Pakistan

Pre Tour Information

Introducing Pakistan...

From snow-dusted summits to desert forts and ancient bazaars, Pakistan is a country of staggering contrasts and deep cultural roots. This South Asian nation is home to some of the world’s most dramatic mountain scenery − including five peaks above 8,000 metres, and the legendary Karakoram Highway that winds through sheer rock gorges and remote alpine villages. In the south, arid plains cradle relics of the Indus Valley Civilisation, while cities like Lahore and Multan pulse with Mughal architecture, Sufi shrines, and centuries-old storytelling traditions.

Travelling through Pakistan means immersing yourself in a land where hospitality is heartfelt, history is multilayered, and landscapes can shift from lush rice paddies to sand dunes within a day’s drive. Whether you're exploring the Hunza Valley, bargaining in Peshawar’s Qissa Khwani Bazaar, or marvelling at the Badshahi Mosque’s red sandstone grandeur, every corner offers something unexpected.

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Managing Expectations

Pakistan is bold, beautiful, and never boring. From the kaleidoscope of trucks roaring through mountain passes to the call to prayer echoing off ancient citadel walls, your senses will stay wide awake. But this is a country where plans bend with the roads, and surprises are part of the itinerary. Infrastructure can be patchy, power may flicker, and things might move a little slower than you're used to − or not at all for a while.

But if you come with curiosity and flexibility, Pakistan will reward you richly.

Here's a list of things to be aware of before you go:

Hospitality Isn't Just a Gesture—It's a Way of Life: Pakistanis take hospitality to another level. If you're a guest, expect to be treated like royalty—people will offer you food, tea, and even invite you into their homes. Turning down hospitality can be seen as rude, so even if you're full, it's polite to accept at least a little. If a local says, "This is your home," they truly mean it.

The Scenery Is Mind-Blowing—And Almost No One Knows About It: Pakistan is home to some of the most breathtaking landscapes in the world, from the snow-capped peaks of the Karakoram Range to the turquoise lakes of Gilgit-Baltistan. The Hunza Valley looks like a dream, and Fairy Meadows offers jaw-dropping views of Nanga Parbat, one of the world's tallest mountains. If this country were easier to visit, it would be a top destination for nature lovers.

Traffic Has Its Own Set of Rules (Or Lack Thereof): Driving in Pakistan is not for the faint-hearted. Lanes are optional, honking is constant, and sudden stops are just part of the experience. Pedestrians, rickshaws, motorcycles, and even the occasional donkey cart all share the road. If you're in a car, buckle up and embrace the chaos—your driver knows what they're doing (probably).

Tea (Chai) Is the Answer to Everything: Pakistanis drink tea all day, every day. It's not just a drink—it's a ritual. If you visit someone's home, chai will be the first thing they offer, and declining it is almost unheard of. The best way to experience it? Sitting at a roadside dhaba (tea stall), sipping a hot cup of doodh pati while watching the world go by.

Expect to Eat with Your Hands—And Be Offered More Food Than You Can Handle: In Pakistan, eating with your hands—especially bread like naan and roti—is the norm. Forks and knives are used for certain dishes, but many meals are meant to be enjoyed by scooping up food with bread. Also, be ready for never-ending refills; Pakistanis show love through food, and your host will keep piling your plate even when you insist you're full.

Power Cuts Are Still a Thing: Load shedding (scheduled or unscheduled power cuts) happens, especially in smaller cities and rural areas. In major cities like Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad, it's less of an issue, but it's still something to be aware of. Most hotels and restaurants have backup generators, so it's usually just a temporary inconvenience.

English Is Widely Spoken—But Not Everywhere: Many Pakistanis speak English fluently, especially in cities, as it's an official language. But once you move into rural areas, Urdu and regional languages dominate. That said, Pakistanis are incredibly resourceful and will find a way to communicate with you, even if it means using hand gestures and a mix of languages.

Security Can Feel Heavy—But It's Mostly Precautionary: In major cities, you'll notice security checkpoints, armed guards outside hotels, and bag checks at shopping malls. It can feel intense at first, but it's largely

precautionary, and many locals don't even notice it anymore. Pakistan has made huge strides in safety, and while some areas still require caution, most tourist spots are perfectly fine.

The Weather Swings from One Extreme to Another: Pakistan isn't just hot—it has extreme seasons. Summers can be brutally hot, especially in cities like Karachi and Lahore, where temperatures can hit 45°C (113°F). But in winter, northern areas turn into a snowy wonderland. If you're heading to the mountains, pack warm clothes—it gets much colder than you might expect.

The Call to Prayer Echoes Across Every City and Village: Five times a day, the adhan (call to prayer) rings out from mosques across the country. The sound is beautiful and atmospheric, especially at sunrise or sunset. But if you're a light sleeper and staying near a mosque, you might want to bring earplugs—Fajr (the first prayer) happens before dawn.

The Cities Are Chaotic—But They Have Their Own Rhythm: Karachi is loud, crowded, and never really sleeps. Lahore is full of history but also has insane traffic. Islamabad, by contrast, feels quiet and organised. Every city in Pakistan has its own unique personality, and while the chaos can be overwhelming at first, you'll soon find yourself getting used to it.

Foreigners Might Get a Lot of Attention (But It's Friendly): If you don't look Pakistani, expect some stares—especially in smaller towns. But it's almost always curiosity rather than rudeness. Some people might ask for selfies, others might want to practice their English. If someone invites you for tea, they probably mean it!

Pakistanis Love a Good Debate: Whether it's cricket, politics, or history, Pakistanis love discussing (and passionately debating) everything. You might get asked for your opinion on world affairs within minutes of meeting someone. Just be careful with sensitive topics—Pakistanis have strong opinions, and conversations can get heated.

Internet and Social Media Can Be Unpredictable: Wi-Fi is decent in major cities, but mobile data can be patchy in remote areas. Also, certain websites or social media platforms occasionally get blocked, usually due to political reasons. If you rely on the internet, a local SIM card with data is a must.

Pakistan Will Challenge Everything You Thought You Knew: Forget the stereotypes—Pakistan is one of the most welcoming, culturally rich, and naturally stunning places you'll ever visit. It's not always the easiest place to travel, but the warmth of the people, the depth of history, and the sheer beauty of the landscapes will stay with you long after you leave. It's a country that defies expectations—and that's exactly why it's worth visiting.

