



Best of India – Epic Indian Travel

## God's Own Country – Kerala

India's most enchanting single-state odyssey— journeying through the colonial harbour city of Cochin, the mist-draped emerald tea gardens of Munnar, the spice-scented forests and wildlife sanctuaries of Thekkady, and the legendary palm-fringed backwaters of Alleppey. From the solar-powered international gateway of Cochin and the unique Pokkali rice- prawn farms of Vypeen, to the classical arts heritage of Kerala Kalamandalam, the ancient Portuguese churches and Chinese fishing nets of Fort Kochi, the Neolithic dolmens and orthodox tea factories of Munnar, the cardamom plantations and Periyar Lake wildlife of Thekkady, and the serene overnight houseboat cruise through Alleppey's timeless backwaters – this 9-day journey captures the very soul of God's Own Country.

### Cochin – Gateway to Kerala

Fort Kochi heritage walk, Pokkali backwater farming, Mattancherry Palace Road, Kerala Kalamandalam classical arts & multi-cultural harbour city

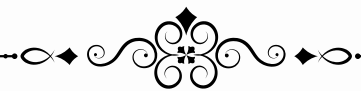
### Munnar & Thekkady – Nature's Finest

Dolmen's Trek to Marayoor, orthodox tea factory, Mattupetty Lake, spice plantations, Kumily spice market & Periyar Lake wildlife safari

### Alleppey – Backwater Paradise

Overnight kettuvallam houseboat cruise, below-sea-level paddy fields, palm-fringed waterways, village life & Kerala's legendary backwater network

**Tour Route: 8 Nights / 9 Days • Cochin [3N] – Munnar [2N] – Thekkady [2N] – Alleppey [1N] (Houseboat)**



# Tour Highlights



## UNESCO & Heritage Sites

Fort Kochi's St Francis Church (India's oldest European church), Mattancherry Dutch Palace, Santa Cruz Basilica, Fort Immanuel & the Dutch Cemetery



## Pokkali Backwater Farming

Unique saline-tolerant rice-prawn symbiotic farming tradition at Vypeen 4 one of the oldest known crops in the world, experienced via local ferry, village walk & Thoni boat ride



## Kerala Kalamandalam

Day visit to India's premier classical arts institution & training in Kathakali, Mohiniyattam, Kutiyattam & Panchavadyam; a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage



## Dolmen's Trek – Munnar

Early morning soft trek to Marayoor's Neolithic dolmens (3000 BC - 14000 BC) through sandalwood forests & pre-historic rock paintings



## Orthodox Tea Factory – Munnar

Walk through emerald tea plantations, interact with tea pluckers, visit the 1936 tea factory museum, learn tea history & enjoy tea tasting



## Spice Plantations & Kumily Market

Guided tour of Thekkady's cardamom, pepper, coffee, clove & cinnamon plantations; visit to India's largest spice export market at Kumily



## Periyar Lake Wildlife Safari

Boat ride on Periyar Lake spotting elephants, monkeys, deer, wild boar & exotic birds; views of cardamom plantations along the shoreline



## Alleppey Overnight Houseboat

Cruise Kerala's legendary backwaters on a traditional kettuvallam houseboat & palm-fringed waterways, below-sea-level paddy fields & rustic village life



DAY 01

# Arrive Cochin — Gateway to God's Own Country

*Cochin (Kochi) is one of the finest natural harbours in the world and has been a major spice trading centre since the 14th century. The city is a fascinating blend of Portuguese, Dutch, British and Indian influences — its streets lined with colonial-era buildings, ancient churches, Chinese fishing nets and vibrant Jewish and Muslim quarters. Cochin International Airport (CIAL) holds the distinction of being the world's first fully solar-powered international airport — a landmark achievement in sustainable aviation. The city serves as the perfect gateway to Kerala's extraordinary natural and cultural wonders.*

## Arrival & Welcome

- Arrive at Cochin International Airport (CIAL) — the world's first fully solar-powered airport
- Clear customs and immigration formalities (approximately one hour)
- Be warmly greeted by our representative just after baggage collection — with a flower bouquet and company paging board bearing your name
- Transfer to your hotel by private vehicle, accompanied by your representative
- Assisted check-in at your hotel

