

JAN Treks & Travels

Journeys into Adventure and Nature

South India: Yoga and Nature In the Western Ghats and Backwaters of Kerala – 21 days

Jeep tour with yoga retreat, visit to wildlife reserves, and lots of cultural activities

November 1-21 & February 1-21, 2014

Tour JTT-KE-01: Delhi - Calicut – Wayanad Sanctuary - Nilaumbur - Cheruthuruthy - Cochin - Alleppey – Backwaters – Marari Beach – Delhi

Activities & sights: Yoga retreat, walks in wildlife reserve, cruising on Backwaters, village life, cultural and community-based activities (traditional music and dance, instrument making, weaving & pottery) and European heritage.



Itinerary

Day 01: Delhi ✈️ Calicut – Wayanad (120 km/ 3 hrs)

After arrival at Calicut Airport you are transferred to Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary. This beautifully forested protected area lies in the Western Ghats, a mountainous area that is famous for its enormous variety of flora and fauna. Your stay will be at My Garden of Eden, an accommodation tucked away amongst lush green forests, for the next seven days.

(Dinner included)



Day 02: At Wayanad

In the morning we'll visit Muthunga National park, part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve. We'll do a two-hours jeep safari inside the sanctuary in an open jeep. The animal population of the



sanctuary includes Asiatic elephant, leopard, jungle cat, civet, Nilgiri langur, wild dog, wild gaur, spotted deer, sambhar, Malabar squirrel and sloth bear. Among the birds that can be seen are wild peacock, babblers, cuckoos, owls, woodpeckers and jungle fowl (the wild ancestor of the domesticated chicken). We return to the resort by late morning.

The afternoon can be spent at leisure, or you can go for a plantation walk around the resort, as the resort has about 20 acres of land to walk in.

Day 03 - 07: Yoga Retreat at Wayanad

P.M. Programme (yoga, walks, wild life jeep drives/walks, cultural activities)

Comment: I'll discuss this with the teacher. Probably early morning and late afternoon sessions. In between off, time for walks etc.

(Breakfast & dinner included)

Day 08: Yoga Retreat at Wayanad, excursions

In the morning we'll visit Uravu Centre where you can see the bamboo workshop, meet the artisans and designers, and see how they create marvels out of different varieties of bamboo grown locally. The visit also includes interaction with the promoters, visit to the bamboo nursery and the shop. You'll enjoy the 'natural' local lunch!

Return back to Resort.

Dinner and overnight at Wayanad.

(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Day 09: Wayanad - Nilaumbur (90 km, 2.5 hrs)

Nilaumbur on the fort hills of Western Ghats, surrounded by teak plantations, has its own charm. Your stay will be at MaranatMana which is a several hundred years old heritage property reflecting the age-old traditions of a Kerala Brahmin family. Focusing on sustainable living, this place strikes an excellent balance between traditional life style and modern living. The two acres of sacred grove on the farm is a representation of bio-diversity that is still sustained.



Overnight in Nilaumbur

(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Day 10: Niluambur - River Nila/Cheruthuruthy (60 km/ 1.5 hrs)

Today we continue further south to River Nila and Cheruthuruty. En route we'll spend time with a family of musicians in Angadipuram. The *musical trail* laid out here is a journey to showcase the percussion culture of River Nila. A lecture plus demonstration on various kinds of musical instruments will be given, concluded by an enchanting performance by the group. Lunch will be had with the community.

After this, we'll proceed to an Ayurvedic Heritage resort at Cheruthuruthy, where we'll check in for overnight and dinner.

(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Day 11: At Cheruthuruthy

In the morning we'll visit the Kerala Kalamandalam School. We'll spend the morning with the master and students, interacting with them and seeing how they are taught classical dance and the music tradition of Kerala. A young team of performers will show you the dance forms, music and percussions.



We return back to the hotel for lunch, after which there is time to relax.

Early evening we leave for a local village and spend twilight with folk artists, in the courtyard of local household, who will showcase the folk heritage of River Nila. A young team of performers will take you through dance forms, music and percussions that make the region so rich in its cultural tradition.

