

# Varanasi Packing List

Everything to pack for Varanasi's ghats, dawn boat rides, and the modest dress this holy city calls for — built to pair with Indroam's Varanasi itinerary templates.

## WHY VARANASI PACKING IS DIFFERENT

Varanasi is one of the world's oldest continuously inhabited cities and one of Hinduism's holiest, built around the ghats lining the Ganges where cremation rites, ritual bathing, and the nightly Ganga Aarti ceremony all take place in close public view. Modesty matters more here than in most Indian cities — conservative, fully covering clothing is expected, especially near ghats and temples — and early-morning boat rides mean cool, damp air even when the city days are hot. Streets near the ghats are narrow, uneven, and often crowded, so practical footwear matters as much as respectful dress.

## CLOTHING

- Conservative, fully covering clothing (long sleeves, ankle-length bottoms) — more modest than most Indian cities expect
- A light shawl or scarf for both modesty and the cool air on dawn boat rides
- Breathable cotton layers for hot, humid daytime hours
- A warm layer for chilly early mornings, especially October–February
- Dark or easily washable clothing — ghat areas can be dusty and crowded
- Modest swimwear is not appropriate here; skip it entirely

## FOOTWEAR & ACCESSORIES

- Easy slip-on sandals — footwear comes off at temples and is best avoided on slippery ghat steps in flip-flops alone
- Closed, grippy walking shoes for narrow, uneven lanes in the old city
- A small flashlight or phone light for early dawn ghat walks before sunrise
- A modest bag that keeps hands free while navigating crowds and boats
- Reusable water bottle
- Hand sanitizer kept easily accessible — ghats and lanes are crowded and busy

## HEALTH, DOCUMENTS & TECH

- Hand sanitizer and wet wipes — essential given the crowds and riverside conditions
- Personal medication and basic stomach-upset remedies
- Mosquito repellent for riverside evenings
- Sunscreen and a sun hat for daytime ghat walks
- Passport/ID copy and hotel confirmations
- Portable charger and a universal plug adapter (India: Type C/D/M)

Cremation ceremonies take place openly at certain ghats — photography is considered deeply disrespectful there, so check locally before taking any pictures.