## Overnight Stay

- Overnight at your hotel in Cochin

## About Your Hotel Area

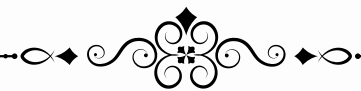
- Your hotel is located in the heart of Cochin — close to Fort Kochi, Mattancherry and the vibrant Marine Drive waterfront
- The area offers easy access to local restaurants, cafés and the famous Chinese fishing nets at sunset

## Evening at Leisure

- Settle into your hotel and freshen up after your journey
- Enjoy a welcome dinner at the hotel or a nearby restaurant
- Rest and relax ahead of your Kerala adventure

**Meals: Dinner | Drive: Airport transfer only**





DAY 02

# Cochin — Pokkali Backwater Farming & Mattancherry Heritage Walk

*Today is a day of extraordinary contrasts – from the ancient rice paddies of Vypeen Island to the lamp-lit colonial streets of Fort Kochi. Pokkali farming is a unique community-based initiative to preserve and conserve a one-of-a-kind, saline-tolerant strain of rice, threatened by extinction. In a stunning backwater setting, you'll have the opportunity to understand one of the oldest known crops cultivated through a symbiotic farming tradition involving rice and prawn culture – a living testament to Kerala's deep agricultural heritage.*

## Morning — Pokkali Backwater Excursion

- Enjoy an early breakfast at your hotel
- Meet your driver and guide and begin your sightseeing in Cochin
- Join the locals on the ferry from Kochi to Vypeen Island – an authentic local experience
- One-hour drive from Vypeen to the Pokkali backwaters area
- Visit the village Agri-Service Centre and walk through the village
- Meet and interact with a farmer who sustains the Pokkali tradition against many constraints
- Take a Thoni (traditional country boat) ride through the scenic backwaters, observing daily village life

## Midday — Village Cooking & Lunch

- Visit a local home for an interactive cooking session with the women of the village
- Learn the secrets of Kerala's traditional cuisine using fresh local ingredients
- Enjoy a home-cooked lunch with the village family – a truly immersive cultural experience
- Return to the hotel after lunch and relax

## Evening — Mattancherry & Fort Kochi Heritage Walk

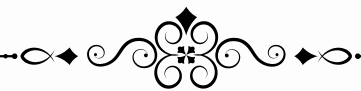
- Early evening: meet your guide for a walk through the Mattancherry area, exploring Palace Road and Fort Kochi by foot or rickshaw
- Witness the multi-cultural nature of the area – different styles of residences and various places of worship of different communities
- In the late evening, temples are lit with lamps and the sound of temple bells and chanting creates a magical atmosphere
- Enjoy dinner at one of the popular restaurants in the Fort Kochi area

## Overnight Stay

- Overnight at your hotel in Cochin

**Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner | Drive: Ferry + 1 Hour to Vypeen**





DAY 03

## Cochin — Kerala Kalamandalam & Muziris Heritage

Today's excursion takes you north to Cheruthuruthi — a 2.5-hour drive from Cochin — to visit Kerala Kalamandalam, the premiere public institution in India preserving the artistic heritage of Kerala through rigorous training and performance. Founded through the revolutionary vision of romantic poet and art aficionado Vallathol Narayana Menon and his close associate Manakkulam Mukundaraja, Kalamandalam has been functioning as a Deemed University since 2007. Imparting systematic training in Kathakali, Mohiniyattam, Kutiyattam, Panchavadyam, Thullal, Mridangam, Karnatic music and their sub-divisions — including vocal music, instrumental music, make-up and costuming — the institution is a living treasure of Kerala's intangible cultural heritage.

### Morning — En Route to Kalamandalam

- Enjoy an early breakfast at your hotel
- Depart for Cheruthuruthi — approximately 2.5 hours' drive from Cochin
- En route, stop to visit the historic site of Muziris — one of the ancient world's most important trading ports, connecting Kerala to Rome, Arabia and China
- Visit the Killimangalam mat weaving centre to interact with the women artisans and learn about this traditional craft

### Midday — Kerala Kalamandalam

- Arrive at Kerala Kalamandalam for the Day with the Master's Programme
- Witness live training sessions in Kathakali, Mohiniyattam and other classical art forms
- Interact with master artists and students; gain insight into the elaborate make-up, costuming and mudra traditions
- Explore the campus and its rich cultural archives

### Afternoon — Return to Cochin

- Return to the hotel in Cochin by late afternoon
- Relax and refresh after the day's cultural immersion

