



TRAVELLING TO NEW PLACES WITH CONFIDENCE

India: Spice Trails of Kerala

9-Day, 8-Night Journey

Cochin, Thekkady, Kumarakom & Marari

Visit beautiful Kerala and discover its many hidden secrets on this 9-day South India journey. From coconut palm-lined coasts and rolling hills of tea to diverse wildlife, a trip to Kerala is as easy and rewarding as a glide through its famous backwaters.

For tea lovers and those who are just beginning, this is your chance to soak up the wonderful culture of tea in Kerala which is one of the largest tea producers in the world. Visit a working tea plantation and factory for a close-up experience.

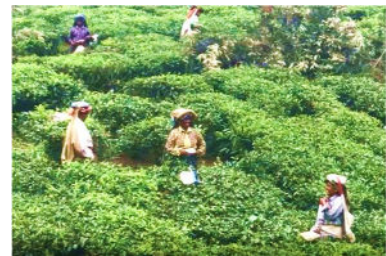
Taste the many different spices that has the food in this culture bursting with flavors and don't forget to take in the atmosphere of serenity that is the MOST soothing and sought after.



Chinese Fishing Net



Tea Plantation



Tea Picker



Kathakali Performance



Village Women Weave Coconut Husk into Rope



Houseboat Cruise

Inclusions

- ▶ Hotel Accommodations
- ▶ Daily Breakfast & Selected Meals
(See tour plan for details)
- ▶ Private Airport Transfers
- ▶ Local guide per itinerary (Premium tour: group excursions. Deluxe tour: private guide.)
- ▶ Entrance Fees to Monuments and Attractions per itinerary

Exclusions

- ▶ International Airfare
- ▶ Government Tourism Fee
- ▶ Travel Insurance
- ▶ Medical Expenses
- ▶ Visa Fee
- ▶ Gratuities
- ▶ Personal Expenses

Nearby Airport

Cochin International Airport (COK)

Itinerary

DAY 1: ARRIVE COCHIN (COK) & COCHIN CITY TOUR

Arrive at Cochin Airport and hotel check-in.

Start your vacation with a Cochin City Excursion. Over its long history, both European and Chinese traders have left their mark on Cochin.

Guided Cochin city tour Explore the historic **St Francis Church, Fort Cochin** and stroll down the harbor to see little fishing boats and the famous **Chinese fishing nets**. Visit the **Paradesi Synagogue** in the Jewish Quarter. The **Mattancherry Palace (Dutch Palace)** offers the best murals and exhibits of Indian mythology. (8 hours @10am)

[2 nights in Cochin. Meals: Dinner]



DAY 2: COCHIN | VILLAGE LIFE, KATHAKALI DANCE PERFORMANCE

After breakfast, a guided tour to explore the lush green fishing and cultural village of **Kumbalangi Village**. Visit crab and agriculture farms, and see coir yarn weaving. Enjoy a Kerala lunch.

This evening, enjoy the **Kathakali dance performance** followed by dinner. This highly sophisticated and dramatic dance-drama is known for its elaborate makeup and extravagant gestures that convey the story.(8 hours @9am)

[Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]

DAY 3: COCHIN – THEKKADY | PERIYAR LAKE BOAT,TEA & SPICE PLANTATION

After breakfast, we take a scenic drive to beautiful Thekkady (4 hours, @9am). The region is filled with lush green surroundings, streams, lakes and plantations of tea and spice plantations.

Guided excursion. (4 hours @3pm) Relax on a boat on **Lake Periyar** inside the National Park with other park visitors. **Periyar National Park** is also a wildlife reserve, home to many endangered species such as the lion tailed macaque, nilgiri tahrs and more. Keep your camera ready for wildlife sightings with the backdrop of lush tropical forests and sprawling grass lands.

We will tour a **tea plantation** to learn about tea, from growing, harvesting to processing into the most widely consumed beverage in the world (next to water). A tea tasting awaits before we leave.

Enjoy a private tour of a **Kerala Spice Plantation** where you can see how pepper, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, vanilla and nutmeg are grown. Taste various spices, tropical fruits and inhale the fragrant air.

In the evening, the hotel normally offers in-house activities for your enjoyment, for example a cooking demonstration, cultural dance program, yoga class or nature walk. Be sure to inquire at the front desk of the hotel.

[2 nights in **Thekkady**, Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]

DAY 4: THEKKADY | BAMBOO RIVER RAFT & JUNGLE TREK

Explore **Periyar National Park** with this half day gentle hike and bamboo rafting. During the rafting you will get a panoramic view of forest-clad hills and chance to see elephants, gaurs and sambars in their natural habitat. (8 hours @9am)

[Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]

DAY 5: THEKKADY – KUMARAKOM

After breakfast, we depart for **Kumarakom**. (4 hours, 9am) Perched sleepily amongst a tangle of lush tropical waterways known as the Kerala backwaters, Kumarakom is technically a cluster of islands on Lake Vembanad - one of Asia's largest freshwater lakes. It's an ideal place to relax and enjoy the beautiful scenery.

Enjoy a **sunset cruise** before your dinner (4 hours @4pm).

[2 nights in **Kumarakom**. Meals: Breakfast, Dinner]

DAY 6: KUMARAKOM | ALLEPPEY HOUSEBOAT LUNCH CRUISE

For the greatest pleasure in Kerala, let's enjoy a private **houseboat cruise** and lunch on the backwaters to Alleppey. A never-to-miss experience cruising slowly through a maze of canals observing scenes of everyday life in villages and paddy fields. See fishermen and locals on a typical day. (8 hours 11am)

[Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]

DAY 7: KUMARAKOM – MARARI

After breakfast we drive to **Marari (Mararikulam)** (1 hour @10am). Enroute visit Philipkutty's Farm.

The resort is located at a sea-side village with thatched huts, swaying coconut palms, lily ponds and fruit trees.

Enjoy 2 days of Ayurveda-inspired relaxation in this earth-friendly resort. Pamper yourself with authentic Ayurveda massage or therapies (at your own cost). Inquire about more in-house activities at the front desk.

[2 nights in **Marari**. Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner]

DAY 8: MARARI

A day of leisure at the sea-side resort.

[Meals: Breakfast, Dinner]

DAY 9: MARARI - COCHIN (COK)

After breakfast the tour ends. Hotel check-out and transfer to Cochin airport (COK) for your flight home.

Bon voyage from God's Country!

[Meals: Breakfast]

Hotels

We carefully handpick our hotels to ensure they provide you with the best comfort and experience. For Private Tours, you may request a specific hotel as one of the customizable options.

