



Top 12 myths about Traveling to Ladakh

In the last decade of my love of traveling to Ladakh, I have passed over numerous myths which I busted for myself in one or the other trip to Ladakh and Zaskar Valley. I see them repeated many times on Devil On Wheels by many of the readers. Here's a list of such busted myths.



Myth:

Ladakh is a honeymoon destination or just another family vacation for leisure

Fact:

IMHO, the truth is, Ladakh is neither a honeymoon destination by any means. Honeymoon happens once in a lifetime, and sometimes things can go weird in Ladakh with AMS, fatigue levels, high physical exertion, etc. Ladakh is instead an adventure tourist destination. So, please be aware of it, and the word "adventure" is the key here which comes with some risks.



Myth:

Leh is Ladakh and Ladakh is Leh

Fact:

The fact is that Ladakh is one of the three regions in the state of Jammu & Kashmir (others being Jammu and Kashmir). Ladakh has further two districts, one is Leh, and the other is Kargil. Leh district is further divided into three tehsils + 9 blocks and has Leh town inside it, which is the district headquarters.



Myth:

Ladakh trip can only be made if I have a Royal Enfield bike

Fact:

Though it is not required to have a sturdy bike like Bullet/RE, 100cc-125cc bikes have also been able to complete the Ladakh circuit every season but they do struggle at some places at high mountain passes or deep slush stretches, water crossings where it might be required to push them manually in case they get stuck.



Myth:

Ladakh trip can only be made if I have an SUV car

Fact:

Well, yes, you will face a few tough challenges with small cars. You can opt for the Srinagar route with a smaller car. You need to drive with extra care and ensure not to bump the engine sump. Also, whenever in doubt do not rush into tougher sections, instead park aside, assess and then make your way through.



Myth:

Ladakh has banned self-drive cars, taxi mafia is creating a nuisance and beating everyone

Fact:

The truth is that apart from one very sorry incident in 2015 where a private self-drive vehicle was attacked, nothing else primary was reported with concrete proof except few cooked up stories. It is the outside rented self-drive cars which are banned for sightseeing in Ladakh; they are also allowed to reach Leh and exit Leh.



Myth:

Ladakh trip can be made on an extended weekend

Fact:

This myth is one of the most dangerous. The truth is that traveling to Ladakh requires your body adjustment or acclimatization to the high altitude terrain. If it is just Leh you want to visit, then it could be possible. But any other place would add a minimum of 3-4 days.



Myth:

Ladakh is unsafe to travel

Fact:

There have been a couple of instances when unrest in the Kashmir valley has disrupted the traffic movement, but in general, it has remained safe. As long as you can stick to main highway roads and tourist areas, in general, there aren't almost no issues.



Myth:

Ladakh is a place where only young people travel not old age people

Fact:

Well, a trip to Ladakh does not associate with your age, gender, sex, physical fitness levels rather it solely depends upon your well being / good health and the way you have planned your trip with proper acclimatization.



Myth:

Ladakh is very very cold, I cannot travel in that cold

Fact:

The fact is that, indeed, in winters, the chill gets too cold to bear in Ladakh. However, season time is mostly pleasant, and if you are going well prepared by carrying proper clothes for your Ladakh trip, you should not have any problems.



Myth:

Ladakh is very very high, I will fall sick and very sick

Fact:

Well, yes, Ladakh is a high altitude desert, but if you follow the principles/tips of acclimatization and go prepared with woolens, at any given day you will make an unforgettable trip to Ladakh.



Myth:

Ladakh is very very far, a journey is tedious and hectic, I cannot undergo all that pain

Fact:

You must make a balanced trip to Ladakh with sufficient days in hand while resting your body as well as gradually ascending the altitude. The problem comes when we try to cram up the Ladakh trip plan in less number of days as we do not have the luxury of leaves mostly.



Myth:

Ladakh by air means, I will fall sick and keep vomiting

Fact:

This happens due to cramming up the schedule by tour agencies, especially by ones who've not even visited the place. If you fly to Leh, you MUST take complete rest after reaching Leh for at least 36-48 Hrs and then only go for any sightseeing. The key to any memorable Leh - Ladakh trip is to acclimatize well.



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