### Evening at Leisure

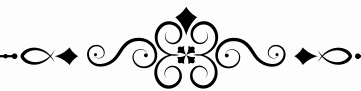
- Stroll down to the nearby markets and spend time at your own pace
- Browse local handicrafts, spices and Kerala souvenirs
- Enjoy dinner at a restaurant of your choice and return to the hotel

### Overnight Stay

- Overnight at your hotel in Cochin

**Meals: Breakfast & Dinner | Drive: 2.5 Hours each way to Cheruthuruthi**





DAY 04

# Cochin to Munnar — Fort Kochi Heritage Walk & Queen of Kerala Hill Stations

145 km · 3.5 Hours Drive

The morning begins with a leisurely heritage walk through the storied lanes of Fort Kochi — one of India's most atmospheric colonial quarters, where Portuguese, Dutch and British layers of history are etched into every building, church and cemetery. By afternoon, you'll leave the coast behind and ascend into the Western Ghats, arriving in Munnar — a small, famous hill station located 1,500 metres above sea level. Munnar's rolling emerald tea gardens, misty mountain peaks and cool highland air make it one of Kerala's most beloved destinations. The drive itself is one of the most scenic road journeys in South India.

## Morning — Fort Kochi Heritage Walk

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel

Meet your guide for a heritage walk through the Fort Kochi area, visiting:

St Francis Church — India's oldest European church, built by Portuguese

Franciscan Friars

The iconic Chinese Fishing Nets that Cochin is famous for

Nehru Children's Park and the interesting heritage houses that ring it (Koder

House, Tower House, Old Harbour Hotel)

Fort Immanuel — the bastion of the Portuguese

The Dutch Cemetery, now managed by the Church of South India

A brief walk along the seaside beach

Bishop's House Road with its beautiful old-style homes

The Union Club Building

Santa Cruz Basilica

Return to the hotel after the walk and relax

## Afternoon — Drive to Munnar

Check out from the hotel after lunch

Drive 3.5 hours through scenic Western Ghats landscapes to Munnar

Arrive in Munnar by early evening and check in at your hotel

Enjoy the beautiful mountain surroundings and cool highland air

## Evening & Overnight

Relax and enjoy the scenic views from your hotel

Enjoy dinner at the hotel restaurant

Overnight at your hotel in Munnar

**Meals: Breakfast & Dinner | Drive: 145 km · 3.5 Hours to Munnar**





DAY 05

## Munnar Sightseeing – Dolmen's Trek, Tea Plantations & Mattupetty Lake

Munnar is a town located 1,500 metres above sea level in the Western Ghats Mountain range in Kerala. The tea gardens of Munnar provide a visual spectacle of rolling hills carpeted in vivid green, punctuated by the neat rows of tea bushes stretching as far as the eye can see. While Munnar is famed for its natural beauty, most travellers don't know about the fascinating Neolithic dolmens situated in Marayoor & 4 ancient megalithic burial chambers dating back to 3000 BC & 14000 BC, hidden among sandalwood forests and pre-historic rock paintings. Today combines an early morning trek with cultural and natural highlights that reveal Munnar's many layers.

### Early Morning – Dolmen's Trek (Marayoor)

Early morning: embark on the soft Dolmen's Trek to Marayoor & suitable for all fitness levels

Trek through sandalwood forests to discover ancient Neolithic dolmens (megalithic burial chambers dating 3000 BC & 14000 BC)

Observe pre-historic rock paintings and enjoy the pristine early morning mountain air

Return to the hotel and enjoy a hearty breakfast

### Morning – Tea Plantations & Factory

Visit the Tea Plantations & walk through the lush tea estate and interact with tea pluckers to learn about local culture and traditions

This walk is excellent for health & breathing pure mountain oxygen in a peaceful setting

Visit the orthodox tea factory, built in 1936 & one of the oldest in Munnar

The museum includes a living factory, tea sales outlet and tea-tasting sections

Receive a briefing on the origins of tea, its history and health benefits, and the traditional manufacturing process

Enjoy tea tasting at the factory

### Afternoon – Mattupetty Dam & Lake

Post lunch, visit the Mattupetty Dam & more than just a water storage facility

The gravity dam creates the beautiful Mattupetty Lake & a perennial lake that never dries up even in summer

Popular with birds and wild animals that rely on this reservoir; excellent for birdwatching and wildlife spotting

