

DESTINATION ITINERARY

Kerala

7-9 Days

From INR 21,000 per person

Best: Jan, Feb, Nov, Dec

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FEATURED IN THIS JOURNEY



Alleppey Backwaters (houseboat)



Munnar tea gardens



Periyar Wildlife...

DOMESTIC INDIA HOLIDAY PLANNING BRIEF

Destination overview

Kerala layers several of India's most distinctive landscapes into one well-connected state. The state stacks its landscapes closely: a lagoon-and-canal network inland from the Arabian Sea, high tea country in the Western Ghats around Munnar, forest and elephant habitat at Thekkady, and a long coastline of sand and coconut palm. Fort Kochi carries layers of Portuguese, Dutch and Jewish history in a few walkable streets, while the backwaters near Alappuzha and Kumarakom are best seen slowly, from a boat. Distances look small on a map but the roads wind, so a first trip works best with three unhurried bases rather than a checklist. Kerala suits couples wanting quiet, families with older children, and anyone who would rather spend an afternoon watching water and rain than queuing at monuments.

PACKAGE DURATION

7-9 Days

STARTING PRICE

From INR 21,000 per person

BEST TIME

Peak: Jan, Feb, Nov, Dec | Shoulder: Mar, Apr, Aug, Sep, Oct | Avoid: May, Jun, Jul

TRIP TYPES

beach, hill, wildlife, honeymoon

8 APPROVED SUBLOCATIONS

Places you'll visit


Alleppey Backwaters (houseboat)
LAKE | OVERNIGHT (1 NIGHT ON BOARD)

A network of canals, lagoons and paddy-field villages inland from the coast, toured on a converted rice barge with a crew who cook on board. You cruise through the afternoon, watch village life along the banks, and moor overnight in a quiet channel.


Munnar tea gardens
HILL STATION | 1-2 DAYS

Rolling highland estates in the Western Ghats where tea bushes cover entire hillsides in clipped green. Visitors drive between viewpoints, walk estate paths, look around a working tea factory and museum, and use the town as a base for nearby dams, valleys and shola forest.


Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary (Thekkady)
NATIONAL PARK | HALF DAY

A forest reserve around a large lake, usually seen from a Forest Department boat that drifts along the shoreline where elephant, gaur and deer come down to drink. Guided nature walks and bamboo rafting are also run, and the surrounding hills are spice-growing country.



Fort Kochi

HERITAGE SITE | FULL DAY

The old harbour quarter of Kochi, walkable in a day, with Portuguese, Dutch, Jewish and British buildings, the shore-mounted Chinese fishing nets, St Francis Church, Mattancherry's palace and synagogue lane, plus art galleries, cafes and evening Kathakali performances staged for visitors.



Kovalam Beach

BEACH | 1-2 DAYS

A set of curved sandy coves below a headland lighthouse on the south Kerala coast. Days go on swimming within the marked areas, walking between the beaches, eating grilled fish at the shacks along the promenade and taking Ayurvedic treatments at the centres nearby.



Wayanad

HILL STATION | 2 DAYS

An upland district of coffee and spice plantations, bamboo forest, ridges and waterfalls in northern Kerala. Visitors trek up Chembra, climb to the prehistoric carvings at Edakkal, visit dams and wildlife sanctuaries, and stay on working plantations away from the main tourist circuit.



Kumarakom

LAKE | 1 DAY

A backwater village on the eastern shore of Vembanad Lake, quieter than Alappuzha. Its bird sanctuary draws migratory and resident waterbirds, and visitors take early-morning canoe rides through the narrow canals, watch fishermen at work and use the village as a slow-paced lake base.



Athirappilly Falls

WATERFALL | 2-3 HOURS

A broad curtain of water on the Chalakudy river at the edge of rainforest, reached by a short walk from the road. A steeper path drops to the base for the view from below. Volume varies sharply with the season and bathing is restricted when the flow runs high.

7 DAYS

Suggested day-by-day plan

01

DAY 1

Alleppey Backwaters (houseboat) and Athirappilly Falls

Visit Alleppey Backwaters (houseboat), Athirappilly Falls.

02

DAY 2

Munnar tea gardens

Visit Munnar tea gardens.

03

DAY 3

Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary (Thekkady)

Visit Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary (Thekkady).

04

DAY 4

Fort Kochi

Visit Fort Kochi.

05

DAY 5

Kovalam Beach

Visit Kovalam Beach.

06

DAY 6

Wayanad

Visit Wayanad.

07

DAY 7

Kumarakom

Visit Kumarakom.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Travel essentials

CURRENCY

The Indian rupee. Cards and UPI are accepted widely, including by houseboat operators and homestays, though spice markets and small eateries prefer cash.

LANGUAGE

Malayalam is spoken everywhere. English is unusually widely understood across Kerala, while Hindi is less common outside hotels and tourism businesses.

TIME DIFFERENCE

India uses one national time zone, so no clock change is required. Daylight hours vary by season and longitude.

WEATHER

Warm and humid year round. October to March is the pleasant dry stretch, while the south-west monsoon from June brings heavy rain and a second spell follows in October.

CONNECTIVITY

Very good mobile data across the state with dependable hotel wi-fi. Only the high Western Ghats and mid-backwater stretches see genuinely weak signal.

Food and culture

Coconut, curry leaf, tamarind and seafood anchor Kerala cooking, from appam with stew and Malabar biryani to coastal fish and prawn dishes. Vegetarian sadya is served on plantain leaves at festivals. Hindu, Christian and Muslim communities all shape the food, calendar and living performance traditions.

AIR, RAIL AND ROAD

Getting there from India

AIR

Kochi is the most versatile gateway, while Thiruvananthapuram, Kozhikode and Kannur suit southern or northern circuits. Flights operate from many Indian cities.

RAIL

Ernakulam, Alappuzha, Kozhikode and Thiruvananthapuram receive long-distance trains from across India. Match the station to the first base.

ROAD

Kerala has good roads, but hill and coastal sectors can be slow. A car with driver is practical for linking Kochi, Munnar, Thekkady and the backwaters.

FROM OUR PLANNERS

Practical notes

- Backwater houseboats cruise only in daylight and moor for the night, so treat the Alappuzha or Kumarakom leg as an experience in itself rather than a way to cover distance.
- The Ghat roads up to Munnar and Thekkady are narrow and full of hairpin bends; anyone prone to motion sickness should sit in front and travel in the morning.
- Carry an umbrella or a light rain shell in almost any month, as Kerala gets showers well outside the main monsoon.
- Athirappilly and the other falls run hardest just after the rains, and bathing areas are closed when the flow is high, so check the day's status locally before you set off.
- Several Kerala temples restrict entry to Hindus and expect men in a mundu without a shirt and women in a saree or salwar; dress accordingly or plan to view from outside.
- Periyar viewing is boat-based on the lake rather than jeep-based, and the early slots go first; carry binoculars, since sightings are usually across the water.

**PLAN WITH ORBITZ HOLIDAYS**

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Explore
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Remember

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