General Travel Information

Local Emergency

- Police: Call 15 or go to the nearest police station
- Fire and rescue services: Call 16
- Ambulance: 115
- Rescue Service: Call 1122

Consular & Embassy Assistance

We strongly advise all travellers to take a proactive approach to their safety and well-being by familiarizing themselves with the contact details and address of their local embassy within their destination before embarking on their journey. Knowing how to reach your embassy can provide invaluable support in case of emergencies, unexpected situations, or the need for consular assistance. This essential information ensures that you're well-prepared and equipped to navigate any challenges that might arise during your travels. Your embassy is your lifeline in a foreign land, offering guidance, assistance, and a sense of security while you explore new horizons.

Staying in Touch

Before departing your home country, check with your phone supplier to see if it is compatible with the mobile phone networks in the countries that you are travelling to, and how much it will cost to use it abroad. Mobile coverage in rural Pakistan, especially in northern areas like Gilgit-Baltistan, can be spotty — but most inhabited areas do have at least basic coverage through major networks like Jazz or Zong. Complete blackouts are rare except in extremely remote or mountainous areas.

Phone & Internet

You can purchase local SIM cards from major mobile providers such as Jazz, Zong, Telenor, and Ufone. SIM cards are available at airports, authorised shops, and some hotels. You'll need your passport and visa for registration − this process includes biometric verification and can take up to 30 minutes.

Wi-Fi

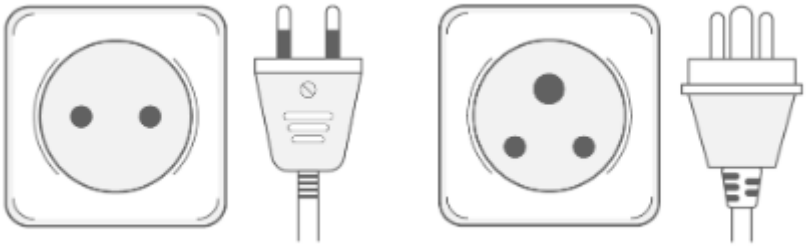
Wi-Fi is generally available in hotels and cafés in major cities like Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi, though speeds vary. In smaller towns and remote areas − especially northern regions like Gilgit-Baltistan − connectivity can be limited or cut out altogether. If you're heading into the mountains or less-developed districts, don’t rely on internet access.

Responsible Tourism

We believe strongly in low-impact or rather positive-impact tourism. Broadly speaking, this means that we aim to minimise the negative aspects of tourism on the local cultures and environments that we visit and highlight the positive aspects. Please visit our website for further details and suggestions on how you can be a responsible traveller. https://www.crooked-compass.com/responsible-tourism/

Electrical Voltage & Plug Adaptors

The standard voltage in Pakistan is 230V, with a frequency of 50Hz.
The outlets and plugs used in Pakistan are typically Type C and Type D.
If you do not have a multi-voltage travel adapter, you may ask to borrow or purchase one from your hotel's front desk.



Plug types can vary between and even within countries, depending on the age of the building. To use your devices, you'll need an adaptor that fits the local sockets. Since multiple plug types can be used when travelling, a universal adaptor/converter combo is your best option. These are lightweight, versatile, and available at most electronics stores — or at the airport if you forget to pack one.

Facts & Figures

Pakistan is in South Asia, bordered by India to the east, Afghanistan and Iran to the west, China to the north, and the Arabian Sea to the south. The country stretches from the high-altitude Karakoram and Himalayan Mountain ranges in the north to flat river plains in the centre and ends in the deserts and coastlines of the south. Its geographic diversity includes glaciers, salt flats, and one of the world's largest irrigation systems fed by the Indus River.

Population & Cities

Pakistan has an estimated population of over 240 million people, making it the fifth most populous country in the world. Major cities include Karachi, the economic hub and largest city; Lahore, known for its cultural heritage and historic architecture; Islamabad, the capital with a more planned, modern layout; and Peshawar and Quetta, both rich in frontier history and regional identity.

Government & Economy

Pakistan is a federal parliamentary republic, with a president as head of state and a prime minister as head of government. The economy is diverse but challenged, with agriculture, textiles, manufacturing, and remittances as key sectors. Tourism is growing, especially in northern areas, though infrastructure remains under development.

Language

The official language is Urdu, though English is widely used in government, education, and business. Many people also speak regional languages such as Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi, Balochi, and Saraiki, depending on the province.

Useful Phrases
Hello: Assalam-o-Alaikum (as-sa-LAAM-o a-LAI-koom)
Thank you: Shukriya (SHOOK-ree-ya)
Yes: Haan (haan)
No: Nahin (na-HEEN)
Please: Meherbani (MEH-her-ba-nee)
Excuse me / Sorry: Maaf kijiye (maaf KEE-jee-ye)
How are you?: Aap kaise hain? (aap KAI-se hain?)
I don't understand: Mujhe samajh nahi aaya (moo-JHAY sa-MAJH na-HEE aaya)
Where is...?: ...kahan hai? (...ka-HAAN hai?)
How much is this?: Yeh kitne ka hai? (yeh KIT-nay ka hai?)

Time Zone
Pakistan operates on Pakistan Standard Time (PKT), which is UTC+5. The country does not observe daylight saving time.

Religion
About 96% of Pakistan's population identifies as Muslim, with the majority being Sunni and a significant Shia minority. Small communities of Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, and others exist, mostly in urban areas.

National Holidays
Key public holidays in Pakistan include:

- Pakistan Day (23 March) – Commemorates the Lahore Resolution of 1940. Expect parades and some government closures.
- Independence Day (14 August) – Celebrates independence from British rule in 1947, marked with fireworks, flag-raising ceremonies, and large public gatherings.
- Eid-ul-Fitr and Eid-ul-Adha – Major Islamic holidays based on the lunar calendar, most businesses close, and travel demand spikes.
- Muharram / Ashura – Observed mainly by Shia Muslims, with processions and public commemorations.
- Quaid-e-Azam Day (25 December) – Marks the birthday of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Pakistan's founding father.

Health & Safety

Medical Supplies

This is one adventure where you don't want to forget your medications; it may be hard to get them in the remote reaches of Pakistan.

- Pack medications in your carry-on bag to avoid loss and to have them handy. Ensure any liquids or gels are less than 100ml.
- Keep medicines in their original, labelled containers for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- Bring copies of your prescriptions, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name, to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.
- Carry a letter from your doctor explaining the medications you are using and that they are for personal use.
- Consider bringing a filled prescription antibiotic for gastrointestinal illness, electrolytes and motion sickness medicine if you are susceptible.

Crooked Compass highly recommends that you travel with your first aid kit.

