

FREE GUIDE — 2026 EDITION



# Northeast India

## Travel Guide

Everything you need to plan your trip to all 8 states

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Budget Breakdowns · Day-by-Day Itineraries · Permit Guide  
Packing Checklist · Food Guide · Transport Routes · Essential Tips

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## 1. All 8 States at a Glance

Northeast India has 8 states, each completely different. Here's what you need to know.

STATE	BEST TIME	TOP HIGHLIGHT	PERMIT?	DAYS
Meghalaya	Oct–May	Living Root Bridges, Dawki River	No	4–5
Sikkim	Mar–May, Oct–Dec	Nathula Pass, Tsomgo Lake	RAP for borders	5–6
Assam	Nov–Apr	Kaziranga Rhino Safari	No	3–4
Arunachal Pradesh	Mar–Jun, Sep–Oct	Tawang Monastery, Sela Pass	ILP required	7–8
Nagaland	Oct–Mar	Hornbill Festival, Dzukou Valley	ILP required	3–4
Manipur	Oct–Mar	Loktak Lake floating islands	ILP required	3–4
Mizoram	Oct–Mar	Phawngpui Blue Mountain	ILP required	3–4
Tripura	Sep–Mar	Unakoti rock carvings	No	2–3

### Quick Pick Guide

First timer? → **Meghalaya** (easy, no permit, stunning)

Mountains? → **Sikkim** (Kanchenjunga views, monasteries)

Wildlife? → **Assam** (one-horned rhinos at Kaziranga)

Adventure? → **Arunachal Pradesh** (remote, epic road trip)

Culture? → **Nagaland** (Hornbill Festival in December)

## 2. Budget Breakdown

Northeast India is one of India's most affordable destinations.

### Daily Costs (Per Person)

CATEGORY	BUDGET	MID-RANGE	LUXURY
Accommodation	₹500–800	₹1,500–3,000	₹4,000–10,000
Food (3 meals)	₹250–400	₹600–1,200	₹1,500–3,000
Local Transport	₹200–400	₹800–1,500	₹2,000–4,000
Activities	₹100–300	₹400–1,000	₹1,000–3,000
<b>TOTAL / DAY</b>	<b>₹1,050–1,900</b>	<b>₹3,300–6,700</b>	<b>₹8,500–20,000</b>

### Flights to Guwahati (One-Way)

FROM	COST	DURATION
Delhi	₹3,500–8,000	2.5–3 hrs
Kolkata	₹2,500–5,000	1.5 hrs
Mumbai	₹4,000–10,000	3.5 hrs
Bangalore	₹4,500–12,000	4 hrs

**Money-Saving Tip:** Book flights 2-3 months ahead. Use shared Sumo taxis (₹300-500) instead of private cars (₹3,000-5,000). Stay in homestays — cheaper AND better food.

### 3. Permit Guide

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#### States Requiring Inner Line Permit (ILP)

STATE	APPLY ONLINE AT	COST	PROCESSING
Arunachal Pradesh	arunachalilp.com	Free	2–3 days
Nagaland	ilp.nagaland.gov.in	Free	1–2 days
Manipur	manipurilp.nic.in	Free	1–2 days
Mizoram	mizoram.nic.in	Free	1–2 days

#### No Permit Needed (for Indian Nationals)

**Meghalaya, Assam, Tripura** — No permits for anyone.

**Sikkim** — Open for most areas. RAP needed only for Nathula Pass and Gurudongmar Lake.

**Important:** Always carry printed copies of your permit. Checkpoints DO verify them. Apply at least 1-2 weeks before travel.

## 4. Packing Checklist

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The 3 non-negotiables: **rain jacket, walking shoes, cash.**

### Essentials

- Rain jacket or poncho — even in "dry" season
- Comfortable walking/trekking shoes (not sandals)
- Cash — ₹10,000–15,000 minimum (ATMs unreliable)
- Power bank 10,000mAh+
- Offline Google Maps (download NE India states)

### Clothing

- Layerable warm clothes (fleece + light down jacket)
- Quick-dry clothes (humidity is high)
- Modest clothes for monastery visits (cover shoulders + knees)

### Health & Documents

- Altitude medicine (Diamox) for Sikkim/Arunachal
- Mosquito repellent (DEET-based)
- Sunscreen + basic first-aid kit
- ILP printout if visiting Arunachal/Nagaland/Manipur/Mizoram
- ID proof + 2 extra passport photos

## 5. Getting There & Around

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### Main Airports

AIRPORT	SERVES	KEY INFO
Guwahati (GAU)	Meghalaya, Assam, Arunachal	Main gateway — most flights
Bagdogra (IXB)	Sikkim, Darjeeling	4 hrs drive to Gangtok
Dimapur (DMU)	Nagaland	3 hrs drive to Kohima
Imphal (IMF)	Manipur	Direct flights from Delhi
Agartala (IXA)	Tripura	Direct flights from Kolkata

