

Tour Of Kerala
With A Driver Guide In Your Own Exclusive Air-Conditioned Vehicle.

BACKWATERS OF KERALA AND THE CARDAMOM HILLS

Day	Date	Location	First Class Hotels	Standard Hotels	Schedule
01		Depart UK			
02		Arrive Cochin	The Old Harbour Hotel Superior Room	Hotel Arches Deluxe Room	>Pick Up From Cochin Airport >Sightseeing At Cochin, Including Chinese Fishing Nets, Mattancherry Palace And The Old Quarter >Evening Kathakali Dance Performance Cochin Airport-Cochin: 24 Miles Approx 1 Hour
03		Thekkady	Elephant Court Patio Room	Wilderness Superior Room	>Scenic Drive Through The Cardamom Hills >Abraham Spice Garden, Spice Villages And Markets In Kumily Cochin-Thekkady: 118 Miles Approx 4 Hours
04		Thekkady	Elephant Court Patio Room	Wilderness Superior Room	>Elephant Back Ride Through Kumily Village >Boat Trip To Observe Wildlife On Periyar Lake Or A Guided Wildlife Nature Walk
05		Kumarakom	Coconut Lagoon Heritage Bungalow	Eastend Lakesong Punnamada Room	>Descent From The Western Ghats To The Backwaters Thekkady-Kumarakom: 78 Miles Approx 2.5 Hours
06		Kumarakom	Coconut Lagoon Heritage Bungalow	Eastend Lakesong Punnamada Room	>Relax At Kumarakom And Vembanad Lake
07		The Backwaters	Lakeland Super Luxury House Boat	Lakeland Luxury House Boat	>Overnight Backwater Cruise From Kumarakom To Alleppey
08		Beach	1		>Pick Up From Alleppey And Drop Off At Beach Hotel
09		Beach	2		
10		Beach	3		
11		Beach	4		
12		Beach	5		
13		Beach	6		
14		Depart Trivandrum Arrive UK			>Transfer To Trivandrum Airport

Featured Hotels Dependent On Availability At Time Of Booking



Kerala's Stunning Backwaters

Day 02 – Cochin



Chinese Fishing Nets At Cochin Harbour

Cochin

Cochin is a wonderfully cosmopolitan **Indian** city with a multi-cultural history. It also has one of the country's largest ports. The famous and photogenic **Chinese Fishing Nets** are built along the northern shores of **Fort Cochin**.

The **Jewish Synagogue** and its **Old Quarter** are also worth a visit, for their quaint shops, selling everything from wooden carvings to bedspreads, from ornate mirrors to exotic spices. Nearby is the **Mattancherry Palace**, which was home to the **Verma Kings** and today is a fine museum.

Cochin also features the oldest church in **India**: the **Church of St Francis**, built in 1503 by the **Portuguese** (it briefly housed the remains of **Vasco de Gama**, who died here), and is now used by the **Anglican Church of South India**.

An evening **Kathakali Dance Performance** will allow you to sample one of the oldest theatre forms in the world in which dancers take various roles traditionally based on themes from **Hindu** mythology.



Kathakali Performance



Day 03 – Thekkady



Kerala Spices

Trips To Spice Villages

Thekkady is the centre of the spice growing area of **Kerala**, and the aroma of spices are everywhere. Numerous **Spice Plantation Villages** have guided tours to identify various spice plants and even cookery demos using spices. At **Kumily Market** there is a huge cardamom auction and shops selling different types of spices.



Chilli, Black Pepper And Cinnamon



Delicious Kerala Cuisine

Day 04 – Thekkady



Wild Elephant At Periyar Lake Wildlife Reserve

The Periyar Lake National Park

Set high in the ranges of the **Western Ghats** is the **Periyar National Park and Tiger Reserve**. Within its 777 square km of deciduous and evergreen forest roam some 750 Elephants that can be observed on a 2-hour **Safari Boat Trip** around the **Periyar Lake** that lies at the heart of the sanctuary.

Apart from **Elephants**, other animals to be seen at **Periyar** include **Gaur (Indian Bison)**, **Wild Pigs**, **Sambar (Elk)**, **Barking Deer**, **Mouse Deer**, **Dhole (Indian Wild Dog)** and very rarely, a **Tiger**.

