



Kerala Tour – City, Mountains, Lakes & Beach

Always wanted to go to India but didn't want to go alone? Come with me on this amazing escorted tour.

All hotels have are excellent and have been hand picked for your comfort and enjoyment. The price includes excellent hotels – many nights spent in eco hotels - includes a night on a houseboat, all breakfasts and evening meals, all transport and guided tours. See the bottom of itinerary for all inclusions.

Contact me with bookings, questions and queries:

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Itinerary

21 Aug 10 – Cochin

On arrival at Cochin Airport, you will be met & transferred to the Hotel (1.5 hour drive). Rest for the day to relax and recover from the flight, or for the adventurer explore the city. Evening, enjoy the Greenix Show, a kaleidoscope of art forms of South India like Bharatanatyam, Mohiniyattom, Kathakali, Kalaripayattu and Theyyam. Overnight at Brunton Boatyard, Fort Cochin – an Eco Hotel. (www.cghearth.com)



22 Aug 10 – Cochin

Morning, after breakfast, proceed for a village backwater Cruise with lunch. Afternoon back to Cochin for a guided sightseeing tour. Overnight at Brunton Boatyard.



Village backwater Cruise - A four hour journey in a country boat into the pristine purity of a typical village backwater of Kerala.... goes through the zigzagging narrow canals and paddy fields fringed with coconut palms.....watch rare birds....country boat making....a natural fish farm where you can go fishing...**Cochin Sightseeing** - St Francis Church, built in 1510 by friars brought to India by Vasco da Gama, is the first European church built in India and is the site where Vasco da Gama was buried.

The Jewish Synagogue was built in 1568, Chinese hand-painted tiles are one of the attraction. This, the only Synagogue in India has a nostalgic past of a Jewish Diaspora. The "Dutch Palace" was built in the 1550s; the palace contains excellent mythological murals and a rare example of traditional Keralite flooring - a subtle mix of burnt coconut shells, lime, plant juices and egg whites - which gives the effect of polished marble.



23 Aug 10: Cochin – Munnar

After breakfast, proceed to Munnar through the Midland farms like Rubber, tuber crops, pineapple, vanilla etc. En route visit Thattekad Bird Sanctuary. Lunch at Thattekad. On arrival at Munnar, check in at the Hotel and later proceed for a short walking tour around your hotel area. Overnight stay at Siena Village (www.thesienavillage.com).



Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary, Thattekad is a home for 280 species of birds including Grey hornbill, White-bellied tree pie, Rufous babbler, Wayanad laughing thrush, etc and a number of water birds. **Munnar** ...breathtakingly beautiful - a haven of peace and tranquility - the idyllic tourist destination in God's own country. Unending expanse of tea plantations... pristine valleys and mountains...exotic species of flora and fauna in its wild sanctuaries and forests...aroma of spice scented cool air. Munnar has all these and more....

It's the place you would love to visit... It's the place you would wish never to leave. Munnar is a misty, lush green hill station up in the Anamalai range of Kerala; Munnar's tea gardens, some of the highest in the world, stretch up the sides of the hills and are interspersed with pockets of forest rich in birds. Its is situated at the confluence of three mountain streams - Mudrapuzha, Nallathanni and Kundala. Surrounded by almost 30 tea gardens that give it a picturesque view Munnar is near Anaimudi, the highest peak of the Kerala Western Ghats.

24 Aug 10: Munnar

After early breakfast at the Hotel, proceed to Marayoor Sandal wood forest Valley. After lunch visit to a typical village to explore the village activities, soft hike through the sandal wood forest, birding, visit to an ancient cave painting etc. Overnight at Siena Village.



Exotic and pristine, Marayoor is a unique place where tourism meets adventure. The enchanting beauty of Marayoor offers diversity in every aspect of the land and culture. Hamlets, rocky hills, rivers, brooks, cave temples, paddy and sugar cane fields, waterfalls, sandal wood and bamboo forests...Marayoor is famous for its natural sandalwood forests grown in natural abundance. Marayoor is the only place in Kerala where natural sandalwood forest is seen. Chinnar wild sanctuary is the haven for two highly endangered species-the grizzled giant squirrel and the star tortoise.

Set at an altitude of 6000 ft in Idukki district, situated at the confluence of three mountain streams, Munnar was the favored summer resort of the erstwhile British ruler in the colonial days. Sprawling tea plantations, picture book towns, winding lanes, trekking and holiday facilities make Munnar a unique experience. Among the exotic flora found in the forests and grasslands here is the Neelakurinji a flower, which bathes the hills in blue colour once every twelve years. Munnar also has the highest peak in South India - Anamudi - which towers over 2695 M and is an ideal spot for campers who like to do some trekking.



25 Aug 10 – Munnar – Periyar

Today, you will be transferred to Periyar Tiger Reserve (4 Hrs), the famous wildlife destination of Kerala. Afternoon for leisure walks by the side of the Tiger Reserve. Overnight at Spice Village (www.cghearth.com).



