

# LUXURIOUS KERALA

## BOOK NOW

### PAY ONLY 50 % FOR COMPANION



Kerala is where India slips down into second gear, stops to smell the roses and always talks to strangers. A strip of land between the Arabian Sea and the Western Ghats, its perfect climate flirts unabashedly with the fertile soil, and everything glows. An easy-going and successful socialist state, Kerala has a liberal hospitality that stands out as its most laudable achievement.

Resting on low hills in Southern Kerala, is the capital Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum), used as a gateway to nearby resorts by many but boasting some of its very own attractions and dreadlocked faithfuls. North of the capital is Varkala with its stunning cliffs; but the real emerald jewel in South India's crown are the backwaters that meander throughout Kerala. Here, spindly networks of rivers, canals and lagoons nourish a seemingly infinite number of rice paddies and coconut groves, while sleek houseboats cruise the water highways from one bucolic village to another – try stopping at Kollam (Quilon). Along the coast, slices of perfect, sandy beach beckon the sun-worshipping crowd, and far inland the mountainous Ghats are covered in vast plantations of spices and tea. Exotic wildlife also thrives in the hills, for those who need more than just the smell of cardamom growing to get their juices flowing.

This flourishing land isn't good at keeping its secret: adventurers and traders have been in on it for years. The serene Fort Cochin pays homage to its colonial past, each building whispering a tale of Chinese visitors, Portuguese traders, Jewish settlers, Syrian Christians and Muslim merchants. Yet even with its colonial distractions, Kerala manages to cling to its vibrant traditions : Kathakali – a blend of religious play and dance; *kalaripayat* – a gravity-defying martial art; and *theyyam* – a trance-induced ritual. Combine this with some of the most tastebud-tingling cuisine in India, and you can imagine how hard it will be to leave before you even get here.

TOUR COST	DELUXE 05 STAR RESORTS (MIN 02 PERSON TRAVELLING ON TWIN SHARING BASIS)
PER PERSON TWIN SHARING	€ 555
<b>50 % FOR COMPANION ONLY</b>	<b>€ 278</b>

#### INCLUDES

- Accommodation for 07 days / 06 nights in a well appointed room
- Daily breakfast during your stay
- All transfers & sightseeing excursions by private air-conditioned car
- Services of local English speaking guide during sightseeing tour of Kochi
- Driver allowances, parking & toll charges
- Current applicable taxes

TRAVEL VALIDITY : JUN TO AUG 2009

# K E R A L A



## Day 01 Arrive Kochi International Airport

Upon arrival you will be welcome by our representative & transferred to **Hotel Brunton Boatyard**. Kochi - formerly known as Cochin in the coastal state of Kerala. With a natural harbour that has always been one of the finest in the world. Overnight stay in Kochi.

## Day 02 Tour Kochi

Today proceed on a guided city tour, visit the Portuguese Church built by St. Francis in 1562, the Jewish Synagogue, the famed Mattancherry Palace, and the Chinese fishing nets - ingenious devices requiring little human attention. Tonight enjoy a presentation of the colorful costumed Kathakali dance drama. Overnight stay in Kochi.

## Day 03 Drive to Kumarakom Backwaters

After breakfast we drive to **Coconut Lagoon Backwater Resort** in Kumarakom - is an emerald peninsula of paddy fields, meandering lagoons and backwaters that juts out into Lake Vembanad. Perhaps more famously known as the Backwaters this area is unique being made up of labyrinth of canals and lakes that stretch between the capital Cochin and Quilon in the south. From the vastness of Lake Vembanad to the quiet streams just large enough for a canoe, the Backwaters form the arteries through which rural daily life calmly flows - children splashing in the water, women washing clothes at the water's edge, fishermen up to their necks in water digging out fish with their feet, rice barges transporting coconuts and rice (the staples of the Kerala diet) and, above all, an overriding sense of peace and tranquility that permeates every aspect of this stunning region. Upon arrival check in. Rest of the day is free for leisure.

## Day 04 In Kumarakom

Day is free to experience the healing ayurvedic massage. Ayurveda believes that human being consists of the five elements, air, water, fire, ether & earth. And the combination of any of these elements exists in each one of us. Ayurveda the traditional form of Indian medicine was developed by ancient sages whose astute observations led to the development of constitutional medicine. The ancients visualized the universe as a constant play of energies, an imbalance of which created discomfort and disease in the body. It was the duty of the vaidya (physician) to harmonize this imbalance of the body - mind environment. Overnight stay in Kumarakom.

## Day 05 Drive to Marari Beach

After breakfast we drive to **Marari Beach Resort** - sprawls across 55 acres of lawns, far-flung lotus ponds and whispering coconut groves, all threaded through with stone-flagged pathways. A windbreak of palms runs the length of the property, a protective cover that reduces even the gustiest sea winds to mere caresses. And beyond is a milk-and-azure ocean, fringed by a beach more ochre than yellow, a sand-meets-sea combination you're not likely to find anywhere else. Upon arrival day is free at leisure. Overnight stay in Marari.

## Day 06 At Marari

Marari Beach Resort has a fully equipped ayurvedic centre, so you can get all the benefits of this ancient system of medicine. Put yourself in the hands of our expert masseuses and you'll feel reborn. There are also regular yoga classes on the beach, in the thick of a cool coconut grove. The locale, we're told, does wonders for your inner serenity. The bar at Marari is in a beautiful 200-year old building, deep in a thicket of trees and lotus ponds. Enjoy a 'Panchamrutam' (a heady local concoction) in the midst of colonial-style spaces and serenity. If you can't tear yourself away from the beach, you can get a tall cold one down there too, at the Beach Shack. Overnight stay at Marari.

## Day 07 Departure

Bid farewell. Today we transfer to Kochi International airport for your flight to onward destination.