

MUMBAI KERALA TOUR

12 NIGHTS/ 13 DAYS



Mumbai – Madurai – Munnar - Thekkedy – Alleppey (houseboat) – Kumarakom - Cochin - Depart

Day 01: Arrive Mumbai

You will be met by a member of our team at the airport along with car and chauffeur and transferred to your hotel for overnight stay.

Day 02: in Mumbai

Breakfasts. Whole day sightseeing with English speaking guide. Your day begins visiting the Elephanta caves, located on an island about 10 kilometres away from the shores of Mumbai. These caves comprise of temples carved from solid rock dating back to the 7th century. The main attraction is the three-headed bust of Lord Shiva, famously known as 'Trimurti'.

In the afternoon, visit rest of the places in Mumbai. A photo stop at the Gateway of India, drive past Mumbai University, the hanging gardens, the Gateway of India, Tower of Silence, the Dhobiwalas (washer men), Prince of Wales Museum and the central Maidan (lawns where cricket is played). Most of the monuments built during the British era. You may choose to stroll across Fashion Street, a stretch famous for its export clothing and accessories. Later drive past Marine Drive also known as the Queen's Necklace. Later, ascend Malabar Hill to visit the beautifully adorned Jain Temple, Kamala Nehru Park and the Hanging Garden. Return to your hotel for night stay.

Day 03 Fly Mumbai – Madurai

After breakfast transfer to Mumbai airport in time to take your flight to Madurai, the cultural capital of Tamil Nadu besides being the second largest city in the state. The city derives its name from the divine nectar (Madhu) that was showered from the locks of Lord. The busy city of Madurai is one of the oldest in South India and has been a centre of learning and pilgrimage for centuries. The 'must see' attraction is the enormous Sri Meenakshi Temple complex in the heart of the old town. It is a "riotously baroque example of Dravidian architecture" and "seethes with activity from dawn to dusk". Other sights include the Market, the Thirumalai Nayak Palace, the Gandhi Memorial Museum and the Madurai Government Museum. Check in and rest of the day free. Night stay in Madurai.

Day 04 in Madurai

Full Day Sightseeing of Madurai including Thiruparamkuntam. Madurai is famous for the Sri Meenakshi temple complex. The gopurams are covered by a coloured profusion of Hindu gods and goddesses, animals and mythical figures. A visit to Madurai shows the visitor the spiritual side of South Indian culture. The temple complex is a hive of activity from early morning until evening, attracting pilgrims and tourists alike. For 10 rupees the resident elephant will place a "tilak" on your forehead with his trunk. Rest of the day explore the local market. Night stay at Madurai.

Day 05 Madurai – Munnar

After breakfast transfer by road to Munnar, the most beautiful hill station of Kerala. The road journey from Cochin to Munnar is filled with mesmerizing views of the Cardamom hills and lush tea plantations. Check-in at the hotel. The rest of the day at leisure. Overnight stay in Munnar.



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Day 06: In Munnar

After breakfast visit Munnar which includes Indo-Swiss Farm, Mattupetty Dam, Town Market, and Old Munnar Town. Mattupetty Dam, one of the major sources of hydroelectricity and flocked by birds and animals. This is one of the best tourist places to enjoy boating and view of beautiful maintains of tea plantations. Indo-Swiss Farm is a joint venture of Indian and Swiss government located just 3 Km away from the Mattupetty Dam. This is a hillside cattle village where thousands of cattle grazes freely on the hill. Continue to Visit the Tea Museum and learn the process of tea. Also, enjoy boating on the Kundala Lake that will allow you the sight of spice garden in Kerala. In the afternoon, explore the old Munnar and enjoy some local shopping. Overnight stay in Munnar. **Optional, not included**: For wildlife lover a short trip to Eravikulam National Park can be arranged on request.

Day 07: Munnar – Thekkady (Periyar)

After breakfast drive to Thekkady, famous for one of the largest Tiger Reserves in India, Periyar national park. Thekkady is the ideal place for those who love nature in its wildest form. Its, high up in the Western Ghats, is a small town close to the entrance of Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary. The sanctuary is part of Project Tiger, but tigers and leopards are rarely seen. However, it is said to offer the best chance of seeing wild elephant in the whole of India. There is also a good chance of seeing wild boar, Gaur bison, Sambar deer, Nilgiris langur, macaque monkey, otter and the Malabar giant squirrel, as well as a large variety of birds. Remember at altitude (Periyar is at 900m or more) temperatures can drop dramatically, especially at night.

