

# Delhi



Delhi, India's fascinating and frenzied capital, rewards those who refuse to allow its less-lovable elements to overshadow their stay. With patience, perseverance and a sense of humour, the creaky old city becomes increasingly more loveable the more time you spend here.

Some Delhi attributes work surprisingly well: the plentiful ATM machines, the train ticket booking system, the luxurious top-end hotels and the impressive metro system, whilst others – the greedy rickshaw drivers and crooked con-artists – stubbornly refuse to toe the line.

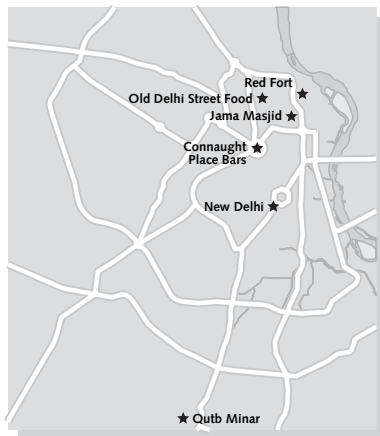
Broadly speaking, Delhi comprises two distinct halves. Spacious and planned, southern New Delhi was built in the early 20th century as the British imperial capital, with Lutyens' neoclassical architecture, wide boulevards and open spaces. This area remains a political and business hub, its southern and western suburbs home to semipermanent foreigners – many embassy workers.

Meanwhile, to the north, Old Delhi was once the capital of Islamic India, built by the Mughals in the 17th century. Today it's an eclectic blend of ancient history and modern chaos, housing many of Delhi's greatest sites, including Jama Masjid and the sprawling Red Fort.

As one of India's busiest international gateways, Delhi is a natural starting and ending point for travel into Rajasthan. With just a day or two to spare, you can easily dip beneath Delhi's surface, soaking up the medieval bazaars of Old Delhi, visiting top-notch museums, reviving over a frothy cappuccino, then taking your dining pick from anything from a local street-food extravaganza to a perfect wood-fired pizza.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Wander the **Red Fort** (p96), an evocative testament to the Mughal emperors
- Stroll through Lutyens' **New Delhi** (p101), experiencing Victorian imperial designs on a grand scale
- Gape at the **Jama Masjid** (p98), India's largest mosque, built by Shah Jahan
- Head out to the soaring **Qutb Minar** (p126) tower, built to proclaim the arrival of Islam
- Sip a mojito in a slick **Connaught Place bar** (p117), then chow down on **Old Delhi street food** (p113) near Chandni Chowk for a tenth of the price



AREA: 1483 SQ KM

POPULATION: 12.8 MILLION

TELEPHONE CODE: 011

## THE EIGHT INCARNATIONS OF DELHI

Remains of many of Delhi's eight cities are still visible today; here's a quick list of what was where, and when.

### Qutb Minar area:

**First City (1060)** Lal Kot was founded by the Tomar Rajput clan, as the first 'official' Delhi incarnation.

**Second City (1303)** Siri, a citadel located near modern Hauz Khas village, was built by Central Asian king Ala-ud-din.

**Third City (1321)** Tughlaqabad (p126), a fortified city, was built by Ala-ud-din's successor; though short-lived, its ruins remain.

**Fourth City (1326)** Jahanpanah, a second Tughlaq creation, was proclaimed.

### New Delhi Area:

**Fifth City (1354)** Firozabad (p99), a fortified palace, was founded by Firoz Shah Kotla.

**Sixth City (1533)** Purana Qila (p104), was founded by Afghan king Sher Shah Suri, located near the present day India Gate.

### Old Delhi Area:

**Seventh City (1638)** Shahjahanabad (Old Delhi) was built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan.

### New Delhi Area:

**Eighth City (1931)** New Delhi was inaugurated by the British, as the jewel in their colonial crown.

## HISTORY

Delhi's history is as colourful and tumultuous as it is ancient. Many have desired and invaded the city, but the old saying that 'whoever establishes a new city at Delhi will doubtless lose it' has so far always come true – it remains to be seen whether its modern-day takeover by the moneyed middle classes will suffer the same fate.

Officially, Delhi has comprised eight distinct cities (only the last one of which was actually named Delhi), though in practice, there have been many periods between the foundation of each separate 'city' during which control over Delhi changed hands multiple times. For a brief run-down of its various major incarnations, see the box above.

The first four cities of Delhi were all to the south, around the area where the Qutb Minar still stands. The far older settlement of Indraprastha, though, which featured in the epic Mahabharata over 3000 years ago, is the earliest known incarnation of Delhi (not officially counted as one of its eight incarnations) and was centred just east of India Gate in New Delhi.

In 1060, a Rajput clan named the Tomars founded Lal Kot, the first 'official' Delhi. This was followed by Siri (p107), a citadel built in 1303 by the unpopular king Ala-ud-din,

member of the Central Asian Turk clan, the Khiljis, who took Delhi in 1290. His lieutenant, Ghiyus-ud-din Tughlaq, followed in Ala-ud-din's footsteps, inaugurating Delhi's third incarnation, Tughlaqabad, in 1321, whose evocative ruins still stand (p126). The fourth Delhi, Jahanpanah, dates from 1326, a Tughlaq creation of Ghiyus-ud-din's successor.

The fifth Delhi, Firozabad (p99), consisting largely of a big fortified palace, was built in 1354 by next-in-line Sultan Firoz Shah Kotla in present-day New Delhi. Then, in 1398, Delhi fell prey to the whims of Central Asian warlord Tamerlane, and was completely sacked. Following a period of wrangling for power by the remaining locals, the area was re-established by the Punjabi Lodi sultans, whose mark can still be seen today in the tombs at the Lodi Gardens (p107).

The sixth city of Delhi, however, was not to appear until 1533, when the Afghan king Sher Shah Suri, also known as Emperor Sher Shah, took the city and built a citadel at Purana Qila (p104), near the spot where the ancient Indraprastha is thought to have stood. Emperor Shah Jahan, grandson of the famous Akbar who moved his court to the doomed Fatehpur Sikri (p142), constructed Shahjahanabad, Old Delhi, in 1638, thus shifting the Mughal capital back from Agra.

Finally, the eighth Delhi, New Delhi, was built almost 300 years later by the British, following the eventual fall of the Mughal empire and the rise of the British Raj. The moving of the capital of British India from Kolkata (Calcutta) to Delhi was announced in 1911 but construction was not finished, and the city officially inaugurated, until 1931. In 1947 it became the capital of modern India.

## ORIENTATION

Although Delhi sprawls for miles (its official city limits encompass 1483 sq km), it's relatively easy to navigate. Probably the best way to get oriented is to begin by taking a stroll around central Connaught Place, upon which the characters of southern New Delhi and northern Old Delhi seem to converge.

Just north of Connaught Place, you'll find New Delhi railway station, the starting point for most journeys to Rajasthan and beyond. On the opposite side of the chaotic Chelmsford Rd is Paharganj, a labyrinthine conglomeration of bargain-basement hotels, souvenir shops and 'tourist restaurants', which services the needs of most of Delhi's budget travellers.

Further north, you'll reach Old Delhi, home to the Red Fort, Jama Masjid, and Chandni Chowk, Old Delhi's congested principal thoroughfare. In Old Delhi, you'll also find the main Inter State Bus Terminal (ISBT). Further north again, you'll find Majnu-ka Tilla, also known as the Tibetan Colony, a peaceful budget accommodation alternative to Paharganj.

Directly south from Connaught Place is India Gate and the impressive buildings of Lutyens' New Delhi. Broad, commanding Rajpath runs from India Gate to the Presidential Palace. Beyond this, to the south and west are affluent South Delhi suburbs and numerous pleasant shopping areas. Many top-end hotels are here, in the 'diplomatic enclave' of Chanakyapuri, tucked between central Delhi and the airport to the south-west.

Further south still, you'll find the Qutb Minar (p126), and the crumbling ruins of Tughlaqabad (p126).

To get around, either take an auto-rickshaw or taxi trip, for an 'on the ground' orientation, or the spanking new metro system (p125) which will whisk you – in underground serenity – to your chosen destination.

## Maps

The free *AA City Maps Delhi Map*, which can be picked up in cafés and tourist spots, is a good basic map, with information on Delhi monuments, embassy phone numbers, train times and even a diagram of the airport. For exceedingly more detail, Eicher produces the 245-page *Eicher City Map* (Rs 290) and *Delhi Road Map* (Rs 75), available at most bookshops and newsstands.

## INFORMATION Bookshops

Delhi has dozens of wonderful bookshops, many conveniently located around Connaught Place. Other good areas to browse for books are the Khan Market (p120) and the Daryaganj Sunday Book Market (p119). For cut-price titles, you'll find plenty of roadside book stalls to peruse; beware that pages might be badly set, eclectically ordered, or missing that crucial last page telling you whodunnit.

### CONNAUGHT PLACE AREA

**Bookworm** (Map p100; ☎ 23322260; 29 B-Block; ☎ 10.15am-7.30pm)

**English Book Store** (Map p100; ☎ 23415031; 17 L-Block; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Sat)

**New Book Depot** (Map p100; ☎ 23320020; 18 B-Block; ☎ 11am-8pm Mon-Sat)

### KHAN MARKET

**Bahri & Sons** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 24694610; ☎ 11am-7.30pm Mon-Sat)

**Full Circle Bookstore** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 24655641; ☎ 10am-7.30pm Mon-Sat)

### SOUTH EXTENSION

**Timeless** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 24693257; 46 Housing Society, South Extension Part 1; ☎ 10am-7pm) Tucked away in a back lane, Timeless specialises in quality coffee-table books and offers complimentary tea.

## Cultural Centres & Libraries

Many of Delhi's libraries and cultural centres host exhibitions and seminars, dance, music and theatrical performances. Check listings (opposite) for details.

**Alliance Française** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 43500200; 72 Lodi Estate)

**British Council** (Map p100; ☎ 23710111; 17 Kasturba Gandhi Marg)

**Delhi Public Library** (Map p97; ☎ 23979297; SP Mukherjee Marg)

**India Habitat Centre** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 43662026; Lodi Rd)

**Italian Embassy Institute of Culture** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 26871901; 50E Chandragupta Marg, Chanakyapuri)

**Max Mueller Bhavan** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23329506; 3 Kasturba Gandhi Marg)

**Tibet House Library** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 24611515; 1 Institutional Area, Lodi Rd)

## Internet Access

There aren't too many internet cafés around Connaught Place, but Paharganj makes up for this with a whole slew of places to check your email. Most charge from Rs 5 to print a black-and-white A4 page and Rs 30 to scan or write a CD.

**Cyber Graphics** (Map pp102-3; Khan Market; per 30min Rs 50; ☎ 10.30am-7pm)

**Cyber Station** (Map p110; Main Bazaar, Paharganj; per 30min Rs 10; ☎ 7.30am-10pm)

**DSIDC Cyber Café** (Map p100; N-Block, Connaught Pl; per hr Rs 50; ☎ 9am-8pm Mon-Sat)

## Laundry

Most budget and midrange hotels offer a laundry service for a decent rate (top-end places may charge an arm and a leg for a shirt and trousers). If you're feeling earth-conscious, lug your laundry to the 'eco friendly garment care' **Guardini Drycleaners** (Map pp102-3; Khan Market; ☎ 24622000; dry cleaning coat/suit/skirt Rs 185/280/175; ☎ 11am-7.30pm Mon-Sun).

## Media

The charmingly old-fashioned, but very accurate, *Delhi City Guide* (Rs 20) and *Delhi Diary* (Rs 10) both include a Delhi map, as does *Explore Delhi* (Rs 20). *First City* (Rs 30) is a slick monthly magazine with comprehensive listings/reviews, while the fortnightly *Time Out Delhi* magazine (Rs 30) makes a great, hip introduction to the city. All are available at most newsstands and bookshops.

## Medical Services

There are plenty of pharmacies around Connaught Place, and in all Delhi's markets. **All India Institute of Medical Sciences** (AIIMS; Map pp92-3; ☎ 26588500, ambulance 1099; Ansari Nagar) Has a 24-hour ambulance emergency service.

**Apollo Hospital** (Off Map pp92-3; ☎ 26925858; www.apollohospitaldelhi.com; Mathura Rd, Sarita Vihar)

**Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23365525; Baba Kharak Singh Marg) Another hospital with 24-hour emergency facilities.

**East West Medical Centre** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 24623738; www.eastwestrescue.com; B-28 Greater Kailash Part 1) A private clinic housed in an unassuming white building opposite N-Block Market.

## Money

### ATMS

ATMs (24 hours) linked to international networks are plentiful throughout Delhi. Most accept Visa, MasterCard, Cirrus, Maestro and American Express.

**Bank of Punjab** (Map p110; Hotel Ajanta, 36 Arakashan Rd, Paharganj)

**Citibank** Basant Lok (Map pp92-3; Vasant Vihar); cnr C-Block & K-Block (Map p100; Connaught Pl); Jeevan Bharati Bldg (Map p100; 3rd fl, Connaught Pl)

**HDFC** (Map p110; Main Bazaar, Paharganj)

**ICICI** Connaught Pl (Map p100; 9A Phelps Bldg); Paharganj (Map p110; Rajguru Rd).

**UTI** (Map p110; Rajguru Rd, Paharganj)

## FOREIGN CURRENCY & TRAVELLERS CHEQUES

The following change major currencies and travellers cheques.

**American Express** (Map p100; ☎ 23719506; A-Block, Connaught Pl; ☎ 9.30am-6.30pm Mon-Fri, to 2.30pm Sat) Also has an Amex-only ATM.

**Central Bank of India** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 26110101, ext 3584; Ashok Hotel, Chanakyapuri; ☎ 24hr)

**Chequepoint Foreign Exchange** (Baluja Forex; Map p110; ☎ 51541523; 4596 Main Bazaar, Paharganj; ☎ 9am-8.30pm) Cash advances on MasterCard and Visa.

**Thomas Cook** (Map p100; ☎ 23416585; C-33, Connaught Pl; ☎ 10am-4pm Mon-Fri; 10am-1pm Sat) Exchanges travellers cheques, foreign currency, and provides cash advances on credit cards. Also arranges international money transfers. There's another branch at the Imperial Hotel (p113).

## INTERNATIONAL MONEY TRANSFERS

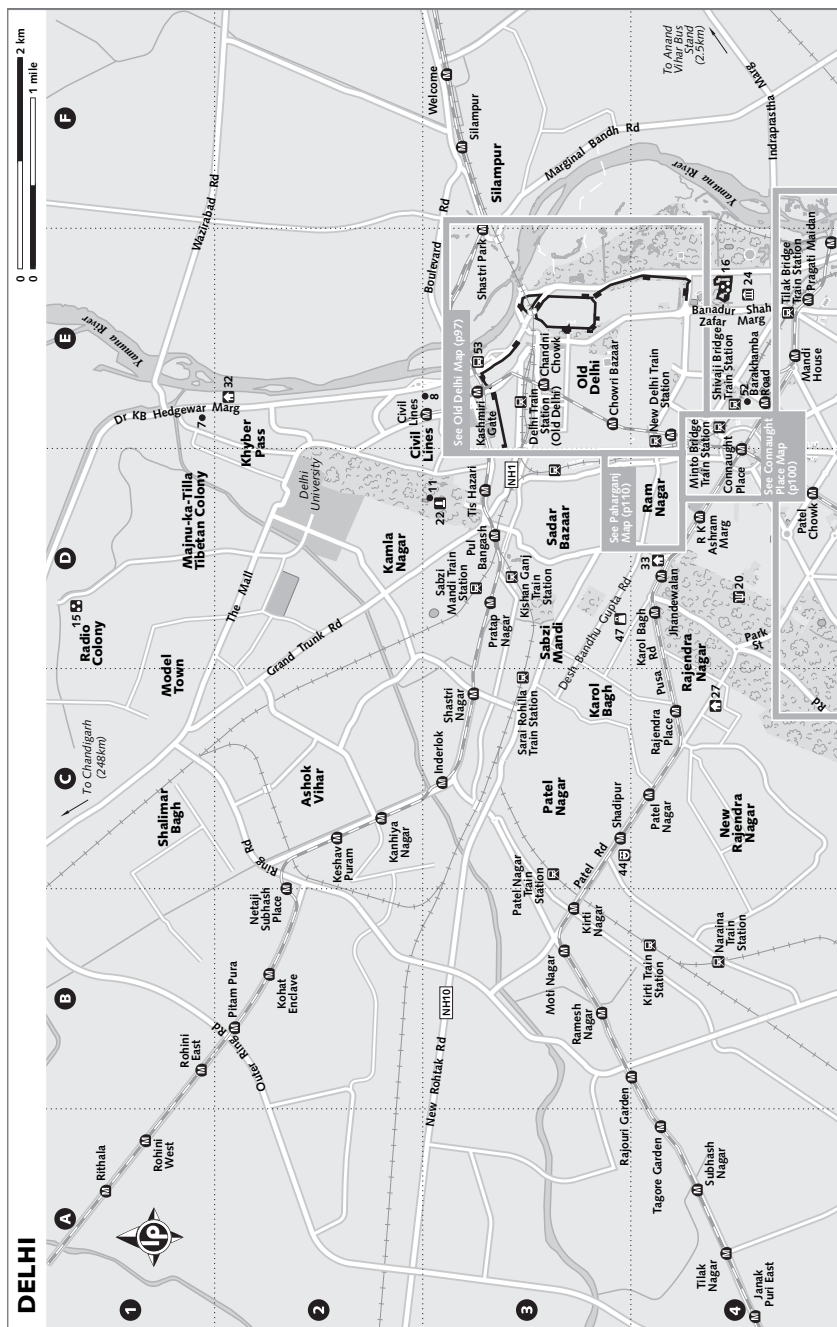
**Thomas Cook** (see above) arranges money transfers from its Connaught Place branch.

**Western Union** (Map p100; ☎ 23311133; Sita World Travels, F-Block, Connaught Pl; ☎ 9.30am-9pm Mon-Sat, to 6pm Sun) There are numerous citywide branches, including a counter at the Connaught Place post office branch (see Post & Telephone).

## Opticians

Delhi is a good place to pick up new frames, glasses or contact lenses. A good, swift central choice is listed here.

