes for its cooling shade and protective aura.

1. **Indian Hospitality: Chai, Snacks, and ‘No means maybe’**

In India, a guest is treated as divine (Athithi Devo Bhava). Whether you step into a mansion or a roadside shack:

* **Chai & Snacks:**  You’ll *always* be handed a cup of milky chai and a plate of namkeen/biscuits within minutes. Declining is polite, but expect insistence – it’s love, not pressure!
* **The Kitchen rule:** Even if you say ‘no’, the host will likely sneak back to fry pakoras, heat sweets or prepare a meal. Surrender gracefully – it’s their joy to feed you.

**Remember:** India will overwhelm, frustrate and enchant you – often in the same day! Keep this kit handy, and feel free to ask questions to a local. They’ll be happy to help you!

Welcome home! **– Team Expat Essentials**

**Survive Your First Weeks with These Basics!**

**Greetings & Politeness**

* **Namaste / Namaskar →** Hello (with folded hands).
* **Shukriya / Dhanyavad →** Thank you.
* **Kripya… →** Please… (e.g., Kripya bill laayein? **→** Can I get the bill, please?)
* **Maaf kijiye →** Excuse me / Sorry.
* **Aap kaise hain? →** How are you?
* **Mujhe Hindi nahi aati →** I don’t speak Hindi.

**Directions & Shopping**

* **Yeh kitne ka hai? →** How much is this?
* **Thoda kam kijiye →** Can you reduce the price?
* **Auto stand/metro station kahan hai? →** Where’s the auto stand/metro station?
* **Paani kahan milega? →** Where can I find water?

**Emergencies**

* **Maddad chahiye! →** I need help!
* **Doctor ko bulao! →** Call a doctor!
* **Police ko call karo! →** Call the police. (only advised in areas where foreigners are common)

**Food & Dining**

* **Mirch kam kijiye →** Less spicy, please.
* **Pani ki bottle dena →** Give me a water bottle.
* **Pehle mein thoda sa taste karunga →** First I will taste a little bit.

**Common Expressions**

* **Aapka naam kya hai? →** What is your name?
* **Mujhe samajh nahi aaya →** I didn’t understand.
* **Bathroom kidhar hai? →** Where’s the bathroom?
* **Mujhe sirf English aati hai →** I only know English.

**Pro tip:** Add ‘-**ji**’ to names for respect (e.g., Rahul-ji, Priya-ji).

**Festivals, Jugaad & Quality**

**Festivals to Celebrate**

***Note: Festivals are fun to observe, and locals often go out of their way to include you. It’s okay to politely decline by saying ‘No, thank you - I’m just looking’, if you’re not comfortable participating. Be firm.***

1. **Rakshabandhan (August):**

* What: Sisters tie a rakhi (thread) on brothers’ wrists, symbolizing sibling love and protection.
* Do: As a man/boy: accept the rakhi and fruit or sweets, it is showing they accept you as a brother. Give some money or clothe as a gift to her. As a woman/girl: accept sweets and or gift as a token.

1. **26 January (Republic Day):**

* What: India’s constitution came into effect.
* Do: Watch the grand parade in Delhi or fly a kite (a popular tradition during Republic Day and Independence Day).

1. **15 August (Independence Day):**

* What: Freedom from British rule in 1947.
* Do: Attend flag-hosting ceremonies and sing the national anthem. Fly kites.

1. **Local Gems:**

* **Lohri** (Punjab), **Bihu** (Assam), **Ganesh Chaturthi** (Mumbai), **Pushkar Fair** (Pushkar)

**Jugaad: India’s Genius of Improvisation**

*Jugaad* = solving problems with creativity. Examples:

* **Broken Chair?** Stack bricks as legs.
* **Power Cut?** Use mobile torch with a water bottle on top.
* **Repair:** Many items like slippers, plastic chairs, umbrellas are rather being repaired than replaced. A tailor fix zippers for ₹20; cobblers resurrect shoes.
* **Quality Perspective:** In India, ‘good enough’ often means durable and adaptable. A steel trunk lasts decades, a ₹100 umbrella survives monsoons. Products are built to endure heat, dust and rough use (e.g., Ambassador cars, stainless steel utensils).