In the afternoon, enjoy the sunset during the boat ride at Lake Periyar. During your ride you can spot many wild elephants bathing on the lakeside, Bison, wild boars, deer and different kind of birds. Return to hotel for night stay.

Day 08: In Thekkady

After breakfast enjoy a visit to the spice plantation and discover the various kind of spices, such as ginger, garlic, cardamom, vanilla, pepper, cinnamon, coffee, tea, clove and nutmeg

In the afternoon, enjoy the Elephant Junction where if you wish you can ride an elephant or simply watch the elephant bathing. You can also feed them treats such as pumpkins or bananas. Late afternoon witness one of the most popular martial art and sports of Kerala, Kalarippayattu. Free hand combat is done along with that various implements are also used in these martial arts. You can enjoy the acts of defence and the beauty with which the weapons are used during the martial art. Night in Thekkady.

Day 09: Thekkady – Alleppy (Houseboat) (approx. 4h)

After breakfast drive to Alleppy, the backwaters of Kerala. Your overnight stay will be at the houseboat which includes all meals. The spectacular beauty of Kerala's backwaters needs no introduction. Traditionally, the houseboat was called Kettuvalam, which means a boat made by tying together pieces of wood. Unbelievable as it may sound, not a single nail is used in the making of a Kettuvalam. Jack wood planks are joined with coir rope and then coated with black resin made from boiled cashew nutshells. The materials that go into the making are all local and Eco-friendly bamboo poles, coconut fiber ropes, bamboo mats, coir carpets etc. These traditional country boats were used as the mode of transport in the early times from the isolated interior villages to the towns. But these boat services have been laid off with the developments taken place in the transport services in the recent past. Today these giant 80-foot long crafts have been adapted into luxuriously furnished houseboats. A Kettuvalam usually has one or two bath attached rooms, an open lounge, deck, kitchenette and a crew comprising two oarsmen and a cook. Traditional lanterns are used as lights. Your holiday in this tranquil world is the comfortably furnished houseboats.



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Day 10: Alleppy (Houseboat) – Kumarakom

Breakfast. Disembark at Houseboat and transfer to Kumarakom for 01-night stay. The network of waterways in Kerala stretches from Kollam in the south to Cochin in the north and includes lakes, lagoons, rivers, canals and channels. This is a beautiful area where the visitor can visit small villages and enjoy the countryside and birdlife – either from a backwater resort or from the decks of a houseboat. Many of the resorts are on the banks of the vast Vembanad Lake at villages such as Punnamada and Kumarakom. This region of the backwaters, called 'Kuttanad', is known as the rice bowl of Kerala and is one of the most beautiful and interesting areas.

Day 11: Kumarakom – Cochin

After breakfast drive to Cochin, a beautiful city situated on the Western Coast of India facing the Arabian Sea, and rightfully called the 'Queen of the Arabian Sea'.

In the evening enjoy Kathakali dance. Your visit to Cochin would not be complete without a visit to a performance of Kathakali. This 500-year-old dance drama is performed by all male dancers, accompanied by music, who play out a story, using their eyes, face muscles, hands and feet. A must is to reach the theatre ahead of time, in order to see the performers putting on their incredible make-up and their magnificent costumes. Night in Cochin.

Day 12: in Cochin

Breakfast. Full day sightseeing of Cochin which includes visiting Mattancherry (Dutch) Palace with its marvellous murals, St Francis Church (the original burial place of Vasco da Gama), the Chinese fishing nets and Jew Town with its old Synagogue and streets full of shops selling antiques and souvenirs. The colourful 'go-downs' used by the spice traders are close by and there are two good book shops near the Synagogue. **Visitors to the Synagogue are asked to dress modestly – no shorts, short skirts or sleeveless tops. Bare shoulders and midriffs are not permitted.** Please note Friday & Saturday are Jewish holiday you will not be permitted inside the Synagogue.

In the afternoon time free for shopping if you wish. Night in Cochin.

Day 13 Final departure

Depending on your flight, drop at Cochin International airport and take connecting flight to onward destination.

End of our services....

Note:

1. This tour can be modified as per your requirements.
2. If time allows you can include Ajanta – Ellora Caves in the programme.