Please refer to a travel vaccination specialist for the most up-to-date advice about vaccinations for your destination(s). We encourage you to check with your healthcare provider and take their advice based on your current state of health.

Please follow the link to check the TravelVax website:
https://www.travelvax.com.au/

Medical Care

Access to medical care in Pakistan varies significantly depending on location. Major cities like Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi have private hospitals and clinics with trained professionals and English-speaking staff. However, rural areas and high-altitude regions often have limited facilities, and emergency services may not be readily available. Travellers should carry any necessary medications and consider bringing a basic medical kit, especially for remote journeys. Comprehensive travel insurance that includes emergency evacuation is strongly recommended. In case of a medical emergency in urban areas, you can dial **1122** for ambulance or rescue services (where available).

Water Safety

Tap water in Pakistan is not safe to drink. To avoid waterborne illnesses, drink only bottled or boiled water, and ensure the seal is intact when purchasing bottles. Avoid ice in drinks unless you're certain it is made from purified water. Many travellers use water purification tablets or portable filters when travelling to more remote areas. In rural or mountainous areas, bottled water may be unavailable. Consider carrying a UV sterilisation pen, pump filter, or iodine tablets if you're trekking or camping.

Food Safety

Local food is a highlight of any trip to Pakistan, but precautions are needed. Eat at busy places with high turnover – whether that's a roadside Dhaba or an urban restaurant. Make sure food is freshly cooked and served hot, and avoid raw salads or unpeeled fruit unless you've washed them yourself. In remote areas, meals may be simple and repetitive, but generally hearty and filling.

Dietary Considerations

Special dietary requests are required to be notified to us at the time of booking. Although we will use reasonable endeavours to accommodate requests, we cannot guarantee requests will be met by suppliers. It is your responsibility to check that meals and beverages do not contain any allergens.

Pakistan's cuisine is heavily meat-based, with frequent use of ghee, spices, yoghurt, and wheat products. Vegetarian travellers can find lentil dishes (daal), vegetable curries, and breads like chapati or naan, but may struggle with variety outside major cities. Vegan options are more limited and often misunderstood − many vegetable dishes use butter or yoghurt by default.

Gluten-free diets can be difficult to maintain, as wheat-based bread is a staple. Dairy-free travellers should ask carefully, as milk, cream, and yoghurt are widely used in sauces and drinks. Hidden ingredients like ghee, butter, or wheat flour can appear in unexpected places.

To manage dietary restrictions:

- Carry a translated dietary card explaining your needs in Urdu.
- Shop for packaged snacks and essentials in larger supermarkets (e.g., Metro, Al-Fatah).
- In cities, some cafés and restaurants cater to modern diets − especially in Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi.
- In group meals or rural homestays, always inform your guide well in advance, and be prepared for limited alternatives.

Altitude Sickness

If on your travels, you ascend altitudes higher than 2000m, you may feel some effects of altitude. Even if you've been to high elevations previously, you could have a different reaction each time. For most people, the symptoms are mild and will pass in a day or so.

You should take it easy, avoid smoking and alcohol, and drink plenty of fluids. Some people take altitude sickness medication, starting when they arrive or one day before. Don't take sleeping medications, as they suppress respiration. The most common symptoms are lightheadedness, shortness of breath, headache, nausea, sleeplessness, and loss of appetite. If these are bothersome, you should start taking medication. Even though you may experience a decreased appetite, force yourself to eat soups and some basic foods.

If these 'normal' altitude symptoms become unmanageable, you must inform your Trip Leader. Please let the leader know if you experience any of the following: serious difficulty breathing, mental confusion, a severe and unremitting headache, continued difficulty breathing after a period of rest, or poor physical coordination.

TIP: Even if your risk is medium to low, it may be worthwhile to bring a medication with you so that you have it on hand for immediate use if needed. No one wants to buy medication they don't need, but on the other hand, no one wants to interrupt their trip for a doctor's visit.

Altitude in Pakistan

Altitude is a significant factor when travelling in Pakistan. Northern regions such as Skardu, Hunza, Fairy Meadows, Khunjerab Pass, and the Karakoram Highway reach elevations well above 2,000 metres, with Khunjerab Pass exceeding 4,700 metres.

Travellers may experience mild to moderate altitude symptoms, especially if ascending too quickly. Allow time for acclimatisation, stay hydrated, and know the signs of Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS). Medical facilities are sparse in these regions, so preparation is crucial.

Safety & Security

Reasonable Precautions

- Travellers are advised to exercise good sense, take some reasonable precautions and avoid irresponsible behaviour like carrying too much cash and displaying valuables like cameras, phones and expensive jewellery
- Always exercise caution
- Do not take unnecessary valuables with you
- A money belt or something similar, worn close to your body, is the best way to carry passports, airline tickets and money
- DO NOT leave any valuables in ANY hotel room, please use SAFETY DEPOSIT BOXES - items are left at the individual's risk
- Pickpockets operate everywhere, particularly in tourist areas and crowded markets. you must always exercise care
- Be aware that anything left unsupervised may be liable to theft

Travel Advisories

Please use the link below to check the Smart Traveller website and register your travel:

👉 Smart Traveller

LGBTQIA

All travellers face risks overseas. Risks can be higher for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people in some destinations. It's your responsibility to get the facts first and take steps to reduce your risks. We encourage you to please read this article. https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/before-you-go/who-you-are/LGBTI

Drug & Alcohol Policy

Under no circumstances are any illegal drugs allowed on any part of the trip. Anyone discovered in possession of any such drugs will be asked to leave the tour immediately without question or refund. Remote communities and some cultures are deemed as ‘dry’, meaning that no alcoholic drinks may be purchased or consumed. Please be respectful of this. Even in cities, alcohol is generally only available in licensed hotels catering to foreigners.

Entry Requirements

Crooked Compass does not provide visa or health advice. The information in this section is for general guidance only.

Please ensure you check and comply with visa requirements for the country you are visiting. For the most accurate and up-to-date information, contact your nearest embassy or consulate. If you need assistance, we recommend using a specialist visa agency such as CIBT Visas.

Visas

If applicable, you must obtain the appropriate visas before embarking on your trip. Country entry regulations can change daily, your travel agent can provide you with visa information. Please consult your relevant embassy for all details, such as opening hours or costs. Certain visas cannot be obtained on arrival, and during the peak months, it may take longer than normal to get them. Please allow extra time to do this. Crooked Compass encourages the use of a visa specialist service such as CIBT Visas to ensure you have the correct and up-to-date information surrounding visa requirements for your destination(s).

Visa and other entry and exit conditions (such as currency, customs and quarantine regulations) can change at short notice.

