

India

The sun had risen from its slumber a few hours ago. The heat was taking control and watching people suffer with a sadistic smile. The days here are filled with chaos, as expected in India. The amount of noise here, out on the streets could be enough to burst your eardrums; with shops clustered together and everyone crammed onto tiny roads and polluted pavements. There are stray dogs running amok, monkeys crouch on the side of the road in groups watching, as cars pass by and chaotically. I've been in Kalimpong for some time now. It's a small town situated in the mountains, full of beauty, yet it's sabotaged by the hustle and pollution and by how overcrowded it has become over the years. It's currently monsoon season but fortunately it only rains at night. When you go higher into the mountains you escape the congested town. You can flee from the town that has piles of garbage with dozens of flies flying like headless chickens around it. It's miserable to witness the destruction of such a beautiful town. However, some things will put a smile on your face, for example, how everybody knows everyone. Here, when you come back after some years away, shop keepers still remember you. This is where people talk to you like you've been friends forever, even if you're strangers. Talking with strangers does depend on whether you know Nepali, as most people don't even know the basics of English.

Although Kalimpong is slowly becoming ruined, it's still full of natural scenery. A great attraction are the temples and monasteries which are full of colour and breath-taking designs. The food is extremely different from England with food that is much spicier and expressive, one of my favourites being momos. These are stuffed dumplings, classed as street food. There is a huge variety. For example, there are chili momos and cheese filled momos. The chili ones are served piping hot and crispy on the outside, filled with vegetables inside and they taste delicious, like an array of spices exploding in your mouth. However, just like most of the food you get in India, you might find it too spicy.

Overall, India can be both enjoyable and a nightmare, but it is definitely a culture shock for most people.