Dinner & Overnight at Nila/ Cheruthuruthy.

(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Day 12: Cheruthuruthy - Kochi (Cochin) (125 km/ 3.5 hrs)

After breakfast our interpreter for the day will visit us. He'll guide us to a local village, where you'll see weaving, potter's workshop and a bell metal workshop. The potters really weave magic on clay. You'll get the chance to make your own pottery and you can give orders for small souvenirs to take home as a memento. At the bell metal workshop you'll witness a unique craft that is confined to a few families in the region only. One can watch the intricate scientific process of creating the bell metal and see how it is molded artistically into traditional teapots, unique door locks, etc.

Lunch will be had at a local resort.

After lunch we set out a 3.5 hrs drive to Fort Kochi 3.5. Historically know as Cochin, it is considered the jewel in the crown of Kerala with its European heritage and true cosmopolitan temperament. A leisurely walk through its streets is one of the best ways to discover all that the city has to offer - its natural harbour and historical sites. Overnight in Fort Cochin.

(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Day 13: At Kochi (Cochin)

In the morning we'll explore the Cochin and see some of the most interesting historical monuments, such as the Dutch Palace, the Jewish Synagogue and Jew Town.

In the evening we'll attend a Kathakali dance performance in a theater. This dance form **XXX** Overnight in Kochi.

(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Day 14: Alleppey / Backwaters

After breakfast, you are transfered to Alleppey by road. Here, among the so-called *backwaters* of Kerala, we board a *houseboat* for a day cruise. The houseboats will be cruising through the backwaters of Kuttanad - the rice bowl of Kerala and Alleppey (Alappuzha) in Kerala. The cruise will go along vast paddy fields, fishing nets, coconut grooves, and local villages. It is really a beautiful, green water world and gliding through the water on the traditionally built boat is an utterly relaxing experience. In the evening, the boat will be anchored in scenic location were you can watch sunset and sunrise the next day. Lunch and dinner to be served on board. Overnight on the houseboat.



(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Day 15: On the Backwaters



Immediately after sunrise we set out for a short morning cruise, while breakfast is being served onboard. We disembark the houseboat at 09:30 for a short transfer to a secluded island on the backwaters. There are six cottages overlooking the backwaters with the most stunning views. Known for its bird life, this island is a good stopover for relaxation. Cycling, village visits, and small trips in canoes are included. Overnight at Karimbavalavu.

(Breakfast, lunch & dinner included)

Day 16: Backwaters - Marari beach (1 hr)

After breakfast, we leave the island and drive to Marari beach. The next two and a half day you can relax here and enjoy this little known but beautiful beach. Stay will be on breakfast-only basis, which means you are free to go out for lunch and dinner in one of the many nice restaurants.

(Breakfast included)

Day 17 to 19: At Marari

(Breakfast included)



Day 20: Marari beach - Kochi airport ✈️ Delhi

Transfer to Kochi airport for your return flight to Delhi.

(Breakfast included)

Tour price

Prices

Group tour, with English & Dutch speaking tour guide and yoga teacher who speaks English, Swedisch and German.

€ 2575/\$ 3525

Price includes: Air fare Delhi - Calicut and Kochi – Delhi, all accommodation (twin sharing, 2 person rooms), full board except at Marai Beach (CP, breakfast only), all transport vehicles. English speaking tour leader and yoga teacher throughout, as well as English speaking local guide, additional guides where necessary. Yoga retreat of one week (&nights at Wayanad Sanctuary/My Garden of Eden, daily yoga exercises during the remainder of the tour, village visits and entrée fees.

Not included: international flight, tips; alcoholic drinks; laundry service; telephone calls; travel/personal insurance; other expenses of personal nature.

Please ask for quotation for additional services.

Extension and prelude options

It is very well possible to stay longer at Marani Beach. Or to head out to the Lakshadweep Islands, reachable in a short flight from Cochin. The Lakshadweep are barely known and undiscovered but as beautiful as the Maledives. There are four islands where you can stay, lie on the beach, go out on snorkel or diving trips to explore the amazing underwater world.