**Optical Corner of India** (Map p100; D-block, Connaught Pl; ☎ 10am-1.30pm, 2.30-7pm daily) Prescription and



<b>INFORMATION</b>	Mutiny Memorial.....	22	D3	<b>DRINKING</b> ☞	Delhi's Devils.....(see 51)
All India Institute of Medical Sciences.....	Rail Transport Museum.....	23	C6	Lizard Lounge.....	40
Bangladeshi Embassy.....	Shankar's International Dolls Museum.....	24	E4	Oxygen.....	41
Citibank ATM.....	Tughlaqabad.....	25	F8	<b>ENTERTAINMENT</b> ☞	
Concern India Foundation.....	<b>SLEEPING</b> ☞			PVR Anupam 4.....	42
East West Medical Centre.....	Home Away From Home.....	26	D7	PVR Priya Cinema.....	43
Foreigners' Regional Registration Office.....	IDA House.....(see 32)			Satyam Cineplex.....	44
Nirmal Hriday (Missionaries of Charity).....	Lhasa House.....(see 32)			<b>SHOPPING</b> ☞	
Shishu Bhavan (Missionaries of Charity).....	Master Guest House.....	27	C4	Dilli Haat.....(see 34)	
Timeless.....	Peace House.....(see 32)			Fab India.....(see 46)	
<b>SIGHTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>	Radisson Hotel.....	28	B7	Greater M-Block Market.....	45
Akshardam Temple.....	Shanti Palace.....	29	B7	Greater N-Block Market.....	46
Ashoka Pillar.....	The Manor.....	30	F6	Hauz Khas Village.....(see 18)	
Ashtaang.....	Uppal's Orchid.....	31	A8	Karol Bagh Market.....	47
Bahai Temple.....	White House.....(see 32)			Lajpat Nagar Central Market.....	48
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Firoz Shah Kotla.....	<b>EATING</b> ☞			Sarojini Nagar Market.....	49
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Lakshmi Narayan Temple.....	Govinda's Sweets.....(see 36)			Air Canada.....	52
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nonprescription glasses available with a one-day service. Also check out the lenses which 'allow more room for the eyelashes'.

## Photography

Among the usual photographic services (including digital needs), the following both snap passport photos (four/10 for Rs 70/120), which take 10 minutes.

**Delhi Photo Company** (Map p100; ☎ 23320577; 78 Janpath, Connaught Pl; ☎ 9.30am-7pm Mon-Sat)

**Kinsey Bros** (Map p100; ☎ 23324446; 2 A-Block, Connaught Pl; ☎ 10am-7pm Mon-Sat) Downloading from memory card to CD costs Rs 170 for an unlimited amount of photos.

## Post & Telephone

Delhi has scores of telephone kiosks, where you can make calls for cheaper than from your hotel.

**DHL** (Map p100; ☎ 23737587; Vandana Bldg, 11 Tolstoy Marg; ☎ 9.30am-8pm Mon-Fri, to 9pm Sat) A reliable courier option.

**Post offices** Connaught Pl (Map p100; 6 A-Block; 10am-7.30pm Mon-Sat); New Delhi main post office (GPO; Map pp102-3; ☎ 23364111; Baba Kharak Singh Marg; ☎ 10am-1pm & 1.30-5pm Mon-Sat, 10am-1pm Sun) The main post office is 500m southwest of Connaught Pl, and

has a poste-restante facility; ensure mail is addressed to GPO, New Delhi, 110001. The Connaught Pl branch is most conveniently located but has no poste restante.

## Tourist Information

Beware of the many profit-driven, overpriced and substandard travel agencies and others posing as 'tourist information centres' all over Delhi. Do not be fooled – head straight to the government tourist office listed below.

For contact details of Indian regional tourist offices ask at the Government of India Tourist Office, check state government tourist office listings in the back of *First City* (see Media, p91) or dial the operator on ☎ 197.

**Government of India Tourist Office** (Map p100; ☎ 23320005/8; www.incredibleindia.org; 88 Janpath; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, to 2pm Sat); international airport (☎ 25691171; ☎ 24hr) Dispenses advice, maps and brochures, and can arrange guided tours of Delhi and beyond. The Janpath branch also investigates tourism-related complaints.

## DANGERS & ANNOYANCES

If you're a first-time visitor to the city, it's important to remember Delhi's reputation as India's centre for con artists and touts. Forewarned, however, is forearmed, and

you'll generally find scammers fairly innocuous if you simply ignore them or call their bluff. Failing that, there's a special 'tourist police' squad, in clearly marked jeeps (each with English-speaking police, usually including one woman) stationed at tourist centres, including the international airport, New Delhi train station and Janpath. Female travellers should also take a look at p372.

## Scams

There are a number of scams operating in Delhi – be extra cautious around tourist hubs. See Dodging Delhi's Dodgy Dealers (below) for a summary of practical tips.

## HOTEL TOUTS

Touts often materialise in the form of taxi-wallahs, most frequently at the international airport. These sneaky drivers will try to persuade you that your hotel is full, poor value, or is no longer there at all, and will try to take you elsewhere. Some will go one step further, 'kindly' taking you to a 'tourist office' where a colleague in cahoots will phone your hotel on your behalf, and corroborate the driver's story. In reality, of course, he's talking to someone in the next room. The taxi-wallah

will then drop you at the hotel of *his* choice, where he gets a plump commission and you get a high room rate.

## TOURS & TOURIST INFORMATION SCAMS

No matter what the touts might tell you, there are only a couple of official, government-run tourist offices in the city. The others are privately owned, often offering inflated prices. For tourist information, only go to the tourist offices listed on opposite.

You should be even more careful when booking multiday tours out of Delhi. Lonely Planet receives frequent reports from travellers who booked and paid upfront, only to find that their 'all inclusive tour' failed to include entrance fees to major sites, provided terrible accommodation, or simply didn't travel to the places they were promised. Several travellers, too, have been sold 'lake' or 'river cruises', only to be ferried up to Kashmir, where violence and instability remain a security worry.

## TRAIN TICKET SCAMS

At the New Delhi train station, touts may try to stop you from booking tickets at the upstairs (1st-floor) International Tourist

## DODGING DELHI'S DODGY DEALERS

- Ignore taxi touts who tell you that your hotel is closed/full/burning down and try to take you to their 'booking office'. Tell persistent taxi drivers that you've paid for your hotel in advance, so there's no point taking you elsewhere and, if they continue, ask that they stop the car so that you can write down the registration plate number. Just to be sure, call or email to confirm your hotel booking, if possible, 24 hours before check-in.
- Walk on by the touts who congregate at the New Delhi Railway Station, and who'll do their best to convince you that the International Tourist Bureau is closed/being renovated/just across the road. They're lying, to which warning signs all over the station attest.
- Ignore touts who surreptitiously dirty one of your shoes or offer you a free, trial ear-cleaning in one ear.
- Agree in advance a fee for any journey by taxi or rickshaw, or insist the meter is put on (checking that it's been reset since the last passenger). If you run into any problems, threaten to telephone the tourist or transport police or, if you're near a prepaid booth, suggest you accompany the driver there to sort out the dispute.
- Beware of unscrupulous travel agents who'll try to sell you expensive, low standard tours, or trips to trouble spots (including Srinagar). If you're planning on booking a tour, only use agents accredited with organisations such as the Travel Agents Association of India, the Indian Association of Tour Operators and the Adventure Tour Operators Association of India – ask to see their accreditation.
- Never accompany any friendly individual who stops to offer help or directions, then suggests you should go to visit their shop: it'll likely be hard-sell all the way.



centre there's an exquisitely carved marble lotus; water channelled from the Shahi Burj used to flow to here.

Relics from the Mughal era are displayed at the **Museum of Archaeology** (Map p97; admission Rs 2) in the Mumtaz Mahal, still further south along the eastern wall.

### Sound-&Light Show

Each evening a one-hour **sound-and-light show** (adults/children Rs 50/20, children under 3 free; ☎ in English 8.30pm Feb-Apr, 9pm May-Aug, 8.30pm Sep-Oct, 7.30pm Nov-Jan, no show on Mondays) re-creates historical events associated with the Red Fort. Tickets are available from the ticket kiosk at the fort.

### CHANDNI CHOWK

Old Delhi's chronically congested main thoroughfare, **Chandni Chowk**, has it all: noise, traffic, hassle, and produce ranging from fear-some bras to fake beards. There are plenty of tempting street treats at little, unnamed stalls, and even a McDonalds, should the particular urge strike. But it was not always so. Once the pinnacle of Mughal Delhi sophistication, this was a serene street of merchants and expensive homes, with a tree-lined canal flowing down the centre. You'll still be able to spot evidence of its former glory in some crumbling, intricately carved *haveli* (traditional residence) frontages.

At the eastern (Red Fort) end, there's the 16th-century **Digambara Jain Temple** (Map p97) You need to remove your shoes and all leather before entering this temple. The **Jain Mandir Hospital for Birds** (Map p97; ☎ 23090921; donations welcomed; ☎ 9am-6pm) here is run by the Jains, who believe in the preservation of all life – even the scruffiest of street pigeons. The western end of Chandni Chowk is marked by the mid-17th-century **Fatehpuri Masjid** (Map p97) mosque, commissioned by one of the emperor Shah Jahan's wives. The stretch in-between is best tackled either on foot, or by cycle-rickshaw, whose drivers are adept at weaving through packed traffic.

### SUNEHRI MASJID

Just south of the Red Fort is the **Sunehri Masjid** (Map p97). In 1739 Nadir Shah, the Persian invader, stood on the roof of this mosque and watched calmly while his soldiers conducted a bloody massacre of Delhi's inhabitants.

### JAMA MASJID

This striking **mosque** (Map p97; camera/video each Rs 150; ☎ non-Muslims 8.30am-12.30pm & 1.45pm-30min before sunset, closed noon-2pm Fri) is the largest in India and the final architectural extravaganza of Shah Jahan, begun in 1644 and not completed until 1658. The mosque has three gateways, four towers and two minarets standing 40m high, and is constructed of alternating vertical strips of red sandstone and white marble. The main entry point is gate No 3, the courtyard inside big enough to hold 25,000 people.

For Rs 20 it's possible to climb the southern minaret (women must be accompanied by a male), where the views from the top, especially of New Delhi, are superb.

Visitors should dress respectfully and remove their shoes at the top of the stairs (pay the shoe-minder Rs 5 upon collection). There are **guides** (per person Rs 50) for hire inside; request accredited identification as travellers have reported fake (expensive) guides who try to fool visitors into paying an entry fee (mosque admission is free).

### RAJ GHAT

South of the Red Fort, on the banks of the Yamuna, a simple black-marble **platform** (Map p97) marks the spot where Mahatma Gandhi was cremated following his assassination in 1948.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Indian prime minister, was cremated just to the north, at **Shanti Vana** (Forest of Peace; Map p97) in 1964. Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi, who was assassinated in 1984, and grandsons Sanjay (who died in 1980) and Rajiv (died 1991) were also cremated in this vicinity.

The Raj Ghat area is now a beautiful park. The **Gandhi Memorial Museum** (Map p97; ☎ 23311793; admission free; ☎ 9.30am-5.30pm Tue-Sun) inside it contains memorabilia and photos.

### CORONATION PARK

North of Old Delhi, in a desolate field known as **Coronation Park** (Map pp92-3), stands a lone granite obelisk commemorating the crowning here of King George V as Emperor of India. It's hard to imagine that this forgotten and windswept site was the place where, in 1877 and 1903, grandiose theatrical durbars (ceremonial gatherings), featuring the full set of Indian rulers, paid homage to Queen Victoria and her successor, Edward VII.

### FESTIVALS IN DELHI

Some of Delhi's festival dates and venues are variable – for this year's details and tickets to events listed below, contact the Government of India Tourist Office (p94). Delhi celebrates Diwali (p360) and Dussehra (p359) with particular verve. During Dussehra, theatrical renditions of the Ramayana are held.

**Republic Day** (26 Jan) At Rajpath, incorporating an impressive military parade, complete with floats, elephants and fly-past. Tickets for 'grandstand' viewing positions can be had for Rs 150 to Rs 300 and standing-room for Rs 20 to Rs 50.

**Beating of the Retreat** (29 Jan) The closing of the Republic Day celebrations is marked by the Beating of the Retreat outside the presidential palace, also entailing military pageantry. Tickets (from Rs 20 to Rs 50) are available for the dress rehearsal the day before, and, more scarcely, for the event itself (from Rs 100).

**Delhi Flower Show** (Jan/Feb) This event spans three to four days.

**Mango Festival** (Jun) Running for several days at the Talkatora Gardens, this festival includes awesome mango exhibitions and mango-eating competitions.

**Independence Day** (15 Aug) India celebrates Independence from Britain in 1947 and the prime minister addresses the nation from the Red Fort ramparts.

**Qutb Festival** (Oct/Nov) This festival runs for about a week at Qutb Minar, and features classical Indian music and dance performances.

### Connaught Place & Around

#### CONNAUGHT PLACE (CP)

The geographical heart of New Delhi is **Connaught Place**, designed by Robert Tor Russel in 1932 in architectural imitation of the famous Royal Crescent in Bath, England. Because of its composition – three concentric, colonnaded circles with seven radial roads running out from them (for some reason known as Radial Rd 2 to 8, rather than 1 to 7) – it can be a bit confusing at first to navigate, though there is some method to the madness.

The inner circle (officially known as Rajiv Chowk, though this name is seldom used) is packed with expensive shops, Western chain restaurants, bookshops and street vendors. It's divided into blocks, from A to F. You'll see which block you're on from the letter painted onto the sides of buildings at each radial road junction, and often on individual establishments' signs.

In the centre of the circle is the calm **central park**, (☎ sunrise to sunset Tue-Sun) which makes a welcome place to sip a takeaway coffee in relative peace.

The middle circle, known, unsurprisingly, as 'Middle Circle', is the smallest and least significant of the three circles, with a backstreet feel and just a scattering of hotels and small eating establishments.

The outer circle (also known as 'Connaught Circus' or 'Indira Chowk' but commonly referred to simply as part of Connaught Place),

is a road teeming with breakneck traffic, and plenty of cafés, bars and hotel accommodation. Like the inner circle, it's divided into blocks: this time, lettered from G through to N.

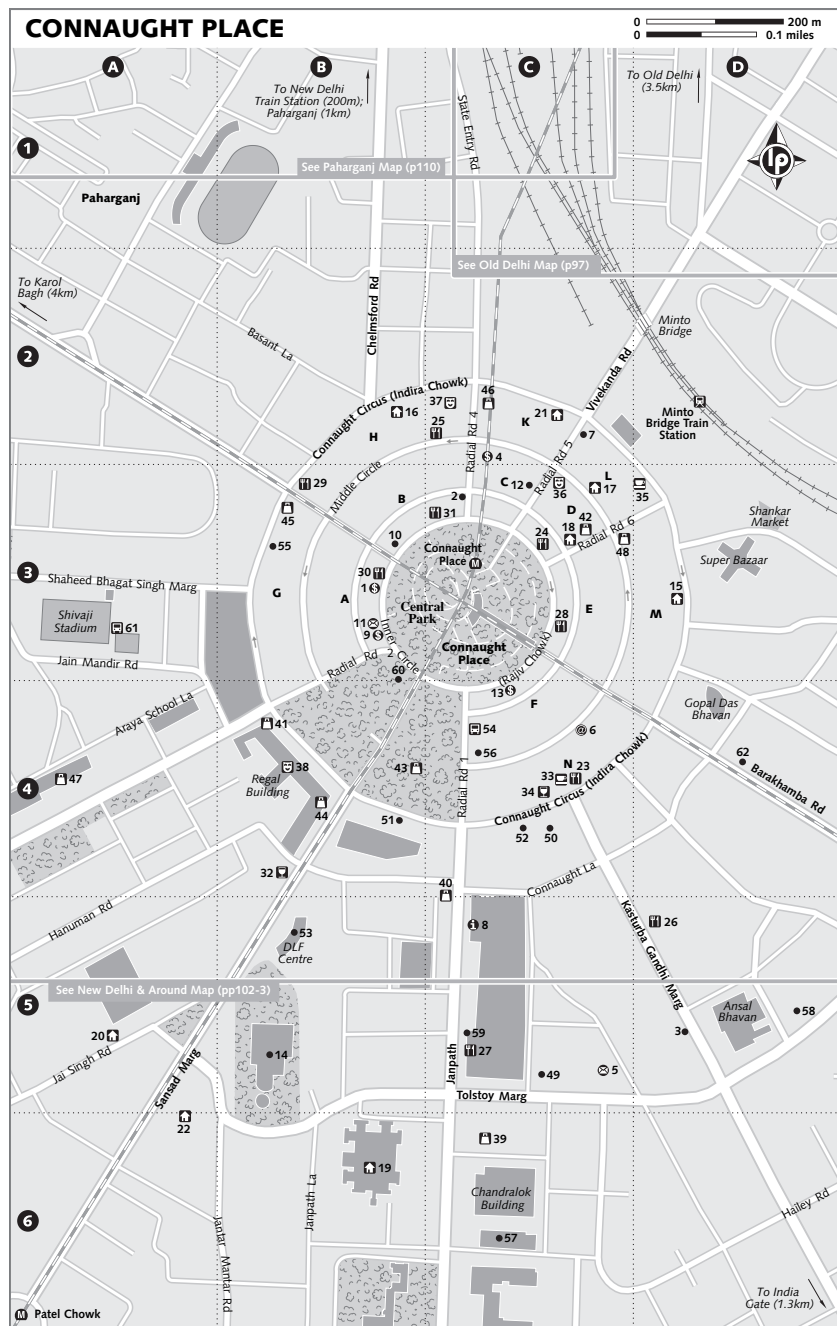
To keep things simple, we've used only 'Connaught Pl' in addresses throughout this chapter. Connaught Place addresses have a block letter and a number, but these are not always presented in a uniform way: some establishments use '50N Block', while others adopt 'N-50' or other variations. For shopping on and around Connaught Place, see p119.

### JANTAR MANTAR

Just a short stroll south from Connaught Place, this impressive collection of salmon-coloured **structures** (Map p100; Sansad Marg; Indian/foreigner Rs 5/100, camera/video Rs 4/25; ☎ 9am-sunset) was one of Jaipuri Maharaja Jai Singh II's amazing observatories. Constructed in 1725 it's dominated by a huge sundial, which looks a lot like a staircase leading to nowhere, known as **Samrat Yantra**, or Prince of Dials. Other instruments were built to plot the course of heavenly bodies and predict eclipses and, though much of the original marble coating has long since been reappropriated, it's well worth a visit, not only for the learned astronomer.