EACH CLIENT IS SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY VISAS BEFORE JOINING A TOUR.

Crooked Compass does not accept responsibility for changes in regulations or requirements for visas.
The information provided is given in good faith.

Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all Crooked Compass itineraries. You must be covered for personal accident, medical expenses, cancellation, curtailment, repatriation, and more. In remote areas, your policy must include helicopter evacuation in case of emergency.

Be aware that many adventure activities — such as trekking, white-water rafting, or bungee jumping — are often excluded from standard insurance policies. If you plan to join such activities, please check your coverage or purchase additional protection.

We also recommend keeping a photocopy of your insurance documents separate from the original while travelling.

Global Rescue

Have you considered evacuation coverage? Crooked Compass partners with Global Rescue, a world leader in medical and security evacuation and advisory services. Unlike most standard travel insurance, Global Rescue offers field rescue from the point of injury or illness, anywhere in the world.
👉 Global Rescue

Passports

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return
- Must have 4 blank pages
- By law, you must carry your passport at all times when travelling in Pakistan

We recommend you carry colour photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards, and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel insurance plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

Money Matters

Local Currency

The Pakistani Rupee (PKR) is a non-pegged, freely floating currency. Banknotes vary in size and colour depending on denomination and are printed with prominent Pakistani historical figures and landmarks. While older notes remain in circulation, newly designed notes are gradually replacing them.

Exchange rates can be volatile, so rates may fluctuate noticeably even during a short visit. Currency exchange is typically straightforward in cities and major towns but can be difficult in remote or rural areas. Always inspect notes for damage − torn or excessively worn notes may be refused.

Currency: Pakistani Rupee
Currency code: PKR
Central Bank: State Bank of Pakistan
Currency symbol: Rs
Currency subunit: Paisa (no longer in circulation)
Nicknames: "Rupee" (commonly used), "PKR" in finance and online
Banknotes: Rs10, Rs20, Rs50, Rs100, Rs500, Rs1000, Rs5000
Coins: Rs1, Rs2, Rs5, Rs10 (rarely used in daily transactions)

Be aware that some countries are more expensive than others and that if you are travelling through several, your expenses will vary enormously. Similarly, there will be some days when you spend nothing at all and others when you exceed your budget.

It is often a good idea to have a small amount of the currency of the country you are visiting before arrival. This will cover you for any initial expenses at or from the airport.

Payment Methods

Cash is still king in most of Pakistan. You'll find that small eateries, markets, and rural vendors generally only accept cash. In major cities like Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi, card payment is accepted at large hotels, upscale restaurants, and shopping malls − but often only Visa or Mastercard. American Express is much less commonly used.

ATMs are widely available in cities and towns. Many international cards work, though withdrawal limits may vary, and some machines can run out of cash, especially around public holidays. If travelling to more remote areas − such as Gilgit-Baltistan or parts of Balochistan − be sure to carry enough cash to cover your entire stay, as there may be no functioning ATMs.

Notifying Card Providers: Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges, such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank that you will be using your cards abroad.

Tipping Culture

Tipping is expected and appreciated, though not always mandatory. In restaurants, a 10% tip is the norm for good service. High-end places may already include a service charge. For bellhops and hotel porters, Rs100‑Rs300 is reasonable depending on the level of service. Taxi drivers generally don't expect tips, but rounding up the fare is polite.

A note about tipping your guide and driver: We realise that tipping is a sensitive subject for all travellers. While tips are widely accepted, we would like to stress that this is at your own personal discretion. While everyone is recommended to tip based on services rendered, our clients often ask that we provide some basic guidelines. Our suggestion is USD10 per day for your tour guide and USD3- 5 per day for your driver (payable in local currency). If hiking, a good idea is to allow around USD10 per day for porters.

Everyday Expenses

If your tour covers accommodation, guides, activities, and breakfasts, you'll primarily need spending money for extras like lunches, dinners, drinks, small souvenirs, and tips. Always keep some small bills on hand for spontaneous purchases or tipping.

Travelling through Pakistan can be very affordable. A bottle of water costs around Rs50 (AUD0.30), while a street meal − like a spicy chana chaat or a fresh naan wrap − might be just Rs200‑Rs300 (AUD1‑1.70). A sit-down local restaurant meal ranges from Rs500‑Rs1000 (AUD2.80‑5.60), while high-end restaurants in urban areas may charge up to Rs3000 (AUD17) per person.

Coffee at a trendy café will cost about Rs400‑Rs700 (AUD2.20‑3.90). Local souvenirs − hand-embroidered textiles, gemstone jewellery, or carved wooden items − range widely, from Rs500 for small items to Rs10,000+ for intricate or high-quality pieces.

Money Requested on Tour

Whilst every precaution is taken to ensure all services as per your itinerary are pre-paid before your arrival, in areas where tourism is still being developed, you may, on occasion, be asked for additional funds for incidentals such as fuel and water. Under no circumstances are you to part with cash to any crew or local person claiming to work for Crooked Compass. Should you be requested to provide such funds, please contact the emergency contact number immediately for support. Crooked Compass is unable to take responsibility without prior authorisation from head office for monies handed over to the crew or local persons.

Getting There

Airports

Pakistan's main international gateways are:

- Islamabad International Airport (ISB) in the capital
- Jinnah International Airport (KHI) in Karachi
- Allama Iqbal International Airport (LHE) in Lahore

You may also enter via multinational hubs like Doha, Dubai, or Istanbul, which have direct connections to all three cities.

On arrival, immigration is generally efficient, though queues can build during peak times. You'll need to present your visa (if applicable) and a valid passport with at least six months' validity. Be prepared for customs declarations and occasional baggage checks.

For departure, arrive at least 3 hours early – even for domestic departures – as security procedures are thorough and involve multiple checks. There is no departure tax for most travellers, as this is usually included in airline ticket prices, but always confirm with your airline ahead of time.

Border Crossings

Pakistan shares land borders with India, China, Afghanistan, and Iran, though not all are open or reliable for tourists:

- Wagah Border (India) – near Lahore; the most used by travellers. Daily flag-lowering ceremony is a tourist attraction. Open for pedestrians and vehicles. Visa is mandatory in advance for both countries – no visas issued at the border.
- Khunjerab Pass (China) – high-altitude border crossing (4,693m (15,397 ft) - oxygen can be thin, especially for those coming from lower elevations) on the Karakoram Highway into Xinjiang. Open only seasonally (May to November), weather dependent. Stunning mountain scenery, but conditions can be harsh.
- Taftan Border (Iran) – used by overlanders. Crossing can be slow, and the security situation in Balochistan must be monitored. Travellers need escort clearance from Pakistani authorities to travel through parts of Balochistan.
- Torkham and Chaman (Afghanistan) – These crossings are not recommended for tourists due to unpredictable security and volatile political situations. Travel is often restricted and subject to abrupt closures.

