

IN006 Kerala Krusing Extension 8 Days

Your “Taste of Volunteering” Project: Not Applicable



Trip Highlights:

- Cochin’s spice markets, bustling port, and the renowned Chinese fishing nets
- Ayurvedic massage in Kumarakom
- Cruise on Kumarakom’s backwaters aboard a comfortable, converted rice barge
- Lake Periyar’s wildlife sanctuary boat trip



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A Brief History of Kerala

The ancient Chera kings ruled Kerala, and had a dependence on trade that meant that merchants from West Asia and Southern Europe established coastal posts and settlements in Kerala. The Jewish, Christian, and Muslim immigrants established Nasrani Mappila and Muslim Mappila communities.

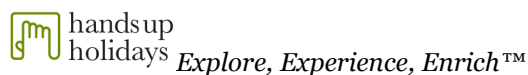
The Jews first arrived in Kerala in 573 BC. The works of scholars and Eastern Christian writings state that Thomas the Apostle visited Muziris in Kerala in 52 AD to proselytise amongst Kerala's Jewish settlements. However, the first verifiable migration of Jewish-Nasrani families to Kerala is of the arrival of Knai Thoma in 345 AD.

Muslim merchants (Malik ibn Dinar) settled in Kerala by the 8th century AD and introduced Islam. After Vasco Da Gama's arrival in 1498, the Portuguese gained control of the lucrative pepper trade by subduing Keralite communities and commerce.

Conflicts between Kozhikode (Calicut) and Kochi (Cochin) provided an opportunity for the Dutch to oust the Portuguese. In turn, the Dutch were ousted by Marthanda Varma who routed them at the Battle of Colachel in 1741. Hyder Ali, heading the Mysore, conquered northern Kerala, capturing Kozhikode in 1766. In the late 18th century, Tipu Sultan, Ali's son and successor, launched campaigns against the expanding British East India Company; these resulted in two of the four Anglo-Mysore Wars. He ultimately ceded Malabar District and South Kanara to the Company in the 1790s. The Company then forged tributary alliances with Kochi (1791) and Travancore (1795). Malabar and South Kanara became part of the Madras Presidency.

Kerala saw comparatively little defiance of the British Raj. Nevertheless, several rebellions occurred, including the 1946 Punnappa-Vayalar revolt, and leaders like Velayudan Thampi Dalava, Kunjali Marakkar, and Pazhassi Raja earned their place in history and folklore.

Many movements, spurred by such leaders as Vaikunda Swami, Sree Narayana Guru and Chattampi Swamikal, instead protested such conditions as untouchability; notable was Vaikom Satyagraham in 1924-25. In 1936, Chitra Thirunal Bala Rama Varma of Travancore issued the Temple Entry Proclamation that opened Hindu temples to all castes; Cochin and Malabar soon did likewise. The 1921 Moplah Rebellion involved Mappila Muslims rioting against Hindus and the British Raj.



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After India gained its independence in 1947, Travancore and Cochin were merged to form Travancore-Cochin on July 1, 1949. On January 1, 1950 (Republic Day), Travancore-Cochin was recognised as a state. The Madras Presidency was organised to form Madras State several years prior, in 1947. Finally, the Government of India's November 1, 1956 States Reorganisation Act inaugurated the state of Kerala, incorporating Malabar district, Travancore-Cochin (excluding four southern taluks, which were merged with Tamil Nadu), and the taluk of Kasargod, South Kanara. A new legislative assembly was also created, for which elections were first held in 1957. These resulted in a communist-led government through ballot - the world's first of its kind - headed by E.M.S. Namboodiripad.

Subsequent social reforms favoured tenants and labourers. As a result, living standards, education, and life expectancy improved dramatically.

Trip Description:

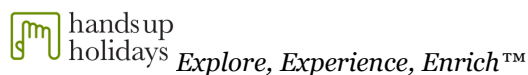
We fly to Cochin, with the rest of the first day at your leisure. The next day we explore Cochin's spice markets and bustling port, St Francis Church, Jewish Synagogue, Cochin fort, the Dutch Palace, and the renowned Chinese fishing nets.

We then drive to Kumarakom, where you have the afternoon at your leisure, and the following day you can indulge in an ayurvedic massage and continue to relax.

The next day we set off for a relaxing cruise on Kumarakom's backwaters aboard a comfortable, converted rice barge. The following morning we drive to Lake Periyar, and tour its wildlife sanctuary by way of a three hour boat trip.

Periyar wildlife sanctuary has a picturesque lake at the heart of the sanctuary. Formed with the building of a dam in 1895, this reservoir meanders around the contours of the wooded hills, providing a permanent source of water for the local wildlife. A highlight is to see Indian elephants in the act of ablution and playfulness by the Periyar lake.

Apart from elephants, the other animals to be seen in the Periyar sanctuary are Gaur, Wild Pig, Sambar, Barking Deer, Mouse Deer, Dole or Indian Wild Dog and very rarely, a Tiger. There are, now, an estimated 40 tigers here. 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.



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The birdlife comprises of Darter, Cormorant, Kingfisher, great Malabar Hornbill and Racket-Tailed Drongo. The reptilian population boasts of Monitor Lizards that can be spotted basking in the sun, on the rocks along the lakeshore.

After a night in Periyar, we drive back to Cochin, for your flight to Delhi or Bombay (Mumbai), where your trip ends after a night at a hotel near the airport, making it convenient for your onward flight home.

Day by Day Itinerary:

Day 1	Fly to Cochin, Kerala	(B)
Day 2	Cochin	(B)
Day 3	Transfer to Kumarakom	(B)
Day 4	Kumarakom	(B)
Day 5	Ricebarge Cruise	(B,L)
Day 6	Transfer to Periyar	(B)
Day 7	Transfer to Cochin; Fly to Delhi/Bombay	(B)
Day 8	Delhi or Bombay; Trip ends	(B)

B = Breakfast, L = Lunch

Flights can be arranged back to either Delhi or Mumbai, and accommodation in either of these cities is included. Flights are not included.

Comfort Level: 4/5
Accommodation is in high quality 3-4* hotels.
Activity Level: 1/5

Min. Travellers per Group: 2
Max. Travellers per Group: 12

Police Check Required? No