### FIROZ SHAH KOTLA

The ruins of Firozabad (the fifth city of Delhi; p89), erected by Firoz Shah in 1354, can be found at **Firoz Shah Kotla** (Map pp92-3; Indian/



INFORMATION		EATING		Optical Corner of India.....42 C3	
American Express.....	1 B3	Banana Leaf.....	23 C4	Palika Bazaar.....	43 B4
Bookworm.....	2 C3	Embassy.....	24 C3	People Tree.....	44 B4
British Council.....	3 D5	Kwality Restaurant.....	(see 44)	Rangarsons Music Depot.....	(see 21)
Citibank.....	(see 51)	Nizam's Kathi Kabab.....	25 C2	Rikki Ram.....	45 B3
Citibank ATM.....	4 C2	Parikrama.....	26 D5	Soma.....	46 C2
Delhi Photo Company.....	(see 8)	Sagar.....	(see 21)	State Emporiums.....	47 A4
DHL.....	5 C5	Saravana Bhavan.....	27 C5	Vedi Tailors.....	48 C3
DSIDC Cyber Café.....	6 C4	The Spice Route.....	(see 19)		
English Book Store.....	7 C2	United Coffee House.....	28 C3		
Government of India Tourist Office.....	8 C5	Veda.....	29 B3	<b>TRANSPORT</b>	
ICICI ATM.....	9 B3	Wenger's.....	30 B3	Aeroflot.....	49 C5
Kinsey Bros.....	(see 9)	Zen.....	31 C3	Air France.....	50 B4
New Book Depot.....	10 B3			Air India.....	51 C4
Post Office (Branch).....	11 B3	<b>DRINKING</b>		Delhi Transport Corporation.....	52 C4
Thomas Cook.....	(see 19)	1911.....	(see 19)	El Al Israel Airlines.....	(see 58)
Thomas Cook.....	12 C3	Agni.....	32 B4	Emirates.....	53 B5
Western Union.....	13 C4	Barista.....	33 C4	Ex-Servicemen's Air Link	
		Blues.....	34 C4	Transport Service.....	54 C4
<b>SIGHTS &amp; ACTIVITIES</b>		Costa Coffee.....	35 D3	Gulf Air.....	55 B3
Jantar Mantar.....	14 B5	DV8.....	(see 44)	Indian Airlines.....	56 C4
Malhotra Building.....	(see 56)			Japan Airlines.....	57 C6
		<b>ENTERTAINMENT</b>		KLM - Royal Dutch Airlines.....	58 D5
		Odeon Cinema.....	36 C3	Kumar Tourist Taxi Service.....	(see 21)
		PVR Plaza Cinema.....	37 C2	Lufthansa Airlines.....	59 C5
		Regal Cinema.....	38 B4	Malaysian Airlines.....	(see 62)
<b>SLEEPING</b>				Pakistan International Airlines.....	(see 62)
Hotel Blue.....	15 D3	<b>SHOPPING</b>		Prepaid Autorickshaw Booth.....	60 B3
Hotel Fifty Five.....	16 B2	Central Cottage Industries Emporium.....	39 C6	Qantas.....	(see 58)
Hotel Jukaso Inn.....	17 C3	Emporium.....	(see 40)	Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation.....	(see 27)
Hotel Palace Heights.....	18 C3	Handpaper World.....	(see 40)	Scandinavian Airlines.....	(see 19)
Imperial Hotel.....	19 B6	Janpath (Tibetan) Market.....	40 C4	Shivaji Stadium Terminal.....	61 A3
YMCA Tourist Hostel.....	20 A5	Khadi Gramodyog Bhawan.....	41 B4	Singapore Airlines.....	62 D4
York Hotel.....	21 C2	New Prominent Tailors.....	(see 46)		
YWCA International Guest House.....	22 A6				

foreigner Rs 5/100, video Rs 25; ☀ sunrise-sunset), just off Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg. In the fortress-palace is a 3rd-century-BC, 13m-high sandstone Ashoka pillar where locals burn incense on Thursday nights to appease the spirits thought to live inside. The remains of an old mosque and a well can also be seen in the area, but most of Firozabad's ruins were used for the construction of later cities.

**LAKSHMI NARAYAN TEMPLE (BIRLA MANDIR)**

Directly west of Connaught Place is the large and welcoming Hindu **Lakshmi Narayan Temple** (Map pp92-3; Mandir Marg; ☀ 4am-1.30pm & 2.30-9pm), erected in 1938 by the rich industrialist BD Birla and opened in 1939 by Mahatma Gandhi. The main temple is dedicated to Lakshmi, goddess of wealth, while its soothing gardens make for serene respite from a Delhi day.

**New Delhi & Around**

New Delhi, designed by British architect Edwin Lutyens, was inaugurated on 9 February 1931 as the new administrative centre of the British empire. Though Lutyens himself hated Indian architecture, he eventu-

ally sought a compromise, creating buildings with neoclassical solidity but the occasional local flourish. Though some might argue that the two styles never really synthesised successfully, there's no doubting that New Delhi's commanding edifices remain as impressive today as when they formed the focal point of the British Raj.

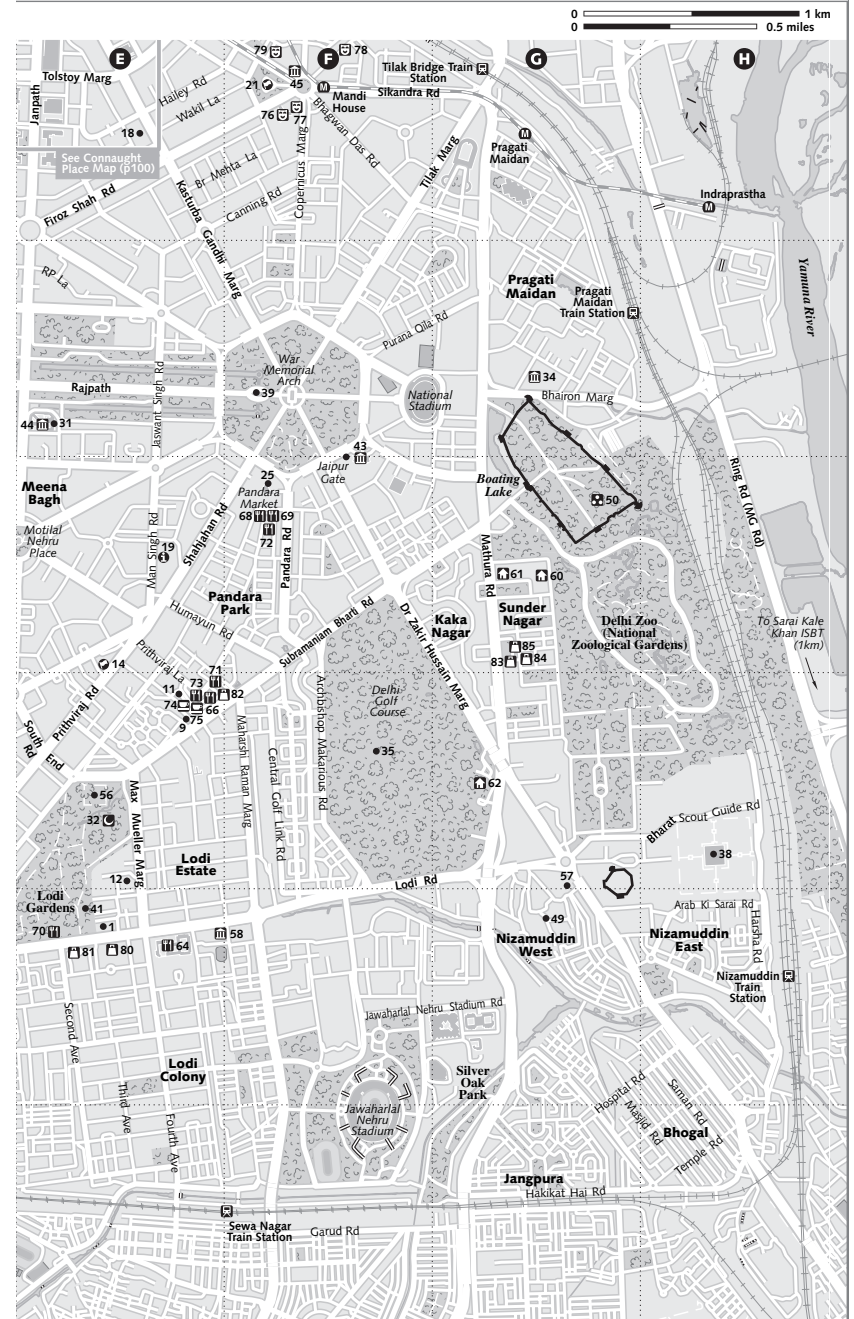
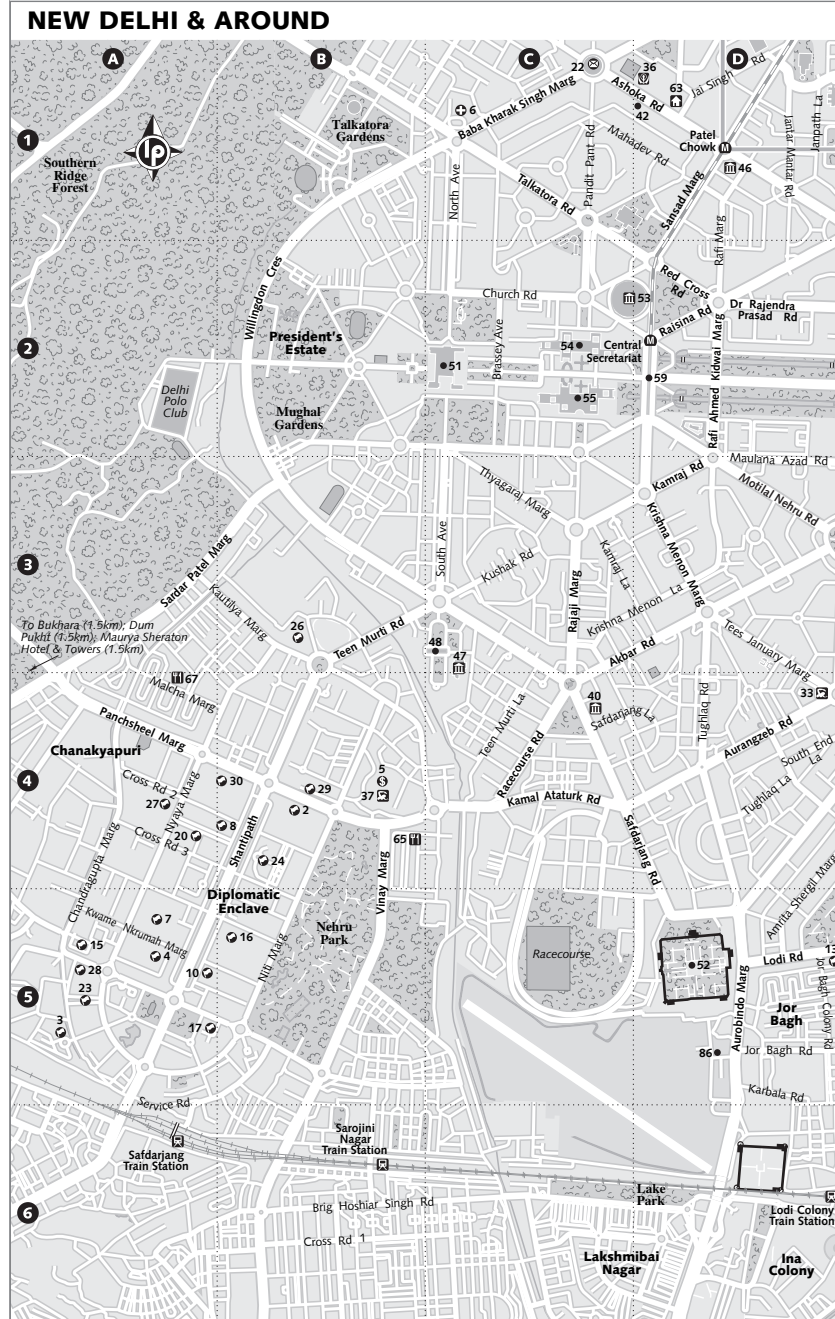
**RAJPATH**

Immensely broad **Rajpath** (Kingsway) is a focal point of Lutyens' New Delhi where, on 26 January each year, thousands gather to witness the spectacle of the Republic Day parade (see p99).

At the eastern end of Rajpath is **India Gate** (Map pp102-3), around which families and couples like to mill aimlessly, particularly on weekends and warm evenings. Designed by Lutyens in 1921, it comprises a 42m-high memorial arch and bears the names of around 90,000 Indian army soldiers who died in WWI, the North-West Frontier operations and the 1919 Afghan fiasco. You'll also see an empty stone platform, which once held a statue of King George V, now banished to a remote spot in Coronation Park (p98).

DELHI

DELHI





INFORMATION		SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES			
Alliance Française.....	1 E5	Archaeological Survey of India.....	31 E2	Maharani Guest House.....	61 G3
Australian Embassy.....	2 B4	Bara Gumbad.....	32 E4	Oberoi.....	62 G4
Bahri & Sons.....(see 82)		Claridges Hotel.....	33 D4	YWCA Blue Triangle Family Hostel.....	63 D1
Bhutan Embassy.....	3 A5	Crafts Museum.....	34 G2	<b>EATING</b> ☺	
Canadian Embassy.....	4 A5	Delhi Golf Club.....	35 F4	All American Diner.....	64 E5
Central Bank of India.....	5 B4	Gurdwara Bangla Sahib.....	36 D1	Basil and Thyme.....	65 B4
Cyber Graphics.....(see 82)		Hotel Samrat.....	37 B4	Chona's.....	66 E4
Dr Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital.....	6 C1	Humayun's Tomb.....	38 H4	Fujiya.....	67 A4
Dutch Embassy.....	7 A5	India Gate.....	39 F2	Gulati.....	68 F3
French Embassy.....	8 B4	Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum.....	40 C4	Ichiban.....	69 F3
Full Circle Bookstore.....	9 E4	Lodi Gardens.....	41 E5	Lodi, The Garden Restaurant.....	70 F5
German Embassy.....	10 A5	Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga.....	42 D1	Mrs Kaur's Premium Cookies.....	71 E4
Guardini Drycleaners.....	11 E4	National Gallery of Modern Art.....	43 F3	Pindi Restaurant.....	72 F3
India Habitat Centre.....(see 64)		National Museum.....	44 E2	The Kitchen.....	73 E4
India International Centre.....	12 E4	National Museum of Natural History.....	45 F1	<b>DRINKING</b> ☺ ☑	
Irish Embassy.....	13 D5	National Philatelic Museum.....	46 D1	Big Chill.....	74 E4
Israeli Embassy.....	14 E3	Nehru Memorial Museum.....	47 C3	Café Turtle.....	75 E4
Italian Embassy.....	15 A5	Nehru Planetarium.....	48 C3	<b>ENTERTAINMENT</b> ☺	
Italian Institute of Culture.....(see 15)		Nizam-ud-din's Shrine.....	49 G5	Kamani Auditorium.....	76 F1
Japanese Embassy.....	16 B5	Purana Qila.....	50 G3	Sangeet Natak Akademi.....	77 F1
Malaysian Embassy.....	17 A5	Rashtrapati Bhavan (President's House).....	51 C2	Shri Ram Centre.....	78 F1
Max Mueller Bhavan.....	18 E1	Safdarjung's Tomb.....	52 D5	Triveni Kala Sangam.....	79 F1
Ministry of Home Affairs (Foreigners Division).....	19 E3	Sansad Bhavan.....	53 C2	<b>SHOPPING</b> ☺	
Myanmar (Burma) Embassy.....	20 A4	Secretariat (North Block).....	54 C2	C Lal & Sons.....	80 E5
Nepalese Embassy.....	21 F1	Secretariat (South Block).....	55 C2	Jor Bagh Market.....	81 E5
New Delhi Main Post Office (GPO).....	22 C1	Sikander Lodi's Tomb.....	56 E4	Khan Market.....	82 E4
New Zealand Embassy.....	23 A5	SOS Childrens Village.....	57 G4	Mittal Tea House.....	83 G3
Pakistani Embassy.....	24 B4	Tibet House.....	58 E5	Regalia Tea House.....	84 G3
RTDC Tourist Reception Centre.....	25 F3	Vijay Chowk.....	59 D2	Sunder Nagar Market.....	85 G3
Sri Lankan High Commission.....	26 B3	<b>TRANSPORT</b>			
Swiss Embassy.....	27 A4	Bikaner House.....(see 25)			
Thai Embassy.....	28 A5	Indian Airlines (Safdarjung Airfield Office).....		86 D5	
Tibet House Library.....(see 58)		<b>SLEEPING</b> ☺			
UK Embassy.....	29 B4	Devna.....(see 60)			
US Embassy.....	30 B4	La Sagrta Tourist Home.....		60 G3	

At the opposite end of Rajpath is **Rashtrapati Bhavan** (President's House; Map pp102-3), flanked by the two large **Secretariat buildings** (Map pp102-3) which sit on a small rise known as Raisina Hill. Topped with small domes, they now house the Finance and External Affairs ministries.

The official residence of the president of India, Rashtrapati Bhavan was completed in 1929. The palatial building – larger than Versailles – exhibits a blend of Mughal and Western architectural styles, includes the famous 23m-long Durbar Hall decorated with coloured marble, which took 20 years to complete. To its west is a **Mughal garden** (admission free, photography prohibited), styled on Mughal pleasure gardens by Lutyens, which occupies 130 hectares. The garden is only open to the public between mid-February and early March – for dates contact the Government of India Tourist Office (p94).

Prior to Independence, Rashtrapati Bhavan was the residence of Mountbatten, India's last

viceroy, and required a vast retinue of servants to maintain the 340 rooms and extensive gardens: legend has it that there were 418 gardeners alone – 50 of them boys whose sole job was to chase away the birds.

North of Rajpath, standing at the end of Sansad Marg, is the circular, colonnaded **Sansad Bhavan** (Map pp102-3) which houses India's parliament. If you're keen to watch a parliamentary debate in progress (usually in Hindi), contact your embassy in Delhi, who will need to supply you with an introductory letter.

#### PURANA QILA

Back down Rajpath and east of India Gate, the crumbling citadel of **Purana Qila** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 24353178; Mathura Rd; Indian/foreigner Rs 5/110, children under 15 free, video Rs 25; ☺ sunrise-sunset) is known as the sixth city of Delhi (p89), built in 1533 by Afghan ruler Sher Shah. It's said to stand on the site of Indraprastha (p89) and marks a brief interruption in Delhi's Mughal his-

tory, the Afghan king defeating Mughal ruler Humayun, before Humayun regained control of India in 1545.

Entry is through the west gate, from which there are good views of Delhi, and beside which is a small **archaeological museum** (admission free; ☺ 10am-5pm Mon-Thu). Inside you'll find calming gardens, Sher Shah's beautifully patterned **Qila-i-Kuharn Mosque** (Mosque of Sher Shah) and, near the south gate, the small, octagonal red-sandstone tower, the **Sher Mandal**, built as an observatory and later used by emperor Humayun as a library. It was while descending the stairs of this tower in 1556 that the emperor slipped and sustained injuries from which he later died. This, sadly, isn't the Purana Qila's only grizzly tale: during Partition in 1947, Muslim refugees flocked here to await transport onward to Pakistan; many thousands of them didn't make it, being slaughtered on the way.

#### MUSEUMS & GALLERIES

##### National Philatelic Museum

Close to the parliament at Sansad Bhavan, this **museum** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23036727; Sadar Patel Chowk, Sansad Marg; admission free, photography prohibited; ☺ 10am-5pm Mon-Fri) is tucked away in the Dak Bhavan post office. There are over 1600 exhibits, covering every single stamp issued since Independence, some extremely beautiful – though you really need to be a dedicated philatelist to fully appreciate the experience.

##### Crafts Museum

Near Pragati Maidan, due north of Purana Qila, is this tranquil **museum** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23371817; Bhairon Marg; admission free; ☺ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun), containing a collection of traditional stalls displaying rural India's various crafts. There are craft demonstrations along with artisans selling direct to the buyer, all part of a contrived, yet still very impressive, 'village life' complex.

