



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

A Pocket Companion to the Northeast

Kindness Is the First Language

Compassion travels faster than Wi-Fi.

- A smile, a nod, or even a hand gesture goes a long way in places where languages change every few kilometers.
- “Thank you” in the local dialect is worth learning — it often opens doors (and hearts).
- Greet elders first when entering homes or community spaces.
- Asking before clicking photos — especially of people or rituals — is always appreciated.
- Your curiosity is welcome, but so is your silence. Listen as much as you ask.

Land of Many Moods

Every season here tells a different story.

- Weather can change within hours — pack layers, not assumptions.
- Roads may be winding, but so are the journeys worth remembering.
- Summer isn't always dry; monsoons aren't always predictable. Check local forecasts, not just apps.
- Early mornings are golden — for views, for markets, for meaningful interactions.

Respect What's Wild

You're a guest in nature's oldest home.

- Stick to marked trails in forests and parks — it protects both you and the ecosystem.
- Don't feed or disturb animals — even butterflies deserve privacy.
- Silence isn't empty here. It's full of birdsong, rustling leaves, and quiet awe.
- Take only memories, leave only biodegradable footprints.
- Many sacred groves are off-limits — if unsure, always ask before entering.

Sacred Is Simple

What's sacred may not always look grand — but it's always felt.

- Temples, monasteries, and churches often follow different customs — observe quietly before participating.
- Carry a scarf or shawl for unexpected holy stops — covering your head or shoulders is respectful in many sites.
- Don't point feet toward deities or sacred altars.
- Even a simple stone altar under a tree could hold centuries of faith.

Traditions Are Living, Not Performances

You're witnessing continuity, not a show.

- Many festivals aren't for tourists — you're invited to witness, not consume.
- Traditional attire is everyday wear for many; don't exoticize it, admire respectfully.
- If you're offered homemade food or rice beer — accept with both hands or a warm “no, thank you.”
- Dance, when invited. Watch, when not.

Maps May Not Tell You Everything

Rely on people, not just pins.

- Network is patchy, but local knowledge is deep. Ask directions with humility.
- Not every place has a board — sometimes, it's a landmark told in stories.
- Local time is flexible — delays are not disrespect, they're rhythm.

Flavours Speak Loudest at Home

Street stalls and homestays are where recipes live.

- Be open to unfamiliar tastes — they're often generational treasures.
- Allergies? Just share early — hosts are thoughtful, even if unfamiliar with the term.
- “Less spicy” still might be spicy — carry your comfort fixers just in case.
- Try one thing you can't pronounce.

Leave Space for What You'll Find

You came with bags — return with stories, friendships, perspectives.

- Leave room in your plans to be surprised.
- Travel slow — the magic often waits at tea stalls, riverbanks, and roadside dhabas.
- What's not listed online may become your favourite memory.

