

بيت على الماء.
Floating on water.

Kerala

A Unique Body/Mind Experience

Kerala-Islamic Tourism

With the Arabian Sea to the west, the Western Ghats towering 500 -2700 m in the east, forty four rivers which traverse the state, Kerala has unique geographical features that have made it one of the most sought after tourist destinations in

Asia: an equable climate, a long shoreline with serene beaches, tranquil stretches of emerald backwaters, lush hill stations and exotic wildlife, waterfalls, sprawling plantations and paddy fields, ayurvedic health holidays, enchanting art forms, magical festivals, historic and cultural monuments and an exotic cuisine. That is why Kerala is different from the rest of India. All of its charming attractions are only two hours drive from one another.

But the state does not just focus on developing its tourist attractions. All the people are literate. There is world-class health care system, the infant mortality is the lowest in country and life expectancy highest. The quality of life is exemplary. Peaceful, pristine Kerala is India's cleanest state.

Thiruvananthapuram

Located on India's southern tip, Thiruvananthapuram, the capital, is bounded by the Arabian Sea in the west and Tamil Nadu in the east. The wooded highlands in the Western Ghats in the eastern and northeastern borders provide enchanting picnic spots. A long shoreline with internationally renowned

beaches, historic monuments, backwater stretches, and a rich cultural heritage ensure this area is always popular with tourists.

The main tourist attractions are Padmanabha Swamy Temple inside the East Fort. Dedicated to Lord Vishnu, the temple is a blend of local and Dravidian architectural styles. It is known for its mural paintings and stone carvings.

Kuthiramalika palace Museum which displays paintings and various priceless collections of the royal family, is near the temple. The Zoological Park, one of the first zoos in India, is in a well-planned botanical garden. With huge trees, including Frangipani and Jacaranda, dotting the sprawling lawns and wild fowl swimming in the lake, it is like a small jungle ➤



Thirumullavaram Beach, a beautiful secluded picnic area, can easily be reached by bus. Sasthamkotta, an enormous fresh water lake surrounded by hills on three sides, is the largest of its kind in Kerala. Thenmala, covered by dense forests, rubber and tea plantations is home to India's first eco-tourism project.

in the heart of the city. There is even a reptile house with various types of snakes. Among the other attractions is Napier Museum, Sree Chithra Art Gallery and the Kanakakunnu Palaces.

When the delights of Thiruvananthapuram City have been enjoyed a number of short tours are on offer. There is Kovalam Beach made up of three adjacent beaches. The southernmost, known as Light House Beach, is the most popular. Thiruvallam a serene backwater stretch, enroute to Kovalam, is famous for its canoe rides. Peppara Wildlife Sanctuary is a seaside resort with a spa. High cliffs with mineral springs rise majestically from the coastline. Agasthyakoodam, Padmanbhapuram Palace Ponmudi, Varkala and Neyyar Dam are ideal for short tours.