In addition to the reconstructed village homes is a fantastic indoor museum with several well-kept galleries; you'll also find a library and a nice fixed-price craft shop.

##### National Museum

On Janpath, not far from its junction with Rajpath, is the **National Museum** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23019272; www.nationalmuseumindia.gov.in; Janpath; Indian/foreigner Rs 10/300, camera Indian/foreigner Rs 20/300, video prohibited; ☺ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun), with exhibits including Indian bronze, terracotta and wood

sculptures dating back to the Mauryan period, miniature and mural paintings, musical instruments, manuscripts, tapestries, tribal masks, swords, spears and plenty more. The most important exhibits are all grouped on the ground floor and, handily, an audio tour is included in the price of the ticket (though you'll need to leave a credit card, passport, or cash deposit). It's well worth a half-day of wandering, and perfect for a rainy monsoon morning.

Next door is the **Archaeological Survey of India** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23010822; Janpath; ☺ 9.30am-1.30pm & 2-6pm Mon-Fri). Publications available at this office cover all the main sites in India.

##### National Gallery of Modern Art

This **gallery** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23382835; Jaipur Gate; Indian/foreigner Rs 10/150, photography prohibited; ☺ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun), formerly the maharaja of Jaipur's grandiose Delhi residence, displays more than 300 contemporary paintings by Indian artists. Upstairs houses the impressive permanent collection, consisting of largely post-1930s works and representing all of India's great modern painters, while the ground floor is home to changing exhibits. Check *Time Out* or *First City* (p91) for current exhibition listings.

##### Nehru Memorial Museum & Planetarium

Teen Murti Bhavan, the former residence of Jawaharlal Nehru (India's first prime minister), just off Teen Murti Rd, was built as Flagstaff House for the British commander-in-chief, and now houses a **museum** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23016734; admission free; ☺ 9.30am-5.30pm Tue-Sun) on Nehru's life and the Independence movement.

In the grounds there's also a **planetarium** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23014504; 45min show Rs 15; ☺ in English 11.30am & 3pm Tue-Sun), one of Nehru's personal passions, which holds various wonders including equipment used by India's first cosmonaut in the 1980s.

##### Indira Gandhi Memorial Museum

The former residence of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has been converted into a **museum** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23010094; 1 Safdarjung Rd; admission free; ☺ 9.30am-4.45pm Tue-Sun). On show are some of her personal belongings, including the sari (with blood stains) she was wearing at the time of her assassination, as well as newspaper clippings, letters and photos, and the clothing

her son, Rajiv, was wearing when he too was assassinated, in 1991. On the way out, you'll pass an enclosed garden in which she walked moments before she was shot by two of her Sikh bodyguards. The path has been covered in crystal; the clear glass portion marks the spot where she collapsed.

### National Museum of Natural History

Although nothing to rave about, this **museum** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23314849; 2nd fl, FICCI Auditorium, Tansen Marg; admission free; ☞ 10am-5pm Tue-Sun) houses some noteworthy fossils such as the 160-million-year-old femur of a sauropod, the largest land animal ever to have roamed the earth. Other exhibits include stuffed armadillos and a Tibetan yak, making it a curiously diverting place to spend an hour or so.

### Rail Transport Museum

Housing almost 30 locomotives and some interesting old carriages, this **museum** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 26880939; Chanakypuri; admission Rs 10, children Rs 3, video Rs 100; ☞ 9.30am-5pm Tue-Sun) will be a hit with railway buffs. Exhibits include the maharaja of Mysore's personal train, an unusual 100-year-old monorail steam train that runs on Sundays, and various oddities such as the skull of an elephant that charged a mail train in 1894, and lost. It's an especially fun place for kids, who can travel round and round on the miniature steam train ride (an extra Rs 10/5 for adults/children), or paddle out onto the kayaking pond.

### Sulabh International Museum of Toilets

Southwest of the city centre, this quirky **museum** (Off Map pp92-3; ☎ 25053646; Sulabh Complex, Mahavir Enclave, Palam Dabri Rd; admission free; ☞ 10am-5pm Mon-Sat) houses a small, intriguing collection of toilet-related paraphernalia (from 2500 BC to modern times). A free guided tour brings the loos to life.

### TOMBES & SHRINES

#### Humayun's Tomb

Emperor Humayun had this impressive early-Mughal **tomb** (Map pp102-3; Indian/foreigner Rs 10/250, video Rs 25; ☞ sunrise-sunset), built for him in the mid-16th century by Haji Begum, his Persian-born senior wife. Elements in its design – a squat building with high arched entrances that let in light, topped by a bulbous dome and surrounded by formal gardens – were to be refined over the years to

eventually create the magnificence of Agra's Taj Mahal. Haji Begum is buried beside her husband, a fitting reward for a woman who camped outside, overseeing its construction, until it was complete.

### Nizam-ud-din's Shrine

Across from Humayun's tomb, off Mathura Rd, is the popular **shrine** (Map pp102-3; ☞ 24hr) and tank of the great Muslim Sufi saint Nizam-ud-din Chishti, who died in 1325, aged 92. Its present incarnation dates from 1562, and comprises a marble building, with the inner tomb surrounded by lattice screens.

Other tombs in the area include the later grave of Princess Jahanara, favourite daughter of Shah Jahan, who stayed with her father in Agra's Red Fort during his imprisonment by Aurangzeb. Amir Khusru, disciple of Nizam-ud-din and considered by many to be the first Urdu poet, also has his tomb here, just in front of Nizam-ud-din's own mausoleum.

On most Thursdays and Fridays (from around 2pm to 8pm), the shrine plays host to hypnotic Qawwali (devotional singing), accompanied by a harmonium and tabla drums, providing a heady soundtrack with which to imbibe the land-that-time-forgot atmosphere of the tightly packed district of Nizamuddin surrounding the shrine itself.

### Safdarjang's Tomb

The mid-18th-century **Safdarjang's tomb** (Map pp102-3; Aurobindo Marg; Indian/foreigner Rs 5/100, video Rs 25; ☞ sunrise-sunset) at the western end of Lodi Rd was built by the nawab of Avadh for his father, Safdarjang, and is one of the last examples of Mughal architecture created before the final remnants of the great empire collapsed. As such, it's an ornate and frothy reminder of all that was glorious and grand about the Mughals.

### TEMPLES

#### Gurdwara Bangla Sahib

Delhi's largest **Sikh temple** (Map pp102-3; Ashoka Rd; ☞ sunrise-sunset), with its striking golden domes, is constructed at the site where the eighth Sikh guru, Harkrishan Dev, stayed when he visited Delhi in 1664. The temple tank contains water believed to have healing properties; locals still drink from it, though you might want to give that a miss. Dress conservatively, covering

your head, and stop in at the information centre near the entrance to pick up a free registered guide.

### Bahai House of Worship (Lotus Temple)

This 1986 **Bahai Temple** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 26444029; Kalkaji; ☞ 9am-7pm summer, 9.30am-5.30pm winter, closed Mon), stunningly shaped like a white lotus, is especially spectacular at dusk when it's floodlit. It's set among pools and well-tended gardens, and welcomes adherents of all faiths to pray or meditate silently according to their own religion.

Remove your shoes before entering, turn off mobile phones and refrain from speaking. Photography is prohibited inside.

### Akshardham Temple

On Delhi's outskirts is this huge, extravagant **temple** (Map pp92-3; www.akshardham.com; Noida Turning, National Hwy 24; admission free; ☞ 9am-6pm Tue-Sun), a pink-sandstone and white-marble edifice inaugurated in 2005 and containing around 20,000 carved deities. Try to visit during weekdays, since the manifold attractions (including a musical fountain, a large-screen cinema and an animatronics 'Hall of Values') are best attempted when it's not too busy.

### OTHER SIGHTS

#### Lodi Gardens

In these well-tended **gardens** (Map pp102-3; Lodi Rd; ☞ 6am-8pm; admission free), popular with joggers and young lovers alike, are the crumbling 15th- and 16th-century tombs of a string of Sayyid and Lodi rulers, including Mubarak Shah (d 1433), Ibrahim Lodi (d 1526) and Sikander Lodi (d 1517). The **Bara Gumbad** (Map pp102-3) at the centre of the gardens is a 15th-century tomb that sports some interesting interior plasterwork, while if minitrees are your thing, head to the gardens, home to the **National Bonsai Park**, in which you can stroll Gulliver-like. It's especially nice here around 6pm, when the sun begins to set, the bats to swoop, and the tombs are illuminated, hiding – from a distance at least – centuries of graffiti.

#### Tibet House

Tibet House contains a small **museum** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 24611515; 1 Lodi Rd; admission Rs 10, photography prohibited; ☞ 10am-1pm & 2-5.30pm Mon-Fri), exhibiting ceremonial items brought out of Tibet when His Holiness the Dalai Lama fled following Chinese

occupation. Pieces include sacred manuscripts and *thangkas* (Tibetan cloth paintings).

There's also a library (p90), and the **Tibet House Book Corner**, which also sells Tibetan CDs (Rs 250), postcards (Rs 10), incense (from Rs 25) and prayer flags (Rs 70).

### Hauz Khas Village

This urban **village** (Map pp92-3) surrounded by parkland and centred around a pleasant deer park, once held the reservoir for the second city of Delhi – Siri (p89) – the remains of which are visible on the western edge of the village. Today, Hauz Khas is a tiny, chic south-Delhi hideaway, filled with fashionable art galleries and boutiques.

A number of crumbling tombs are scattered about the reservoir area, including **Firoz Shah's tomb** (Map pp92-3), commemorating the founder of the fifth city of Delhi, while the woodlands surrounding it are a popular destination for early-morning joggers and late-evening canoodlers. Also part of the former old city of Siri, just east of Hauz Khas Village, is the **Moth-ki Masjid** (Map pp92-3), said to be one of the finest mosques in the Lodi style.

### ACTIVITIES

#### Golf

**Delhi Golf Club** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 24362235; Dr Zakir Hussain Marg; foreigners weekdays/weekends Rs 1980/2640 ☞ sunrise-sunset) is an old-fashioned institution with well-tended grounds; on weekends its fairways are pleasingly filled to capacity with Delhi notables, worthies and old-timers.

### Massage & Ayurvedic Treatments

**Ashtaang** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 24101802; E-2 Anand Niketan; ☞ 9am-6pm), opposite Delhi University (South Campus), offers authentic Kerala Ayurvedic treatments, such as *sirodhara* (warm oil drizzled on the forehead; 45 minutes costs Rs 1000) and *pzhichal* (oil-intensive body massage; 1½ hours costs Rs 1200).

**Beyond Looks** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 26141517; lower ground fl, 15 Poorvi Marg, Vasant Vihar; ☞ 8.30am-8.30pm) offers an olive/coconut oil massage (one hour costs Rs 400), shiatsu (one hour costs Rs 600) and *sirodhara* (1½ hours costs Rs 500).

**LSA Homecare** (☎ 9910397429; www.isahomecare.com) is a (legitimate) massage service that will arrive to pamper you in your hotel room. Massages are Rs 600 to Rs 2000, facials Rs

### FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD

If you find yourself frazzled by Delhi's oppressive summer heat, traffic snarls and pesky touts, there are some scenic spots to steal solace. In the cooler months, chill out in the pleasant grounds of **Humayun's tomb** (p106), **Qutb Minar** (p126), **Safdarjung's tomb** (p106), **Lodi Gardens** (p107), **Hauz Khas** (p107) and **Raj Ghat** (p98).

During hotter months, the bars at **top-end hotels** (p112) – with their powerful AC and comfy interiors – offer revitalising havens, worth the inflated prices for a reviving tittle. Likewise, many of Delhi's **bars** (p117) open around noon and provide cool respite, in both senses of the word. If a frothy iced-coffee would do the trick, Connaught Place is well equipped (p117), while if you just can't face the heat and hassle of yet another autorickshaw negotiation, plump for the AC comfort of the underground **metro system** (p125).

Delhi's modern AC **cineplexes** (p118) are also terrific spots to beat the summer heat without spending a fortune. Movie tickets range from Rs 50 to Rs 150, and that all-important popcorn will set you back around Rs 50.

1800 to Rs 2700, and nails and waxing Rs 650 to Rs 2700.

### Swimming

Deluxe hotels have the best pools but they're restricted to guests. Some of the more modest upmarket hotels permit outsiders (for a stout amount). **Claridges Hotel** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23010211; 12 Aurangzeb Rd; per person Rs 900), the **Radisson Hotel** (p113; per person Rs 500) and **Hotel Samrat** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 26110606; Chanakyapuri; per person Rs 300) are three to try.

### COURSES

See p91 for publications containing up-to-the-minute details of various courses.

### Meditation & Yoga

Telephone for session timings and, if not stated below, venues. Where there are no fees, donations are appreciated.

**Ashtaang** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 24101802; E-2 Anand Niketan; 1hr Rs 500) Beginner and advanced hatha yoga, including meditation.

**Dhyan Foundation** (www.dhyanfoundation.com) Meditation classes plus one-day workshops introducing participants to *sanatan kriya* (rotation exercises, yoga and meditation). Check the website for details and various Delhi branch phone numbers.

**Laughter Yoga** (☎ 27217164) Giggle yourself to well-being with an early-morning laughter yoga session in one of Delhi's parks.

**Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23730417; www.yogamdniy.com; 68 Ashoka Rd) Includes pranayama and hatha yoga, meditation, stress-management and various diploma courses.

**Studio Abhyas** (☎ 26962757) Yoga classes (1¼ hours) combine asanas (fixed body positions), pranayama and

meditation. There's Vedic chanting on some evenings and Pilates classes too.

**Sushuma Studio** (☎ 9871930150) Ashtanga, yoga-lates (a yoga-Pilates combo) and other classes, taught by a London-trained expert.

**Tushita Meditation Centre** (☎ 26513400) Twice-weekly Tibetan/Buddhist meditation sessions.

### DELHI FOR CHILDREN

Though Delhi might not seem the obvious destination for tiny people, there's a wealth of activities to entertain both big and small. Cultural centres often have activities on offer: check *Time Out* listings (p91).

For a day outdoors, head first to **Delhi Zoo** (Map pp102-3; Indians/foreigners Rs 10/50; ☎ 8am-6pm Sat-Thu in summer, 9am-5pm Sat-Thu in winter), the biggest zoo in India (though in quite a sorry state), with rare white Bengal tigers. Much more fun than the zoo, though, is the 1950s-throwback **Rail Transport Museum** (p106), the deer park at **Hauz Khas Village** (p107), and the **boating lake** (p104; Rs 40 per boat for 30 mins; ☎ noon-7pm summer, 11am-6pm winter) in front of Purana Qila. **Discover Delhi** (opposite) runs fortnightly tours of the city for *sanatan* between the ages of four and 14.

For indoor activities, the **National Museum of Natural History** (p106) might amuse some children, while **Shankar's International Dolls Museum** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 23316970; Nehru House, 4 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg; admission Rs 10; ☎ 10am-6pm Tue-Sun), with 6500 dolls from more than 80 countries, will appeal to others. Connaught Place has a number of bookshops, toy shops and stalls selling things both edifying and of the flashing, squealing variety, along with a legion of child-friendly Western-style eating options.

### TOURS

**Government of India Tourist Office** (p94) Can arrange multilingual, government-approved guides for Rs 350/500 for a half-/full-day (maximum five people).

**Salaam Balak Trust** (contact Shekhar ☎ 9873130383; Rs 200; ☎ 2½hr walks 10am daily) Former street children take you out into the Paharganj streets they know intimately, introducing you both to the neighbourhood and to the street children who fight there for survival.

**Discover Delhi** (Contact Kanchan ☎ 26891223; Rs 300 incl snack; ☎ 9am fortnightly on Sat) Runs tours through various parts of historic Delhi, for children aged four to 14, guided by an educational and social activist.

**Hotel Broadway** (Map p97; ☎ 23273821; 4/15 Asaf Ali Rd; Rs 495) Operating from the hotel (p111), two-hour 'gastronomic walking tours' of Old Delhi include lunch at Chor Bizarre (see p113).

**Master Guest House** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 28741089; R-500 New Rajendra Nagar) This guesthouse (p112) offers personalised tours – such as 'Hidden Delhi' (includes Old Delhi) – with a knowledgeable guide. Tours cost the rupee equivalent of US\$15, which includes breakfast and snacks.

### SLEEPING

It's wise to book a room in advance as Delhi's most salubrious places can fill up in a flash, leaving new arrivals easy prey for commission sharks (see p95). During the low season (around mid-April to mid-August) room discounts of at least 20% are often negotiable.

Hotels with a minimum tariff of Rs 500 charge a 12.5% luxury tax. Some places, especially at the top end of the range, also whack on an additional service charge (of 6% to 10%); beware, too, that those charging in dollars may have a 'fixed' dollar rate that differs from the actual exchange rate of the day. Taxes aren't included in the reviews in this chapter unless indicated, and all rooms have private bathrooms unless otherwise stated.

Many hoteliers urge travellers to call or email to confirm their reservation 24 hours before arrival (hotel owners complain that travellers don't bother calling to cancel, just as frequently as travellers complain that their hotel bookings aren't always honoured).

### Budget

Delhi's budget bunch of places to stay is decidedly lacklustre, with rooms typically small,

cell-like and dreary. The truly diabolical, meanwhile, may be damp, mouldy, home to suspicious stains on the bed-linen, walls, or even the ceiling. On the plus side, however, there's plenty of choice, with new ventures opening up all the time, so with a bit of careful prodding and poking, you should be able to find something to suit your taste as well as your budget.

Most backpackers base themselves in Paharganj, a bustling, tourist-oriented enclave near New Delhi train station. For something much more mellow, but not nearly as central, try Majnu-ka Tilla, the Tibetan Colony. Here, the prices are low but the hotels generally cosier than in Paharganj. If it's your first time in Delhi, however, you may feel a bit disconnected from the action, and the enclave is quite hard to find, especially if you're arriving at night.

In the following budget listings, only the cheapest, non-AC room rates have been given; the AC rooms, where available, cost around several hundred rupees more.

### NORTH DELHI

#### Old Delhi

Few travellers stay in Old Delhi since it's generally easier to be based near the amenities of Paharganj or Connaught Place, but for those who wish to, there are a couple of reasonable hotels near the Jama Masjid.

**Hotel New City Palace** (Map p97; ☎ 23289923; 725 Jama Masjid Motor Mkt; s/d Rs 250/350; ☎) Clean though claustrophobic rooms but still better than most other Old Delhi cheapies; the pricier rooms have windows and AC, and there's plenty of hot water on tap.

**Hotel Bombay Orient** (Map p97; ☎ 23242691; s/d Rs 350/450) One of the most appealing choices in the area; ensure, though, that you look at a few rooms, as some are much newer and nicer than others.

