



See life on the backwaters, the network of canals, lakes, and rivers that wind their way through the Kerala countryside

DISCOVER KERALA

A 14 night tour of India's tropical paradise State

From £4,100 per person

(inc UK/India return flights)

At the tip of India lies beautiful, verdant, Kerala; the spice capital of India, 'God's Own Country'. As well as spices, Kerala is known for Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine that focuses on holistic wellness and balancing the mind, body, and spirit. Kerala boasts the highest literacy rate in India, at almost 100%. This is due in part to the State's commitment to education, with free and compulsory schooling for all children. Kerala is also a leader in social progress, with high rates of gender equality and low infant mortality. It is India's cleanest, richest, safest State.

(I have visited Kerala many times and I have made this itinerary to show you my favourite places – GER)

DISCOVER KERALA

Itinerary

(your daily activities and your hotels – please follow the links provided to learn about the selected hotels in detail)

Day 1

Depart UK for India from the airport of your choice. There are regular flights from the major UK cities. We will find the best flights for you.

(Flight time is usually 9 hours, with a 90 minute layover in either Dubai, Abu Dhabi or Doha).



Brunton Boatyard

Day 02

On arrival at Kochi airport by flight [Ex TBA; ETA -TBA hrs], you will be met by the Redbird representative who will be holding a paging board with your name on it and then you will be transferred to your hotel - The Brunton Boatyard (Standard check-in time at the hotel is 1400 hrs, but early check can be arranged if your arrival time suggests it). <https://www.cghearth.com/brunton-boatyard>

The rest of day is at leisure for you to relax and acclimatise.

Kochi, also known as Cochin, plays a major role in the spice trade. A natural harbour formed by a flood in the 14th century allowed Cochin to become a central hub for spices like pepper, cardamom, and cloves. This rich history is still visible today, with influences from European powers who came to control the spice trade, like the Portuguese and Dutch.

Day 03

Breakfast at the hotel;

Today you will have a guided sightseeing tour; visiting the Dutch Palace, the Jewish Synagogue, St. Francis Church, the Chinese Fishing Nets and local markets.

In the evening enjoy a Kathakali theatre/dance performance



Windermere Estate

Day 04 After breakfast, you will be driven to Munnar [Approx. 130 Kms / 4 Hrs.]

Upon arrival, check-in at your hotel. <https://windermeremunnar.com/>

Munnar, the hill station at 5,000', is a cool green paradise, away from heat and dust. The air here is crisp and clean, the temperature pleasant and the views spectacular. The breeze carries the aroma of coffee, cardamom and tea. This hill station was once the summer resort of the erstwhile British Government in South India.

The rest of the day is at leisure to relax and enjoy the mountain scenery

Day 05 Breakfast is at the hotel.

In the morning, you will be taken for guided walk through the tea plantations. In the afternoon, you will be taken for a visit to The Tea Museum where you can follow the process of tea making.

The rest of the day is at leisure

Windermere Estate

Day 06 After breakfast, you will be driven to Thekkady [Approx. 85 Kms / 3 Hrs.]

Upon arrival, check-in at the hotel. <https://www.cghearth.com/spice-village>

Thekkady located near to Kerala-Tamil Nadu border is a sanctuary famous for its dense evergreen, semi-evergreen, moist deciduous forests and savanna grass lands. It is home to herds of elephants, sambar, tigers, gaur, lion-tailed macaques and Nilgiri langurs. The Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary is spread across 777 km², of which 360 km² is thick evergreen forest.



Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary

The wildlife sanctuary was declared a tiger reserve in 1978. The splendid artificial lake formed by the Mullaperiyar Dam across the Periyar River adds to the charm of the park. The greatest attractions of Periyar are the herds of wild elephants, deer and bison that come down to drink in the lake. The sanctuary can be accessed through a trekking, boating or jeep safari. Thekkady is considered a haven for natural spices such as black pepper, cardamom, cinnamon, nutmeg, mace, ginger, and clove

The rest of the day is at leisure;
(*the Planter's Bar at Spice Village is a favourite haunt of mine – GER)

Day 07

Early in the morning, you will be taken on a nature walk with a naturalist.

The programme is unique in being conducted by a team of poachers who turned protectors of the forests. The team members are hardy and dependable with an intimate knowledge of the forest terrain.

Return to hotel for breakfast.

After breakfast, you will be taken for a guided walk in a spice plantation.

Thekkady has been a spice haven for centuries. The lush greenery yields black peppercorns with their pungent bite. Cardamom adds a complex sweetness. Ginger, turmeric, and chilies bring heat, while fragrant cloves and nutmeg perfume curries (as you will discover – GER)

The rest of the day is at leisure;



On Lake Vembanad

Day 08 Breakfast at the hotel.

Today, you will be transferred to Alleppey jetty [Approx 152 Kms-4.5 Hrs, from where you will board your 'kettuvallam' houseboat for an overnight stay <https://www.cghearth.com/spice-coast-cruises>

The Vembanad Kayal or lake through which you cruise happens is the longest lake in India and the largest in the state of Kerala. Spanning over several districts in the state of Kerala, the lake is at the heart of the famed backwaters of Kerala with the Kumarakom bird sanctuary located on its eastern shore. Over 1.6 million people live on its banks and are directly or indirectly dependent on the lake for their livelihoods.

A typical 'kettuvallam' houseboat is about 60 to 70 feet in length and has a width of around 15 feet in the middle. The boat is made of wooden planks joined and stitched together using coconut fibre ropes. Usually the wood used will be 'Anjili', the roof covering is made of bamboo poles and palm leaves. The outside of the boat is painted using cashew nut oil, which acts as a protective coating. Your crew of 3 will prepare your meals and help you appreciate the unique environment and society of the backwaters. It is an experience of intense tranquillity and many visitors to Kerala count it as the highpoint of their tour.