Thiruvananthapuram is a city of festivals. As in

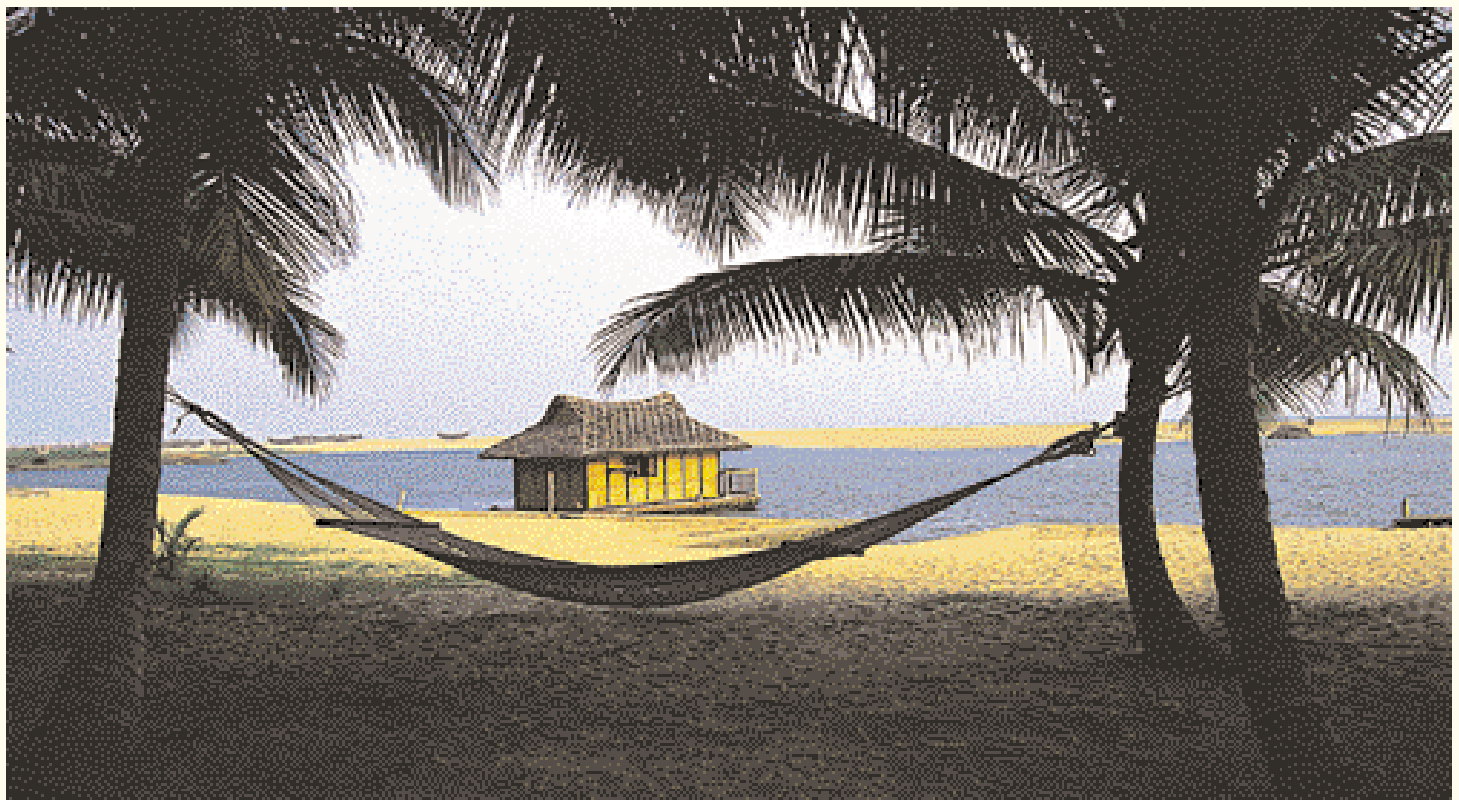
other parts of Kerala, the Christians celebrate Christmas and Easter just as Muslims celebrate Ramazan and Bakrid. There are many colourful festivals in various temples around Thiruvananthapuram, along with performances of folk and classical arts. Onam is one of the most widely celebrated festivals of Kerala, Arattu held twice a year is led by members of the royal family of erstwhile Travancore. Attukal Pongala, a ten day festival at Attukal Bjugavathy Temple, attracts thousands of female devotees from many parts of the country. Other festivals include Chandanakudam, Nishagandhi Dance and Music, Fest of Christ, and a flower show .

Kollam

Located 71 km to the north of Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam is the centre of the country's cashew trading and processing industry. One of the oldest ports on the Malabar

coast, Kollam was once the port of the international spice trade. Thirty percent of this historic town is covered by the renowned Ashtamudi Lake, making it the gateway to the magnificent backwaters of Kerala. The eight hour boat trip between Kollam and Alappuzka is the longest and most enchanting experience on the backwaters of Kerala. The district also has some interesting historic remnants and a number of temples built in a traditional ornate architectural style.

Thangasseri is a small village of great historic importance with ruins of an old Portuguese fort and churches built in the 18th century. Thirumullavaram Beach, a beautiful secluded picnic area, can easily be reached by bus. Sasthamkotta, an enormous fresh water lake surrounded by hills on three sides, is the largest of its kind in Kerala. Thenmala, covered by dense forests, rubber and tea plantations is ➤



Beach house.