#### Paharganj Area

Paharganj isn't everyone's cup of tea, with its reputation for drugs and shady characters. Nevertheless, it's walking distance from New Delhi train station and is the place to tap into the busy backpacker network. Most budget hotels offer nondescript, poorly ventilated and sun-starved rooms on the Main Bazaar main drag, or in the numerous (nameless) alleys snaking off it.

**Hotel Navrang** (Map p110; ☎ 23581965; Tooti Chowk, Main Bazaar; s/d Rs 100/120) Very rudimentary,

**PAHARGANJ**

INFORMATION		EATING	
Bank of Punjab ATM.....	1 C2	Diamond Restaurant.....	19 B4
Chequepoint Foreign.....	2 C4	Everest Bakery Café.....	20 C4
Exchange.....	3 C4	Metropolis Restaurant & Bar.....	(see 16)
Cyber Station.....	4 A4	Sam's Café.....	(see 18)
HDFC ATM.....	5 A3	Sonu Restaurant.....	21 B4
ICICI ATM.....	6 D3		
International Tourist Bureau.....	(see 5)		
UTI ATM.....	(see 5)		
SLEEPING		DRINKING	
Ajay Guest House.....	7 A4	Hotel Downtown.....	10 C4
Hare Krishna Guest House.....	8 A4	Hotel Namaskar.....	11 B3
Hare Rama Guest House.....	9 B4	Hotel Navrang.....	12 B3
Hotel Rak International.....	13 B3		
ENTERTAINMENT			
Hotel Relax.....	14 B4	Imperial Cinema.....	23 A3
Major's Den.....	15 A3		
Metropolis Tourist Home.....	16 A4		
Prince Polonia.....	17 A3		
Vivek Hotel.....	18 B4		

cell-like rooms (especially the singles), but it's friendly, there's hot water by the bucketful for Rs 10, and the prices are among Delhi's lowest.

**Hare Krishna Guest House** (Map p110; ☎ 41541341; harekrishnagh@hotmail.com; 1572 Main Bazaar; s/d Rs 200/250) Apart from being smallish, the well-worn rooms are in pretty good shape (for Paharganj), it's fairly cosy, and there's a rooftop restaurant.

**Hare Rama Guest House** (Map p110; ☎ 35361301; harerama\_2000@hotmail.com; T-298 Main Bazaar; s/d Rs 200/250; ☎) Rooms are clean, good value and have cool tiled walls and floors, but some are notably sunlight deprived.

**Hotel Downtown** (Map p110; ☎ 51541529; 4583 Main Bazaar; s/d from Rs 200/300) The rooms are smallish

and some are much better than others, so check a selection before you move in. There's also a very basic dorm-bed option (Rs 80), with 16 beds, equipped with threadbare sheets, to one room.

**Ajay Guest House** (Map p110; ☎ 23583125; ajay5084@hotmail.com; 5084 Main Bazaar; s/d Rs 250/350; ☎) Luring travellers more for its chilled-out vibe than its insipid, ragged rooms, Ajay's has a rooftop café and pool table.

**Hotel Namaskar** (Map p110; ☎ 23583456; www.namaskarhotel.com; 917 Chandiwalan, Main Bazaar; d from Rs 300; ☎) The star attractions of this hotel are its two helpful brothers, who, apart from dispensing useful advice, can arrange car hire and tours in and beyond Delhi and in Rajasthan. Most of the 32 simple rooms are painted in a

cheerful shade of pink, and the place generally gets very good traveller feedback.

**Hotel Rak International** (Map p110; ☎ 23562478; Tooti Chowk, Main Bazaar; s/d Rs 300/400; ☎) All the rooms at this popular option have windows, making them a cut above much of the competition. Though modest, they're generally clean and the management is efficient.

**Major's Den** (Map p110; ☎ 23589010; d Rs 500-550; ☎) Away from the flurry of Main Bazaar, the rooms are extremely sparse and basic, but this is made up for, to some extent, by the charismatic presence of the spritely retired Major who lives on site, and who is exceedingly proud of his solar hot-water system.

### Majnu-ka Tilla

Alongside the Yamuna, north of Civil Lines, is this peaceful enclave also known as the Tibetan Colony. Not nearly as centrally located as Paharganj, but with better-value rooms and less hype, it's perfect if you're all Delhi-ed out. There's a sprinkling of cheap Tibetan eateries, shops and internet centres.

**Wongdhen House** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 23816689; wongdhenhouse@hotmail.com; s/d from Rs 200/275; ☎) Hidden towards the bottom of an alleyway, this is the pick of the area's bunch, welcoming weary travellers with its sizable rooms, courteous staff and a breezy rooftop terrace sporting Yamuna River views. The restaurant cooks everything from banana pancakes (Rs 40) to *phing sha* (Tibetan noodles with mincemeat, Rs 50).

**Peace House** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 23939415; d AC/4th/3rd/2nd/1st fl Rs 725/175/275/325/325) Down a little side street and quite hard to spot, the hotel's sign mysteriously reads 'Peace STD' rather than 'hotel'. It offers plain but neat rooms and whenever hunger strikes, a nice plate of steamed *momos* (Tibetan dumplings, Rs 20) in its ground-floor restaurant.

Also recommended are:

**IDA House** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 23813960; d Rs 250)

**Lhasa House** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 23939777; d Rs 350; ☎)

**White House** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 23813944; d Rs 250; ☎)

### CENTRAL DELHI

#### Connaught Place Area

**Hotel Blue** (Map p100; ☎ 23416666; hotelblue@indiatimes.com; 2nd fl, M-126; s/d Rs 800/1200, without bathroom Rs 600/800; ☎) Up a dingy stairwell to the top floor, its 13 rooms are an acceptable choice if

all else fails, with a roof terrace of sorts and reliable hot water. Avoid the inaptly named Hotel Bright downstairs.

### Midrange

#### NORTH DELHI

##### Old Delhi

**Hotel Broadway** (Map p97; ☎ 23273821; broadway@oldworldhospitality.com; 4/15 Asaf Ali Rd; s/d Rs 1500/2595; ☎) Broadway's great Chor Bizarre restaurant (p113) and 'gastronomic walking tours' (p109) are more thrilling than the rooms which, though slightly gloomy, are certainly clean and well kept.

#### Paharganj Area

**Prince Polonia** (Map p110; ☎ 23581930; polinter@del3.vsnl.net.in; 2325 Tilak Gali; s/d Rs 900/1000; ☎) Unusually for the area, most of Prince Polonia's rooms are equipped with windows, and some even go so far as to have balconies. The staff are friendly and keen to please, most rooms have TVs and attempts at decoration, and there's a nice rooftop restaurant, beside which is an empty swimming pool, sadly closed by order of the authorities.

**Vivek Hotel** (Map p110; ☎ 51541435; 1534-1550 Main Bazaar; d Rs 1000-1850; ☎) Recently renovated, Vivek tries hard to provide its guests with a comfortable stay. Many double rooms come with bathtub and the owner's own line in headboards, and the suite is especially decent. Sam's Café (p114), up on the roof, serves a hearty line-up of dishes.

**Hotel Relax** (Map p110; ☎ 23562811; vidur109@hotmail.com; Nehru Bazaar; d Rs 1200; ☎) Its business cards, curiously, proclaim that this hotel offers 'day and night service'. The knick-knack filled hallways belie standard, spartan rooms, but the balconies make a good place to sit and watch bazaar life go by.

**Metropolis Tourist Home** (Map p110; ☎ 23561794; metravel@bom9.vsnl.net.in; 1634 Main Bazaar; d Rs 1200-1500; ☎) Good rooms (some with balcony) with TV, fridge and clean bathrooms that receive more natural light than most other Paharganj hotels. There's also a pleasant rooftop restaurant (p114).

#### West of Paharganj

**Yatri House** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 23625563; www.yatrihouse.com; 3/4 Panchkuian Marg; s/d Rs 3000/3500; ☎) Serenity just steps from the madness of Main Bazaar, on a lane off Panchkuian Marg, this guesthouse boasts a green lawn, open-air courtyard

and well-kept, nicely decorated rooms. For Paharganj and the surrounding area, it's by far the best of the bunch for its price range; it's also very popular; reservations – well ahead of time – are strongly advised.

### Rajendra Nagar Area

**Master Guest House** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 28741089; www.master-guesthouse.com; R-500 New Rajendra Nagar; d from Rs 1850; 📶) This calm residential guesthouse, located near the Shankar and Ganga Ram Hospital Rds crossing is run by a friendly couple. There are just four homely rooms (pick from 'Moghul', 'Ganesh', 'Krishna' and 'Lucky'), all clean and comfortable. Avnish runs tours of 'Hidden Delhi' (see p109).

### CENTRAL DELHI

#### Ashoka Road

**YWCA Blue Triangle Family Hostel** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23360133; ywca@delhi@yahoo.co.in; Ashoka Rd; s/d Rs 1136/1975; 📶) Open to both sexes, you must become a temporary member (Rs 20, valid for one month) to stay. The dormitory is commendable, if a tad tightly packed, and the private rooms are also nice, despite a lingering hint of fragrance à la mothball. All rates include tax and breakfast.

#### Sunder Nagar

The leafy, upmarket suburb of Sunder Nagar is about 3km southeast of Connaught Place.

**Maharani Guest House** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 24359521; mgh@vsnl.com; 3 Sunder Nagar; s/d Rs 2700/3300; 📶) With clean, comfortable rooms lacking in atmosphere, this hotel is a veritable rabbit warren. Check out a few rooms before you decide (avoid the damp underground ones); the higher floors are generally airier and less claustrophobic.

**La Sagrta Tourist Home** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 2435 8572; www.lasagrta.com; 14 Sunder Nagar; s/d Rs 3690/4090; 📶) A warm and friendly option, its rooms boast wooden floors, comfortable furniture and nice, clean bathrooms. There's 24-hour room service to make up for the lack of a restaurant.

### Connaught Place Area

**YMCA Tourist Hostel** (Map p100; ☎ 23361915; ymca@ndf.vsnl.net.in; Jai Singh Rd; s/d Rs 1150/2000, without bathroom Rs 750/1400; 📶) This prim hostel takes both genders (Rs 30 membership; valid for one month); see several rooms, as some are dingy. All rates include tax, breakfast

and dinner; there's a pool and a gym for an extra fee.

**YWCA International Guest House** (Map p100; ☎ 23361561; www.ywcaindia.org; 10 Sansad Marg; s/d Rs 1556/1980; 📶) With the same institutional feel as the YMCA, the rooms are certainly nothing exciting but they're secure and relatively clean.

**York Hotel** (Map p100; ☎ 23415769; K-Block; s/d Rs 1800/2950; 📶) A '70s survivor with brown and beige everywhere you look. The rooms are plain and sparse, but functional and clean, some with new laminate flooring. Try to get a 'backside' room to cut down on traffic noise.

**Hotel Fifty Five** (Map p100; ☎ 23321244; bookings@hotel55.com; H-55; s/d Rs 2300/2800; 📶) Small, warm and friendly, the 15 rooms are simple and clean, there's a nice rooftop terrace, reliable airport pickup service and free luggage storage.

**Hotel Jakaso Inn** (Map p100; ☎ 23415450; jakaso@vsnl.com; L-Block; s/d Rs 3000/3850; 📶) Though this place has decent, recently renovated rooms, even equipped with small flat-screen TVs, free wireless internet and a breakfast buffet, it gets bad reviews from travellers for its unfriendly staff.

### SOUTH DELHI

**Home Away from Home** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 26560289; 1st fl, D-8 Gulmohar Park; s/d from Rs 1375/1575; 📶) Owned by Mrs Kamte – who lives on site and keeps the place in tiptop condition – there are just two warm, clean rooms here, each tastefully furnished. Hush and Puppy, the pet basset hounds, appreciate a tummy tickle.

### Top End

**Devna** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 24355047; 10 Sunder Nagar; d from Rs 5000; 📶) Formerly known as Ten, this diminutive guesthouse has five lovely, antique-filled rooms and extremely friendly owners. Without doubt the best choice in Sunder Nagar for its personal touches, homely atmosphere and free wi-fi; be sure to enter through the right-hand gate, so as not to end up in the neighbours' house.

**our pick Hotel Palace Heights** (Map p100; ☎ 4352610; www.hotelpalaceheights.com; D26-28 Connaught Pl; s/d Rs 5000/5500; 📶) At last – a comfortable, central and welcoming hotel, with top-end service without the exorbitant prices. The rooms might be smallish and scraping the upper edge of the mid-price category, but they're very well decorated, with powerful hot-water showers

and a terrific tandoori restaurant attached. Eat a complimentary breakfast whilst gazing down at the early morning Connaught Place action. Highly recommended, as well, for people travelling with children.

**The Manor** (Map pp92-3; www.themanordelhi.com; d US\$220; 📶) Tucked away in upscale New Friends Colony, this place might not have the hype or the extensive facilities of the usual top-end joints (there is, for instance, no pool) but it more than makes up for this in intimacy, great food and tip-top service. The suite, in particular, makes for a great stay, equipped with sculptures, comfy beds, and one of the biggest TVs you may have ever seen.

**Oberoi** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 24363030; www.oberoidelhi.com; Dr Zakir Hussain Marg; s/d from US\$346/383; 📶) On the edge of the Delhi Golf Club, the Oberoi scores high marks. Discerning service and elegant rooms make it especially popular with business people.

**Maurya Sheraton Hotel & Towers** (Off Map pp102-3; ☎ 26112233; reservations.maurya@welcomgroup.com; Sardar Patel Marg; d from US\$420; 📶) This world-class hotel has carved a name for itself as one of Delhi's finest, with a range of top-notch facilities, including a health club, business centre, and two excellent restaurants, Bukhara (p115) and Dum Pukht (see p115).

**Imperial Hotel** (Map p100; ☎ 23341234; www.theimperialindia.com; Janpath; d from US\$495; 📶) The rates at this exceptionally fine old Delhi Art-Deco jewel continue to climb steeply, making it ever more expensive to sample its sumptuous interiors and top-class service. It's worth dropping in for a drink or dinner, though, if the tariffs seem more ridiculous than sublime.

### Airport Area

**Shanti Palace** (Map pp92-3; www.shantipalace.com; National Highway 8; ☎ 5732675; s/d Rs 5450/6600; 📶) This place receives good reports from travellers as a comfy, convenient option before an early departure or following a red-eye arrival.

**Uppal's Orchid** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 25061515; www.uppalsorchidhotel.com; National Highway 8; d from US\$200; 📶) Billing itself as an 'environmentally conscious ecolodge' this is another comfortable top-end choice near the airport.

**Radisson Hotel** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 26779191; www.radisson.com/newdelhiin; National Hwy 8; d US\$225; 📶) Apart from its 256 stylish rooms, there's a

fitness centre and a few smart restaurants (see p117).

### EATING

Catering to every palate and pocket, eating out in Delhi is a highlight. The following recommendations barely scratch the culinary surface of what the city has on offer: don't forget to just follow your nose – and the local in-the-know crowds – to discover your own slice of heaven.

### Old Delhi & Around

#### RESTAURANTS

**Karim's** (Map p97; 16 Gali Kebabian, Jama Masjid; ☎ 23269880; mains Rs 75-180; 🕒 7am-midnight; 📶) Iconic Karim's has been delighting Delhiites since 1913 with its flavoursome, predominantly nonvegetarian, heavy Mughlai cuisine. It is really a city institution and worth every second of the hunt to find the place; during Ramadan, it opens after sunset.

**Moti Mahal** (Map p97; ☎ 23273661; 3704 Netaji Subhash Marg, Daryaganj; mains Rs 100-225; 🕒 11am-midnight; 📶) Though a bit shabby around the edges, this is another great Delhi institution. It's particularly noted for its succulent butter chicken (half/full chicken Rs 150/285), which tastes especially good when eaten outside, in summer, in the large courtyard.

**Chor Bizarre** (Map p97; ☎ 23273821; Hotel Broadway, 4/15 Asaf Ali Rd; mains Rs 115-250, veg/nonveg thalis Rs 260/325; 🕒 noon-3.30pm & 7.30-11.30pm; 📶) Wonderful Kashmiri and Mughlai fare in quirky surrounds – there's a vintage car that serves as a salad bar, and even a four-poster bed as a table. The *sharabi kababi tikka* – chicken in a rich cream-and-tomato sauce – is divine.

#### QUICK EATS

All along Chandni Chowk, you'll find stalls churning out both sweet and savoury treats. Make sure you pick a popular one, checking that the food's being cooked in front of you, and you shouldn't have any problems.

**Paratha Wali Gali** (Map p97; parathas Rs 30-40) In a lane just behind Ghanewala, off Chandni Chowk, opposite the Central Bank. Come here to feast on *parathas* (Indian flat bread) stuffed with fillings such as spiced *aloo* (potato), *gobi* (cauliflower) and *paneer* (unfermented cheese), all served with simple curries.

**Jalebiwala** (Map p97; Chandni Chowk; jalebis per 500g from around Rs 50; ☎ 9am-9pm) Near the Sisganj Gurdwara, Jalebiwala is *the* place to sink your teeth into fat, syrupy fried *jalebis* (deep-fried coils of sweet batter dipped in sugar-syrup).

**Ghantewala** (Map p97; 1862 Chandni Chowk; Indian sweets per kg around Rs 80; ☎ 8am-9pm) Also near the Sisganj Gurdwara, this simple sweets shop has been in business since 1790 and still has a loyal following. Try the divine *pista samosa*, of which you'll dream long after returning home.

**Haldiram's** (Map p97; Chandni Chowk; samosas/pakoras Rs 5/6, barfi per kg from Rs 100, ☎ 9am-10pm; ☎) A Delhi legend since 1947, you can rest ach-ing legs upstairs in the icily air-conditioned cafeteria, which serves terrific thalis (try the calorific Maharaja Thali for Rs 105), and even decent small pizzas. Alternatively, eat straight from the counter, filling up on *ladoos* (sweet gram-flour balls), *pistas* (pistachio sweets), *barfis* (fudgelike condensed-milk sweets) and *kajus* (cashew sweets) galore.

## Pharganj Area

**Sonu Restaurant** (Map p110; mains Rs 25-100; ☎ 12-9pm) Cooks up plenty of South Indian *dosa* (lentil-flour pancake) fare, including bizarre egg and cheese versions – there's even a chocolate banana *dosa* (Rs 40) – as well as passable Chinese, Indian and Continental dishes.

**Everest Bakery Café** (Map p110; mains Rs 30-90; ☎ 7am-11pm) Opposite the Hotel Star Paradise, this teeny café boasts particularly enticing teas, nice with a big wedge of chocolate cake.

**Diamond Restaurant** (Map p110; mains Rs 40-100; ☎ 7.30am-11.30pm) The diminutive Diamond shines when it comes to pasta, but its Chinese, Continental and Israeli dishes can yield wobbly results. Breakfasts (Rs 50 to Rs 70) are reliable, as is the good music and the friendly vibe.

**Sam's Café** (Map p110; Vivek Hotel, 1534-1550 Main Bazaar; mains Rs 60-110; ☎ 8am-11pm) A dependable place to sip a *masala chai* (mixed tea) or strawberry lassi before diving into the filling plates of schnitzels, *momos*, falafel, thalis or roast chicken.

