



11 Days

# India

## Kerala Spices & Conservation

Kerala, a state in southern India, is famous for its palm-lined beaches, legendary backwaters and rolling hills lined with vibrant green tea and spice plantations. Kerala is a tropical symphony of wildlife, pristine hiking trails, glistening canals, hill stations and ancient temples. This educational journey brings us through cloud forests, nature sanctuaries and hydroelectric dams. We will learn first hand about nature and agriculture in rural Kerala and spend time with indigenous people whilst trekking through the Western Ghats. Let's not forget the cycling, kayaking and river cruises! This is an enchanting journey in a world away from the frenzy of northern India.



# Recommended expedition itinerary

Day  
1-2

## Arrive Kerala

On arrival in Kochi, we will be met by our STC Leader and transferred directly to our hotel. After freshening up, we will set out to visit the heritage city, Fort Cochin and see the world famous Kathakali art. After a welcome briefing, we will enjoy our first dinner in Kochi and a Kathakali Dance performance in the evening.

Day  
3

## Foothills, birds & elephants

After breakfast we transfer to Thattekkad where we will first visit the renowned Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary, named after the late Dr Salim Moizzudin Abdul Ali, India's best known ornithologist. The sanctuary was created to protect the thriving birdlife living in the surrounding mangroves and marshland. Next we will visit an elephant orphanage and Sacred Grove (kaavu) where we will learn more about these incredible giants as well as traditional Hinduism.

Thattekkad is also home to lowland plantations of rubber, pepper and vanilla. This afternoon we will visit some of these plantations and meet with the farmers. Tonight we will stay overnight at Hornbill Camp.

Day  
4

## Kalypso Camp & nature walk

After breakfast we transfer to Suryanelli, a small town near the famous Munnar hill station. This is our gateway into the stunning Western Ghats mountain range, and a rich bio-diversity area. Here we will be surrounded by flocks of birds and rolling hills dotted with tea and cardamom plantations established in the late 19th century.

We will reach Suryanelli by midday and begin our trek, 6km through grassland and pine forest until we reach Kalypso Camp, where we will overnight. This evening we will take a walk with a Naturalist who will teach us about the global environmental issues which are impacting the local economy.

Day  
5

## Rainforest Trek

Today we will trek into the heart of the Western Ghats. Our route passes through high altitude rain forests (sholas), along mountain trails and past spice-growing villages which are home to the Muduvans and Malapulayas indigenous people. This area is a bio-diversity hot spot and home to a variety of wildlife which we will try to spot, including birds, butterflies and monkeys. After a long and adventurous day we return to Kalypso Camp.





Day  
6-7

## Kulamavu Environment Conservation

We will spend the next two days at Kulamavu, an environmental conservation station that is well known for its natural beauty. On arrival we will explore the farms and spice gardens surrounding the resort where we will learn how the spices are picked, harvested, processed and sold. This afternoon we will then visit a local market so we can understand the socio-economic aspects of spice trade in Kerala.

On day 7 we will go on a nature walk with a Naturalist, during which we will learn about this endemic mountain ecosystem. This afternoon we will also visit the Idukki Dam, Asia's first and largest arch dam, which is part of the Idukki Hydro Electric Project. Tonight we can walk to a viewpoint to watch the spectacular sunset over the mountains. During our stay we will overnight at the resort.

Day  
9-10

## Alleppey, Cycles, Kayaks & Cruise

We wave farewell to the friends we have made and transfer to Alleppey. Alleppey (or Alappuzha) is best known for houseboat cruises along the rustic Kerala backwaters, a network of tranquil canals and lagoons. Having checked in to our hotel we will freshen up and head out for a cycling tour of the local area.

This morning we will explore these legendary backwaters and beaches by kayak. After lunch we can relax and explore the local markets. Tonight we will step aboard our private houseboat for an unforgettable dinner whilst watching the sunset.

Day  
11

## Fly to London

After an exhilarating trip, we take our return flight to the UK.

# Further information

## Look what's included!

- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local expedition leader
- Parent and student expedition launch evening
- Comprehensive pre-expedition training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff
- ATOL financial protection

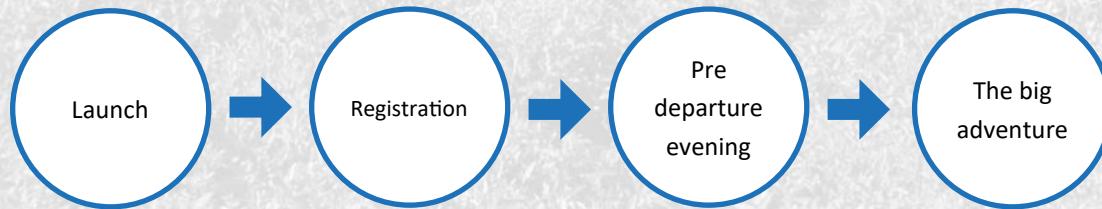
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

## What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations

- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance

## Your educational journey timeline



## Physical expedition rating:



Some low level physical activities included in your trip, including walking on uneven terrain, maybe a morning/afternoon trek of two to four hours. That said, no physical preparation is required to make the most of the tour. High humidity and temperatures can occur at certain times of the year.

## Culture shock rating:



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



# A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey

## 1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

## 2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

## 3 Arrange an expedition launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening with opportunity for questions.



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