Enjoy the scenic lakeside surroundings and mountain views

### Evening & Overnight

Return to the hotel by evening and relax

If you wish, indulge in activities organised by the hotel

Overnight at your hotel in Munnar

Meals: Breakfast & Dinner | Munnar Sightseeing Day

LEAF INDIAN  
TRAVEL



DAY 06

# Munnar to Thekkady – Spice Capital of India

100 km · 3.5 Hours Scenic Drive

*Thekkady, situated in the Idukki district of Kerala, is known as the spice belt of India. The region produces an extraordinary variety of spices – cardamom, pepper, coffee, clove, cinnamon and more – and the air itself is fragrant with their mingled aromas. The drive from Munnar to Thekkady is one of the most scenic road trips in Kerala, winding through the Western Ghats with breathtaking views of valleys, waterfalls and spice-covered hillsides. This evening, you'll be introduced to the magical world of Indian spices through an immersive cookery class at your resort.*

## Morning – Leisure in Munnar

- Wake up at leisure and enjoy a relaxed breakfast at your hotel
- Savour the scenic views of Munnar's tea-covered hills one last time
- Check out from the hotel and prepare for the drive to Thekkady

## Afternoon – Scenic Drive to Thekkady

- Depart for Thekkady – approximately 3.5 hours' scenic drive through the Western Ghats
- The route winds through lush forests, spice plantations and mountain passes
- Arrive in Thekkady by late afternoon and check in at your hotel
- Relax and refresh after the journey

## Evening – Kerala Cookery Class

- Participate in the cookery class at the resort – master chefs share their skills and secrets with you
- Learn the secrets of traditional Kerala cooking – the art of combining spices, coconut, curry leaves and tamarind
- Enter the magical world of Indian spices: what they are, how to use them, how to combine them, and savour the special magic they bring to even the most commonplace foods
- Enjoy the meal you've prepared together

## Overnight Stay

- Overnight at your hotel in Thekkady

**Meals: Breakfast & Dinner | Drive: 100 km · 3.5 Hours to Thekkady**

# Thekkady Sightseeing – Spice Plantations, Kumily Market & Periyar Lake

*Thekkady is known as the spice belt of India and produces many spices such as cardamom, pepper, coffee, clove and cinnamon. There is also home to the Periyar National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary—one of India's finest protected areas, where the Periyar River has been dammed to create a beautiful area surrounded by dense tropical forests. A boat ride on Periyar Lake offers the magical possibility of spotting wild elephants, deer, monkeys and exotic birds against a backdrop of cardamom-covered hillsides. The Kumily spice market – the largest in the country – is a sensory feast of colours, aromas and flavours.*

## Morning – Spice Plantation Tour

- Enjoy breakfast at the hotel
- After breakfast, visit the Spice Plantation – Thekkady is known as the spice belt of India
- See the raw spices and their plants: cardamom, pepper, coffee, clove, cinnamon and more
- Learn about the cultivation process, harvesting methods and the role of spices in Kerala's history and economy
- Interact with plantation workers and gain hands-on knowledge of India's most prized spices

## Midday – Kumily Spice Market

- Visit the Kumily spice market—the biggest spice market in the country
- The market exports spices across the globe; browse the stalls and purchase authentic Kerala spices
- Enjoy lunch at a local restaurant in Kumily

## Afternoon – Periyar Lake Boat Ride

- Post lunch, enjoy a boat ride on the beautiful Periyar Lake
- Watch the cardamom plantation situated nearby the lake
- Spot various wildlife including elephants, monkeys, deer, wild boar and different species of birds during your boating tour
- The boat ride offers a unique perspective of the Periyar National Park from the water

## Evening & Overnight

- Return to the hotel by evening
- Relax and enjoy the cool Thekkady air
- Overnight at your hotel in Thekkady

**Meals: Breakfast & Dinner | Thekkady Sightseeing Day**

# Thekkady to Alleppey – Overnight Houseboat Cruise on Kerala's Backwaters

140 km · 3.5 Hours Scenic Drive

Kerala's network of navigable backwaters stretches to cover a thousand kilo metres. These serene waterways are fringed by palm groves and paddy fields, dotted with small islands and connected by a web of canals, rivers and lakes. The Alleppey district is one of the most popular areas where you can cruise the backwaters – it is also one of the few places in the world where farming is done below sea-level, using a system of dykes. The traditional kettuvallam houseboat – once used to transport rice and spices – has been lovingly converted into a floating hotel, complete with bedrooms, a kitchen and a sun deck. An overnight cruise is one of the most magical experiences Kerala has to offer.

