

I want to ask every reader a question to start with- Why do you travel? Usually, people have told me it's either to enjoy and spend time with family, get away from hot months in your hometown, experience nature and wilderness or just relax and unwind. In any of the above scenario, off-season travel sounds like a more practical option than peak season tourist madness. Of course, there are perks of travelling during peak seasons like doing the cliché touristy things of a place. But trust me, if you travel off-season for once, you will never want to do the peak travel ever again. Want to know why? Read on.

1. Absence of crowds

To every Indian reading this, you know what I mean when I say 'crowd'. Not 20 people or a 100. A crowd is usually in thousands for us. We can't fight it, there are people everywhere in our country. So when you actually take a vacation, you mostly want to be alone or at least in a less crowded place. One of the most important reasons for off-season travel is the absence of a crowd.

Imagine going to a place and not getting brushed, having enough parking space and no rushing to reach the top attitude. You can actually laze around and enjoy the place with lesser people threatening to spoil your view. The queue for the Eiffel Tower in August is so insane you wouldn't wanna go up at all, whereas, in November, you can breeze around the tower and spend hours taking beautiful angle shots on your camera without having to spend hours on the spiralling queue.

2. Cheap flight tickets

Another great perk that will lure you to travel off-season is the flight tickets. Due to lower traffic, and the competitive nature of the tourism industry, air carriers usually reduce their prices considerably and you can save almost half

your travel cost by just going around in off-season months. This is a huge saving that you can spend on much better experiences at your travel destination. Just google your dream destinations off-season airfare, you will be shocked to see the price difference.

3. You can take better photos

The biggest advantage of off-season travel is you get to take better pictures of the place with fewer crowds around. If you have ever been to Trevi fountain in Rome, you know the maddening crowd that turns up day after day to get their wish coins thrown into the fountain and get a perfect picture taken at the place. I honestly thought you couldn't get a picture without unintentional photobombs at this place. But I was wrong, a friend of mine went on a trip to Rome and came back with a beautiful picture of herself enjoying the early sun at the place with literally no one around in the month of January, and yes it was an off-season for Rome at that time.

4. Discounted shopping deals

Staying in a tourist city like Jaisalmer, I know exactly what the non-tourist months do to the city's economy. Especially the local tourist market where some shops even close seasonally due to lack of business in the off months. On the brighter side, this is a great time to bag some amazing shopping deals due to lack of shoppers. You can shop in so much peace than in the bustling markets with inflated prices for everything in the peak season.

5. Ample availability, so no rushing for the best spot

Another one of my favourite reasons to travel off-season is the ease of availability at famous restaurants, tourist attractions and hotel accommodations. Lack of crowd in the low season makes it easier to book seats at your favourite spot without worrying about not getting the best seat. The lack of enthusiastic tourists in off-season makes it possible for you to sit at that window seat in your sea facing cafe or in the front row of a boat ride, without having to rush. This is the perfect way to have a lazy holiday and also a spontaneous one.

6. Great hotel prices

For seasoned travellers, this is no secret. Low season means low hotel fare and hence an upgraded star hotel at the same budget. Another reason why you should travel off-season is to stay at a luxury property even in a tight budget. Usually, in the low season, even high-end hotels reduce their prices considerably to attract guests. This is a perfect opportunity to spoil yourself and enjoy the luxury of having a sea facing villa, or a private pool suite at a luxury property that you otherwise wouldn't want to splurge on. Now that is some serious benefit guys!

7. Cheaper food menus

This is something I observed during my Europe travel, that food menus at less crowded places are cheaper than at tourists spots with more people. This applies everywhere, restaurants usually jack up their menu prices during the peak season to accumulate more profits. During off-season, however, food

menus are less likely to be hiked and you can enjoy a decent meal at an affordable price. Another way you can make that budget trip even more rewarding.

8. No need for advance reservations

A perfect reason why off-season travel is better- don't have to make millions of reservations before you land and then end up rushing through all of them mechanically. It makes it easier to have last minute plans, and the vacation can be more spontaneous and fun, rather than tedious for having to plan it to the last minute. I actually plan to visit Udaipur in the non-tourist season once, just to enjoy that lakeside dinner at a particular restaurant I always want to go but never make it due to advance tourists reservations.

9. No long queues

Did you know that the queue at Taj Mahal actually starts to form at 5.30 in the morning? It's true. Been there, done that and a few hours in the queue later, regretted so much. A perk of off-season travel is that you can enjoy if you visit any place in the low traffic months. Leaving you so much more time than you would have if you stood hours in the queue for just one museum or monument. Go during the low times and enjoy a few minutes for entry and brag to your friends about it being your luck.

10. Better services

Even the best of hotels can falter in the overwhelming tourist seasons and leave you with a mediocre experience at times. But off-season means fewer guests and a happier and more energetic staff waiting to make your experience the best during your stay. Enjoy personal attention with suggestions and meaningful gestures on arrival and even throughout your stay. What more can you ask for?

More than any of the above reasons, travel off-season to experience the place like it truly is. I respect tourists in all seasons but a crowd can really dampen the vibe of a place. If you actually want to experience the true authenticity of the place, visit it during off-season and see the real beauty of it. When it is just a home to its people and not a famous tourist destination crowded and full.

Hopefully, these reasons for off-season travel make you excited about travelling in the low months and the next time you want to visit a place you would want to try the off-season feeling of travelling