There are now, an estimated 40 **Tigers** and a similar number of **Leopards** in the reserve. Four species of primates are found at **Periyar** - the rare **Lion-tailed Macaque**, the **Nilgiri Langur**, **Common Langur** and **Bonnet Macaque**. **Periyar** also happens to be the habitat of the elusive **Nilgiri Tahr**, which is rarely to be seen.

Elephant Back Ride At Thekkady

You may if you wish, go on an **Elephant Back Ride** that is a very popular excursion at the spice growing village of **Kumily**.



Elephant Back Ride At Kumily

Day 05 – Kumarakom



The Backwaters At Kumarakom

Kumarakom

Kumarakom is a unique backwater destination situated on the banks of the **Vembanad Lake**. It is an unbelievably beautiful paradise of mangrove forests, emerald green paddy fields, coconut groves interspersed with enchanting waterways and canals adorned with white lilies.

As the monsoon winds bring rain to the shores of **Vembanad Lake**, **Kumarakom** is transformed into a rich fertile land. The streams, lagoons, brooks break their banks and provide nourishment to springs and shrubs that sprout from every available space.



Vembanad Lake At Kumarakom

Day 06 – Kumarakom



Exploring Narrow Canals By Boat

Kumarakom

The village of **Kumarakom** is a cluster of little islands on the **Vembanad Lake**. **Kumarakom's** soil is extremely fertile due to the proximity of the water source, this has resulted in the growth of a wide variety of mangroves and coconut trees.

Located on the eastern side of **Vembanad Lake**, **Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary** stretches over an area of 14 acres and is home to a large variety of birds and also provides shelter to migratory birds, such as **Siberian Storks**.



Extraordinary Natural Beauty At Kumarakom



Day 07 – Rice Boat



View Of Deluxe Bedroom And Backwaters Riceboat Journey

By Private Rice Boat Through Kerala's Backwaters

A boat journey through **Kerala's Kuttanad Country**, a 75km stretch of shimmering waterways and dense tropical greenery wedged between the hills and the sea is one of the most **Memorable Experiences Any Traveller Could Have In India**.

Kettuvallams of olden times were rice and spice barges that used to transport harvests from **Kuttanad** to **Cochin** for sale. Many of these traditional craft have been converted into long houseboats with all the creature comforts of a good hotel including furnished bedrooms, modern bathrooms, cozy living rooms and even balconies for angling.

Each boat has a fully equipped kitchen and an experienced cook to prepare authentic **Kerala** cuisine with sea food specialties and fresh vegetables.

The Backwaters

The **Backwaters** are one of the unique attractions of **Kerala**, a chain of canals extending about 1500 kms incorporating a network of 44 rivers, lagoons and lakes.

The canals and lagoons are lined by swaying palm trees and **Chinese Fishing Nets**, cooled by a gentle breeze, and studded with water hyacinths. All kinds of craft ply these waters ferrying cargoes of spice, rice, nuts, *coir* (coconut fibre), *copra* (dried coconut) and people.



Rice Boat Interior



Rice Boat On Shores Of Vembanad Lake

Day 08 - Kerala Beach Stay



Kovalam Beach At Dusk

Kovalam Beach

A group of three crescent shaped bays and coves known to have some of the best beaches in **India**. **Kovalam** is divided by its many bays and the landscape has formed sandy crescents with headlands to each end, the most popular being the **Lighthouse Beach**. Behind the beaches are shady coconut groves and a maze of alleyways linking local shops, guesthouses and restaurants beneath the coconut palms.

The beaches of **Kovalam** have particularly shallow water during the **Winter Season** from **October – April**. It is possible to go in to the sea for up to 100 meters at waist height in certain places.

Marari Beach

If you prefer a quiet end of tour beach stay, the exclusive beach resorts of **Marari** is very conveniently located near the **Kerala** backwaters near **Alleppey**. Soft sandy beaches spread out for many miles and are completely deserted except for a few isolated fishing villages.

Poovar Beach

An idyllic location at the meeting point of a backwater, river and lagoon near **Kovalam**. Very much the place to head for a 'get away from it all' type of beach holiday.



The Sandbank At Poovar

Depart Kerala