Karnataka and Kerala Discovery

Trip Code: KER

Version:

CULTURE	GUIDED GROUP	LEISURELY
		2



HIGHLIGHTS

- Two days (3 nights) at the beautiful and very special Neeleshwar Hermitage
- Safari adventures by boat and jeep at Kabini
- Guided sightseeing tours of Mysore and Kochi
- An overnight cruise on a backwaters houseboat
- Plantation stay and Eddakal cave and waterfalls visit at Wayanad

AT A GLANCE

- 13 days touring and sightseeing. Max altitude - 1500 metres
- Join at Bangalore - Mysore

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

Embark on a tropical adventure, a journey carved with the spirit of exploration. Over thirteen days, you will follow a trail that reveals the majestic south of India, unfolding its secrets step by step. From the regal echoes of Mysore's palaces to the call of the wild in Kabini's jungles, from Wayanad's mist-wreathed plantations to the hushed backwaters of Payyanur, this route invites you into stories written by kings, gods, rivers, forests and the sea.

Adventure here is not about rushing headlong into extremes, but about travelling with open eyes and a curious heart, allowing each place to strike its own chord. You will wander into caves etched with prehistoric carvings, climb to temple watchtowers gazing over vast landscapes, and glide along rivers where elephants drink at twilight. In the fire-lit courtyards of Kerala, you will witness the trance of Theyyam ritual dances, a living embodiment of myth and devotion. Finally, the journey carries you to Kochi, where cultures have converged for centuries, leaving behind spice-scented streets, Jewish synagogues, and colonial facades that still whisper of merchants and seafarers. This is not just an itinerary but a quest, a weaving of culture, wilderness, and wonder, where your true companion is the spirit of discovery itself.

Is this holiday for you?

This touring and sightseeing adventure holiday incorporates some of the highlights of southern India into just less than 2 weeks and provides a taste of the Subcontinent's amazing culture, history, wildlife and religious pageantry. There is a reasonable amount of travelling, as we journey between Mysore and Kochi. However, using private, air-conditioned vehicles and a modern express train, the effect of this is kept to a minimum. The holiday includes some quite leisurely exploration of city streets, cultural and other sites on foot and there are two short guided walks from the plantation estate lodge at Wayanad.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- A professional English-speaking local leader
- A group transfer from Bangalore Airport to Mysore on Day 1
- A group transfer to Kochi Airport on Day 13
- All land transport involved in the itinerary
- All accommodation as described
- All Meals
- Park and monument entrance fees
- Jeep and boat safaris at Kabini
- Backwaters overnight houseboat cruise
- 2 days at Neeleshwar with morning yoga
- Guided city tours of Mysore and Kochi
- Theyyam (Neeleshwar) and Kathakali (Kochi) dance performances

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Bangalore and Kochi airport transfers (other than group transfers)
- Indian Visa
- Tips for local staff
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the hotel in Mysore.

A group transfer from Bangalore Airport is provided mid-morning on Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary.

A private transfer can be arranged on request for travellers whose flight are not compatible with the group transfer.

We can also book an overnight stay in Bangalore for anyone arriving a day early.

On the final day of the itinerary a group transfer is provided from the hotel in Kochi to Kochi Airport.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All meals are included from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 13.

Food & Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. You should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a Water-To-Go bottle) to treat your water. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

The food in Karnataka and Kerala is terrific. Rice, vegetables, fruit, seafood and a range of delicious spices are the main staples of the cuisine of these two states, with dishes traditionally served on a banana leaf. Whilst at hotels, we will have the opportunity to try the local fare, although other options with a more western flavour will usually be available also. Our night on the houseboat and the time we spend at Neeleshwar will provide an excellent opportunity to sample Keralan food at its best. All meals are included in the trip price.

Accommodation

We will have 11 nights in a very good standard of hotel accommodation, in cities (Mysore and Kochi) but also in national park, tea estate and coastal resorts where the upgraded accommodation is in individual cabins and cottages. There is also one night on a houseboat on the Keralan backwaters. All accommodation is allocated on a twin-sharing basis. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. Depending upon availability it may be possible to arrange single room occupancy for all nights. For hotel prices and single supplement costs please refer to the dates and prices page of the trip on our website.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be accompanied by an experienced professional leader throughout and specialist cultural guides will be brought in when sightseeing in Mysore and in Kochi. There will also be specialist guides at Kabini and at the tea estate in Wayanad. There will also be a private, air-conditioned vehicle and driver for all road transfers.

Spending Money

Approximately £200 (or the equivalent in US dollars or euros) changed into the local currency (Indian rupees) should be allowed for miscellaneous expenses, including tips for your leader, support staff and hotel staff, as well as beer and soft drinks etc. If you are intending to buy expensive souvenirs, you should budget accordingly (credit cards can be useful in this respect). We recommend that you carry your travel money in the form of currency, since you will exchange the majority of this on the day of your arrival in India, either at Bangalore Airport or in Mysore. Sterling and US dollars are equally acceptable for exchange.