**Metropolis Restaurant & Bar** (Map p110; Metropolis Tourist Home, 1628 Main Bazaar; mains Rs 85-250; ☎ 8am-11pm) A relaxing rooftop restaurant with decent lasagne, sweet-and-spicy salmon fillets, spaghetti Bolognese, chicken wrapped in bacon, and plenty more.

## Connaught Place & Around RESTAURANTS

**Sagar** (Map p100; 15 K-Block; dosas Rs 32-50, thalis Rs 60; ☎ 8am-11pm; ☎) A vegetarian *dosa* dreamland, Sagar is incredibly popular with Delhiites and its *uttappams* (crisp-collared rice-flour and coconut-milk pancakes from Rs 40) deserve special merit. Other favourites include the onion *rava masala dosa*, the *dahi vadas* (gram-flour balls smothered in spiced yogurt), and the cooling *dahi idli* (rice cake dunked in yogurt).

**Saravana Bhavan** (Map p100; 46 Janpath; dosas Rs 34-70, thalis Rs 65; ☎ 8am-11pm; ☎) Heavenly Tamil food at this unmissable all-vegetarian joint. Great-value *dosas*, *idlis* and other southern specialties; don't miss the Tamil Nadu thali served at the sit-down restaurant on the first floor. Saravana also has a branch at 15 P-Block, Connaught Pl.

**Banana Leaf** (Map p100; 12 N-Block; dosas Rs 50-80, thalis Rs 70-95; ☎ 10am-11pm; ☎) Apart from some top-notch South Indian vegetarian standards, including a delicious *Rawa Idli* made with cashews, tomato and carrot (Rs 50), there are some more-obscure options such as the Mysore dry fruit *masala dosa*. For a filling lunch, go for the Special Limited Thali (Rs 95).

**Kwality Restaurant** (Map p100; 7 Regal Bldg, Sansad Marg; mains Rs 85-180; ☎ noon-11pm; ☎) Feeding Delhi for 65 years, Kwality may have rather tightly packed tables, but this venerable restaurant's food (especially the Indian dishes) lives up to its name. Try the *shahi paneer* (unfermented cheese in a creamy tomato sauce, Rs 110).

**Embassy** (Map p100; 11 D-Block; mains Rs 90-200; ☎ 10am-11.30pm; ☎) Dimly lit and one of the oldest establishments in the area, Embassy attracts a clientele of notable oldies, including Delhi-based journalists and retired politicians. It serves up a scrummy *palak paneer* (unfermented cheese in spinach sauce) but is best known for its chicken supreme, apparently a favourite with its older clients.

**Zen** (Map p100; 25 B-Block; mains Rs 100-450; ☎ 10.30am-midnight; ☎) Reasonable renditions of Chinese food. For lunch there's a decent, though not overly generous, set meal (veg/nonveg Rs 299/339). Dim sums go for Rs 109 to Rs 139 per portion.

**Parikrama** (Map p100; ☎ 66303394; 22 Kasturba Gandhi Marg; mains Rs 140-400; ☎ 12.30-11pm; ☎) A revolving restaurant on the 24th floor where you can enjoy Indian or Chinese food while

oh-so-slowly spinning (one revolution takes 1½ hours). The views are superlative, especially during the day and the food is decent, if not exceptional.

**United Coffee House** (Map p100; E-Block; mains Rs 165-345; ☎ 11am-11pm; ☎) With old-world charm and pleasing meals, this is a splendid spot to slow the pace beneath dusty chandeliers. The menu encompasses a bit of everything, from grilled-cheese sandwiches to rich, filling curries.

**our pick Veda** (Map p100; H26-27 Connaught Pl; ☎ 41513535; mains Rs 450-800; ☎ noon-3.30pm & 8-11.30pm) A Moulin Rouge fantasy of crushed velvet and chandeliers, serving an Indian-fusion menu, with highlights including tandoori grilled lamb chops. The food is great, but the atmosphere is really what you're coming for – sip a martini in plush, glamorous comfort, forgetting for a second that the clamour of Connaught Place is just outside the tinted windows.

**The Spice Route** (Map p100; The Imperial Hotel, Janpath; ☎ 23341234; mains Rs 500-1200; ☎ 12.30-3pm, 7-11.45pm; ☎) For a ritzy night out, this beautifully decorated restaurant in the glorious Imperial Hotel is hard to beat. The food roams through South India, Thailand, Burma and beyond, and dishes range from delicious to perfection itself. Reservations are recommended.

## QUICK EATS

**Wenger's** (Map p100; A-Block; ☎ 10.30am-8pm) The legendary Wenger's bakes cakes (from Rs 27 per slice), savouries (coleslaw/chicken-tikka sandwiches Rs 28/40) and bread (cheese and jalapeno loaf Rs 25). Old-fashioned foil-wrapped chocolates – perfect for your great-great-aunt's birthday – are Rs 600 per kilo. It's almost always packed, largely because of its convoluted system of buying produce through a series of tickets, cashiers and counters.

**Nizam's Kathi Kabab** (Map p100; H5/6 Plaza Bldg-Block; ☎ 11am-11pm) Legendary takeaway kebabs: try the mutton kebab in *paratha* (Indian flat bread) with egg (Rs 65 to Rs 85); vegetarians will melt at the *paneer tikka* (spiced, marinated, chargrilled unfermented cheese) roll (Rs 80).

## New Delhi & Around

### DIPLOMATIC ENCLAVE & CHANAKYAPURI AREA

**Fujiya** (Map pp102-3; 12/48 Malcha Marg Market; mains Rs 85-210; ☎ noon-midnight; ☎) Small and friendly

Fujiya serves Chinese and some Japanese dishes in a serene district of the diplomatic enclave. Whether it's Peking lamb, Szechwan chicken, or roast tofu with vegetables, diners are rarely disappointed. No reservations are taken so arrive early.

**Basil & Thyme** (Map pp102-3; Santushti Shopping Complex, Chanakyapuri; mains Rs 235-265; ☎ 10.30am-6pm Mon-Sat; ☎) A great bet if you're missing Western deli dishes; the menu is packed with home comforts such as asparagus tart and pasta with smoked salmon and dill, though, like the society ladies who lunch here, you'll be paying fairly substantially for the privilege...

**Bukhara** (Off Map pp102-3; ☎ 26112233; Maurya Sheraton Hotel & Towers, Sadar Patel Marg; mains Rs 495-695; ☎ 12.30-2.45pm & 7-11.45pm; ☎) Award-winning Bukhara serves North-West Frontier-style cuisine with aplomb, and is generally considered Delhi's very best restaurant. Almost anyone who's anyone has eaten here – including Bill Gates and Mick Jagger – making reservations pretty much essential; they are taken between 7pm and 8pm daily.

**Dum Pukht** (Off Map pp102-3; ☎ 26112233; Maurya Sheraton Hotel & Towers, Sadar Patel Marg; mains Rs 680-1000; ☎ 7.30-11.45pm daily, 12.30-2.45pm Sat & Sun; ☎) Another highly acclaimed Sheraton offering. The delectable dishes here are cooked in a *dum* style, a sort of slow-cooked stew with a pastry lid. Reservations (taken any time) are advised.

## LODI COLONY

**All American Diner** (Map pp102-3; India Habitat Centre, Lodi Rd; mains Rs 150-250; ☎ 7am-11pm; ☎) Decked out in true diner style right down to the tunes, this place serves US classics from buttermilk pancakes and peanut-butter malts to hot dogs and onion rings.

**Lodi, The Garden Restaurant** (Map pp102-3; Lodi Rd; mains Rs 200-400; ☎ 11am-11.30pm; ☎) Its cuisine gets varied reports, but this pleasant eatery, with a garden setting, is a handy sustenance stop after a power-walking session at nearby Lodi Garden. One hit is the mezza platter, piled high with tabbouleh, hummus and aubergine salad.

## PANDARA MARKET

**Gulati** (Map pp102-3; mains Rs 100-300; ☎ noon-12am; ☎) Incredibly popular with locals, this place does great Punjabi dishes, its two top hits being butter and *khadhai* (a tomato-and-chilli-infused masala) chicken. Rumour has it, too, that you might bump into a couple of

Bollywood legends, who arrive here regularly for a quick food fix.

**Ichiban** (Map pp102-3; mains Rs 100-300; ☎ 12.30-3.30pm & 7.30pm-1.30am; 🍴) If you're all curried-out, Ichiban specialises in Chinese and Japanese food, with perfectly reasonable versions of all your eastern favourites. Try the yummy stir-fried vegetables in almond sauce, salt-and-pepper chicken, and for dessert, crispy noodles in honey sauce (Rs 80).

**Pindi Restaurant** (Map pp102-3; mains Rs 100-300; ☎ noon-1am; 🍴) In an area with many *dhaba* (snack bar) Punjabi restaurants, this is probably the most famous, starting life as a simple, neon-lit affair and nowadays rather more sophisticated, with prices to match. Still, it's a good stop-off point for a large and delicious lunch, with particularly gratifying butter chicken (Rs 200) and *mattar paneer* (peas and cheese in gravy, Rs 160).

#### KHAN MARKET

**Mrs Kaur's Premium Cookies** (Map pp102-3; Khan Market; ☎ 9.30am-10pm) These scrummy, squidgy takeaway cookies range from Rs 30 for a super-choc chunk to Rs 600 for a giant birthday cookie. They also deliver, if you get caught with a craving.

**Chona's** (Map pp102-3; Khan Market; mains Rs 90-320; ☎ 11.30am-11.30pm Mon-Sat; 🍴) Linger with the locals at this simple institution over Indian, Chinese and Continental dishes, including their speciality veg or nonveg 'sizzlers' (Rs 190 to Rs 210). Some dishes work better than others but it's a good place to hang out with a 'chilli potato' or chicken-wing starter, watching the Khan Market world go by.

**The Kitchen** (Map pp102-3; Khan Market; mains Rs 150-350; ☎ 11am-11pm; 🍴) Friendly, cute and with an extensive menu, this is a great lunch spot, with a daily happy hour between 4pm and 7pm. Tuck into Irish stew (Rs 275), mixed-bean chilli (Rs 225) or attempt the 'complicated noodle salad' (Rs 180). Top this all off with a blueberry cheesecake or mocha fudge ice cream, and don't miss the framed poster of George Bushisms in the toilet.

#### HAUZ KHAS AREA

**Naivedyam** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 26960426; Hauz Khas Village; dosas Rs 50-75, thalis Rs 90; ☎ 11am-11pm; 🍴) A delightful, snug, South Indian restaurant decorated temple-style, with a small but great-value menu and happy atmosphere. The thalis come especially recommended.

**Park Baluchi** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 26859369; Hauz Khas Village; mains Rs 220-530; ☎ noon-11pm; 🍴) Set within the restful grounds of the deer park itself, this is a smart place drawing in a largely local crowd for its upmarket Indian cuisine. A favourite with wedding parties, it makes a nice place for a drink or a tandoori-chicken meal on a summer evening, after a calming stroll through the park.

**La Piazza** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 26791234, ext 1310; Hyatt Regency, Bhikaiji Cama Pl, Ring Rd; mains Rs 310-780; ☎ noon-3pm & 7-11.30pm; 🍴) Long acclaimed for its Italian food, this is an upmarket choice if you're simply craving a perfect wood-fired pizza, ravioli with ricotta and *pomodoro* (tomato), or have the taste for truffles.

#### DEFENCE COLONY & SOUTH EXTENSION AREA

**Dilli Haat** (Map pp92-3; Aurobindo Marg; www.dillahaat.org; admission Rs 15; ☎ 10.30am-10pm Oct-Mar, to 9.30pm Apr-Sep) Although this open-air market is rather contrived and more than a little touristy, it does offer the opportunity to sample regional Indian cuisine, even Manipuri veg thalis (Rs 60) and treats from the northeastern state of Assam.

**Flavours** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 24645644; 51-54C Moolchand Flyover Market, Ring Rd; mains Rs 150-310; ☎ noon-11pm; 🍴) Known by many – including its Italian owner – as 'the most authentic Italian eatery in Delhi'. Chef/owner Tarsillo Nataloni ensures you eat the *real* thing, whether it's bruschetta, risotto or, of course, pasta. Eat in the attractive restaurant or out in the garden, but beware that the service can sometimes be a little patchy.

**Swagath** (Map pp92-3; 14 Defence Colony Market; ☎ 24330930; mains Rs 180-600; ☎ 11am-11.30pm) Swagath serves up popular Indian and Chinese choices, the winner being seafood. Its most popular dishes include green masala pomfret and ladyfish fry.

#### GREATER KAILASH & EAST OF KAILASH

**Govinda's Sweets** (Map pp92-3; ladoo per kg Rs 140; ☎ 9am-1pm & 2-9pm) Next door to Govinda's. Sells delicious takeaway *mithai* (Indian sweets).

**Govinda's** (Map pp92-3; Hare Krishna Iskon temple complex, East of Kailash; buffet Rs 225; ☎ breakfast 8-11am, lunch 12.30-3.30pm, afternoon snack 4-6.30pm, dinner 7-10pm; 🍴) Promising a 'transcendental dining experience', Govinda's pure-veg (no onion or garlic) Indian buffet is a good way to fill up in serene surroundings. Though the food

itself is not necessarily spectacular, it's worth sampling if you're in the area, especially if you're keen to discuss George Harrison with an orange-robed devotee after dinner.

**Shalom** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 41632280; N Block Market, Greater Kailash Part I; mains Rs 400-700; ☎ 12.30-3.30pm & 7.30-12pm) Essentially a lounge bar with food, this is a grand place to dine if you need a complete break – both culinary and visual – from the chaos of Delhi. Step inside and you'll enter the Mediterranean, with a mostly Lebanese menu inspired by hints of Morocco and Spain. Vegetarians won't be disappointed with the extensive menu, one of the highlights being the Spanish corn crepes.

#### AIRPORT AREA

**NYC** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 26779191; Radisson Hotel, National Hwy 8; mains Rs 265-425; ☎ 24hr; 🍴) A glam but pricey coffee shop with an overwhelmingly stars-'n'-stripes theme. It's worth stopping in if you're killing time in the airport area, and the food, though unspectacular, is a reasonable mix of sandwiches, soups and kebabs.

#### DRINKING

Delhi's bar scene, these days, is amazingly extensive, with new, hot places opening all the time. There are three main coffee chains – Barista, Coffee Day and Costa Coffee – which have taken Delhi with a vigour of which Starbucks would be proud. All offer cool respite from a hot Delhi day – or a welcome warm-up on a freezing Delhi winter morning.

#### Cafés

**Barista** (Map p100; 16 N-Block, Connaught Pl; snacks Rs 32-60; ☎ 9am-1am; 🍴) Hip and happening, Barista serves comfort food, from smoked-chicken sandwiches to chocolate-chip muffins and a monstrous iced café mocha latte (Rs 72).

**Costa Coffee** (Map p100; L-8 Connaught Pl; ☎ 9am-1am; 🍴) Though this central Connaught Place branch is one of the most popular and cossetting, no doubt you'll spot other branches popping up all over town. Great for a cup of something hot and steamy (try a large tiramisu latte for Rs 79), a piece of blueberry mousse cake (Rs 49) or a cheese-and-mushroom panini (Rs 69).

**Big Chill** (Map pp102-3; 68A Khan Market; mains Rs 90-190; ☎ noon-11pm Mon-Sat; 🍴) Serves outrageously divine smoothies (Rs 70) and homemade ice cream, including a chocolate

superfudge flavour (Rs 50 per scoop) in a cute, vintage movie-poster filled interior, along with a broad selection of veggie pasta and grill dishes.

**Café Turtle** (Map pp102-3; 2nd fl, Full Circle Bookstore, Khan Market; mains Rs 75-250; ☎ 10am-7.30pm Mon-Sat; 🍴) Perfect for a languid cinnamon tea and a wedge of orange poppy-seed cake. Savoury eats include quiche, salads and sandwiches.

#### Bars & Nightclubs

In recent years, Delhi's bars have graduated from places for travellers to drown the sorrows of a miserable hotel room to places to see and be seen by hip urban Delhiites. Many of the best bars morph into nightclubs later in the evening, with top international DJs and prices to match those of more conventional clubbing capitals. The **Haze Bar** (☎ 41669008; 8 Basant Lok; 3pm-midnight) is a good place for a spot of live rock or blues; there's a Rs 500 bar minimum per person on days when a live band is performing.

#### PAHARGANJ

These licensed establishments serve drinks until around 11pm. Unlicensed eateries may also serve beer in a teacup if you're discreet about it.

**Metropolis Restaurant & Bar** (Map p110; Metropolis Tourist Home, 1634 Main Bazaar) This hotel's rooftop restaurant is a little pricey, but a good place for a cocktail sundowner (from Rs 90).

**Hotel Gold Regency** (Map p110; 4350 Main Bazaar) Sells cheap beer (a bottle of Kingfisher is Rs 80, including tax) at its bar and has live Indian music nightly except Tuesday.

#### CONNAUGHT PLACE AREA

**Agni** (Map p100; ☎ 2374 3000; Park Hotel, Parliament St; cover charge per couple Rs 2000 on Fri & Sat; ☎ 5pm-2am; 🍴) A stylish lounge pad with a mixture of locals and travellers packing it out every night of the week, this hotel bar hosts dancing late into the night, with a 35ft-long bar holding every conceivable liquor your heart might desire. The Park also hosts exclusive poolside club **Aqua**, which bangs out techno music, then takes it down a notch with R&B, until around 1am. Bouncers here are selective, so dress for the occasion and be prepared for steep prices: Rs 225 for a pint of local beer; Rs 415 and above for cocktails.

**DV8** (Map p100; ☎ 41500694; 13 Regal Bldg; ☎ noon-midnight; 🍴) A place that is embraced by young

professionals after a hard day at the office, this is a great destination if you've got a cocktail craving, with unusual beer-based cocktails on offer: try the 'American Rumble' (Rs 200) for a pick-me-up, whilst listening to the largely rock line-up. Check whether there's a live band playing while you're in town.

**1911** (Map p100; Imperial hotel, Janpath; ☎ noon-1am; ☎) For a true feel of colonial grandeur, imbibe in the company of oil-painted Maharajas, or lie back on bamboo deckchairs on the perfect-green lawn. Named after the year in which Delhi was proclaimed British India's capital, this grand bar claims to have over 500 beverages, as well as a simple bar-snacks menu if you're feeling peckish.

**Blues** (Map p100; 18 N-Block; ☎ noon-midnight; ☎) Dimly lit with a cool vibe and a nice rock-and-pop change from the proliferation of lounge and techno Delhi's bar scene has on offer, Blues makes a relaxed place for a mug of draught beer (Rs 180) and a big plate of baked nachos (Rs 130). There's live music on Thursday and Saturday nights, and a generous happy hour between 4pm and 8pm.