بيت على الشاطئ.

home to India's first eco-tourism project. Selected by the World Tourism organization as one of the world's most eco-friendly projects, Thenmala has a leisure zone that includes winding pathways, a sway bridge and a boardwalk; a cultural zone with an amphitheatre, a musical fountain and an adventure zone. Palaruvi (Stream of Milk) Waterfall makes its way down the rocks, from a height of 300 feet. Palaruvi woods is a beautiful picnic spot with Picnic Village at Ashramam. Along the backwater front is Kollam's main centre for recreational activities: a 200 year old Government guest house, an adventure park, a tourist boat club, a children's traffic park are all housed in this vast tourist complex. Ochira, Kulathupuzkq, Rameshwara Temple and Kottukal Rock are also worth a visit.

Ernakulam

Ernakulam is located on the coast of the Arabian Sea with Kottayam and Alappuzka districts in the north, Idukki in the east and Thrissur in the north. The commercial capital and the most cosmopolitan city of Kerala. Kochi, in Ernakulam, is also known as the Queen of the Arabian Sea. With one of the finest natural harbours in the world, it was once a major center for commerce and trade with the British, Arabs, Chinese, Portuguese and Dutch. A leisurely walk through the city is the best way to discover historic Fort Kochi. An obscure fishing village that became the first European township in India, Kochi has an eventful and colorful history. Its reputation as a seafaring commercial town was such that Nicolas Conti, an Italian traveler of the middle ages remarked: if China is where you make your money, then Kochi surely is the place to spend it. The town was shaped by the Portuguese, the Dutch and later the British. The results of these cultural influences are seen in the many examples of Indo European architecture. In this famous city you can visit Chinese Fishing Nets, Pierce Leslie Bungalow, Old Harbour House, Santa Cruz Basilica, Loafer's Corner, Princess Street, Vasco House, Fort Immanuel, The Cochin Club and many other places. Around Kochi you can visit The Hill Palace Museum, Madhavan Foundation, Kaladi, Kodanad, Chendamangalam, Malayatoor, and Thattekkadu Bird Sanctuary.



The beaches of Kerala.

ساحل كيرلا.



A rare squirrel.

السنجاب.

Waterfalls

The forests of the Western Ghats are punctuated with large and small waterfalls that roar, gurgle and splash down the mountain side. Almost all these scintillating cascades are the venues for picnics and excursions throughout the year.

Palaruvi (stream on milk) 75 km from Kollam town makes its way down the rocks, from a height of 300 feet. The Palaruvi woods are a beautiful picnic spot. The PWD Inspection Bungalow and the KTDC Motel offer comfortable accommodation.

Located at the entrance to the Sholayar ranges, 78 km from Kochi, the 80 foot Athirapally waterfall is a popular picnic spot. Just a short drive from Athirapally, the picturesque Vazhachal spot is adjacent to dense green forest land, a part of Chalakudy river.

The Kerala Experience

Ayurveda : harmony of body, mind and soul Ayurveda evolved around 600BC in India. This system of medicine stresses the prevention of body ailments in addition to curing them. Today it's a unique, indispensable branch of ➤



waterbed

One of 20th century world architecture - 1962 in Copenhagen, Denmark

Visit www.kerala.gov.in



BACHWATERS HILL STATIONS WILDLIFE BEACHES AYURVEDA

medicine – a complete natural healing system that depends on the diagnosis of the body's humours – Vata, Pitta and Kapha- to achieve the right balance.

Ayurveda believes in treating the whole individual, not just the ailment. It is the natural way to refresh yourself, eliminate all toxic imbalances and regain resistance and good health.

Kerala's equable climate, natural abundance of forests (with a wealth of herbs and medicinal plants) and the cool monsoon season (June – November) is best suited to Ayurveda's curative and restorative packages. Today Kerala is the only state in India which practises this system of medicine with absolute dedication.

Traditional texts reveal that the monsoon is the best season for rejuvenation programmes. The atmosphere remains dust-free and cool, opening the pores of the body to the maximum, making it most receptive to herbal oils and therapy.

Cuisine

Kerala has a cuisine as distinctive as its cultural life. Influenced by its long coastline and flavoured by the all-pervasive coconut, it is enriched by exotic fruits, vegetables, and seafood garnished with the distinctive aroma of spices.

According to *Travel and Leisure*, Kerala wakes up to one of the best breakfasts in the world-both in terms of taste and nutritional value: Puttu (made of rice flour and coconut) and Kadala (gram) curry; Idiappam (noodle like rice cakes) and egg / vegetable curry; Appam (soft centred lacy pancakes) and mutton/vegetables stew.