Guidance on Tipping

Tipping is an accepted and expected part of Indian culture, although you should only tip for services which are well done. Your guide will help with sundry tipping; bell boys, other hotel staff, lunchtime restaurant staff and specialist guides who may be with the group for short periods. This means you don't need to concern yourself with who to tip and who not to tip. Your guide may set up a tip 'kitty' for this and you will be asked to contribute £20 - £30 each (in rupees) for this. You should pay a tip to your driver at the end of the holiday. This should be done by the group as a whole and your tour guide will help you decide on an appropriate amount. You will have the opportunity to tip your tour leader separately during dinner on the final evening of the holiday. As a rough guide and depending on group size, we suggest that you should allow a total of £80 for tips - although the amount you give is entirely up to you.

Additional Information

Single Traveller Supplement

This holiday is priced on a 2-person-sharing basis. If you are travelling by yourself and do not request single room occupancy, we will make every effort to pair you up with another single traveller of the same sex. If this proves not to be possible, you will be liable for an additional single traveller payment.

Baggage Allowance

You should restrict your luggage to one main travel bag plus a small daypack to carry cameras, binoculars, water etc. A robust holdall or a piece of luggage fitted with wheels is appropriate for this kind of trip.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the ‘Dates and Prices’ table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

Visa India

Most nationalities, including travellers from the UK, the USA and many European countries can apply for their Indian Visa online through the **E-Visa Application** process. You must make your application at least four days prior to departure. Please download the detailed information document for details of how to apply for your visa: Visa India PDF

NB. The application process can be temperamental and we suggest you try a different browser (Firefox is known to work) if your application does not at first go through.

e-Arrival Card - Important

Separately and additionally, foreign nationals must now complete an e-arrival card to present at immigration on arrival in India along with their e-Visa. The digital e-Arrival form is found here https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/earrival/ It should be completed **within the 72 hours prior to your arrival in India.**

Ebola Self-Declaration Form (SDF) - Important

All passengers travelling to India must now also complete the Ebola Self-Declaration Form (SDF) to present at immigration on arrival in India. The form is found here https://airsuvidha.civilaviation.gov.in It should be completed **within the 72 hours prior to your arrival in India.**

Sikkim

If you are joining one of our Sikkim Beneath Kangchenjunga (SIK) groups, we will ask you to complete a Sikkim Permit form approximately 20 days before you travel. You will need your Indian Visa details for this form. A 30-day E-Tourist Visa can be applied for within 30 days of travel and will usually be processed within a couple of days. As an alternative you can apply for a 1-Year E-Tourist Visa within 180 days of travel. DO NOT MENTION SIKKIM in 'Places to be visited' when you make your application.

Nagaland

If you are joining the Kaziranga, Nagaland and the Hornbill Festival (HBF) group we need to apply for a PAP (Protected Area Permit) for Nagaland once the tour is confirmed. Approximately 20 days before you travel, we will need from you a copy of your passport and of your Indian E-Tourist Visa, along with a colour passport photo and a copy of your international flight e-tickets.

Currency

The currency of India is the Indian Rupee.

Preparing for your Holiday

Although there is no strenuous walking on this holiday, there is some exploration on foot including a couple of short guided walks at Wayanad. Generally, it makes sense to be in reasonable shape before coming on any active holiday. You could encounter some reasonably high temperatures (as high as 30 degrees centigrade) and you should be prepared for this. We suggest that you do some reading about the country, its people and the wildlife you are likely to see.

Climate

The most important influence on the annual climate of the south Indian states of Karnataka and Kerala is the monsoon, which brings a great deal of rain during the period from May to October. In November, the tail end of the monsoon can cause short-lived rainstorms. At the time of any of our departures, we will experience maximum daytime temperatures at sea level of between 25 and 30 degrees centigrade, falling to around 20 degrees centigrade at night. It is, of course, cooler at higher elevations, with daytime maximum temperatures of around 20 degrees centigrade at Wayanad. From November to April, conditions should be pleasant.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum.

You must bring the following items:

Strong shoes or trainers

Lightweight trousers

Shirts (at least one long-sleeved with collar) and T-shirts

Lightweight fleece jacket or jumper

Light waterproof jacket

Casual clothing for evenings

Sunhat

Sunglasses

Small daypack 20 to 25 litres

Torch

Sun protection (including total bloc for lips, nose etc.)

Water bottles 1 litre (x2)

Water purification tablets

Washbag and toiletries

Antibacterial handwash

Basic First Aid Kit including: antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters (band-aids), insect repellent, and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).

The following items are optional:

Camera

Travel clothes

Swimwear

Satellite Communications:

India does not currently allow the carrying of satellite communication devices such as satellite phones and Garmin ‘inReach’.

If you use such devices, please do not bring these with you to India.

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for the itinerary starting at the hotel in Mysore. A single group transfer is provided from Bangalore Airport to Mysore on Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary and from the group hotel in Kochi to Kochi Airport on the final day of the Land Only itinerary.

Flights and other transport to your destination should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London, Heathrow to Bangalore and returning to London from Kochi. Outbound flights will usually depart from the UK in the mid-afternoon, arriving in Bangalore at breakfast time on the following day (Day 1 of the Land Only itinerary). Return flights will depart Kochi at breakfast time on the final day of the Land Only itinerary, arriving in the UK in the evening of the same day.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

Our local agent for this mouth-watering itinerary also owns the award-winning Neeleshwar Hermitage, a place that we have waited far too long to include in one of our holidays. Our relationship with the family goes back 40 years to the earliest days of KE.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 11/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change