



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

FAMILY TOUR OF KERALA

Day	Date	Location	First Class Hotels	Standard Hotels	Schedule
01		Depart UK			
02		Arrive Cochin	Taj Malabar Inter Connecting Heritage Rooms	Casino Hotel Inter Connecting Rooms	>Pick Up From Cochin Airport >Kalari Martial Arts Demonstration At ENS Kalari Cochin Airport-Cochin: 24 Miles Approx 1 Hour
03		Cochin	Taj Malabar Inter Connecting Heritage Rooms	Casino Hotel Inter Connecting Rooms	>Sightseeing At Cochin, Including Chinese Fishing Nets, Mattancherry Palace And The Old Quarter >Evening Cruise Through Cochin Harbour
04		Thekkady	The Elephant Court Inter Connecting Patio Rooms	Wild Corridor Adjoining Rooms	>Scenic Drive Through The Cardamom Hills >Visit To Elephant Junction Where Activities Include Elephant Rides And Bathing With Elephants Cochin-Thekkady: 118 Miles Approx 4 Hours
05		Thekkady	The Elephant Court Inter Connecting Patio Rooms	Wild Corridor Adjoining Rooms	>Abraham Spice Garden, Spice Villages And Markets In Kumily >Boat Trip To Observe Wildlife On Periyar Lake
06		The Backwaters	Lakeland Super Luxury 2 Cabin House Boat	Lakeland Luxury 2 Cabin House Boat	>Descent From The Western Ghats To The Backwaters >Overnight Backwater Cruise From Alleppey Along The Beautiful Southern Backwaters Thekkady-Alleppey: 102 Miles Approx 3.5 Hours
07		Beach	1		>Pick Up From Alleppey And Drop Off At Beach Hotel
08		Beach	2		
09		Beach	3		
10		Beach	4		
11		Beach	5		
12		Beach	6		
13		Beach	7		
14		Depart Cochin Or Trivandrum Arrive UK			>Transfer To Cochin Or Trivandrum Airport

Featured Hotels Dependent On Availability At Time Of Booking



Kerala's Stunning Backwaters

Day 01 – Depart UK

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. One of the great attractions of **Cochin** is the wonderful **Syrian Christian** cuisine that has evolved from a fusion of **Arabic** and **Keralan** cooking styles. Local restaurants also serve some of the best seafood to be found in **India**.

The bazaars of **Mattancherry** and the **Old Quarter** are well worth a visit for their quaint shops selling everything from wooden carvings to bedspreads, from ornate mirrors to exotic spices. The **Pardesi Synagogue** (1568) was the focus of the famous **Jewish** community of **Cochin**, although only a handful of families remain today. Nearby is the **Mattancherry Palace**, which was home to the **Verma Kings** and today is a fine museum with some of the finest frescoes in **India** on display.

Kalari Martial Arts Performance

Kalaripayattu is one of the oldest existing martial art forms, dating back more than 2000 years with origins in **Kerala**. It incorporates strikes, kicks, grappling, choreographed martial art sequences, and weaponry, as well as healing techniques. **Kalaris** are the schools where training in this martial art form is imparted by **Gurukals** or masters.

At **Cochin** you can see an evening **Kalari** performance at **ENS Kalari**.



Kalari Martial Arts Performance



Day 03 – Cochin



Frescoes At The Mattancherry Palace

Fort Cochin

The famous and photogenic **Chinese Fishing Nets** are built along the northern shores of **Fort Cochin**. Around the **Old Parade Ground** there are some lovely boutique hotels converted from old mansions of spice merchants. Narrow streets radiate from here in all directions full of crumbling and interesting historic buildings.

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**.



Cochin Harbour



Spice Merchant At Cochin

Day 04 – Thekkady



Bathing With Elephants In Kerala

Elephant Junction

Thekkady has always had a large number of domestic elephants due to its proximity to the huge jungles of **Periyar**. These days as working opportunities for domesticated elephants have diminished; many are used for elephant-back rides through the village of **Kumily**.

One of the best and 'socially responsible' locations where elephants are kept is **Elephant Junction**, which has a 2.5 hour program that is a great experience especially for families with children. This includes elephant rides, bathing elephants, observing them moving timber, Tug-Of-War competitions with elephants and lots of other photo opportunities.



Riding With Elephants At Thekkady



Day 05 – Thekkady



Wild Elephants Grazing By Periyar Lake

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.

Trips To Spice Villages

Thekkady is the centre of the spice growing area of **Kerala**, and the aromas 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



Reflections At Periyar Lake Wildlife Sanctuary

Day 06 – Rice Boat



View Of Deluxe Bedroom And Backwaters Riceboat Journey

Private Family 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 07 – Day 13 Kerala Beach Stay



Kovalam Beach At Dusk

Kerala's Beaches For Families

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 family 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

Day 14 – Depart Kerala - Arrive UK