



Top 15 Tips on Responsible Travel in the Himalayas

Many of us wonder about "Why is there any need for responsible travel in the Himalayas?". In the past seven years, tourism in Ladakh has risen like anything without any control or regulations by authorities. With the rise of Instagram age, the situation has gone worse. Let's check some tips on how you can travel responsibly and help in saving our Himalayas.

1

DO NOT litter

Please DO NOT litter around in the mountains. You must love them and protect them as you do your home. Each person in your group MUST ensure that they bring their trash back from the day's travel, especially the plastics wrappers or at least put them into the dedicated dustbin.

2

Always carry a refillable water bottle

One of the significant waste/garbage littered in the Himalayas is the "Plastic Water Bottles" as they tend to get crushed, making them unusable after 2-3 refillings. Some folks even don't bother refilling once. A small move of using a reusable water bottle will be a tremendous help.

3

Enjoy the music but restrict the volume to yourself

Typically people from the plains tend to play loud music in their cars in the mountains. It sounds very jarring; destroys peace and tranquility of the place and startles the local fauna. If you must, turn down the volume or even better, use earphones or headphones (definitely not while driving).

4

Benefit & promote the local Himalayan people with your travel

It is always better to stay with local families and talk to the people around the remote Himalayan village to understand and support their cultural values & beliefs. Stay in homestays or guest houses run by local families, hire locals as guides for treks, eat at local dhabas/eateries and do your bit.

5

Try your best to conserve natural resources, whenever possible

Please do not pollute any of the water sources. Correctly, never use soap, detergents, oil or any such substance near or in these sources. Do your bit to avoid polluting the air fire hazards.

6

DO NOT disturb the wildlife

One must always act and protect the wildlife from any disturbances which are annoying for them. Posing for a photo with them as is in the background still makes sense as neither you're disturbing them physically nor destroying their home.

7

Stop leaving behind your Graffiti or artwork skills

At too many places, people have this urge to record their presence at every site that they reach. Pristine locations get defaced and in its place are ugly announcements of either somebody's visit or their love for some other individual.

8

Avoid touching the prayer flags & Mani walls

PLEASE DO NOT contact by hand or by feet or sit or stand on them. These prayer flags or mani stones or other sacred things in the high lands of the Himalayas or anywhere are there for a purpose.

9

Respect the local culture and traditions

Appreciating and respecting local customs is part of our education that broadens our horizons beyond what we know. So, even if you disagree, do not debate there and keep your opinion to yourself and participate respectfully if not reverentially.

10

Ask for permission before taking photographs of locals, especially females

Asking for permission before taking a picture is not only valid for the Himalayas, but anywhere in the world. It is always advisable to seek consent before clicking a photo of any person.

11

Avoid offroading on wetlands/grasslands for the fun sake

You must avoid offroading on wetlands/grasslands just for fun. In the Himalayas, these wetlands/grasslands are scarce resources for food and waters for the wildlife/animals in that region. These are present to maintain the overall ecology of the environment at those places.

12

Responsible driving/riding tips

It is essential to know the basics of some not-so-known rules to people like us who are accustomed to driving in plains. Knowledge of such tips will surely help us make a responsible driver or rider.

13

Be ready to help others

Being helpful and generous is one of the keys to being a great traveler. Traveling in the Himalayas can be lonely at times and painful too. Hence, extend your help to other fellow travelers, trekkers, or locals who need something stranded in the middle of nowhere.

14

Carry out cleanliness drives on any day of your tour at mountain passes and lakes

What you can do as a responsible tourist or traveler is that you or your group can involve locals around the lakes or at mountain passes (if any otherwise, DIY) and organize that day as cleanliness drive.

15

Make Friends

Yes, in the end, don't forget to make friends with the locals or other travelers. Sometimes knowing the locals will help you get information or updates that you may never find mentioned in any book or any article over the Internet.

Himalayan Travel Tips

- Have Buffer Days
- Stay Warm & Hydrated
- Avoid Alcohol
- Carry Required Clothing, Food & Water
- Drive with Caution & Care
- Start Early, Sleep Early



#SaveOurHimalayas

- Spread Smiles Not Plastic
- Stop Littering
- Bring Back Your Own Trash
- Avoid Plastic Water Bottles