



BEST OF KERALA

11 days / 10 Nights

Day 1

Cochin

You will be met on arrival and transferred to your hotel for a 2-night stay.

Take a cluster of beautiful islands and narrow peninsulas surrounded by sparkling, azure water. Carpet them with mile after mile of unending lush, green paddy fields and towering coconut trees. In a touch of divine whimsy, throw in the oldest European church in India; a Jewish community whose roots go back to the Diaspora; cantilevered Chinese fishing nets; 100 foot long snake boats; winding roads crammed with 500-year-old Portuguese houses; a Dutch Palace containing breath-taking murals depicting scenes from the great Indian mythological epics. Welcome to Cochin – now known as Kochi – 'Queen of the Arabian Sea'.

Accommodation – 2 nights – Cochin

Hotel Brunton's Boatyard (Heritage Hotel)

1/498 Fort Kochi,

Kochi 682 001

Tel: 484-2215461

Fax: 484-2215562



Designed and built in the style of the early Portuguese and Dutch architecture of Fort Cochin, this spacious and elegant Heritage hotel with 26 rooms, built on the site of a boatyard, has expansive views over the Cochin waterfront and the ships sailing in and out of the harbour. The olde world charm in its colonial style buildings is complemented by well appointed rooms, a large swimming pool, courteous staff and excellent Keralan cuisine.

The best way to enjoy Cochin is to get on one of the innumerable boats that ply these waters and cruise around. The Hotel has its own private jetty, which doubles up as a "cafe", over looking the pool, garden and the sea. One could spend a full afternoon doing nothing or enjoy an exotic cocktail at the jetty before dining at one of Brunton's fine restaurants.

Day 2

Cochin

This morning you will be taken on a half-day city tour of Cochin visiting, the Jewish Synagogue and Chinese Fishing Nets, also visit the Fort and the Jew Town. Evening enjoy the Kathakali Dance show in Cochin. Overnight Cochin. B

Day 3

Cochin-Periyar 200kms – 4½hours

Drive today from Munnar to Periyar, stopping on the way to visit a spice plantation. Take a 2 hour late afternoon boat cruise on Periyar Lake to see the wildlife in the sanctuary. B

Lying close to the plantations nearby, you can see one of the most fascinating wild life reserves in India - The Periyar Wild Life Sanctuary and The Periyar Lake, home to a variety of wildlife including tigers, elephants, and deer. The only sanctuary in India where you can have the unique experience of viewing wildlife at close quarters. From the safety of a boat on the lake.



Accommodation – 2 nights – Periyar

Spice Village

Thekkady-Kumily road,

Thekkady 685 536

Tel: 4869-224514

Fax: 4869-222317



Set in the heart of the Cardamom hills of Kerala, Spice Village is an unprecedented tourist destination, offering a rare opportunity to enjoy South India's wildlife & beauty. The Village lies just outside Periyar tiger reserve, and a stay here is the perfect way to appreciate and respect the environment. Recreating the mood of local tribal community, the resort architects have designed individual cottages amongst a landscaped spice garden. Each dwelling is thatched with elephant grass and offers simple luxury and privacy.

Day 4

Periyar

Free day to relax and enjoy your thatched cottage set in the heart of the Cardamom hills. Take a nature walk around the spice gardens and perhaps enjoy some Ayurvedic treatments. B

Day 5

Periyar-Kumarakom 180kms – 4½hours

You will be driven to Kumarakom this morning to spend 2 nights in a breathtakingly beautiful sanctuary on the banks of Vembanad Lake, staying in a typical Tharawad (cottage). Free afternoon – some more Ayurveda? B

Kumarakom (78kms from Cochin) is located on the eastern shore of lake Vembanad at the mouth of the Kavanar River, in the heart of the fascinating backwaters, giving visitors an authentic insight into Kuttanad life. Kerala's famous backwaters comprise of vast lakes and a system of narrow canals and waterways linking them to one another. Not so long ago, these waterways served as the backbone of Kerala's transportation. And Kumarakom is the ideal place to experience the backwaters.