### Getting Between Cities

ROUTE	SHARED SUMO	PRIVATE TAXI	TIME
Guwahati → Shillong	₹400	₹3,000	3 hrs
Guwahati → Kaziranga	₹500	₹4,000	5 hrs
Bagdogra → Gangtok	₹300	₹3,500	4 hrs
Dimapur → Kohima	₹200	₹2,000	3 hrs
Guwahati → Tawang	—	₹15,000+	2 days

## 6. Quick Itineraries

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### Meghalaya — 5 Days

DAY	ROUTE	HIGHLIGHTS
1	Guwahati → Shillong	Police Bazaar evening walk, local food
2	Shillong sightseeing	Elephant Falls, Don Bosco Museum
3	Shillong → Cherrapunji	Nohkalikai Falls, Mawsmai Cave
4	Root Bridge + Dawki	Living Root Bridge (3,500 steps), Mawlynnong
5	Dawki → Guwahati	Umngot River boat ride

### Sikkim — 5 Days

DAY	ROUTE	HIGHLIGHTS
1	Bagdogra → Gangtok	MG Marg, thukpa & momos
2	Gangtok sightseeing	Rumtek Monastery, Ropeway
3	Tsomgo + Nathula	Tsomgo Lake, Nathula Pass (14,140ft)
4	Gangtok → Pelling	Ravangla Buddha Park, Kanchenjunga views
5	Pelling → Bagdogra	Pelling Skywalk, Pemayangtse Monastery

### Assam — 4 Days

DAY	ROUTE	HIGHLIGHTS
1	Guwahati	Kamakhya Temple, Brahmaputra riverfront
2	Guwahati → Kaziranga	Check in, evening orientation
3	Kaziranga Safari	Jeep safari (rhinos!), elephant safari
4	Kaziranga → Guwahati	Tea garden visit, optional Majuli detour

### Arunachal Pradesh — 7 Days

DAY	ROUTE	HIGHLIGHTS
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<b>1</b>	Guwahati → Bhalukpong	ILP checkpoint, enter Arunachal
<b>2</b>	Bhalukpong → Dirang	Hot springs, Dirang Dzong
<b>3</b>	Dirang → Tawang	Sela Pass (13,700ft), Paradise Lake
<b>4</b>	Tawang	Tawang Monastery, War Memorial
<b>5</b>	Bumla Pass	India-China border (15,200ft)
<b>6</b>	Tawang → Bomdila	Bomdila Monastery, apple orchards
<b>7</b>	Bomdila → Guwahati	Return journey

## 7. Food Guide

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NE Indian food is unlike anything else in India — fermented, smoked, fresh, and bold.

STATE	MUST-TRY DISH	WHAT IT IS	COST
<b>Assam</b>	Masor Tenga	Tangy fish curry	~₹150
<b>Meghalaya</b>	Jadoh	Rice cooked with pork	~₹120
<b>Nagaland</b>	Smoked Pork + Axone	Pork with fermented soybean	~₹180
<b>Sikkim</b>	Thukpa	Tibetan noodle soup	~₹100
<b>Arunachal</b>	Momos + Thukpa	Dumplings + soup combo	~₹80
<b>Manipur</b>	Eromba	Fermented fish + veggie mash	~₹100
<b>Mizoram</b>	Bai	Boiled herbs & vegetables	~₹80
<b>Tripura</b>	Muya Awandru	Bamboo shoot curry	~₹120

**Vegetarian?** Options everywhere: thukpa (no meat), veg momos, Assamese dal-rice, Sikkimese gundruk.

## 8. 10 Essential Tips

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#	TIP	WHY IT MATTERS
1	Carry cash (₹10K+)	ATMs fail outside major towns
2	Apply permits 2 weeks early	Online ILP takes 2–3 days
3	Pack rain gear always	Showers happen even in October
4	Start early every day	Weather worsens after noon
5	Respect local culture	Shoes off at monasteries
6	Don't underestimate distances	100km = 4–5 hours on mountain roads
7	Book Kaziranga safari early	Nov–Dec sells out weeks ahead
8	Carry altitude medicine	Nathula & Sela Pass cause sickness
9	Download offline maps	Signal drops in remote areas
10	Try the local food	NE cuisine is India's best secret

### Want more detailed guides?

Visit [northeasttourpackages.in](https://northeasttourpackages.in) for full day-by-day itineraries, budget breakdowns, permit walkthroughs, and the latest travel updates.