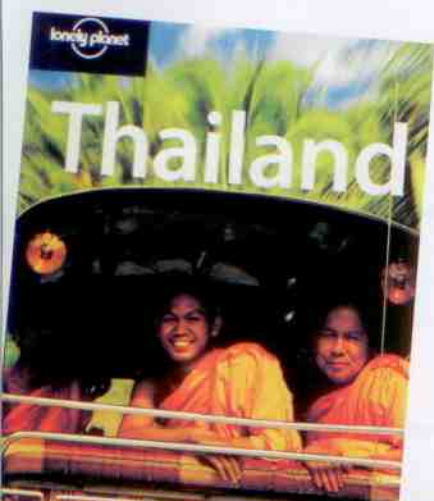


Don't leave home without it

It's your entry into another culture, another destination. Which guidebook will you rely on? Payal Shah Karwa lists what's on offer



From Goa to the Greek Islands, the world can be encapsulated in a book that can be packed in your handbag, telling you where to go and what not to miss. It may also contain some of the thrills of discovery en route — a spring or waterfall shrouded from sight or a humble practitioner of some regional music. You won't want to leave home without that guidebook.

Here's a list of the best known ones to get before you go jet-setting.

THE LONELY PLANET

Tops the list, of course, and not without reason. The travel guides are well sectioned into:

- Country guides
- City guides and
- Pocket guides with maps

Publisher: Lonely Planet Publications

Destinations covered: Almost every destination

one could think of — from Bolivia, Waikiki, Iceland, Bali, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Thailand to New Zealand, Germany, Europe, China, Australia et al.

Price: Rs 1,300 onwards

We like: Deeply researched by dedicated authors who find out and write about unique things and popular spots. There's accurate, in-depth, up-to-date data, with colour coding and maps to facilitate reading.

Availability: Almost all major bookstores, such as Oxford, Landmark or Granth, and even the local ones, stock them. Or shop online for a destination of your choice at www.lonelyplanet.com

TIMEOUT TRAVEL GUIDES

It's the next on our list, for its snazzy looks. Timeout covers several international destinations as well as domestic places.

Publisher: Timeout

Group Ltd

Price: Rs 800 onwards

Destinations covered: Amsterdam to Austria, Vienna to Washington, the Timeout guides cover over 51 destinations, like Barcelona, Paris, New York,

London, Bangkok, Lisbon, Madrid, Mumbai, Hong Kong, Istanbul, Milan, Miami, Las Vegas, Mallorca, Marrakech, Naples, New Orleans, Prague, Rome and Shanghai, among others.

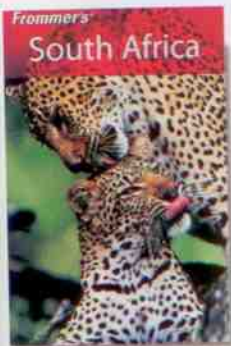
We like: With sales of over 8,50,000 copies a year across the world, these guides cover the destinations in the minutest detail. It is different as they are written by local residents with fool-proof knowledge of the local conditions vis-à-vis other guides which consist of content written by visiting authors. Timeout's writing is easy to read, witty and intelligent and has established a huge, loyal readership across the world.

Availability: Sold in all well-known bookstores like Crossword, Landmark, Oxford, etc. Buy online too from www.timeout.com

BERLITZ POCKET GUIDES

These pocket-sized guides are equipped with easy navigable maps, useful expressions of the respective language and great pictures.

Publisher: Apa Publications GmbH & Co, Singapore



Price: Rs 400 onwards
Destinations covered: Over 100 destinations, including Goa, Madeira, Athens, Delhi, Madrid, Chicago, LA, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Florence, Boston, Amsterdam, Barbados, Barcelona, etc.
We like: Besides special features, like arts and culture, history and local cuisines of the respective cities, these guides also cover detailed listings or review hotels and restaurants.
Availability: Available in major bookstores like Landmark, Oxford, Crossword, etc. You can also shop online at berlitzbooks.com

OUTLOOK TRAVELLER

Publisher: Outlook Publishing (India) Pvt Ltd



Price: Rs 295 onwards
Destinations covered: Outlook Traveller has covered India and tourist destinations, such as Ladakh, Manali, Dalhousie, Dharamshala, Amritsar, Gangtok, Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Jaipur, Udaipur, Gwalior, Mandu, Goa, Kochi, Thiruvananthapuram, Chennai, Trichy, Madurai and Kanyakumari. For the religiously inclined, they have a pilgrimages guide that covers everything from Vaishnodevi to Sabarimala.
We like: Photographs and details, such as '101 Things to do' and 'Places to visit', which make the guide informative and interesting.
Availability: Apart from the regular bookstores, such as Crossword, Oxford and Landmark, these guides are available at airports, railway stations and newsstands.

FROMMERS' GUIDEBOOKS

Guiding eager travellers for over 50 years, Frommers is well researched and packed with interesting tips.

Publisher: Frommer's
Price: Rs 600 onwards
We like: An exhaustive list of destinations covered. Candid reviews offered from the traveller's point of view, listings of popular restaurants, shops, nightclubs, sports facilities, things to do that are special to each destination, such as golf courses or cultural dos, with ratings. They also have theme guides for keen shoppers (in the Born To Shop series).

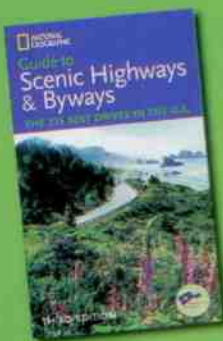
Destinations covered: Region-wise titles such as, Asia, and countries covered under it would include: China, Hong Kong, Singapore, India, Japan, Russia, Thailand, Vietnam and others.
Australia and South Pacific: Australia, New Zealand, and Great Barrier Reef South Pacific

Caribbean and Atlantic: Bahamas, Bermuda, Caribbean
Europe: Germany, Great Britain and Ireland, Scandinavia, Spain and Portugal, Austria, Hungary Republic of Croatia, Belgium, Switzerland, Danube Valley, Prague and Czech Republic
Middle East and Africa: Israel, Turkey, Egypt, South Africa
North America: New York, Washington, Florida, California, Hawaii, Northeast US, Chicago, Southwest and the Rockies

Availability: At Landmark or shop online at www.frommers.com/bookstore
 St Augustine once said, 'The world is like a book and if you don't travel, you have read only a page'. These books help us discover a world unknown as yet to us. Take a weekend break, go on a discount shopping tour, get enthralled by the art and traditions of a different culture. Pack a bag and hit the road less travelled. **T**

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC TRAVEL GUIDES

With some of the best TV travel shows in their kitty, they can't go wrong with travel guidebooks as well.
Publisher: National Geographic Publications
Price: Rs 800 onwards
Destinations covered: Pretty much a horde of global destinations (countries, cities, theme tours, etc.), such as



Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, The Caribbean, London, Madrid, Sicily,

Naples, Piedmont and Northwest Italy, Prague and the Czech Republic, St. Petersburg, Provence and the Cote d'Azur, Cuba, Australia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, India and special editions on the USA.
We like: In-depth descriptions of the historical and cultural aspects of the destination it covers, laid out in an interesting and easy-to-read manner. For instance, each chapter is

equipped with a content list for quick and easy reference. The guides have accurate information, including maps and lists of shops, restaurants and numbers to call in an emergency.
Availability: You can pick these up from Landmark (Crossword and Oxford do not stock them) or shop online on <http://shop.nationalgeographic.com>

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