



HIMALAYAN
INSTITUTE®

Preparation Packet For:

2021 Signature Excursion: Valley of Flowers, Badrinath, Kuari Pass

To assist you in preparing for the upcoming excursion we have put together some helpful information. Please review all information contained in this document and keep a copy for reference.

Packet Overview:

- **International and Domestic Travel**
- **Passport and Visa**
- **Health and Immunizations**
- **Baggage Allowance**
- **Packing Tips**

Important Dates and Deadlines:

Action Point	Date/Deadline
Early Registration Period Closes	November 13, 2020 – Full payment required for the early rate of \$3,150
Regular Registration Period Closes	April 15, 2021 – Full payment required for the regular rate of \$3,350
Late Registration Period Closes	July 1, 2021 – Full payment due at time of registration - \$3,550
Flight Details Submitted to Excursions	July 20, 2021
Passport and Visa Details Submitted to Excursions	July 20, 2021
Flight Arrival	September 15, 2021 on flights arriving in Dehradun by 8:30am
Flight Departure	September 28, 2021 – depart from the Dehradun airport on flights 4pm or later. Choose international flights departing Delhi at least 3 hours after your domestic flight arrives or early on the morning of September 29, 2021.

International and Domestic Travel

Each participant is responsible for making their arrangements to fly to/from India and Dehradun, the starting point of the Intensive.

It is strongly recommended that you purchase trip cancellation insurance to protect from cancellation for any reason, cancellation and other fees, lost baggage, and medical assistance and/or medical evacuation in the case of an emergency. **There are many online trip insurance providers such as insuremytrip.com, Allianz, or AIG Travel Guard to name a few. Although we sincerely hope you will not need to cancel, we encourage you to research insurance options to protect you from the unexpected need to cancel!**

Check directly with the airlines, one of the online providers, or your local travel agent familiar with India travel for recommended flights. Flight schedules are typically available 10 months before a departure date. **Flights to Dehra are available will be available 6-9 months before the excursion if not sooner. Act promptly to book at the lowest fares.** The costs for international and within-India airline flights are payable directly to the airline or third party provider.

International flights, local hotels, and flight connections: Plan to arrive and depart India at Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi. It is advantageous to be ticketed on **one ticket** from your home departure city through to/from New Delhi, or possibly all the way through to/from Dehradun.

Should you wish to spend time in Delhi to get over jet lag before moving on, or to freshen up and rest during the layover between flights, there are a number of hotels in or near the airport such as:

- Plaza Premium Lounge, Terminal 3, International Arrivals at Meters and Greeters Hall
- Holiday Inn Express, Indira Gandhi International Airport T3
- Lemon Tree Hotel
- Radisson Blu Plaza Delhi Airport Hotel
- Four Points By Sheraton New Delhi, Airport Highway
- Red Fox Hotel, Delhi Airport

If you exit the Delhi airport for a hotel stay between your international and domestic flights, plan to arrive back at the airport 2 hours before your domestic flight time. Allow additional time for traffic and unexpected delays to ensure that you don't miss your domestic flight.

FLIGHTS TO/FROM INDIA – DO NOT BOOK FLIGHTS UNTIL HIMALAYAN INSTITUTE EXCURSIONS HAS RECONFIRMED EXCURSION DETAILS IN APRIL 2021

From the United States: Many U.S. and international airlines offer flights to New Delhi, India. On the East Coast, a good number of flights depart from or connect at New York (JFK or EWR in Newark, NJ). Other major airports throughout the U.S. also offer flights to India. A number of flights stop in Europe where passengers change planes.

TIPS: Non-stop flight options to/from Delhi are also available from some major U.S. cities. When booking your international return home, allow ample time for possible flight delays or changes. **International flights departing from India after midnight are recommended.**

If you would like the assistance of a travel agent to book your international and domestic flights (both from your home departure city and within India), you are welcome to contact Mr. Ashish Dut in New York by email adut@maantravel.com (preferred), or by phone at 718-526-2976 or 917-863-3030 (cell). When emailing him, please provide your name as it appears on your passport, dates of travel, city departing from and city traveling to. He will look into flight options and email the most efficient and economical routing for your consideration. *Note:* Mr. Dut is unable to assist with airline reservations being booked with miles or points.