Periyar - The very sound of the name conjures up images of elephants, unending chains of hill and spice scented plantations. Here, in the crisp, cool air of the Western Ghats you will experience the most enchanting holiday. With the animals of the wild and the simple mountain people, Periyar Tiger Reserve is one of the finest wildlife reserves in India, and spread across the entire district are picturesque plantations and hill towns that hold great opportunities for treks and mountain walks.

26 Aug 10 – Periyar

Full day explore the wildlife of Periyar. Early morning go for a boat safari through the Periyar Lake to watch wildlife. Later option for a guided trek through the Reserve Forest. Visit a spice farm. Option for Elephant safari and a lot more... Overnight at Spice Village .

The Thekkady sanctuary is one of the best in the country for watching and photographing wild life. A cruise through the waters of Periyar Lake around which the wildlife sanctuary is situated, offers a soul-stirring pleasant experience. This is the only sanctuary in India where you can have the unique experience of viewing wildlife at close quarters from the safety of a boat on the lake. The greatest attraction of Periyar remains the large herds of wild elephants that come down to the lake's edge. The tiger and leopard are sighted when the forest water holes dry up and these animals come and drink water from the river.



27 Aug 10 – Periyar – Kumarakom

After breakfast, check out from the Hotel & proceed to Kumarakom (4-5 Hrs), which is famous for its backwater & scenic beauty, sprinkled with traditional houseboats, country crafts, rural lifestyles and Tranquility. On arrival at Kumarakom check in at the Resort. Option for rejuvenating Ayurveda Massage. Overnight at Coconut Lagoon overlooking lake Vembanad (www.cghearth.com).



The slender coconut palms standing here, there and everywhere, its never ending paddy fields, meandering lagoons and backwaters, mangroves nesting birds of a hundred varieties can peacefully calm and invigorate your mind with renewed inspiration for your vocation and life. That is the pristine beauty of Kumarakom.

28 Aug 10 – Kumarakom

Full day explore the beauty of back waters. Option for Yoga Session in the morning. Also you may opt for a rejuvenating Ayurveda Massage. Evening join the sunset cruise. Overnight at Coconut Lagoon.



Kumarakom is a cluster of little islands on the Vembanad Lake and a picturesque, clean village like most places in Kerala. The rich greens and the rural life are clubbed with the beautiful Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary. Spread across 14 acres, the bird sanctuary is a favourite haunt of migratory birds and an ornithologist's paradise. Egrets, darters, herons, teal, waterfowl, cuckoo, wild duck and migratory birds like the Siberian stork that live in flocks are a fascination for visitors. The best way to watch the birds of the Kumarakom sanctuary is a boat trip round the islands.

29 Aug 10: Kumarakom



Full day at leisure to be in Nature and the tranquility of Coconut Lagoon. Option for Yoga session & Ayurvedic Massage. Visit the butterfly garden with the escort of the Resort Naturalist. You may also go for a bird watching tour through the Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary in the morning. Overnight at Coconut Lagoon.

30 Aug 10 – Houseboat

Enjoy your breakfast at the resort. Option for Yoga session in the morning. By noon the Houseboat will pick you up from the resort jetty. Explore the amazing backwater life of Kerala! Overnight on the Houseboat (www.muthoothotels.com).

What is truly magical about a houseboat ride is the breathtaking view of the untouched and otherwise inaccessible rural Kerala that it offers. The houseboats have all the creature comforts of a good hotel including furnished bedrooms, modern toilets, cozy living rooms, a kitchen and even a balcony for angling. Meals would be cooked on board and supplemented with fresh fish from the backwaters. Today, the tradition is still continued and the food from the local cuisine is served by the Kuttanad localities, on board.



31 Aug 10: Alleppey – Marari

Morning, enjoy your breakfast on board & disembark at Alleppey. Proceed to Marari Beach (45 Minutes Drive). On arrival, check in at Marari Beach Resort). Day free to enjoy the beach activities. You may opt for rejuvenating Ayurveda Massage on all days at Marari Beach. Overnight at the resort. (www.cghearth.com)



Marari originates from "Mararikulam", one of the local fishing villages, where life still goes on much as it did a hundred years ago, with the men going out to sea each day to earn a living bringing in the daily catch. Completely new to the holiday maker. Marari offers endless miles of superb sand beaches backed by swaying palms, virgin territory where you can experience the local charm/and traditional Keralan Hospitality at it's best.

01 Sept 10: Marari

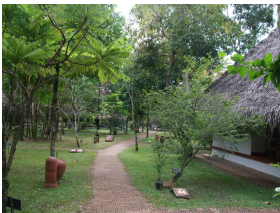
Day free to enjoy the beach activities. Option for Yoga session in the morning. Evening option to visit the local Hindu Temple to watch the village crowd joins the Temple to offer their prayers Overnight at Marari Beach Resort.

