

Culture Shock

Traveling to India for the First Time

Updated on May 9, 2016 LadyFlashman

<https://wanderwisdom.com/travel-destinations/culture-shock-in-india>



Experiencing Culture Shock in India

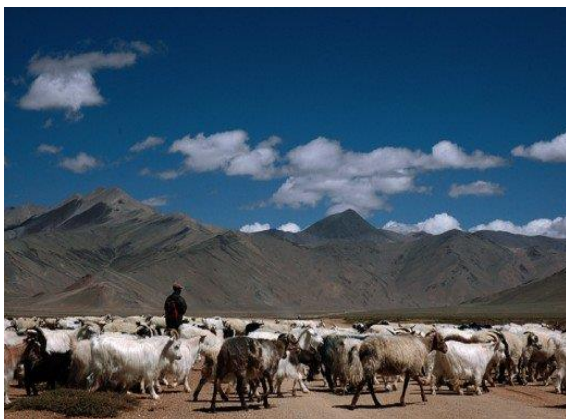
What is culture shock? It is the impact of traveling from a familiar culture and trying to adjust to an unfamiliar one. India especially is renowned for causing Westerners culture shock and this page is going to show you what is most likely to befuddle and confuse you when traveling to this beautiful but crazy country! I visited India alone and as a solo woman traveler experiencing the sensory overload of India could be a little much at times. I hope that by writing this article about what could give you culture shock in India may help you plan a first trip there.

This article is not trying to put you off visiting India - but rather to show you what is most likely going to make you think "argh! this wasn't in the guide books!"

The diversity of India - Your culture shock may be different to mine!

Take a look at the two photos below...the left one is Ladakh in the North and the right one is Kerala in the South - the same country but very different landscapes. This is a gigantic country and it isn't just the landscapes that are so diverse - the people, cultures and languages are too. So depending on where you go and travel to throughout India, your experience of the culture change could be very different from place to place. I started off in Delhi and traveled in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh before heading to Ladakh. The contrast between each place was very different, Ladakh is like another country compared to Delhi! My point is, if you travel through this vast country you will experience different levels of culture shock and you will love some places and hate others and that is ok! You do not have to love everywhere you visit!

The differing landscapes in India



Shepherds in Ladakh



Tea estate in Munnar

The mass of humanity in India can be overwhelming!

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If you like your personal space, forget it because you will not be getting any here! You will have to get used to being shoved, pinched and in close proximity to people all day, with people shouting in your face to get in their rickshaw, buy their wares or give them money. Nonetheless, Indian people are clean, well dressed, extremely friendly and hospitable.

30 India is all that you would imagine, chaotic, colourful, cultural and full of contrasts. The wealthy rubbing shoulders with the poor in the big cities, cows and dogs everywhere, not to mention autorickshaws, motorbikes and literally millions of people. However, India is full of splendour as well, and rich in history. Deeply religious, Indians are very proud and knowledgeable about their Hindu history and their religion touches their lives every day.

35 Truly, a multicultural place, with the majority being Hindu, and as per everywhere else in the world a high percentage of Muslims, a smattering of Buddhists, Jains, Sikhs and a sprinkle of Christianity in there too, generally, all living in harmony.

40 India is Beautiful...but dirty - There is a huge garbage problem

These photos aren't just small areas of India that you may occasionally see. Trash is everywhere in India. It is (or would be) a beautiful country and all this litter everywhere is just horrendous. You will see people collecting trash to sell - like water bottles. You will see

45 cows eating the trash, which gets caught up in their gut and kills them. The state of the Ganges is disgusting, polluted and dirty - and it is meant to be spiritual.

India is a very dirty place and the depth of the filth is something you just cannot comprehend until you have seen it.

Pollution is absolutely everywhere in India



Canal in Chennai



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