**Spirit** (Map p100; 34 E-Block; ☎ noon-midnight; ☎) A cosmopolitan lounge-bar-restaurant with a particularly pleasing wine list (Californian and Australian bottles for around Rs 1700); by the glass it's Rs 300/200 for foreign/domestic wine. There's a good menu specialising in Lebanese and Italian cuisine, and the barman knocks up a mean Long Island Iced Tea.

## NEW DELHI & AROUND

**Lizard Lounge** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 32948208; 1st fl, E5 South Extension Part II; ☎ noon-midnight; ☎) A world away from the rat race, this funky yet suave lounge is a desirable place to unwind over a cocktail or, if the mood is right, bubbly (Dom Perignon is a cool Rs 12,000). The volume is turned up after 11pm and there are a dozen flavours of hookah to choose from, including a curious cappuccino variety.

**Delhi's Devils** (Map pp92-3; 3rd fl, E3 South Extension Part II; cover charge weekdays Rs 300, weekends Rs 500; ☎ noon-midnight; ☎) This cavernous bar is a good place to wind down, with lounge music on Mondays and Tuesdays, salsa nights on Thursdays, and hip-hop on Fridays.

**Geoffrey's** (Map pp92-3; Ansal Plaza, Khel Gaon Marg; ☎ 12.30-11pm; ☎) If you're in the area, English-themed Geoffrey's pub is recommended for a mojito or two, accompanied by asparagus spears wrapped in smoked salmon (Rs 290).

**Oxygen** (Map pp92-3; D-Block Market, Poorvi Marg, Vasant Vihar; ☎ 11am-11.30pm; ☎) Though really more restaurant than bar (and serving up a tasty vegetarian kebab), you can roll into Oxygen for a late-night cognac (Hennessy Rs 200) or choose from its massive selection of imported wines and spirits, to a mostly Bollywood soundtrack.

## ENTERTAINMENT Cultural Programmes

See Media (p91) for publications to pick up for to-the-minute listings of Delhi's dynamic cultural scene. The venues listed below reliably have something of some description going on.

**Kamani Auditorium** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23388084; Mandi House, Copernicus Marg)

**Sangeet Natak Akademi** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23387246; Rabindra Bhavan, Copernicus Marg)

**Shri Ram Centre** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23714307; 4 Safdar Hashmi Rd)

**Triveni Kala Sangam** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23718833; 205 Tansen Marg)

## Cinemas

Most Delhi cinemas screen a fully Bollywood fare, rarely with English subtitles. There are several cinemas around Connaught Place including the **Odeon** (Map p100; ☎ 41517899) and the 1932-built **Regal** (Map p100; ☎ 23362245). There's also the enticingly ramshackle **Imperial Cinema** (Map p110; ☎ 55396702; Rajguru Rd, Paharganj) in Paharganj. Drop into the box office to check out screening times; tickets run to between Rs 30 and Rs 80.

You might be able to catch an international flick at one of the comfy, suburban cineplexes listed below: screening times are in newspapers and PVR cinema details are online at [www.pvrcinemas.com](http://www.pvrcinemas.com).

**PVR Anupam 4** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 51000458; Saket Community Centre, Saket)

**PVR Plaza Cinema** (Map p100; ☎ 27944194; H-Block Connaught Pl)

**PVR Priya Cinema** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 9810708625; 61 Basant Lok, Vasant Vihar)

**Satyam Cineplex** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 25893322; Patel Rd, Patel Nagar)

## SHOPPING

Delhi has a magnificent mix of markets, from seething local bazaars to designer shopping enclaves, as well as fixed-price emporiums where you can finally take a break from

## OLD DELHI'S BUZZING BAZAARS

Getting lost in the old city's colourful, convoluted bazaars (Map p97) is half the fun of shopping here; try, though, to arrive at around 11.30am, when most shops have opened but the jostling is at its most bearable.

For silver jewellery (and some gold) head for Dariba Kalan (Map p97), near the Sisganj Gurdwara. Nearby Kinari Bazaar has a focus on bridal gear, from fancy sari borders to iridescent tinsel decorations. The Cloth Market (Map p97) sells uncut material, as well as bed linen and towels, while electrical gadgets are the speciality of Lajpat Rai Market (Map p97). Chowri Bazaar (Map p97) is the wholesale paper and greeting-card market. Nearby, Nai Sarak (Map p97) deals in wholesale stationery and books and also has a portion devoted to saris.

Near the Fatehpuri Masjid, on Khari Baoli, is the aromatic Spice Market (Map p97), ablaze with fiery-red chilli powders and burnt-orange turmeric, as well as pickles, tea and nuts.

haggling. Outside these, bargain hard and remember that some taxi and autorickshaw drivers earn juicy profits (from you) via the commission racket – politely decline their shopping suggestions.

Top-end hotels have glitzy shopping arcades whose prices run to the stellar: for fun, check out the Valentino store at the **Shangri-la Hotel** (☎ 4119191919; [www.shangri-la.com](http://www.shangri-la.com); Ashoka Rd), or the Louis Vuitton at the Oberoi (p113), from which you can order a cigar humidior that will set you back a smart Rs 3,600,000. At the other end of the spectrum you'll find indefatigable street hawkers on Chandni Chowk flogging everything from squeaky toys to fake beards for less than the price of a cup of chai.

## Government & State Emporiums

Although the prices at these fixed-price emporiums can be marginally higher than elsewhere, you're assured of quality and don't have to haggle. If time permits, scout emporiums to get an idea of prices before exploring the markets – you can always return later if you didn't find comparable products at better prices in the bazaars.

**Central Cottage Industries Emporium** (Map p100; ☎ 23326790; Janpath; ☎ 10am-7pm) A multilevel treasure-trove filled with India-wide handicrafts, including woodcarvings, silverware, jewellery, pottery, papier-mâché, brassware, beauty products, textiles and plenty more.

**State Emporiums** (Map p100; Baba Khara Singh Marg; ☎ 10am-6pm Mon-Sat) This string of side-by-side state government emporiums showcases authentic products from around the nation. Set aside several hours to do these fantastic shops justice, and bear in mind that some close for lunch between 1.30pm and 2.30pm.

## Markets & Complexes

Many markets are closed once a week (indicated below), with most operating from roughly 10am to 7pm.

## OLD DELHI & AROUND

**Chandni Chowk** (Map p97) is Old Delhi's famous shopping street, and wending your way through its offshoot jumble of chaotic bazaars is a head-spinning assault on the senses – see above for more information.

**Daryaganj Sunday Book Market** (Map p97; ☎ 10am-5pm Sun) A bookworm's delight, this market north of Delhi Gate is a great place to spend a Sunday afternoon browsing and picking up out-of-print or hard-to-find titles for peanuts.

**Karol Bagh Market** (Map pp92-3; ☎ Tue-Sun) Popular for its competitively priced clothing, shoes, homeware and general consumer goods. Spice things up here at **Roopak's** (Map pp92-3; 6/9 Ajmal Khan Rd; ☎ 10am-8pm), two shops side by side that sell a similarly priced range of excellent, well-packed spices, most around Rs 100 per 100g.

## CONNAUGHT PLACE & AROUND

**Janpath (Tibetan) Market** (Map p100; ☎ 10am-7.30pm) This isn't really a market at all, but a series of permanent stalls running along Janpath to catch the moneyed tourists coming out from the Imperial Hotel towards Connaught Place. Because of this, prices are inflated and you'll have to haggle hard, but for those on a short trip, it's still a good place to pick up trinkets. For quality handmade paperware here, visit **Handpaper World** (Map p100; 12B Janpath Market).

**Khadi Gramodyog Bhawan** (Map p100; Regal Bldg, Sansad Marg; ☎ 10am-7.45pm) Best known for its *khadi* (homespun cloth), but also ventures



beyond textiles, with items such as hand-made paper and delicately scented glycerine soaps. Watch out for the strange multicounter purchasing system.

**Main Bazaar** (Map p110; ☎ 10am-8pm) abounds with cheap T-shirts, shawls, costume jewellery, essential oil, incense and bindis. Although officially closed on Monday, many shops remain open, especially during the tourist season.

**Palika Bazaar** (Map p100; ☎ 11am-7.30pm Tue-Sun) This is a claustrophobic and frequently seedy bustling underground bazaar with competitively priced consumer goods (especially clothing) and Indian music CDs aimed at local clientele. Tourists are invariably quoted higher prices, so don't be shy to bargain.

**People Tree** (Map p100; Regal Bldg, Sansad Marg; ☎ 10.30am-7pm) The small and well-concealed People Tree sells avant-garde T-shirts, many with socio-political messages, as well as books, bags, clothes and costume jewellery.

**Rangarsons Music Depot** (Map p100; ☎ 23413831; 12 K-Block, Connaught Pl; ☎ 10am-5.30pm Mon-Sat) prides itself as being 'leading suppliers to the armed forces'. Items include brass-band instruments (trumpets Rs 2500), tablas (from Rs 1600) and sitars (from Rs 2500).

**Rikhi Ram** (Map p100; ☎ 2327685; Marina Arcade, 8 G-Block, Connaught Pl; ☎ 11.30am-8pm Mon-Sat) is patronised by some of India's most esteemed musicians. Sitarists start at Rs 22,000 and tablas are upwards of Rs 4500.

**Soma** (Map p100; 1st fl, 44 K-Block; ☎ 10am-7pm) Soma has beautiful block-printed textiles from oven mitts and aprons, to children's clothing, cosmetic bags and scarves.

## NEW DELHI & AROUND

**Dilli Haat** (Map pp92-3; Aurobindo Marg; admission Rs 10; ☎ 10.30am-10pm) sell reasonable regional handicrafts, such as shawls and woven baskets, but nothing you couldn't get in a government emporium. The food on offer is good, though, and the admission fee means a welcome break from hawkers.

**Greater Kailash M-Block & N-Block Market** (Map pp92-3; Greater Kailash 1; ☎ Wed-Mon) An upmarket shopping enclave best known for its garment, fabric and furnishings store **Fabindia** (Map pp92-3; N-Block Market; ☎ 10am-7.30pm) whose *dhurries* (cotton rugs) range from Rs 150 to Rs 15,000.

**Hauz Khas Village** (Map pp92-3; ☎ Mon-Sat) Another high-end shopping district, this one abounding with art galleries, boutiques

and furniture shops geared to society's upper crust.

**C Lal & Sons** (Map pp102-3; 9/172 Jor Bagh Market; ☎ 9.30am-7.30pm) Run by the lovely Mr Lal, this humble little 'curiosity shop' at Jor Bagh Market (Map pp102-3) is especially popular with expats for its charming handmade Christmas-tree decorations. The handicrafts (cheaper than those at tourist markets) include papier-mâché, blue pottery, candles, silk scarves and pretty glass beads.

**Khan Market** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 10am-7.30pm Mon-Sat) Rather a collection of shops and cafés than an actual market, this place is popular with expat diplomats and well-heeled locals for its boutiques and rash of skincare clinics. After splurging on books, CDs, clothes and organic toiletries, drop your remaining change into the permanent tin collection-box for stray cats, courtesy of the Windsor Pet Shop.

**Lajpat Nagar Central Market** (Map pp92-3; ☎ around 11am-9pm Tue-Sun) This market attracts bargain hunters on the prowl for household goods, clothing and jewellery. If you've fallen in love with the colourful jangly bangles widely worn by Indian women, you can find them here for around Rs 50 per two dozen.

**South Extension Market Parts I & II** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 11am-8pm Tue-Sun) sells high-class good in two enclaves, one on either side of the road. Music store **Planet M** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 26251620; ☎ 11am-8.30pm Tue-Sun) here has two well-arranged floors of English and Indian music.

**Sunder Nagar Market** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 10.30am-7.30pm Mon-Sat) Just south of Purana Qila, this genteel collection of shops specialises in Indian and Nepali handicrafts and 'antiques' (most are replicas). There are also two outstanding teashops: **Regalia Tea House** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 10am-7.30pm) and **Mittal Tea House** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 10am-7.30pm), both offering similar products (including wonderful loose teas and prepacked spices) and complimentary tea tastings.

## Tailors

Tailors adeptly replicate ready-made garments so bring your favourite party frock. Ultracheap tailors can be shoddy – seek recommendations or try the following (reputable) outlets. Always confirm whether quotes include fabric; the following prices exclude material.

**New Prominent Tailors** (Map p100; ☎ 23418007; 25 K-Block, Connaught Pl; ☎ 11am-7.30pm Mon-Sat) A skirt (without lining) is Rs 150, men's trousers are Rs 300.

**Vedi Tailors** (Map p100; ☎ 23416901; 60 M-Block, Connaught Pl; ☎ 11.30am-8pm Mon-Sat) Men's-only tailor. Charges Rs 300/2400 for trousers/suits.

## GETTING THERE & AWAY

Delhi is a major international gateway to India. It's also a centre for domestic travel, with extensive bus, rail and air connections. Note that Delhi is prone to fog during the chilly winter months of December and January, which frequently disrupts airline schedules. For more details of arriving from overseas see p373.

## Air

The domestic terminals (Terminal 1) of the Indira Gandhi International Airport (Map pp92-3) are around 15km south-west of Connaught Place, and the international terminal (Terminal 2) is a further 6km away. There's a free shuttle bus between the two terminals, or you can use the Ex-Servicemen's Air Link Transport Service (see p123). Allow 30 to 45 minutes to get to the domestic airport during the middle of the day, and 45 minutes to an hour to reach the international airport. If you're heading there at rush-hour, it's wise to double this, just to be sure.

At both domestic and international terminals, you *must* have your check-in baggage X-rayed and sealed before you check in – don't forget to do this or you'll be sent back. At the check-in counter, ensure you collect tags to attach to your hand luggage (mandatory to clear security later). For flight enquiries, call the **international airport** (☎ 25652011) or the **domestic airport** (☎ 25675126).

## DOMESTIC

### Arrivals & Departures

Check-in for domestic flights is one hour before departure. Note that if you've just arrived and have an onward connection within India, it may be with Air India, the country's international carrier, rather than its domestic carrier, Indian Airlines. If this is the case, you must check in at the international terminal (Terminal 2), not the domestic terminal.

### Airlines

The most convenient **Indian Airlines office** (Map p100; ☎ 23133317; F-Block, Malhotra Bldg, Connaught Pl; ☎ 10am-1pm & 2-5pm Mon-Sat) is at Connaught Place. There's also a ticket office at **Safdarjang**

**airfield** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 24631337; Aurobindo Marg; ☎ 7am-11pm). For Indian Airlines' flight arrival and departure times, dial ☎ 1407.

Other major domestic airlines (it's usually quickest and cheapest to book tickets online):

**Air Deccan** (☎ 9818177008; www.airdeccan.net)

**Jet Airways** (☎ 39893333; www.jetairways.com)

**Kingfisher** (☎ toll-free 18001800101; www.flyingfisher.com)

**Spicejet** (☎ toll-free 18001803333; www.spicejet.com)

## INTERNATIONAL

The international airport's arrivals hall has 24-hour money-exchange facilities, a prepaid taxi counter and a tourist information counter. The railway booking counter is open from 8am to 8pm.

### Airline Offices

Most airline offices listed below operate between around 10am and 5pm, Tuesday to Sunday.

**Aeroflot** (Map p100; ☎ 55302334; Tolstoy House, 15-17 Tolstoy Marg)

**Air Canada** (Map pp92-3; ☎ 41528181; 5th fl, World Trade Tower, Barakhamba Rd)

**Air France** (Map p100; ☎ 23466262; 7 Atma Ram Mansion, Connaught Pl)

**Air India** (Map p100; ☎ 23731225; 2nd fl, Jeevan Bharati Bldg, Connaught Pl)

**British Airways** (☎ 951244120747; DLF Plaza Tower, DLF Phase 1, Gurgaon)

**El Al Israel Airlines** (Map p100; ☎ 23357965; rm 303, Prakash Deep Bldg, 7 Tolstoy Marg)

**Emirates** (Map p100; ☎ 66314444; 7th fl, DLF Centre, Sansad Marg, Connaught Pl)

**Gulf Air** (Map p100; ☎ 23324293; 12 G-Block, Connaught Pl)

**Japan Airlines** (Map p100; ☎ 23324922; Chandralok Bldg, 36 Janpath)

**KLM-Royal Dutch Airlines** (Map p100; ☎ 23357747; Prakash Deep Bldg, 7 Tolstoy Marg)

**Lufthansa Airlines** (Map p100; ☎ 23724200; 56 Janpath)

**Malaysian Airlines** (Map p100; ☎ 41512121; Gopal Das Bhavan, 28 Barakhamba Rd)

**Pakistan International Airlines (PIA)** (Map p100; ☎ 23737791; 23 Barakhamba Rd)

**Qantas Airways** (Map p100; ☎ 23321345; Prakash Deep Bldg, 7 Tolstoy Marg)

**Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation (RNAC)** (Map p100; ☎ 23321164; 44 Janpath)

**Scandinavian Airlines (SAS)** (Map p100; ☎ 43513202; Thapar House, 124 Janpath)

**Singapore Airlines** (Map p100; ☎ 23356283; 9th fl, Ashoka Estate Bldg, Barakhamba Rd)

**Thai Airways International** (THAI; Map pp92-3; ☎ 41497777; Park Royal Intercontinental Hotel, America Plaza, Nehru Pl)

## Bus

Delhi's main bus station is the **Inter State Bus Terminal** (ISBT; Map pp92-3; ☎ 23868836; Kashmiri Gate; ☎ 24hr), north of the (Old) Delhi train station, about 20 minutes autorickshaw ride north of Connaught Place. It has a 24-hour left-luggage facility (Rs 10 per bag). 'Chaotic' can be an understatement here, so try to arrive at least 30 minutes ahead of your departure time.

**Rajasthan Roadways** (☎ 24864470; counter 36) and **Uttar Pradesh Roadways** (☎ 23868709; counter 38) sell onward tickets to Rajasthan and Agra at the bus station itself. You can also purchase tickets to Rajasthan at **Bikaner House** (Map pp102-3; ☎ 23383469), located near India Gate, where RTDC buses to and from Jaipur, Jodhpur, Ajmer and Udaipur arrive and depart. Services are seasonal, and vary wildly in price, time and comfort, so it's best to enquire here or at the bus station for up-to-the-minute options.

## Train STATIONS

There are two principal stations in Delhi – (Old) Delhi train station (Map pp92-3) 2km north of Connaught Place in Old Delhi, and New Delhi train station (Map p110) at Paharganj, a 15-minute walk from Connaught Place. It's another of Delhi's eccentricities that though the Old Delhi station is also known as the 'main station', most trains actually depart from the New Delhi train station. Do make sure you double-check which station serves your destination. If you're departing from the (Old) Delhi train station you should allow adequate time to tackle the slow-moving traffic of Old Delhi.

There's also the Nizamuddin train station (Map pp102-3), 5km southeast of Connaught Place, where some southbound and Agra connections depart or terminate. Some trains between Delhi and Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur also operate out of the Sarai Rohilla train station (Map pp92-3), which is about 4km northwest of Connaught Place.

