

THINGS TO REMEMBER IN BANGALORE

- Do take taxis or private cars (either from the hotel or those booked with reputable taxi companies) rather than walk in the cities, unless you know the area. On foot, you will be followed by auto-rickshaws, taxis and other vehicles, whose drivers honk incessantly to persuade you to accept a ride.
- Auto rickshaws are also preferred, pay as much as the meter shows, if it is after 8-9pm, you may be required to pay the fare+50%.(that's the norm). If possible prefer using prepaid Auto
- Do drink only bottled water that is provided by hotels and restaurants, and make sure the cap is sealed when the bottle is presented to you. Use this water for everything, including tooth-brushing. If you get a Coke or a soda, make sure it is served in a closed can and don't take ice in it (or in any drink).
- Do bring along heaps of business and professional cards – everyone will ask for one and everyone will offer you his or hers. Even when you are meeting 10 people from the same company in the same room, you'll be expected to give each person a card
- Do try and remember the names of the people you meet and address them by name – most of the Indian businesspeople I met used my first name (and expected me to use theirs) right away.
- Don't over-schedule yourself. It takes 30-90 minutes to reach some offices from downtown city hotels because traffic is heavy and unpredictable. I would aim for one meeting a day rather than two if it's possible, unless the second meeting is a dinner meeting or something late in the evening. By US standards, Indians eat dinner on the late side (8-9pm or later).
- Don't engage in public displays of affection (PDA) with members of the opposite sex. You often see men and boys holding hands or with their arms draped around each others' shoulders, and you sometimes see women walking arm-in-arm, but rarely do men and women touch in public and I never saw any overt displays of affection between men and women, which I assume means PDA isn't appropriate.
- Don't give money to begging women and children – they will approach you on the street or knock on the windows of cars you're riding in. Distributing even a coin or two makes many more children materialize instantly. On the other hand, I often carried apples or candy bars with me and passed them out when asked (but once or twice, this led to fights between the recipient and other kids).
- Don't assume everyone eats meat and drinks alcohol. Many Indians are "veg" (eat only vegetarian foods) and others don't drink. I never saw a restaurant with beef on the menu as Hindus revere the cow. Be careful what you order when

eating with Indian people and be prepared to give up beefsteak and the burgers. Follow your host's lead in this department.

- Don't go off on your own or wander into unknown parts of the city by yourself; let someone know where you are all the time, and always carry a photocopy of your passport (not the original) on your person. There is a high price paid in the black market for foreigners' passports and it would be easy for a novice traveler in India to be taken advantage of or end up in a dangerous situation because he/she misreads what appears to be a friendly overture.
- Take off your shoe before entering into any religious place
- Shaking hands is the most formal way of greeting someone; you will embarrass people if you try to kiss them on the cheek as a greeting.
- Get prepared to experience some horrible traffic (worse if it is raining)..Start Early on your schedules
- Get a local to take you out shopping, they know the best places and can get you better deals than if you went alone
- Don't buy silver/ivory articles or peacock feathers in bulk.
- Don't purchase travel tickets through strangers or unauthorized travel agents or tour operators.
- There are lots of clubs, pubs near the M.G. Road, Brigade road area. Try to leave these places before 10pm as it is not safe after that time.
- Most places will not accept credit cards for small amounts, carry a few hundred rupees.