

SOUTHERN INDIA 9 days

Itinerary:



Day 1 : Arrive Cochin

Upon arrival at Cochin International airport transfer to your hotel. In the evening enjoy a Kathakali Dance show, the ancient dance form of Kerala.

Lodging: Holiday Inn

Day 2 : Cochin - Periyar (B)

After breakfast start your Cochin city tour. Walk to Jew Town where you see the Pardesi Synagogue, the Mattancherry Palace, known locally as the Dutch Palace and Fort Cochin. Marvel at the reminiscent of European streets and houses, the Chinese fishing nets on the northern shore of Fort Cochin and St. Francis Church. Later drive to Periyar. This is one of the best elephant sanctuaries in India. It also is home to monkeys, wild boar and sambals.

Meals: Breakfast **Lodging:** Elephant Court

Day 3 : Periyar - Wildlife Reserve (B)

After breakfast explore cruising the waters of the lake. The park is home to many mammals that come to the shore to drink, including elephants, bison gaur, sambar, cheetal, sloth bear and wild dog, plus many species of birds. During the dry season when water holes within the forest are dry, leopards and tigers also come to the lake for water. The reserve's range of flora and fauna includes more than 100 orchid species and a large variety of trees. The River Periyar, which is known as the lifeline of Kerala, originates in the park's dense forests. Later enjoy a Kalaripayattu Show in Periyar, a traditional martial art practiced in Kerala.

Meals: Breakfast **Lodging:** Elephant Court

Day 4 : Periyar - Kumarakom (B)

Start today with an early morning nature walk offering an excellent opportunity to watch birds, butterflies and other wildlife. The trails pass through evergreen and moist deciduous forests, here you can feel nature, hear the whispers and smell the flowers. Later make your way to Kumarakom, a village on the Vembanad lake in the backwaters of Kerala. It is laced with canals and houseboats ply the waters. The Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary is home to many species including cuckoos and Siberian storks.

Meals: Breakfast **Lodging:** Lakesongs Resort

Day 5 : Kumarakom - Bird Sanctuary (B)

This morning after breakfast visit the Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary. This wonderful sanctuary is on the banks of the Vembanad lake house. An ornithologist's delight it is the favorite haunt of migratory birds like the siberian stork, egret, darter, heron and teal. Among the other species are the woodpecker, skylark, crane, water hen and parrots. To get the right feel it is best to cruise

along the lake. Pathiramanal, a delightful island on the lake, can be accessed by boat from here as well.

Meals: Breakfast **Lodging:** Lakesongs Resort

Day 6 : Kumarakom - Alappuzha (B / L / D)

After breakfast drive a short distance before switching to a boat going through many canals and waterways up to Alleppey. On arrival embark on your private houseboat to cruise on the backwaters, a splendid area full of canals, lakes and coves. Your houseboat or 'Kettuvalloms' are luxurious boats with well-appointed cabins and ensuite bathrooms. You can sunbathe on the deck or observe the palm fringed landscape from your cabin. Apart from the mesmerizing surroundings it is the life along the coast that adds a touch of exotica to this experience. The locals travel in canoes and you find vegetable sellers, fishermen and other traders bringing household goods, door to door in small wooden boats. As you cruise along the backwaters you can ask your captain to stop at villages, paddy fields and other places enroute.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner **Lodging:** Deluxe Houseboat

Day 7 : Alappuzha - Kovalam (B)

After breakfast drive to Kovalam, an international renowned beach resort of Kerala. A massive rocky promontory on the beach has created a beautiful Bay of calm waters ideal for sea bathing. The leisure options at this beach are plenty and diverse, sunbathing, swimming, herbal body toning massages, special cultural programs, catamaran cruising and more.

Meals: Breakfast **Lodging:** Turtle on the Beach

Day 8 : Kovalam (B)

After breakfast enjoy a full day at leisure with time to relax and explore more of the local activities on your own.

Meals: Breakfast **Lodging:** Turtle on the Beach

Day 9 : Kovalam - Trivandrum departure (B)

After breakfast transfer to the Trivandrum airport for your international return flight.

Meals: Breakfast