Served on a plantain leaf and eaten with the hand, the Sadya is the traditional feast of Kerala. A three course meal, it includes an amazing variety of up to 40 vegetarian delights: crispy pappadoms (wafers deep fried in coconut oil). A variety of pickles accompany this sumptuous spread which is rounded off with different varieties of Payasams (sweet desserts).

With a long coastline, over 44 rivers, innumerable lagoons and lakes, Kerala has abundant marine wealth. Among the seafood delicacies are prawns, lobsters, crabs, mussels etc all enticingly cooked with exotic



Festivals.

مهرجانات.



Beach house.

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spices. Karimeen or Pearls spot, a backwater fish is the famous delicacy.

The Moplah cuisine of Malabar, influenced by the Arabs, and Syrian Christian cuisine influenced by the Dutch, Portuguese and British are unique in their rich flavour. Extensive use of fish, red chillies and Kudampuli, a souring agent distinguishes Syrian Christian cuisine, with its lightly flavoured aromatic Malabari Biryani, a treat for the taste buds.

Shopping

Kerala is an ideal place to shop. The state is renowned for its handlooms, gold ornaments, spices etc. The handicrafts of Kerala are known for their uniqueness of style, perfection of form and elegance of design.

Making the metal, 6 inch by 4 inch mirror, of an alloy of copper and tin, with an oval shape and a tail-like handle was once a closely guarded secret. It predates the modern mirror.

Richly embellished with a conical lid, this ➤



Water falls.

شلالات.



The boat race.

سباق القوارب.

ethnic jewelery box of Kerala (Nettur Pettii) was once the prized possession of the rich and famous. Made of rosewood, the fully handcrafted casket is a collector's item. The handloom sarees (Kasavu Mundu) of Kerala are known for their elegant simplicity. Soft and light, and laced with gold kasavu, they are treasured items.

Kerala's traditional jewellery items like necklaces, chains, bangles, ear rings etc, are rich in variety and design. Natural motifs like

flowers, leaves, birds etc. used as embellishments set them apart. The high ranges of Kerala are home to endless stretches of spice plantations. The state produces twelve varieties of spices including pepper, cardmom, clove, cinnamon etc.

Meetings, Conventions and Exhibitions

In addition to an excellent network of roads and

three international airports, Kerala offers the best telecom and datacom facilities not to mention world-class conference facilities including the International Convention Centre, Cochin, the largest of its kind in South India. Several high profile corporate events were recently hosted in the state.

You can choose between Backwater Conferencing in Thiruvananthappuran (Poovar island Resort) Kottayam (Coconut Lagoon, Taj Garden Resort, Kumarakom Lake Resort, Windsor Castle & Lake Village) Alappuzka (Punnamada Backwater Resort, Kayaloram Lake Resort), Kochi (Taj Malabar, Le Meridien, Bolgatty Palace, Brunton Boatyard, Hotel Yuvarani Residency, Far Horizon) Thrissur (The River Retreat) and Kozhikode (Kadavu Resorts), or Hill Station Conference facilities in Idukki (Spice Village, Taj Garden Resort, Club Mahindra, Tea Country). Most of hotels & resorts offer board rooms with different seating capacity, projectors, computers, and all conference facilities.

Classical Performing Arts

The tradition of classical arts in Kerala dates back over a thousand years. Koodiyattam, a dance-drama associated with temple rituals is perhaps the oldest of these. This art form was recently selected by UNESCO as one of the masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Kathakali, a popular art form of Kerala, has been referred to as the world's first theatre of imagination due to its elaborate costumes, ornaments and facial make-up.

Kalaripayattu the martial art form of Kerala is regarded at the oldest and most scientific in the world. Training in combat is given at the Kalari (training school). The principles of Kalari education stipulate that training in martial arts begins with an oil massage of the body which goes on until it is agile and supple. Training consists of chattrm (jumping), ottam (running) marichil (somersault) followed by lessons in the use of weapons such as daggers, swords, spears, maces, the bow and arrow etc.

A holiday in Kerala will always be varied and eventful with cultural delights, a unique cuisine, the possibility of holistic therapy, breath taking scenery and magnificent waterfalls. With its conference facilities it is also an ideal venue for combining business with pleasure. ■