From other countries: Numerous flight options to/from Delhi from other countries around the globe are available. Depending on the departure city, many flights from Europe are non-stop to Delhi.

TIP: If separate tickets are issued for routes within India with international connections, or one-way or round-trip within India, the checked baggage allowance shown on the domestic ticket will apply to routes within India (approx. 15kg / 33 lbs. at this time; hand baggage limit 7kg/15 lbs.). Excess weight and additional pieces incur significant additional charges payable to the airline upon check-in.

FLIGHTS TO/FROM DEHRADUN

Book your tickets so that you arrive in Dehradun by 8:30 am on September 17 (if you are registered for the add-on) or 8:30am on September 20, 2020 for the main excursion. Schedule your international flight home accordingly, and allow ample time for possible flight delays or schedule changes. Plan to depart from Dehradun on October 3, 2020 on flights leaving after 4pm. **International flights from Delhi departing after midnight are recommended.**

Passports and Visa

Passports and visas are required for travel to India. Passports must be valid for at least six (6) months **after** your return from India date. Your passport should have at least 2-3 visa/stamp blank pages in addition to the endorsement page. If you need a new passport, or if your passport will expire in less than six months after your return date, apply now to allow ample time to receive your new or reissued passport.

Refer to the separate Indian Visa Application Guideline PDF on the Resources page for additional visa application tips and guidelines.

Non-U.S. passport holders: check with your local India consulate for details and requirements for obtaining a visa.

TIP: You can now apply for an e-tourist visa more easily than a regular tourist visa. Services such as ivisa.com can assist you in this process for a small fee. See the Visa Application Guide for more information about how to apply, tips, and other information needed for the visa application.

Details on how to apply and a sample e-Visa application can be found on the Government of India website- www.indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa. E-visas for US citizens are now available for a 1 month, 1 year, or 5 year period with multiple entries.

For the regular tourist visa, there are five Application Centers for Indian visas in the United States located in Washington DC, New York, Chicago, Houston, San Francisco, and Atlanta. The state in which you live determines where your application will be processed. **Cox & Kings Global Services Pvt. Limited is the only authorized service provider for the Embassy of India and its Consulates across the USA for Visa support services. Note: According to the Consulate of India website, the Embassy of India and its Consulates in the USA do not recognize any other agency to provide Visa services.**

Visa applications and information about the online application process for a regular tourist visa can be found at www.in.ckgs.us. Read the visa instructions carefully, fill out your application online for a 10 year (120 months) **tourist visa**, and follow the detailed instructions for sending your photos, payment, and passport to Cox & Kings for processing. **Your valid passport must be submitted with your visa application.** We recommend using a traceable method for delivery of your passport to/from Cox & Kings such as prepaid UPS or FedEx.

HEALTH

Immunizations and Prescription Medication

No immunizations are required for the areas we're traveling to in India; however, it is recommended to be up-to-date on routine vaccinations. Please check the Center for Disease Control and the World Health Organization websites for their list of *recommended* vaccines. These vaccines are optional and the decision to get them is strictly a personal choice. We encourage you to discuss immunization with your health professional in order to make an informed decision based on your own personal preferences and health history.

If you are currently taking any prescription medication we recommend bringing an adequate amount with you. Although some medicines are available in India, their supply and quality are not reliable.

Considering packing a small general medicine kit as well for unexpected minor health issues that may come up while traveling including natural or allopathic medicines for coughs, cold, headaches, body pain, upset stomach, diarrhea, vomiting, dehydration (electrolytes or oral rehydration salts).

Natural ways to enhance your health

Himalayan Institute Chyawanprash is highly recommended in preparation for your journey to India, and anytime. Described in ancient Ayurvedic texts, Chyawanprash is a synergy of specifically selected herbs and fruits in a nutritive tonic. The principle herb Amla (Amalaki) is one of the world's most concentrated naturally occurring sources of antioxidant Vitamin C. A spoonful a day of this 2,000 year old formula is a tasty way for people of all ages and constitutions to nourish mind and body, while supporting healthy immune function.* Take it regularly for several months before your departure to strengthen and build your immune system.

