

FEBRUARY 2026

## Delhi | India

Vaishnavi Pareek and her colleague Mohammad Maaz guided Jordan Kestle (SHL) around Delhi.



**Vaishnavi Pareek** is a Delhi-based hospitality professional and alumna of SHL's Management Excellence Training Week, delivered in partnership with Taj Hotels. Born and raised in Delhi, she navigates the city with equal parts nostalgia and practical insights. Curious, culture-driven, and happiest exploring her hometown through fresh eyes.

**Delhi** has a way of revealing itself slowly. It doesn't instantly show off for you on arrival. Instead, it waits... behind tree-lined avenues, centuries-old tombs and morning chai stalls, until you're willing to pause long enough to notice.

For Vaishnavi Pareek, it is home in the truest sense: the place she was born, raised, and continues to build her professional life today. She sees Delhi through both an insider's affection and a hospitality professional's eye. What makes Delhi special, she says, is its rare layering of time: dynasties, religions and neighbourhoods coexisting within a modern capital that never stops moving. It's overwhelming if rushed, deeply rewarding

if approached gently. If you're willing to look beyond the scale and distances, Delhi reveals itself as deeply human, richly textured, and quietly beautiful.

Delhi is a true melting pot. Mughal tombs, Sultanate ruins and modern city life exist side by side, sometimes within the same neighbourhood. Humayun's Tomb, Lodi Garden, and remnants of the Tughlaq and Lodi dynasties quietly anchor the city's rhythm.

Despite its size, Delhi feels surprisingly navigable and is stitched together by an efficient metro system that locals rely on daily.

#### **If you only have 24 hours...**

Start your day with a cozy read in the winter sun at Lodi Garden, followed by a delicious butter chicken lunch at Gulati's. In the afternoon, take your time to leisurely explore a nearby historic monument, and round off the day with relaxing drinks at GK II Market or Sidecar.

## **SHL IN INDIA**

SHL has partnered with Taj Hotels since 2024, supporting leadership development and service excellence. SHL delivers bespoke Management Excellence Training Weeks in Switzerland, blending classroom learning with hands-on exposure to Swiss hospitality, combining Indian warmth with Swiss precision.



### **Culinary Highlights**

Some cities impress with innovation. Delhi comforts. And nowhere does that better than Gulati's, home to what Vaishnavi confidently calls the city's best butter chicken. Rich, indulgent and nostalgic.

Delhi's signature dish is Chole Bhature. It's breakfast for some, lunch for others, and comfort food for everyone. Another essential is Rajma Chawal: kidney bean curry with steamed rice. Simple, nourishing, and deeply emotional for those who grew up eating it. Breakfast traditions include Aloo Puri, often served in hotels and local eateries alike. For variety, Bikanervala, a popular chain, offers a reliable introduction to chaat and local snacks. A gentle warning: ask for food «non-spicy» if heat isn't your strength. Delhi definitely doesn't dilute flavours by default.

For the adventurous traveller, one must try Delhi's abundance of street food. A good place to start is around Jama Masjid. Must-try foods include: Aloo Tikki, Daulat ki Chaat, Chicken Lamb and Buff Kebabs – and to round it off, Paan, a fragrant betel leaf parcel that delivers an explosion of sweet, herbal, and cooling flavours in a single bite. For regional depth, Jamun offers refined Indian flavours that are well curated. It's Punjabi comfort food at its most generous with familiar dishes cooked the way they're meant to be eaten at home.

For travellers heading north, definitely try the restaurant NAAR!

### **Bars & Nightlife**

Sidecar has been Vaishnavi's go-to place for years, a cocktail bar that balances technique with warm hospitality. Newer spaces like Barbet and Pals bring a playful, social energy, while Hoots', a speakeasy-style bar, quietly reinterprets classics. Ask nicely, and they may still make the discontinued Albert's Negroni.

### **Markets & Shopping**

Book lovers should seek out Delhi's oldest bookstore, Faqir Chand's at Khan Market, where shelves lean with Indian poetry, Urdu works and authors names whose don't always travel beyond the subcontinent. Neighbourhood markets like GK II feel more intimate, more local.

For handicrafts, Dilli Haat gathers stalls from across India, offering a glimpse into regional craft traditions without leaving the city. As always in Delhi, don't forget to bargain hard!