**Embrace it:** When locals say, ‘chalta hai!’ (it works!), they’re celebrating practicality, not compromise.

**Delhi Guide for Expats**

**Explore Delhi Safely & Smartly!**

**Markets**

1. **Khan Market:**

* Upscale, expat-friendly. Best for books, cafes and imported foods.

1. **Dilli Haat:**

* Open-air bazaar with handicrafts from every Indian state. Don’t accept their initial price. Bargain for Rajasthani quilts or Assam silk. (often at 30% of their initial price)

1. **INA market:**

* Opposite of Dilli haat. A large market with lots of imported foods, at the back there is a meat and fish market. Looking for something from your home country? Ask at a few shops, you might be able to find it there.

1. **Chandni Chowk (Old Delhi):**

* Historic chaos! Visit for spices, street food (Parathe Wali Gali), and fabric shops. **Avoid solo trips** – pickpockets thrive here.

**Malls**

1. **Select Citywalk (Saket):**

* Luxury brands, multiplex, and international dining.

1. **DLF Emporio (Vasant Kunj):**

* India’s most luxurious mall – Gucci, Sabyasachi, and fine art galleries.

**Famous Restaurants**

1. **Karim’s (Jama Masjid):**

* Mughlai legend. Try mutton *burra* and *sheermal*.

1. **Indian Accent (The Lodhi):**

* Global fusion. Ranked Asia’s top restaurant.

1. **Sagar Ratna (chain in many locations):**

* South Indian comfort food – *masala dosa* and filter coffee.

**Specialized Markets**

1. **Toy Market (Super Bazar, Connaught Place):**

* Floor dedicated to toys, from wooden puppets to RC cars.

1. **Lajpat Nagar Central Market:**

* Fabrics, home décor, and wedding trousseau shopping.

1. **Nehru Place:**

* Electronics and software hub. Haggle hard for gadgets.

**Safety Tips:**

* **Old Delhi:** Avoid flashy jewelry, carry minimal cash. Don’t keep your mobile out unnecessary.
* **Metro:** There are women’s coaches at first or last coach of each metro.
* **Auto-Rickshaws:** Main markets have prepaid booths for fixed rates.

**ABOUT EXPAT ESSENTIALS OPC PVT LTD**

**Your Partner in Navigating India**

**Who We Are**

Expat Essentials simplifies life for newcomers through curated kits, cultural insights, being an agent when you need to relocate, find a home in Delhi, get your AC serviced etc. Founded by expats, for expats.

**What We Offer**

1. **Welcome Kits:**Essentials for health, safety, and cultural integration (like this box!).
2. **Monthly Subscription:**

Discover India state-by-state: handicrafts, sweets, regional information. Each month another state.

1. **Delhi Expat Group:**

Join our delhiexpat.in. We are building a network to get in touch with other expats in India. User filled content with travel tips, Q&A and more.

1. **Go-to-person:**

We are ready to help you find the right person for any task. Whether you need to apply for a landline number, need to get an AC fixed, want to know where to buy a certain item, want to buy or rent another place? Contact us – we’re happy to help!

1. **Tours:**

We have Tours specially focused on finding your way in your first weeks of India. The local markets, parks, where to sport? Explore your area and Delhi with us for 3 days **to find your way around**.  
Settled in? We have a wonderful **tour by car through the countryside** just out of Delhi. Just an hour away from Delhi, but you’ll feel like you are in a totally different world.  
Want to explore more? We also provide **private Tours to Rajasthan**. We avoid crowded tourist hotspots and instead take you to hidden gems, showcasing Rajasthan’s true beauty.

**Why Choose Us?**

At Expat Essentials, we’re more than just a service – we’re a community. Here is what sets us apart: **Social impact: 10% of every kit, subscription, and tour** directly supports free education for underprivileged children through our Foundation. **Decades of Experience:** Our founder, Peter, has lived in India for nearly 20 years. His deep understanding of expat challenges and local culture ensures you get the best guidance. **Empowering locals:** We collaborate with former students of our foundation, now skilled professionals, to provide reliable services. **Holistic Support:** From relocation assistance to cultural integration, we’re your one-stop solution for life in India. **Our Mission:** To make your transition seamless while creating a positive impact on the community.