## Morning – Departure from Thekkady

- Enjoy breakfast at the hotel
- Check out from the hotel after breakfast
- Depart for Alleppey – approximately 3.5 hours' drive through scenic Kerala countryside
- The route passes through rubber plantations, paddy fields and small Kerala towns

## Afternoon – Board Your Houseboat

- Arrive in Alleppey and board your traditional kettuvallam houseboat
- The houseboat is fully equipped with comfortable bedrooms, a private bathroom, a kitchen and a sun deck
- Set sail into the legendary backwaters of Kerala
- Cruise through palm-fringed canals, past paddy fields farmed below sea-level and through tranquil village waterways

## Evening – Backwater Sunset Cruise

- Watch the spectacular Kerala sunset over the backwaters from the deck of your houseboat
- Observe the daily life of local fishermen, farmers and villagers along the waterways
- All meals are freshly prepared and served onboard by your houseboat crew
- Enjoy a delicious Kerala dinner onboard as you drift through the moonlit backwaters

## Overnight Stay

- Overnight onboard your houseboat on the Alleppey backwaters
- Fall asleep to the gentle sounds of water and the rustle of palm trees

**Meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner (all onboard) | Drive: 140 km · 3.5 Hours to Alleppey**

DAY 09

# Depart Cochin — Farewell God's Own Country

Alleppey → Cochin International Airport • 1.5 Hours Drive

*As your Kerala journey draws to a close, you'll wake to one final morning on the backwaters — the mist rising over the palm-fringed canals, the gentle lapping of water against the hull of your houseboat. After disembarking, a short drive returns you to Cochin International Airport — the world's first fully solar-powered airport — for your onward flight. Kerala has offered you its finest gifts: ancient arts, emerald hills, fragrant spice gardens, sacred wildlife and the timeless serenity of its legendary backwaters. God's Own Country will stay with you long after you leave.*

## Morning — Final Breakfast Onboard

- Wake up to a beautiful final morning on the backwaters
- Enjoy your last breakfast freshly prepared and served onboard the houseboat
- Savour the peaceful backwater scenery one last time
- Disembark the houseboat after breakfast

## Departure to Cochin Airport

- Drive approximately 1.5 hours from Alleppey to Cochin International Airport (CIAL)
- Our representative will assist you with your departure formalities
- Check in for your onward flight — Cochin has excellent domestic connections to all major Indian cities as well as extensive international connections

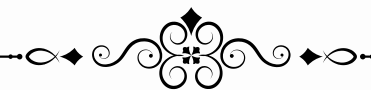
**Meals: Breakfast (onboard) | Drive: 1.5 Hours to Cochin Airport**

## End of Services

- Our services conclude upon your drop-off at Cochin International Airport
- We hope your journey through God's Own Country has been everything you dreamed of and more

## Onward Connections from Cochin

- Cochin International Airport offers various flight connections to other states across India
- Extensive international connections to the Middle East, Europe, Southeast Asia and beyond



# Why Choose Epic Indian Travel?

EpicIndian Travel is India's premier Destination Management Company, recognized as the Best Bespoke Tour Operator. We specialize in crafting deeply personal journeys – from intimate leisure escapes to large group adventures and high-impact incentive programs. Every itinerary is built from scratch, shaped by your interests, pace and passion for discovery. Our God's Own Country package is a testament to our commitment to authentic, immersive and responsible travel experiences.



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## 24x7 Support

Round-the-clock assistance before, during and after your trip – so you focus on enjoying God's Own Country, not worrying about logistics.

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Getting started is simple – just follow these steps and we'll handle everything else.

01

### Send Us an Email

Write to [epicindiantravel@gmail.com](mailto:epicindiantravel@gmail.com) with your details: number of participants and preferred travel dates.

02

### Receive Your Itinerary

We'll put together a personalised itinerary tailored to your interests and travel style.

03

### Customise to Your Needs

Review and let us know any changes – we'll refine it until it's perfect.

04

### We Share the Costs

Once finalised, we'll send you a detailed cost breakdown.

05

### Confirm and We Book

On your approval, we arrange all hotel bookings and ground arrangements.

06

### Advance Deposit

After hotel confirmation, 50% advance deposit of land costs required, plus 100% of flight costs.

07

### Balance Payment

Remaining 50% of land costs payable 65 days prior to your holiday.

