



Southern India Escape - 9 Days (#16649)

Note: Price printed on this PDF is valid until **08-09-2024** and is subject to change without notice due to Partner changes and currency fluctuations

Trip Highlights

Kochi-Munnar-Kumarakom-Alleppey-Mararikulam-Kochi

Detailed Itinerary

Day 01

Day 1: Australia to Kochi

Upon arrival in Kochi, you will be welcomed by your English speaking representative and transferred to your hotel.

Kochi is the most laid back of Kerala's cities, with one of the nicest natural harbour on the Arabian Sea coast. The city once served as a port of call for the Chinese, Arabs, Jews, British, French and Portuguese. Absorbing the cultures of each nationality, the city formed its cosmopolitan character.



Day 02**Day 2: Kochi**

This morning breakfast at hotel, later begin a sightseeing tour around Kochi, beginning with the Dutch Fort and St. Francis Church, the first European church to be built in India. The history of this church reflects the colonial struggle of European powers in India from the 15th to 20th centuries. It is said that the Portuguese trader, Vasco da Gama, was originally buried in St. Francis Church before being taken back to Portugal.

The next stop is the Santa Cruz Basilica and from here you can view the unique cantilevered Chinese fishing nets, the only place outside China where they are used. Locally known as Cheenavala, they are used for a unique and unusual method of fishing and many fishermen earn a living by using these massive nets.

Continuing your tour of the city, visit the Jewish Synagogue in the heart of the Jewish Quarter. The prosperous Jewish trading community built the Jewish synagogue in 1568. It is the oldest synagogue in India but was partially destroyed in the war of 1662 and was rebuilt by the Dutch. End the day with a stroll through the nearby markets.

In evening enjoy the Kathakali Dance performance in a local theatre.

Meal: Breakfast, lunch and Dinner

Day 03**Day 3: Kochi to Munnar**

Drive approximately 4-5 hours (130 kms) to Munnar – the first hour is a steep and winding descent from the highlands, a stretch of even road and then a steep ascent again to Munnar. The group bus will not be able to drive under the clearance height of the bridge, located just outside Munnar. Hotel staff will send jeeps to collect you and your luggage to take you the remaining short distance to the hotel to check-in.

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 04**Day 4: Munnar**

This morning travel to Mattupetty Dam, located 13kms from Munnar town where we will enjoy an easy walk around the lakeside areas.



Later visit Eravikulam National Park, which is about 97sq km in size, situated along the crest of the Western Ghats in the high ranges of Idukki district. The park holds the largest viable population of the endangered Nilgiri Tahr, a small stocky goat. Apart from the Nilgiri Tahrs, the National Park is home to other animals such as Nilgiri Marten, ruddy mongoose, small clawed otter and dusky striped squirrel.

February- April Itinerary to be confirmed

Depending on the time of year (February-April is Nilgiri Tahr mating season) you may enjoy a walking tour of the national park or light trekking through Munnar this afternoon. If time permits then visit Tea Museum before 1600 hrs. (Closed on Monday).

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 05

Day 5: Munnar to Kumarakom

Depart early from your hotel and drive 1-2 hours (80km) to Kothamangalam town. Here you will tour local rubber, coffee and pepper plantations and enjoy lunch with local family before driving another 2 hours (76km) to Kumarakom, located in the Kerala backwaters region.

Upon arrival proceed to your hotel, located on the banks of the Vembanad Lake, and check-in.

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 06

Day 6: Kumarakom – Backwater Cruising

This morning after check-out, visit the Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary. Enjoy a tour of the sanctuary on foot, home to many different species of bird such as the Siberian Stork, egret, darter, heron and teal.

Later, board your houseboat, a converted rice barge known as a 'kettuvallam'. The houseboats have all the creature comforts of a good hotel including furnished bedrooms, modern bathrooms, cosy living rooms, a kitchen and even a balcony for angling. Parts of the curved roof of plaited palm or wood open out to provide shade and allow uninterrupted views.

While cruising to Alleppey witness the village life around the backwaters of Kerala. What is truly magical about a houseboat ride is the breathtaking view of the untouched and otherwise inaccessible rural Kerala. An unhurried backwater cruise on a traditional houseboat is the best way to discover Kerala's exceptional scenic beauty.

Tonight you will enjoy dinner on-board and stay overnight on the houseboat.



Please note: While on the houseboat, electricity can be intermittent. There is a generator on board, so keep this in mind when charging phones, cameras or other electronic items. The cabins on board are all air conditioned, but the living areas and deck may be cooled with fans. If you are a light sleeper you may wish to bring ear plugs, as the generators may be loud at night.

Meal: Breakfast, lunch and Dinner

Day 07**Day 7: Alleppey to Mararikulam**

After breakfast disembark at Alleppey. Drive 30-40 minutes (15km) to Mararikulam and upon arrival check into your beachside hotel.

The remainder of the day is free at your leisure to relax by the swimming pool or at the beach.

Please note: there is no individual TV in the guest rooms. A TV is available in the shared recreation room in the hotel.

Meal: Breakfast

Day 08**Day 8: Mararikulam**

Tour and learn about traditional fishing techniques Kumbalangi Integrated Tourism Village, located on a small island near the Kerala backwaters region. Watch traditional craft demonstrations before visiting Cherthala town, which is a major coir production area.

Learn about coir weaving before returning to the hotel, where the afternoon is free to enjoy at your leisure.

Meal: Breakfast and Lunch

Day 09**Day 9: Mararikulam – Depart Kochi**

The day is free at your leisure to relax.

After a late check-out drive 1 hour (42km) and enjoy dinner at a local restaurant in Kochi before continuing to the airport for your overnight flight to Australia.

Meal: Breakfast



Inclusions

8 Nights' accommodation.

Day use room on Day 9.

All sightseeing, excursion and transfers by AC vehicle as specified with local English speaking guide including entrance fees (not Camera).

8 breakfasts, 06 lunches and 01 Dinner.

Cooking Demo.

Kathakali Dance show.

Tea Plantation and museum visit and all applicable taxes.

Exclusions

Any item of personal nature such as Mini bar, table drinks, Laundry, Telephone calls.

Camera fees (Still/video) at any monuments

Any tipping, gratuities or portorage anywhere

Any International or domestic airfare & Visa Fees

Excess Baggage charges

Meals other than those mentioned in the itinerary

Insurance of any kind

Early Check-in & late check-out

Note

Hotels Used OR Similar

Cochin - Crown Plaza (Deluxe room City view)

Munnar - The Devonshire (Sunrise view)

Kumarakom - Backwater Ripples (Lake view room)

Allepey - Spice Coast Cruise Houseboat (AC room)

Mararikulam - A Beach Symphony (Beach Cottage)

Important: For 03 pax we shall use 02 Bedroom Houseboat (staying in 01 DBL + 01 SGL room). All Houseboats we use will be private.

Upgraded hotels available on request.



Program Touring / Guide

Private touring

Periodic Departure

01 Apr, 2024 to 30 Sep, 2024

2-3 pax

AUD 3,860 P P twin share

AUD 6,363 P P single

AVAILABLE

4-5 pax

AUD 3,591 P P twin share

AUD 6,094 P P single

AVAILABLE

6 plus

AUD 3,457 P P twin share

AUD 5,960 P P single

AVAILABLE

01 Oct, 2024 to 31 Mar, 2025

2-3 pax

AUD 4,674 P P twin share

AUD 7,411 P P single

AVAILABLE

4-5 pax

AUD 4,082 P P twin share

AUD 6,819 P P single

AVAILABLE

6 plus

AUD 3,972 P P twin share

AUD 6,709 P P single

AVAILABLE