Marari Beach is an endless vista of sand and surf, but it is more. An authentic experience of the world of Kerala's traditional fishing villages, and a recreation of an ancient, harmonious way of life. The village of Mararikulam lies on a forgotten shore, midway up the Malabar coast, where the Indian Ocean finally decides that it has now become the Arabian Sea.



02 Sept 10: Marari

Day free to enjoy the beach activities. Option for Yoga session & Ayurvedic Massage. Visit the butterfly garden & organic vegetable farm with the escort of the Resort Naturalist. You may also go for a bird watching tour through the Resort property. Overnight at Marari Beach Resort.



Marari Beach sprawls across 55 acres of lawns, far-flung lotus ponds and whispering coconut groves, all threaded through with stone-flagged pathways. A windbreak of palms runs the length of the property, a protective cover that reduces even the gustiest sea winds to mere caresses. And beyond is a milk-and-azure ocean, fringed by a beach more ochre than yellow, a sand-meets-sea combination you're not likely to find anywhere else.

03 Sept 10: Cochin

Morning, after a leisurely breakfast drive to Cochin. Check into the hotel. Afternoon go for a shopping or a drive through the bridges connecting various islands on Cochin. Evening option for a culinary session with Kerala cookery class followed by a farewell dinner at a traditional Christian home. Overnight at Taj Malabar (www.tajhotels.com).

Kerala has a distinctive cuisine, very unusual and different from the rest of India. Cooking in Kerala is all about discoveries, aromas and colours. Kerala cuisine is very hot and spicy and offers several gastronomic opportunities to those willing to experiment with the local cuisine. Traditionally, in Kerala food is served on a banana leaf. One has to take food with right hand. Tender coconut water is a refreshing nutritious thirst quencher.. Seafood's are main diet of Coastal Kerala.



04 Sept 10: Cochin Departure

Like all good things, your holiday experience comes to an end but you will always carry with you memories of this unique and unforgettable experience. Today, you will be assisted and transferred to Cochin International airport for your flight home!!

All this for a good value price, an **opportunity not to miss!**

Tour Cost : GBP 1130 per person on Double/Twin sharing
: GBP 1760 per person on Single Occupancy

Package Cost Includes:

- * 02 Nights accommodation at Brunton Boatyard at Cochin on arrival as mentioned above
- * 02 nights accommodation at Munnar as mentioned above
- * 02 Nights accommodation at Periyar as mentioned above
- * 03 Nights accommodation at Kumarakom as mentioned above
- * 01 Night stay at a 01 bedroom A/c Houseboat (Kumarakom - Alleppey) with all meals
- * 03 Nights accommodation at Mararikulam as mentioned above
- * 01 Night accommodation at Taj Malabar on departure as mentioned above
- * Daily Breakfast and Dinner at all the hotels/ resorts

- * All meals on Houseboat
 - * English speaking guide at Cochin
 - * Greenix Show at Cochin
 - * Village Backwater Cruise with Lunch at Poothotta
 - * Lunch at Thattekkad Bird Sanctuary enroute to Munnar
 - * Naturalist escorted trekking through Chinnar Wildlife Park in Munnar
 - * Cookery Demo with Farewell Dinner at Cochin
 - * Caricature session during farewell Dinner
 - * Boating & Spice Plantation Tour in Periyar
 - * All entrance fees throughout the tour
 - * All transfers and sightseeing as per attached itinerary by A/c Luxury Coach.
 - * Driver allowance, parking, fuel, state entry fee
 - * All currently applicable taxes including Government Service Tax

Package Cost Excludes :

- * **Flights and Insurance** (flights approx £485 from London to Cochin on Expedia.co.uk)
- * Any meals other than those specified
- * Any sightseeing unless otherwise specified
- * Any train/ air/ Ship fare other than those specified.
- * Camera fee, Ride, Guide fee etc other than those specified.
- * All expenses of personal nature like soft/ hard drinks, Telephone/ Fax, Laundry, Tip etc.
- * All other services not mentioned under package cost includes section.

Supplementary Cost for optional activities :

- * Guided Trek in Periyar GBP 15 per pax
- * Elephant Ride at Periyar GBP 12 per pax

Note :

- * Above mentioned rates are valid at the moment are subject to change without any prior notice.
- * Confirmation of all services are subject to availability at the time of booking.
- * Above mentioned rates are applicable to foreign nationals of India only
- * At houseboat A/c will be available from 09 PM to 06 AM only.
- * Rates are Valid from 01 May 2010 till 30 Sept 2010 only.

Payment & Cancellation Policy:

- 25% deposit on confirmation of the tour and the balance amount 75 days prior to departure
- Cancellation policy is as per Hotel Cancellation Policies as per below:
- 100% Refund for cancellations prior to 60 Days of Check In
- 50% Refund for cancellations prior to 45 Days of Check In
- No Refund for cancellations within 30 days of travel.

<http://www.ayurvedajersey.com>