Always check visa requirements and real-time border status before planning overland travel.

Internal Flights & Luggage Allowance

Many of our tours run without changes but please be advised that due to weather and other unforeseen circumstances domestic internal flights may not always run to schedule or on time. Your trip leader will keep you informed of any schedule changes as they happen.

Standard commercial airline baggage restrictions apply for all internal flights within Pakistan. Usually, this is 20kg for economy passengers, which will include checked luggage as well as one piece of carry-on luggage. Excess luggage can be stored in your hotel. Passports are required for travel on domestic flights, and you should arrive at the airport two hours before your scheduled departure time.

Key domestic airlines include:

- PIA (Pakistan International Airlines) – largest and most widespread network
- Airblue, Serene Air, and AirSial – newer carriers with good safety records and competitive service

Frequent routes connect Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Multan, Skardu, Gilgit, and Quetta. Flights to the mountainous north (e.g. Skardu or Gilgit) are scenic but highly weather-dependent. Delays and cancellations are common due to cloud cover and wind conditions.

Climate

Pakistan's climate varies significantly across its vast and rugged landscape. The country spans four major geographic zones: the arid southern lowlands, the Indus River plains, the hilly northern highlands, and the extreme high-altitude ranges of the north and northwest.

In the south − including Karachi and much of Sindh − the climate is hot and dry for most of the year, with minimal rainfall and searing temperatures from May to July. Coastal humidity can make the heat more intense.

The central plains of Punjab and parts of Balochistan experience scorching summers, a short monsoon season from July to September, and mild winters. Rainfall here can be sporadic but heavy, especially during the monsoon.

In the northern regions, including Gilgit-Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the climate becomes mountainous and alpine. Winters bring sub-zero temperatures, snow, and seasonal road closures in remote valleys. Summers are pleasant and cool, making this region a popular escape from the heat.

Rainfall varies dramatically: from less than 100 mm annually in arid zones like Tharparkar to over 1500 mm in the Himalayan foothills. The Karakoram and Hindu Kush ranges are particularly unpredictable − sudden downpours and flash flooding are not uncommon in summer.

Seasonality

Pakistan experiences four distinct seasons: Winter, Spring, Summer/Monsoon, and Autumn

Winter (December – February)

Expect cold conditions in the north, with temperatures dropping below 0°C in Skardu and Gilgit. Snowfall is common in hill stations like Murree, often cutting off access to high-altitude valleys. Southern Pakistan remains mild and dry, with Karachi averaging 10–25°C. Pack warm layers for northern areas, especially if venturing into mountainous terrain.

Spring (March – May)

Spring brings a rapid rise in temperatures, especially across Punjab and Sindh. By May, cities like Lahore and Multan may already be seeing 35°C or more. Northern regions begin to thaw, making valleys like Hunza more accessible. It's a good time for lower-elevation trekking, but still too early for high-altitude routes.

Summer / Monsoon (June – August)

Southern and central Pakistan faces intense heat − daytime temperatures in the lowlands can exceed 45°C. Meanwhile, the monsoon sweeps across Punjab and the Himalayan foothills, bringing heavy rain and occasional flooding. In the north, summer is the peak travel season, with cooler temperatures and open roads. Mountain storms can strike quickly − always be prepared for delays.

Autumn (September – November)

Temperatures gradually drop, and the monsoon rains recede, leaving behind lush greenery in the north. October is one of the best months to travel in Gilgit-Baltistan and the Hunza Valley − sunny days, crisp nights, and vibrant autumn foliage. Lower elevations remain warm but increasingly dry. It's a comfortable season for both cultural travel and trekking.

Month	Record high (°C)	Average high (°C)	Daily mean (°C)	Average low (°C)	Record low (°C)	Average rain (mm)	Precipitation days	Relative humidity (%)	Sunshine hours
Jan	25.9	13.3	8.4	1.6	-32.4	39.2	5.1	43.5	8.5
Feb	29.5	15.4	11	3.8	-29.3	93.6	8	47.7	9.3
Mar	36	20.8	16.6	8.4	-26	92	9.4	45.7	11.1
Apr	41.3	26.5	22.7	13.7	-21.5	74.9	10.8	39.9	12.5
May	44.5	31.5	27.9	18.6	-16	49.6	8.9	33.6	13.7
Jun	45.6	34.2	30.9	22.3	-8.5	53	8.1	34.6	14.1
Jul	43.4	33.6	30.5	23.6	-1.9	125.7	13.2	45.9	13.8
Aug	41.1	31.8	28.8	22.2	-0.2	139	14.4	51.4	12.8
Sep	40.6	29.9	26.5	18.8	-7.1	61.6	8.6	44.6	12
Oct	38.8	26.1	22	13.8	-18.4	25.4	4.3	35.3	9.3
Nov	32.8	20	15.2	8.1	-25.4	23.8	3.7	35.9	8.5
Dec	27.5	15.4	10.2	3.7	-29.9	17.3	2.5	34.2	8.4

Travel and Terrain

From the sun-scorched plains of Sindh to the icebound peaks of the Karakoram, travel in Pakistan offers some of the most dramatic geographic contrasts in South Asia. While cities are relatively accessible, much of the country's most breathtaking beauty lies in remote valleys, mountain passes, and arid highlands − where travel becomes both adventurous and unpredictable.

General Road Conditions
Pakistan's road network is a patchwork of extremes. Major highways like the Motorway (M2) between Islamabad and Lahore are well-maintained, smooth, and efficient, comparable to Western standards. But outside of urban centres, road quality drops sharply. In rural Punjab and interior Sindh, roads can be riddled with potholes or entirely unsealed. In the mountains of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan, narrow cliff-edge roads are common, and landslides, rockfalls, or flash floods frequently block routes.

Driving through the north, you'll encounter suspension bridges strung across roaring rivers, shepherds leading flocks along the roadside, and precarious switchbacks climbing toward snow-covered passes. Expect slow travel times, even over short distances.

Main Travel Routes
The Karakoram Highway (KKH) is the backbone of travel in northern Pakistan − a high-altitude marvel connecting Islamabad to Gilgit and on to the Chinese border at Khunjerab Pass. Along this route, you'll pass dramatic terrain including the Nanga Parbat massif, the Hunza Valley, and glacier-fed rivers twisting through narrow gorges.