An essential (and oddly addictive) piece of reading matter for deciphering Delhi's rail services is the invaluable *Trains at a Glance* (Rs 50), available at newsstands, bookshops or

at the International Tourist Bureau (see Ticket Bookings below). It offers complete listings updated every month, including prices per class and km, of all India's trains.

## TICKET BOOKINGS

Foreign travellers should head directly to the **International Tourist Bureau** (Map p110; ☎ 23405156; 1st fl, New Delhi train station; ☎ 8am-8pm Mon-Sat, to 2pm Sun). Do *not* believe anyone who tells you it has shifted, closed or burnt down – this is a scam to divert you elsewhere (see p95).

In this large, air-conditioned upstairs office you'll find generally helpful staff, whose motto, advertised on the wall, is 'Service with a Smile', though this may be stretching it. You'll need to fill out a reservation card before heading to a counter, where tickets can be paid for in rupees, pounds sterling, US dollars, euros, or travellers cheques, but not by credit card. Take your passport along, and try to book onward tickets as early as possible before you intend to travel, since berths – especially first class and sleeper varieties – fill up fast. There are also counters here for buying, and making reservations with, Indrail passes.

## GETTING AROUND

City buses can be hopelessly crowded, and unless you're travelling with a local, it's almost impossible to find the right one to serve your destination. Autorickshaws and taxis are in plentiful supply, but rates vary wildly, since it's frequently impossible to find one willing to turn on its official meter.

In certain parts of the city, cycle-rickshaws provide a swift way of cutting through Delhi traffic: this is most applicable on the short run from New Delhi train station to Connaught Place, and along the congested Chandni Chowk in Old Delhi.

Aside from walking, however, the very best way of getting around Delhi is by making use of its excellent metro system. Enter this serene, surreal underground world (keep an eye out for amazed locals struggling, Borat-like, with the escalators) and you'll be whisked about town quickly and sanely. New lines are still in the making, but for now the existing lines serve a good few of the main sights. Commuter hours may get sweaty and busy, but never worse than what's going on above-ground, or, for that matter, on London's Underground in August.

## MAJOR TRAINS FROM DELHI

Destination	Train No & name	Fare (Rs)	Duration (hr)	Departures & station
Agra	2280 <i>Taj Exp</i>	91/199 (A)	2¾	7.15am HN
	2002 <i>Shatabdi Exp</i>	292/584 (B)	2	6.15am ND
Ajmer	2916 <i>Ashram Exp</i>	545/675/1194 (C)	8	3.05pm OD
Jaipur	2916 <i>Ashram Exp</i>	416/515/910 (C)	5½	3.05pm OD
	2958 <i>Rajdhani Exp</i>	473/656/1145 (C)	4½	8pm ND
Jaisalmer	4059 <i>Barmer Exp</i>	284/798/1153 (D)	20	5.45pm OD
		(1AC not available)		
Jodhpur	2461 <i>Mandore Exp</i>	605/874/1546(C)	11	8.50pm OD
Udaipur	2963 <i>Mewar Exp</i>	555/801/1417 (C)	12	7pm HN

Train stations: ND – New Delhi, OD – Old Delhi, HN – Hazrat Nizamuddin

Fares: A 2nd class/chair car, B chair car/executive class, C 3AC/2AC/1AC, D sleeper/3AC/2AC/1AC

## To/From the Airport

Airport-to-city transport is not as straightforward as it should be, due to predatory taxi and autorickshaw drivers who often target first-time visitors – see p95.

Many international flights arrive in the wee hours, making it wise to book your hotel in advance, notify it of your arrival time and, if possible, save yourself a lot of hassle by pre-arranging a pick-up.

## PREARRANGED PICK-UPS

Arranging an airport pick-up through a hotel will inevitably be more expensive than taking a 'prepaid taxi' from one of the prepaid booths at the airport. It's worth the peace of mind though, especially if you're a first-time visitor to the city or your flight arrives in the middle of the night, since you know you'll end up at the right hotel and for a prearranged price. There's nothing more comforting after a long-haul flight than seeing someone holding a placard with your name on it.

## BUS

The **Ex-Servicemen's Air Link Transport Service** (EATS; Map p100; ☎ 23316530; F-Block, Connaught Pl; ☎ 10am-10.30pm) has a bus service between the airport (both terminals) and its office in Connaught Place. The fare is Rs 50, plus Rs 10 per large piece of luggage, and tickets can be purchased from its counter in the arrivals hall. The bus will also drop you off at most major hotels en route, and at the Ajmeri Gate entrance to New Delhi train station (for Paharganj). There is no set timetable as the bus operates according to flight arrivals.

There is also a Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) service (its counter is also in the arrivals hall), which operates frequent buses (Rs 50) into town, terminating at the ISBT (opposite) in Old Delhi. Since most travellers plump to stay in Paharganj or near Connaught Place, this service is generally much less useful than the EATS option.

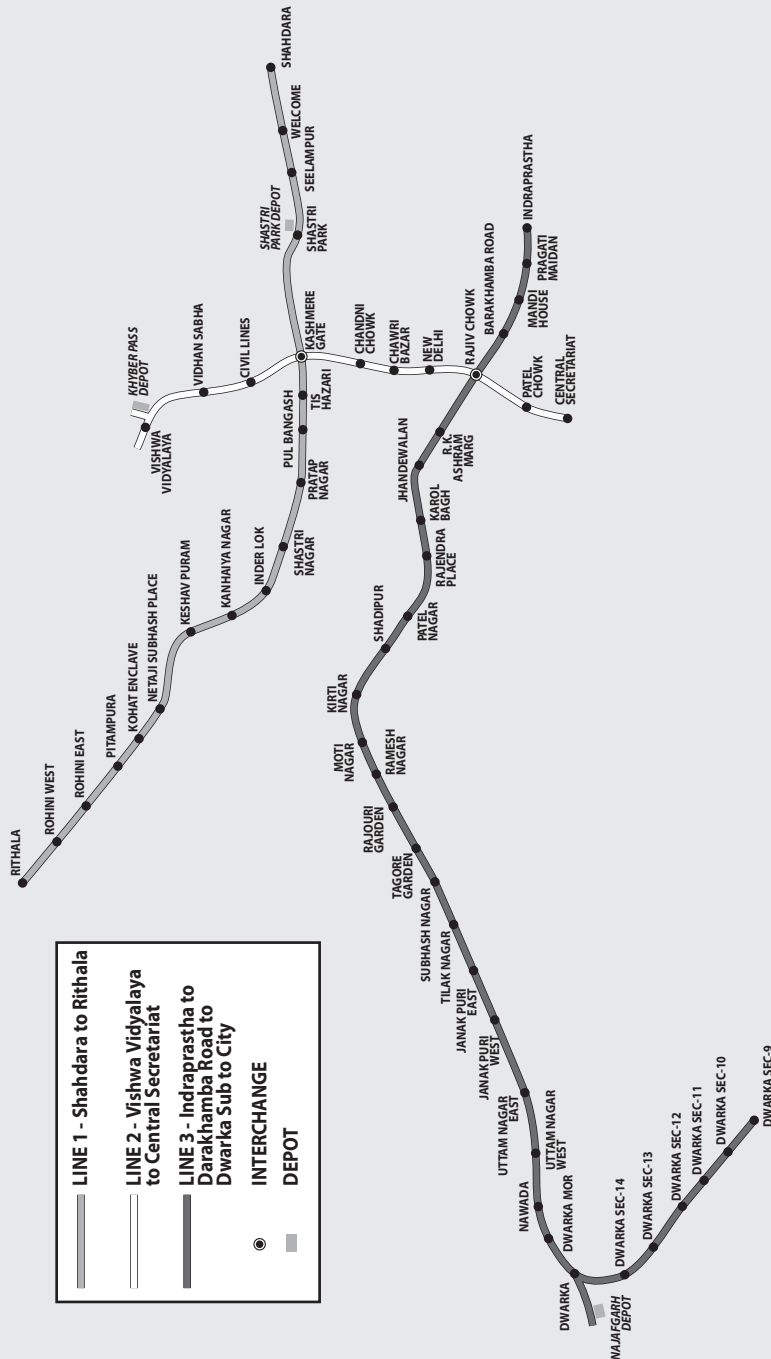
## TAXI

In the international terminal, there are several prepaid taxi booths in the arrivals hall area directly after customs; there's also a prepaid stand in the domestic terminal arrivals hall. It costs about Rs 250 to the city centre and there's a 25% surcharge between 11pm and 5am. If you're arriving at night or on your own, however, you may prefer to prearrange a pick-up from your hotel, since it's been known even for prepaid taxi drivers to attempt to take you to a different hotel in order to get a commission.

If you order a prepaid service, you'll be given a voucher at the booth with your destination on it. Never surrender your voucher until you actually get to your destination; it's a nice insurance that you'll actually get to where you've paid to go, since without that docket your driver won't get paid. To lodge complaints contact the **traffic police** (☎ 23378888; ☎ 24hr).

## Bus

The Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC; Map p100) runs some buses, and others are privately owned, but they all operate along the same set routes. Tickets cost a maximum of Rs 15 for travel within the city precincts.



Whenever possible, try to board at a starting or finishing point, such as the **Shivaji Stadium terminal** (Map p100; Connaught Pl), as there's more chance of a seat.

Useful buses:

**Buses 101, 104 & 139** Shivaji Stadium terminal to the Red Fort.

**Bus 505** Janpath (from opposite the Imperial hotel) to Qutb Minar.

**Buses 604, 620, 632 & 641** Connaught Pl (on Sansad Marg) to Chanakyapuri.

## Car

### HIRING A CAR & DRIVER

Numerous operators offer chauffeur-driven cars – for important tips see p379. Hotels can also often arrange cars but make absolutely sure there won't be hidden 'extra' charges before you depart. Three traveller-recommended options are cars arranged by the Vivek Hotel (p111), Hotel Namaskar (p110) and Yatri House (p111).

**Kumar Tourist Taxi Service** (Map p100; ☎ 2341 5930; kumar.tt.free.fr; 14/1 K-Block, Connaught Pl; 🕒 8am–9pm) is a tiny family-run outfit near the York Hotel and offers chauffeur-driven tours in Delhi and beyond. A day-long Delhi tour will cost between US\$13 and \$24 per car; a return daytrip from Delhi to Agra will be US\$80–150 per car, prices varying depending on the size and air-conditioning situation of the car.

### Cycle-rickshaw & Bicycle

Cycle-rickshaws are banned from Connaught Place and New Delhi, but are extremely handy for commuting between Connaught Place and Paharganj (about Rs 20). They're also recommended in Chandni Chowk (Old Delhi), as the drivers are veritable wizards at weaving through the crowds and gridlocks. You might decide to save your haggling skills for another occasion, since cycle-rickshaw drivers are usually some of Delhi's poorest (employed) residents, won't try to dupe you as frequently as autorickshaw drivers, face stiff competition among legions of others, and are restricted in their access to popular parts of the city.

If you want to purchase a bike, the largest range of new and secondhand bicycles can be found at Jhandewalan Cycle Market (Map pp92–3).

## Metro

Delhi's **metro system** ([www.delhimetrorail.com](http://www.delhimetrorail.com)) opened to great acclaim in 2002 and is still in

development, with work not expected to be finished until 2021. There are currently three lines in operation:

**Red Line (Line 1)** Runs northeast to northwest, from Shahdara to Rithala.

**Yellow Line (Line 2)** Runs south to north, from just south of the Central Secretariat to Vishwa Vidyalaya.

**Blue Line (Line 3)** Runs southeast to southwest, from Indraprastha to Dwarka.

Metros run daily every few minutes from 6am to 10pm and are an excellent, cost-effective way to get around the city. Purchase your token from the booth (fares start at Rs 6) or avoid queuing each time by purchasing an unlimited travel card (one-day/three-day card Rs 70/200). Children under 90cm tall travel for free.

Unlike on the London Underground, there is little indication, at each stop, what points of interest you might be near, so consult a map to find your nearest station. In general, the blue line is of most use to travellers, for shuttling between the sights of New and Old Delhi.

## Motorcycle

To purchase or hire motorcycles (including legendary Enfields), head for Karol Bagh (p119) – do shop around and seek advice from fellow travellers in order to ensure you get the best deal. **Indar Motors** (Map pp92–3; ☎ 25728579; lallisingh@vsnl.com; 1740-A/55 Basement, Hari Singh Nalwa St, Karol Bagh Market) receives consistently positive reports; for more information see p382.

## Taxi & Autorickshaw

All taxis and autorickshaws are metered but you'll usually find the meters are 'not working' or that drivers will simply refuse to turn them on. Unless you've got an iron will, you'll usually end up haggling over a price rather than standing for hours trying to find a meter-willing driver (taxi cost roughly double autorickshaws; as a guide, an autorickshaw from Connaught Place to Old Delhi should be Rs 40 to Rs 50). Prices will depend on how seasoned a traveller you appear to be, and the time of year. When there's less tourist trade in the winter months, you'll find that fares drop considerably. If you do get lucky with a working meter, remember that from 11pm to 5am, there's a 25% surcharge for autorickshaws and taxis.

To avoid shenanigans, you can try to catch an autorickshaw from a prepaid booth; locations are listed over page. In practice, though,

unless you happen to be near a prepaid booth at a time of day when it's not only officially open, but also has someone sitting behind the counter, you'll have to resort to haggling hard.

**Government of India Tourist Office** (Map p100; 88 Janpath; ☎ 11am-7pm) The booth is just outside the tourism office.

**New Delhi train station car park** (Map p110;

☎ 24hr)

**Palika Bazaar's Gate No 2** (Map p100; Connaught Pl;

☎ 11am-9pm)

## GREATER DELHI

Two atmospheric sites well worth the trek out of the city are Tughlaqabad and the Qutb Minar complex, both evocative vestiges of the city's ancient past. You can visit both in a day trip from Delhi: Tughlaqabad lies around 15km southeast of Connaught Place, while the Qutb Minar is 13km to the south.

### TUGHLAQABAD

The crumbling battlements of **Tughlaqabad** (Map pp92-3; Indian/foreigner Rs 5/100, video Rs 25; ☎ sunrise-sunset) once enclosed the third city of Delhi (p89). The walled city and fort with 13 gateways was built by Ghiyus-ud-din Tughlaq and was deserted soon after his death, possibly due to a dearth of fresh water nearby; not much remains, though 6.5km of walls, some halls, towers, and the outline of city streets can still be made out.

The city's construction involved a legendary quarrel between Ghiyus-ud-din and the saint Nizam-ud-din: when the Tughlaq ruler forbade workers moonlighting on the construction of Nizam-ud-din's shrine, the saint cursed the king, warning that his city would be inhabited only by shepherds. Today, along with legions of rhesus macaques, this is indeed the case.

An autorickshaw from Connaught Place should cost around Rs 200 for the return trip to Tughlaqabad, including half an hour waiting time.

### QUTB MINAR

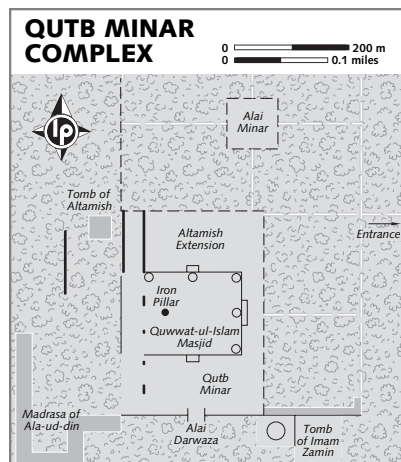
The imposing buildings of the **Qutb Minar complex** (☎ 26643856; Indian/foreigner Rs 10/250, video Rs 25; ☎ sunrise-sunset Tue-Sun) are the first monuments of Islamic rule in India and are fine examples of early Afghan architecture.

The Qutb Minar itself is a soaring tower of victory whose construction begun in 1193, immediately after the defeat of the last Hindu kingdom in Delhi. It's nearly 73m high and tapers from a 15m-diameter base to just 2.5m at the top.

The tower has five distinct storeys, each marked by a projecting balcony. The first three are of red sandstone, while the upper floors are of marble and sandstone. Although Qutb-ud-din began construction of the tower, he only finished the 1st storey; his successors completed it and, in 1368, Firoz Shah rebuilt the top storeys and added a cupola. An earthquake brought the cupola crashing down in 1803 and an Englishman replaced it with another in 1829. His dome, however, was deemed inappropriate and removed some years later.

Today, this impressively ornate tower has a slight tilt (making it no longer possible to climb), but otherwise has worn the centuries remarkably well. Scattered around it are a number of other remains; the **tomb of Imam Zamin** is beside the entrance gateway, while the **tomb of Altamish**, who died in 1235, is by the northwestern corner of the mosque. The largely ruined **madrasa of Ala-ud-din** stands at the rear of the complex.

There are also some **summer palaces** in the area, along with the **tombs** of the last kings of Delhi, who succeeded the Mughals. An empty space between two of the tombs was intended for the last king of Delhi, who died in exile in Yangon, Burma (Myanmar), in



1862, following his implication in the 1857 Indian Uprising.

The Qutb Minar Festival is held here every October or November (p99).

### Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid

At the foot of the Qutb Minar stands the first mosque to be built in India, the **Might of Islam Mosque**. Qutb-ud-din began construction of the mosque in 1193, but various additions and extensions have been added over the centuries. Altamish, Qutb-ud-din's son-in-law, surrounded the original mosque with a cloistered court, built between 1210 and 1220. Ala-ud-din then added a court to the east along with the magnificent **Alai Darwaza gateway** in 1300. This gateway, the main entrance to the complex, was built of red sandstone in 1310 and stands just southwest of the Qutb Minar.

The mosque was built on the foundations of a Hindu temple, and an inscription over the east gate states that it was built with materials obtained from demolishing '27 idolatrous temples'. Many elements in the mosque's construction, however, still hark back to their Hindu or Jain origins.

### Iron Pillar

This 7m-high pillar stands in the courtyard of the mosque, where it has stood since long

before the mosque's construction. A six-line Sanskrit inscription indicates that it was initially erected outside a Vishnu temple, possibly in Bihar, and was raised in memory of Chandragupta II, who ruled from AD 375 to 413.

What the inscription does not mention is how the pillar was made, for the iron in the pillar is of quite exceptional purity. Scientists have never discovered how the iron, which has not rusted after almost 2000 years, could be cast using the technology of that time.

### Alai Minar

When Ala-ud-din made his own additions to the mosque, he also conceived an ambitious second tower of victory, exactly like the Qutb Minar, but twice as high. By the time of his death the tower had reached 27m and was never completed; it now stands to the north of the Qutb Minar and the mosque.

### Getting There & Away

Catch bus 505 (Rs 15) from the Ajmeri Gate side of New Delhi train station or from Janpath (opposite the Imperial hotel). Alternatively, Janpath's prepaid autorickshaw booth charges Rs 140 for the return trip to the Qutb Minar, including 30 minutes' waiting time (Rs 20 per extra hour).

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