



Travel – Explore – Discover India

Assisted Independent Travel: Kerala
14 days Trivandrum > Calicut

Trip code: AITKER

Kerala has the most diverse range of accommodation in India, ranging from small guest houses and unique homestays to luxury five star resorts. The one constant in Kerala is the peoples' ability to provide genuine hospitality, no matter where you stay. This trip highlights the diverse range of unique accommodation that Kerala has to offer.

Day 1: Arrive Trivandrum

Arrive by domestic flight to Trivandrum, the capital city of Kerala, and transfer to the small coastal town of Varkala. Overnight Varkala.

Day 2: Varkala – Thottapally

After breakfast and a swim in the Arabian Sea, drive 3 hours north to Thottapally, where you board your airconditioned kettuvallum (a traditional rice barge converted to a houseboat). You can explore the inland lakes and waterways, with opportunities to stop and get a feel for life in the backwaters. Overnight on the houseboat, with lunch and dinner included.



Day 3: Alleppey – Thekkady

Disembark after breakfast, where your driver will meet you and commence 4 hour drive up the Western Ghats (the mountainous spine of Kerala) to Thekkady, near to Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary. Arrive in the afternoon and relax.

Day 4: Thekkady

In and around the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary there are many activities, such as guided nature walks, boat rides, spice plantation tours, and visits to tribal villages. For the more active, there is the option of a full day outing including a jeep ride, trekking and rafting, which present the best chance of seeing animals.

Day 5: Thekkady – Cochin

After breakfast drive 5 hours to Cochin; after settling into your heritage hotel in historic Fort Kochi, you can take a leisurely stroll around this very laid back part of town. In the evening, attend a Kathakali performance, the famous and very colourful traditional Keralan dance.

Day 6: Cochin

This morning your guide will arrive at your hotel and take you on a tour of Cochin, including the Dutch Palace, the St Francis church (India's oldest), and the iconic Chinese fishing nets. Ayurvedic massage is on offer here in Cochin. In the late afternoon take a private harbour cruise where dolphins can sometimes be seen playing.

Day 7: Cochin – Cheruthery

In the morning drive to Cheruthery, a 5 hour drive. This is a special spot not reached by many tourists. Here you have the choice of conventionally luxurious resort accommodation, or of staying in a family run guest house. For those choosing the latter, your accommodation – in an ancestral landowner's home – and the local activities are what make your stay unique. Overnight at the guest house or resort.

Day 8: Cheruthery

For those staying in the guest house, today's local activities will be coordinated by your host. Bird and wildlife watching, a walk through the small nearby village, cooking classes, a visit to the astrologer and local temple, and Ayurvedic massage are all options. For those at the resort, you can relax and enjoy the property's beautiful setting, or visit Kerala Kalamandalam, a training academy for Indian performing arts, particularly the traditions that have developed in Kerala. Overnight at the guest house or resort.

Day 9: Cheruthery – Calicut

Morning drive 3 hours to Calicut. On arrival check into an Ayurvedic 'homestead' or a luxury resort set in the picturesque backwaters. Afternoon free to enjoy Ayurvedic treatment and relax.

Day 10: Calicut – Kannur

After breakfast drive 2 hours to Kannur, on the far north coast of Kerala. This is a truly wonderful spot. Secluded beaches, amazing food, and simple but refreshing guest houses are what make this area worth the extra driving to get to. There is a range of accommodation options available in this general area.

Day 11: Kannur

Today you are free to relax and enjoy the surrounding beaches. There may also be the opportunity to watch Theyyam, a local Hindu dance ritual.

Day 12: Kannur – Wayanad

After breakfast, drive 5 hours to the Wayanad district of north Kerala. This is a lush, mountainous area, with tea and coffee plantations and wildlife sanctuaries. The accommodation options are varied and unique: villas set in dense rainforest, a mountain-side coffee plantation retreat or tree houses!

Day 13: Wayanad

Today you can take a jeep safari to one of the wildlife parks, take a walk in a plantation, visit the 5000-year-old rock carvings in Edakkal cave or just relax and soak up the rarefied air.

Day 14: Wayanad – Calicut

Drive 3 hours to Calicut airport in time for onward flight to another Indian city for further travel or international flights home.

Kerala – superior hotels AUD\$2290 per person

Price valid until March 2009 based on two people travelling using one double/twin room

Kerala – deluxe hotels AUD\$3150 per person

Price valid until March 2010 based on two people travelling using one double/twin room

Price includes

- Double room with breakfast in all places
- All meals at Costa Malabari, Kadnath Tharavad, Harivihar, Edakkal Hermitage and on board the Houseboat (for Superior hotels tour)
- All meals at Ayesha Manzil, Kadnath Tharavad, Harivihar and on board the Houseboat (for Delux hotels tour)
- Transport by Air conditioned car with English speaking driver
- English speaking guide in Cochin
- Kathakali Dance and harbour cruise in Cochin
- Boat ride or Nature walk in Periyar
- Arrival and departure assistance at airports
- Mineral water in the vehicle throughout the trip
- All Taxes

Not Included

- Entrance and camera fees at monuments and sightseeing places
- Lunch and dinner other than those specified
- Tips, Porterage, drinks and items of a personal nature
- Peak season surcharges Nov 5th – 15th , Dec 20th – Jan 10th, Dec 24th and 31st Gala Event

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Well Connected Travel Pty Ltd, 67 Ferguson Street, Forestville NSW 2087 Australia

Tel : 61 + 2 + 9975 2355 : 1300 88 38 52 Fax : 61 + 2 + 9451 3011

Website : www.wellconnectedtravel.com.au Email : info@wctravel.com.au

Other registered names: Well Connected Tours, Baltic Connections, Coral Connections

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