Other key routes include:

- Islamabad to Skardu – via the newly upgraded Skardu Road, dramatically improved but still vulnerable to landslides and weather delays
- Quetta to Taftan (Iran border) – passes through arid, militarised Balochistan; requires caution and security escorts
- Lahore to Multan via N-5 or M-4 – flat and accessible, through rich agricultural heartland
- Chitral to Kalash and Shandur – mountain roads with sharp inclines, limited paving, and seasonal closures

Rail exists between major southern cities (Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi) but is slow and outdated, and rarely used by international travellers. Northern regions are not served by rail at all.

Challenging Terrain or Remote Areas
Travel into Gilgit-Baltistan, Chitral, or western Balochistan involves navigating remote terrain where road conditions shift with the seasons.

The Deosai Plateau, sitting at over 4,000 metres, is only accessible from June to early September, and even then, only by 4WD. Similarly, Skardu's valleys often require vehicles with high clearance, especially after rain or snowfall.

The Thar Desert in Sindh and Cholistan near Bahawalpur present entirely different challenges − intense heat, blowing sand, and long distances between settlements. While spectacular, they require careful planning and good vehicle support.

Navigating Urban vs. Rural Travel
In cities like Karachi, Islamabad, and Lahore, travel is relatively straightforward, though traffic congestion is common. Ride-sharing apps like Careem and Uber operate in larger cities but are non-existent in remote areas.

Crossing Borders in High Terrain
The Khunjerab Pass (4,693m) into China is one of the highest paved border crossings in the world. The road is stunning, but oxygen levels are low, and temperatures can fall well below freezing − even in summer. Altitude-related issues are a genuine risk for those unacclimatised.

Please note that while we have given guidelines in our itinerary, getting from one place to another can take longer than expected. A short drive on the map might turn into a slow crawl due to congestion, road conditions, road closures or random delays. Roads that were operating at the time of printing your documentation may no longer be accessible at the time of travel and a one-hour journey may turn into a four-hour expedition. Travel times vary not just because of distance but also because of road conditions and traffic behaviour.

Suggested Packing items

As you will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions, we suggest several layers of clothing. If you like to hand-wash your clothes, look for fabrics that will dry out overnight. You can buy clothing designed especially for travel, with features like wrinkle-resistant fabric or built-in sun protection. Merino clothing is wonderful for layering, keeping you warm and cool, as well as being incredibly multi-purpose. Merino clothing does not sweat or retain odour. Dress on this trip is functional and casual, consisting of basic pants or everyday skirts, shirts, and sportswear. Your dress should be somewhat conservative, to be respectful of the local, traditional culture. A hat is recommended.

Travel Documents & Money:

☐ Passport (with photocopies)
☐ Travel insurance (with photocopies)
☐ Airline tickets (e-ticket number)
☐ Cash in AUD & your local currency (small denominations for tipping)
☐ Credit Card & ATM Card (See Money Matters section)
☐ Money belt or secure travel pouch
☐ Printout of your visa and e-ticket (electronic copies not always accepted at airports or checkpoints)
☐ Emergency contact list – including embassy numbers and your guide/operator info
☐ Photocopy of your passport stored separately – occasionally requested at police or military checkpoints in regions like Gilgit-Baltistan
☐ Basic Urdu phrase card or translation app – English is common, but not universal, especially in remote valleys
☐ Vaccination certificate (e.g., polio or COVID-19) – sometimes requested at entry points or rural checkpoints

Luggage & Bags:

☐ 1 soft-sided bag (medium size approx. 80–100 litres) – for group tours
☐ Daypack (10–20 litres) – for daily essentials like water, camera, and snacks
☐ Lightweight reusable shopping bag (for markets or day use)

Clothing & Footwear:

☐ Shirts: A mix of short and long-sleeved breathable fabric (cotton/linen)
☐ Pants: Loose-fitting, lightweight trousers (avoid tight jeans for comfort)
☐ Comfortable walking or hiking shoes (sturdy for uneven terrain)
☐ Socks (moisture-wicking recommended)
☐ Wide-brim sun hat or visor
☐ Lightweight scarf or shawl (for religious sites, sun, or dust protection)
☐ Light rain jacket or windbreaker with hood (for unexpected cool weather)
☐ Light cotton or wool sweater (for cooler evenings)
☐ Fleece jacket or heavy sweater
☐ Swimsuit & cover-up
☐ Comfortable sandals or flip-flops (for beach and casual wear—not for sightseeing)
☐ Sunglasses
☐ Headscarf (for women – required when entering mosques or some conservative areas)

☐ Dust mask or scarf (useful for windy areas, desert travel, or long jeep rides)
☐ Down jacket or thermal layers – nights in the north can drop below freezing, even in summer

Health & Personal Care:
☐ Prescription medications (enough for the trip)
☐ Sunscreen & lip balm (high SPF)
☐ Insect repellent
☐ Electrolyte tablets or powder (prevents dehydration from heat)
☐ Reusable water bottle with filter
☐ Personal first-aid kit (pain relievers, Band-Aids, antihistamines, diarrhoea relief, rehydration salts, etc.)
☐ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush/comb, shaving items, deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, etc.
☐ Hand sanitiser & antibacterial wipes
☐ Pocket-size tissues (for toilets without paper)
☐ Wet wipes or facial mist (refreshing after sightseeing in heat)
☐ Dramamine or motion sickness bands
☐ Spare toilet paper roll or travel tissue packs (public restrooms often lack supplies)
☐ If you use a medical device (e.g., insulin pump, CPAP, EpiPen), bring a letter explaining it, along with a translated card in Urdu if possible. Always carry spare batteries or power banks in areas prone to outages.
☐ Water purification drops or Steripen – for areas where bottled water may be unavailable
☐ Lip balm with SPF – high UV exposure at altitude
☐ Insect repellent

Tech & Gear:
☐ Camera (with spare batteries & SD cards)
☐ Charger for devices & power bank (for areas with limited charging access)
☐ Plug adaptors
☐ Small flashlight or headlamp
☐ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses

Optional Items
☐ Gifts from home (for hosts or guides)
☐ Small notebook & pen (for journaling or note-taking)
☐ Snacks or energy bars (useful during long travel days)
☐ Small padlocks (for securing luggage)
☐ Earplugs (useful for light sleepers)
☐ Binoculars (for sightseeing or wildlife viewing)
☐ Sewing kit & hand wash laundry soap (e.g., bar of sunlight soap)
☐ Travel journal
☐ Hand fan or battery-operated mini fan
☐ Whistle (basic safety tool for solo travellers in remote areas)
☐ Compact trekking poles – if visiting mountainous areas or hiking uneven trails

Footwear: You'll be on your feet a lot during the trip and walking over some rough and slippery surfaces. We recommend you wear sturdy walking shoes, light hiking boots, or similar supportive sports shoes that offer good traction.