To order Chyawanprash, call 800-822-4547 (press 4) or visit www.HimalayanInstitute.org.

Packing and Baggage Allowance

Baggage Allowance

Baggage allowance varies by carrier and is subject to domestic and international airline restrictions. Check with your airline to know your exact baggage allowance. Most international airlines allow 1 or 2 checked bags weighing 50 pounds each while domestic airlines within India limit checked baggage to 1 bag weighing up to 33 pounds and carry-on baggage to 1 bag weighing no more than 15 pounds.

Although airline baggage allowance may be higher, the **Himalayan Institute provides transport and portage for a maximum of 1 duffel bag and 1 carry-on bag**. Please speak with us in advance if you will be travelling with excess luggage. Additional fees may apply and will be higher if not pre-arranged. Please attach the luggage tag (to be mailed to you) to your checked baggage and affix the purple HI luggage stickers to your checked bag and carry-on bag to help excursion staff ensure baggage reaches the proper destination. The purple luggage stickers are helpful in aiding excursion participants to identify each other during travel as well.

Packing

Baggage allowance - one duffel and one daypack

The following items are essential:

- Soft-shell duffel bag or something similar (non-wheeled preferred)
- Sleeping bag rated to at least 20 degrees or lower
- Comfortable, waterproof hiking shoes/boots
- 2 — 3 active wear T-shirts
- 2 — 3 long sleeve trekking/active wear shirts
- Medium to heavy weight thermal base layers (tops and bottoms)
- 1 medium or heavyweight fleece jacket
- Down jacket
- Wind and waterproof layers (jacket with hood and pants)
- 2 — 3 trekking pants
- Gloves (consider bringing a light weight and warm pair)
- Warm hat
- Hiking socks (4 — 5 pairs)
- Lightweight travel or pack towel
- Two 1 - liter or one 2 - liter water bottle or hydration bladder*
- Sun hat
- Sunglasses with UV protection
- Walking stick / trekking poles
- Sunscreen and lip balm
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Personal toiletries, including soap and shampoo

- Wet Wipes or other hand sanitizer
- Prescription medicine, if required
- Day pack with rainproof cover
- Lightweight stuff sack or bag for excess items on camping day**

*If you are only planning to bring a hydration bladder to carry water, you should plan to bring another bottle which can hold hot water. On camping days we will be drinking boiled, filtered water.

**Bag weight is restricted to 22lbs/10 kg on camping days. Excess luggage may be left at a secure location on camping days. It is advisable to bring a lightweight stuff sack, large plastic compressible bag, or small cloth duffel to store items that aren't required for overnight camping.

Other things to consider:

- Vest (down or fleece)
- Balaclava face mask or face wrap
- Waterproof liner for inside your duffel (or a large garbage bag)
- Slip-on shoes and/or rubber sandals
- Rain poncho
- Extra Zip Lock or plastic bags
- Camera and accessories
- Power bank (portable charging device) (kept in carry-on not checked bag)
- International converter kit for rechargeable items, or bring extra batteries
- Plug adaptor
- TSA luggage locks (locks keep zippers closed during handling, and help prevent accidental opening)
- Pocket knife (packed in checked baggage, not in carry-on)
- Toilet paper and/or pocket tissues
- Laundry soap (for hand laundry)
- Earplugs
- Electrolyte drink mix
- Snack bars, trail snacks

Things to leave at home:

- Hair dryer, curling iron, hair straightener, electric shaver, iron, hot water pot, heating coil, and similar electrical items
- Non-essential electronics
- Incense and candles
- Excess clothing

Packing Tips

Your luggage (**day pack and duffel**) should be capable of withstanding rain and rugged treatment.

Minimize baggage weight to 22lbs or be sure to bring a lightweight Stuff Sack or Compression Sack for excess items/baggage that you choose to leave behind on camping days. The weight limit for portage on camping days is 22lb/10kg. Consider bringing a small waterproof bag/sack to keep inside your day pack to provide additional protection for electronics and layers.

NOTE: If you are taking any prescription medication, bring an adequate amount with you. Although some medicines are available in India, their supply and quality are not reliable.

Excess Baggage – Additional charges may apply; inform the tour organizer in advance if you have baggage in excess of one duffel and one day pack to avoid paying higher fees.