Day 6

Kumarakom

Enjoy some Ayurveda for which Kerala is famous – energise your body, stimulate your mind, and calm your soul. B

Accommodation – 2 nights – Kumarakom

Coconut Lagoon

P Box No 2 Kumarakom,
Kottayam 686 563
Tel: 481-252 5834
Fax: 481-2524495



About 78 kms from Cochin, hidden among the palm trees on the eastern shore of lake Vembanad at the mouth of the Kavanar River, Coconut Lagoon Resort is set in the heart of the fascinating backwaters, and has been designed to give visitors an authentic insight into Kuttanad life. Kerala's famous backwaters comprise of vast lakes and a system of narrow canals and waterways linking them to one another. Not so long ago, these waterways served as the backbone of Kerala's transportation. And Kumarakom is the ideal place to experience the backwaters. Coconut Lagoon has rightly carved its place among the top 10 heritage resorts of the world. The resort is on a small island and can be reached only by boat. The accommodation consists of individual cottages called tharawads, built in the traditional Kerala style, relying heavily on wood and some with private pools. The bathrooms are open to the sky and the restaurant specializes in Kerala cuisine typical of the region.

Day 7

Kumarakom-Alleppey

Spend 1 peaceful day on board a Kettuvallam houseboat today, exploring the peaceful backwaters (canals). The serene waterways are fringed by palm grove and paddy fields and offer a striking spectacle of the rustic life. Overnight on the boat. BLD

Accommodation – 1night – Alleppey

Houseboat

Today, the houseboats have all the creature comforts of a good hotel including furnished bedrooms, modern toilets, cosy living rooms, a kitchen and even a balcony for angling. Parts of the curved roof of wood or plaited palm open out to provide shade and allow uninterrupted views. While most boats are poled by local oarsmen, some are powered by a 40 HP engine.



Day 8

Alleppey -Marari 45kms – 45 min drive

This morning drive to Kovalam. Overnight in Kovalam. B.

Accommodation – 3 nights – Mararikulam

Marari Beach Resort

Mararikulam North
P O, Alleppey 688 549
Tel 478-286 3801
Fax: 478-2863810



Set in 25 acres of coconut palm groves leading down to a vast expanse of magnificent pristine beach, The Marari Beach is built in the style of a traditional fishing village with 51 thatched villas (3 with their own private swimming pool) that have been designed to be in keeping with the local village style.

Marari originates from "Mararikulam", one of the local fishing villages, where life still goes on much as it did a hundred years ago, with the men going out to sea each day to earn a living bringing in the daily catch. Marari offers endless miles of superb sand beaches backed by swaying palms, virgin territory where you can experience the local charm/and traditional Keralan Hospitality at its best. Amenities include: 2 restaurants, bar, large swimming pool; beautiful beach; Amphitheatre where cultural shows are performed; Beach Volleyball; Ayurveda centre; Bicycles. Marari Beach Resort is located 60kms from Cochin (Kochi).

Day 9

Marari

Enjoy the beach or some Ayurveda at your Resort. B

Day 10

Marari

Enjoy the beach or some Ayurveda at your Resort. B

Day 11

Marari-Cochin

Free day. This evening you will be transferred to Cochin airport for your flight home. B

Tour Cost per person— valid for travel from 01st May to 30 Sep

Land Only: 02 paying pax	A\$1410
Land Only 04 paying pax	A\$1225
Single Supplement:	A\$897

Cost Includes:

- *Accommodation on twin sharing basis for a total of 10 nights*
- *Meals: Daily Buffet Breakfast except houseboat where all meals are included*
- *Local English speaking guide at all destinations.*
- *Air-conditioned Toyota Innova for 2 pax and AC Mini Van for 4 pax for all transport services.*
- *Entrance Charges at monuments (as mentioned in the itinerary).*
- *Boat ride on Lake Periyar.*
- *Assistance by English speaking representative for airport-hotel-airport transfers*

Costs Exclude:

- *International airfares ex Australia.*
- *Lunches & dinners*
- *Entrance charges for camera/video camera.*
- *Expenses of personal nature such as laundry, telephone calls, drinks, etc.*
- *Tips to driver/guide/boatman/elephant man.*