Baggage Whilst on Tour

Our baggage allowance policy stipulates that each traveller is allowed to bring no more than 20kg of luggage per person. To ensure smooth logistics and efficient use of space in our vehicles, we recommend opting for a soft-sided bag, as it offers greater flexibility when packing the vehicles. This is particularly important for group tours and larger private groups. It's important to note that some of the accommodations you may be staying in, might not have lifts or porterage services available. Being able to manage your luggage is crucial.

Culture & Etiquette

Pakistan’s culture is rooted in centuries of history shaped by empires, religion, and regional traditions. From the ancient Indus Valley Civilisation to Persian, Greek, Mughal, and British influences, its culture reflects a blend of South Asian, Central Asian, and Middle Eastern elements. While Islam is the foundation of societal norms and identity, there’s striking diversity between the provinces−Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashtun, Baloch, and many others− each with its own languages, attire, music, and customs. Rural areas remain more conservative and tribal, while urban centres like Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad offer a more cosmopolitan blend of tradition and modernity.

Social Interactions

Hospitality is central to Pakistani life−you'll often be offered tea or food upon entering a home or shop, and it’s polite to accept. Greetings are respectful but reserved. Men often shake hands or offer a slight bow; between genders, physical contact is typically avoided unless you’re clearly invited to do so. When in doubt, a respectful nod and a warm “As-salamu alaykum” (peace be upon you) is always appreciated, with the reply being “Wa alaykumu as-salam.”

Personal space is important in formal settings, but among the same gender, physical closeness is common− friends may walk arm in arm or sit closely. Affection between men and women in public is rare and discouraged.

When visiting homes, remove your shoes at the entrance unless told otherwise. Bring a small gift if you're invited for a meal−sweets or fruit are ideal. Avoid commenting on political issues, especially around India or religion.

Religion & Traditions

Islam is deeply woven into everyday life. You'll hear the call to prayer (adhan) five times a day from mosques in every town and city. Many shops and services pause briefly during prayer times, particularly on Fridays, the holiest day of the week.

Ramadan, the month of fasting, transforms daily rhythms. During this time, eating or drinking in public during daylight hours is considered disrespectful. However, non-Muslims are usually accommodated with discreet meal arrangements at hotels.

Major religious holidays−Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha−are festive and family-oriented, with large gatherings, traditional foods, and acts of charity.

Shrines of saints (Sufi shrines) play a major role in spiritual life, particularly in Punjab and Sindh, and often host vibrant festivals with music and devotion.

Dining Customs & Gift-Giving

Meals are typically shared communally, and eating with your right hand is expected (the left is considered unclean). In more traditional households, men and women may dine separately. If you're offered food, it's polite to accept at least a small portion.

Food is an expression of generosity−guests are served first, and often more than they can eat. Complimenting the food is always welcomed, and it's courteous to wait until the host begins eating before you do.

Gift-giving is common in social situations. Avoid alcohol or overly lavish items−something thoughtful and simple is best. If wrapping a gift, avoid white (associated with funerals) and opt for bright colours instead.

Unusual Customs

In rural Sindh and Balochistan, visitors may be greeted with floral garlands or even a ceremonial gunfire welcome. Don't be alarmed−it's a sign of respect. Also, roadside truck art−decorated with vibrant colours, mirrors, and poetry−is a form of national folk expression you'll likely encounter daily.

Hospitality may sometimes feel overwhelming. It's not uncommon to be invited to someone's home or offered food multiple times during a short visit. Declining gently and with gratitude is acceptable if needed.

Dressing Respectfully

Please use your discretion and be sensitive to cultural differences in the countries you visit, in particular, visits to religious buildings and when taking photographs. Your tour leader will advise you of any specific customs to observe.

Dress modestly, especially outside major cities. For women, this means covering shoulders, cleavage, and legs. A loose scarf (dupatta or shawl) is recommended, especially when entering religious sites or rural areas−it shows cultural awareness, even if not mandatory in urban zones.

Men should avoid shorts and sleeveless tops in conservative areas. Local dress–like the shalwar kameez–is widely worn and welcomed on foreigners. It's comfortable, respectful, and a great way to connect with locals.

At mosques or shrines, both men and women should cover arms and legs, and remove shoes. Women should cover their heads with a scarf. Carry socks if you're uncomfortable walking barefoot on stone or tiles.

Photography

Please remember, we are guests in the countries through which we travel and may sometimes inadvertently cause offence by taking photographs or video without first asking permission. It is absolutely forbidden by law to take photos or videos at any borders, as they are all active military installations. We encourage you to take photos of the busy lives of the locals; however, please ensure you are respectful of local requests and guidelines surrounding photography and videography.

Always ask permission before photographing people, especially women. In conservative regions, some may find photography intrusive or offensive. Be particularly mindful in tribal or remote areas–here, privacy is highly valued.

Many locals are happy to be photographed, especially children and market vendors, but showing respect and engaging first makes all the difference. Avoid photographing police, soldiers, or checkpoints, as this is often illegal.

Do's & Don'ts

Do

- Greet with "As-salamu alaykum"
- Eat with your right hand
- Dress modestly (esp. women)
- Remove shoes in homes & shrines
- Bring a small gift when visiting
- Cover your head in mosques

Don'ts

- Touch the opposite gender unless clearly invited
- Comment on politics or religion
- Wear shorts/tank tops in conservative areas
- Assume all locals want to be photographed
- Wrap gifts in white paper
- Take photos at borders or military sites

Daily Life & Essentials

In Pakistan, accommodation options range from stylish hotels in major cities to simple family-run guesthouses in remote valleys. You'll find international-standard 4-star and boutique hotels in cities like Islamabad, Lahore, and Karachi, offering high comfort, good service, and modern amenities such as Wi-Fi, air conditioning, and en suite bathrooms.

In smaller towns and rural regions−such as the Hunza Valley, Skardu, or Kalash villages−expect basic but charming lodgings. These may include guesthouses, homestays, or heritage hotels converted from old forts or havelis (mansions). Many rural stays offer spectacular mountain views or proximity to cultural sites but may have intermittent power or limited water pressure. Hot water might only be available at certain times of day, especially in colder regions where heating water requires gas or firewood.

