

Hello Everyone.

I am Sohini from the DasGupta Lab. I visited Oxford in the month of April and stayed there till July,2017

I think that is the best time to visit Oxford as the weather is nice with infrequent spells of rain, not too cold and glorious sunshine.

Below I have put together information that I think might make your visit to Oxford smooth. Most of them were kindly provided to me by the Poole Lab members notably Dr.Alison East and Dr. Beatriz Jorrín.

**Arriving in Oxford:** If you are arriving in Heathrow or Gatwick you have a company call The Airline that have buses every 30min directly from the airport to Oxford. They cost £30 go and return (valid for 3 months the return) from Heathrow and £37 go and return (valid from 3 months) from Gatwick (<https://airline.oxfordbus.co.uk/>). If you are going back to India in more than 3 months, just take the one way £23 from Heathrow and £28 from Gatwick. You need to pay that directly to the driver by cash, or you install the app in your phone or buy it them thought internet.

If you are flying to Birmingham, there are as well The Airline buses but they are less frequent. You can take the train directly in the airport to Oxford and I think there is one every hour (<http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/>) If you are going to buy the train ticket in advance (they are cheaper), leave at least 2h after you landing, or just buy it when you arrive, but they are going to be more expensive

If you are landing in other airports (Luton or Stansted), you will need to take the National Express buses, you can buy the tickets in the airport. Having said this, I found that travelling from Heathrow is the least expensive if you are arriving by Air India.

If you want a UK number while you are here you can buy a phone in Tesco (supermarket) for less than £25 with a rechargeable sim card or u can find them at the airport itself. However, you have access to the eduroam wireless network around the city (is the network that works with academic emails)

2. **Accomodation:** There are a couple of websites where you can search for rooms.

A. Oxford Graduate Housing Facebook Group –This is a closed group in Facebook. I found my room through here.

B. SpareRoom.com-This is a website where they regularly advertise rooms for rent.

There are several other sites that were suggested to me by Dr.Alison East of the Poole Lab

You can also check private accommodation (flats/house) through these websites - first three are the most useful ones:

C. <http://www.dailyinfo.co.uk/>

D. <http://www.gumtree.com/flats-houses/oxford>

E. [www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk)

F. [www.spareroom.co.uk](http://www.spareroom.co.uk)

G. [www.houseshare.com](http://www.houseshare.com)

H. <http://uk.easyroommate.com/south-east/oxfordshire/oxford-flatshare/listings/>

I had rented rooms in Summertown which is 15mins by bus from the Department of Plant Sciences. The neighbourhood is quiet and very peaceful. My landlady is very accommodating and nice and never did she make me feel an outsider.(She gave me complete freedom to cook whatever I wished and we often ended up having gala Indian dinners!!!).Her name is Diana Martin and her mail id is [dianajolanlucy@gmail.com](mailto:dianajolanlucy@gmail.com). She regularly rents her rooms. Just drop her an email.

**3. Transport:** I used to commute by bus and the best way to do that is to get a monthly pass which allows you to travel to any part of Oxford in buses operated by the Oxford Bus Company. I went for an Adult SmartZone Period Pass - Zone: "Oxford SmartZone" which costs about £ 55.49,with an extra 5 pounds on the first month to make the card.

**4. Food:** Tesco,Sainsbury:Two most important names. There are two of them at City Centre and another two in Summertown. Other than these, there are several others like the Co-op scattered in different localities. If you love to cook, you will have a wide choice of ingredients. If you do not like cooking, plenty of ready to eat options are there as well.

Also every Wednesday there is an open market at Gloucester Green.I came to know of it from Nick Crang of Poole Lab. It is a delightful place where you can get fresh vegetables and fruits. Also cuisines from all over the world including Indian (yummy!!).

**5. Clothings :** Basically you can wear whatever you want but warm woollens are a must. It is wise to carry an umbrella always. Also, there are formal dinners which you might need to attend. So pack accordingly.