The day is spent enjoying the tranquillity of the backwaters, and from time to time you can disembark to explore the villages. You will spend the night on board the houseboat.



Day 09 Breakfast on board the houseboat.

After breakfast, cruise to Kumarakom and your next hotel the Coconut Lagoon. <https://www.cghearth.com/coconut-lagoon>

The village of Kumarakom is a cluster of little islands on Vembanad Lake

The rest of the day is at leisure;

Day 10 Breakfast at the hotel.

Today is at leisure.

You may like to visit Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary located on the banks of Vembanad Lake, where you may see common as well as endangered species of residential and migratory birds. These include parrots, Siberian Cranes, egrets, darters, herons, owls, and waterfowl.

Day 11 Breakfast at the hotel

After breakfast, you will drive to Mararikulam (approx. 60 kms / 1 hr).

On arrival, you will check in at your hotel
<https://www.cghearth.com/marari-beach>

On the shores of the Arabian Sea at Mararikulam, this lovely resort is set back behind the palms, from a patrolled white sand beach.

The hotel layout is campus style with individual thatched cottages set in a well-maintained landscape area. There is a large swimming pool with sun

terrace near the main restaurant, a bar and an amphitheatre where cultural performances take place.



The beach bar and restaurant, set amongst the coconut palms fronting the beach, serves delicious fish and seafood. Each day, in the late afternoon, the local fishermen land their catch on the beach. You will probably be invited to help haul in the nets.

The resort has its own ayurvedic centre and gentle yoga sessions take place each sunrise and sunset. There is also a small shop selling locally crafted artefacts and clothing. Here you can have bespoke articles in silk and cotton made to measure in 48 hours.

The town of Alleppey, with its interesting shopping opportunities, is just 15 minutes away by taxi or tuc-tuc.

The rest of the day is at leisure to relax or pursue independent activities, such as a walk along the white sand beach, or a bicycle ride through the coastal fishing villages;

Days 12/13/14 Breakfast at the hotel

The days are at leisure to relax or pursue independent activities; vehicle and driver will not be at disposal. However, this can be arranged at nominal charges by contacting our local office directly.

Day 15 Breakfast at the hotel

At an appropriate time, you will be met and driven to Kochi airport [approx. 02 hrs] to connect with your onward Flight. Ex TBA. ETD TBA Hrs.

DISCOVER KERALA ACCOMMODATION

Dates	Nts	City	Hotel	Room Category	Meal
Day 01-Day 03	02	Kochi	Brunton Boatyard	Sea Facing Room	BB
Day 03-Day 05	02	Munnar	Windermere Estate	Estate Room	BB
Day 05-Day 07	02	Thekkady	Spice Village	Spice Garden Cottage	BB
Day 07-Day 08	01	Alleppey	Spice Coast Cruise	Deluxe 1 Bedroom Houseboat	FB
Day 08-Day 10	02	Kumarakom	Coconut Lagoon	Heritage Bungalow	BB
Day 10-Day 14	04	Mararikulam	Marari Beach Resort	Garden Villa	BB

The price per person on Double/twin share shall be as below:

*Excluding Christmas & New Year Period i.e., 20th Dec'24 Till 10th Jan'25 when supplements apply

International flights - UK/India economy return £ 600.00 (average price estimate)
(prices are date dependant and may be subject to changeup to the point of ticketing)

Discover Kerala tour price per person £3,500.00

Total Discover Kerala tour + flights* price pp £4,100.00

*flight price shown is an estimate only

The price includes:

International UK/India return flights (in economy – {Business Class POA}) and transfers
13 nights' accommodation on twin sharing basis as per the hotel grid including an overnight on Houseboat;

Meal plan as stated above; [BB: Bed & Breakfast; FB: full board i.e. Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner];

Half day sightseeing tour of Kochi;

Kathakali theatre/dance performance;

Visit to a Tea Plantation and Tea Museum in Munnar;

Nature walk/trek and Spice Planation tour in Thekkady;
An English-speaking local guide for sightseeing tours of Kochi & Munnar and a naturalist in Thekkady;
All transfers, sightseeing and excursions as per the itinerary will be as below;
by chauffeured AC Toyota Innova Crysta or similar vehicle;
No transport service on Day 11, 12 and 13;
Entrance fees, road taxes, parking fees, fuel charges, interstate taxes and portorage at all airports;
A Red Bird representative for assistance on arrival and departure transfers in Kochi;
All currently applicable taxes, including the service tax applicable on the total invoice amount.

The price excludes:

Expenses of personal nature like tipping, laundry, telephone/fax calls, alcoholic beverages, camera/video camera fees at monuments, medical expenses, airport departure taxes where not included in the ticket price, etc.;

Meals other than those specified above;

Any insurance;

Any visa fees;

Any air-fare unless mentioned above;

Any other services not mentioned in the inclusion.

Special Notes:

UK, US, EC and citizens of most other countries require a visa to visit India and you will require a minimum of 6 months validity remaining on your passport from date of arrival.

(I will advise on visas – GER)

For single entry visits of up to 30 days UK, US and some EC citizens can use the e-TV online visa on arrival system which has simplified the application process and reduced the cost. Details can be found at <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/tvoa.html>

Journey times are approximate and may vary considerably due to adverse traffic or road conditions and the number and duration of stops along the way.

Air and train fares are indicative and are subject to confirmation at time of booking.

Check in time at the hotel is 1400 Hrs and check out time is 12 Noon

In case of any currency fluctuations, amendments to Government taxes, or any fuel price rises we reserve the right to adjust the tour price accordingly.

Any change in hotel or room category may attract a supplement or reduction in the tour cost.