Backup generators are common in areas prone to power outages, though usage may be restricted at night. Air conditioning is not always available outside of the cities, and in the north, heating can be minimal−layers are essential during cold months. In warmer southern regions, mosquito nets or insect screens may be provided, but it's wise to carry insect repellent regardless.

Bathrooms vary widely. Western-style toilets are standard in hotels, but squat toilets are still common in rural areas, roadside stops, and older homes. Many bathrooms are wet-room style, meaning the entire space gets wet when showering. Bring slip-resistant sandals and your own toilet paper, as this is not always provided.

Beds are typically on the firm side compared to Western standards. Extra blankets or pillows are usually available on request. In heritage properties, you may find antique furniture and traditional décor, sometimes with creaky floorboards or thin walls−part of the charm but not soundproof.

Check-in times are generally strict in cities (around 2pm), and check-out is often required by 11am. Some family-run accommodations may offer more flexibility if arranged in advance. During major religious holidays, services may be reduced or delayed, and alcohol restrictions may apply in all accommodations.

Cuisine

Pakistani food is bold, aromatic, and deeply regional. Meals often feature slow-cooked meats, lentils, vegetables, and richly spiced sauces. Popular dishes include biryani (spiced rice and meat), nihari (slow-cooked beef stew), saag (spinach curry), and chapli kebabs from the northwest. Bread is essential−roti, naan, and paratha come fresh from tandoor ovens at almost every meal.

Street food culture thrives in cities−don't miss gol gappay (crispy puris filled with spicy water), chana chaat (chickpea salad), and seekh kebabs. Food is usually eaten with the hands (right hand only), and meals are often shared communally.

Breakfasts can be hearty: halwa puri with chickpeas and fried bread is a popular weekend treat. Vegetarian travellers will find plenty of lentil, potato, spinach, and chickpea options, especially in home-cooked meals, but be prepared to ask clearly, as meat is a staple in many dishes. In more remote regions, food may be simpler but always filling−expect flatbreads, lentils, rice, and seasonal vegetables.

Meals are served later than Western norms−lunch around 2–3pm and dinner after 8pm. Alcohol is generally restricted due to Islamic law, but it may be available in high-end hotels or with special permits.

We've carefully chosen the restaurants and local food outlets for your group meals and consider these establishments safe to eat at however, be very careful with food sold from vendors on the street, and with uncooked fruit and other foods. Fruit that you peel yourself is usually safe - avoid lettuce and other unpeeled produce.

Shops & Souvenirs

Markets (called bazaars) are where shopping comes alive. Expect narrow alleys bursting with textiles, hand-embroidered shawls, jewellery, carved wood, onyx items, leather goods, and spices. In cities like Lahore, the Anarkali Bazaar or Liberty Market are popular, while Hunza offers handwoven fabrics, gemstones, and dried apricots from local co-ops.

Fixed-price shops are rare−bargaining is part of the culture. Offer about half the initial price and negotiate with a smile. Vendors expect it and often enjoy the friendly back-and-forth. Shopping malls with international brands also exist in major cities, offering a more familiar retail experience but at higher prices.

If you're after unique souvenirs, look for truck art items (mirrored trays, painted kettles), handwoven khaddar fabric, or lapis lazuli stones from Gilgit-Baltistan.

Please be aware that it is your responsibility to personally transport any artefacts to **Pakistan** following official fumigation and cargo shipping requirements. Do not offer money to your guide or any local person to handle this on your behalf unless they are from a registered international courier service with verifiable insurance and tracking information. Additionally, any artefacts purchased during your Crooked Compass tour are your responsibility for transportation, potential damage, insurance, and compliance with local quarantine regulations.

Crooked Compass cannot be held responsible for the transportation, delivery, or any issues related to goods purchased and organised by you during the tour.

Toilets & Bathrooms

In cities and modern accommodations, Western toilets are standard. However, squat toilets remain common in rural areas, public rest stops, and some local eateries. Always carry toilet paper and hand sanitiser−these are often not provided. In many public washrooms, a small bucket or handheld bidet (lota) replaces toilet paper.

Many toilets have a shared washroom style with open, wet floors−so waterproof/slip-resistant shoes or sandals come in handy. Expect varying levels of cleanliness, especially in rural or roadside facilities. Larger hotels and tourist restaurants will usually have clean Western-style toilets with basic supplies but always be prepared for surprises when travelling off the beaten path.

💡 *Pro Tip:* Always carry toilet paper, hand sanitiser, and a small bottle of water just in case!

Final Word

Travelling through Pakistan is not simply a journey through landscapes–it's a powerful immersion into centuries of story, spirit, and survival. This is a country that doesn't just greet you, it envelopes you: in the warmth of strangers who become friends over chai, in the haunting melodies drifting from Sufi shrines, and in the high-altitude silence of mountain passes that stir something deep inside.

What lingers most is the resilience and hospitality of the people–the shopkeeper who insists you take a gift, the child who wants to practise their English, the elders who share tea and stories as if you've always belonged. These moments remind you that in Pakistan, you're not simply observing from the outside; you're participating in a living culture that opens itself generously, even amid complexity.

At Crooked Compass, we believe in taking you beyond the ordinary, uncovering the stories, landscapes, and traditions that many travellers miss.

We'd love to hear about your experience! If you enjoyed your journey, please consider leaving a Google review to help fellow travellers discover what makes Pakistan and Crooked Compass special. You can share your thoughts here:
👉 Review us here

We also encourage you to share your photos and stories with us on social media so we can follow along on your adventure!

Facebook: @Crookedcompasstravel #FollowADifferentPath #crookedcompass
X: @CrookedCompass #FollowADifferentPath #crookedcompass
Instagram: @crooked_compass #FollowADifferentPath #crookedcompass

Emergency Contact Procedure Reminder and Information

Ensuring the safety and well-being of our guests is of paramount importance to us at Crooked Compass. We would like to take this opportunity to remind you about our emergency contact procedure and where to find your contact details, as well as provide guidance on what to do in different emergency situations.

Local Crooked Compass 24/7 Assistance Contact can be found on your detailed itinerary. This is the **first point** of contact for any concerns or queries whilst in destination for all types of assistance.

Emergency Services Page 6 in this document.

Notify Crooked Compass (Non-Urgent)
For any non-urgent enquiries, please contact our office within Australian office hours (Mon – Fri, 9am – 5.30pm AEST) on +61 2 8089 1370 or via email info@crooked-compass.com

Consular Assistance Please familiarize yourself with your local embassy's details before travel.