



## Trip Highlights

- Spectacular ride to Munnar
- Scenic route through spice plantations & tea gardens
- A day at Periyar Tiger Reserve
- Backwater Experience



## At a Glance

Historical places, dense forested roads, spice gardens, isolated hamlets, manicured tea gardens, the rubber estates of Central Kerala and the magical waterways of the backwaters – these are some special treats that await you as you cycle through the heartland of Kerala

## Distance Chart – Cycling

Day 1	Arrive	-
Day 2		60 Kms
Day 3		50 Kms
Day 4		40 Kms
Day 5	Free Day	-
Day 6		30 Kms
Day 7		90 Kms
Day 8	Free Day	-
Day 9		70 Kms
Day 10	Free Day	-
Day 11		45 Kms
Day 12		20 Kms
Day 13	Free Day	-
Day 14	Depart	-

## Detailed Itinerary

### Day 1: Kochi

On arrival you will check into a heritage hotel at Fort Cochin. After lunch, rest of the afternoon and evening can be used to discover this amazing city of Kochi. Kochi (Cochin as it was known in colonial times) is a major port on the west coast of India, set on a cluster of islands surrounded by sparkling blue lagoons and backwaters. Its historic links can be seen in the Colonial Bungalows, an old Synagogue, Chinese fishing nets, the oldest European Church in India and a medieval Portuguese Palace.

**Overnight accommodation at a hotel (B)**

### Day 2 – Thattekkad

After breakfast we start off on our cycles making the most of the early morning coolness heading towards the foothills of the Western Ghats towards the lowland forests of Thattekkad. We will start a little off the city limits enabling us to avoid the morning city traffic and reach a quiet countryside where the roads are mostly level. We pass through a scenic countryside of temples, spice gardens, paddy fields and rubber plantations. After a leisurely lunch en-route, we will reach the spectacular eco-lodge on the banks of the river Periyar.

**Overnight accommodation at a Eco Lodge (B, L, D)**

### Day 3: Adimali

Today's ride passes through the narrow winding country roads along the banks of the Periyar & through dense low altitude forests of Neriya Mangalam. This is an excellent opportunity to see the numerous rubber estates, pepper plantations, cardamom estates and finally tea plantations – all this as the altitude goes up gradually to 1200 m. Our stay will be at a beautiful farmhouse on a cliff with a breathtaking view of the Western Ghats.

**Overnight accommodation at a hotel (B, L, D)**

### Day 4, 5 – Munnar

We will make our way to Munnar (the hill country) after breakfast. Once a favourite summer resort town of the

British, the hill town of Munnar is set amidst dramatic mountain scenery: Craggy peaks, tall red wood trees, and some of the world's highest tea plantations. Our ride passes through high altitude forests, manicured tea gardens, cardamom plantations and winding roads as we make it to a family owned resort within a cardamom forest. Munnar is famed for its trekking routes and a refreshing trek is on offer or we can go on a cycling trip through the wonderfully laid tea gardens in absolute serenity through the quiet country roads.

**Overnight accommodation at a hotel (B, L, D)**

### Day 6 – Suryanelli

We will take a ride through the Grahamsland Tea Estate and the daunting mountain pass at the "Lockhart Gap", a testimony to the perseverance of the early planters. We will arrive at the Anaerangal Camp, Suryanelli, where we will stay in Luxury Cottage Tents, with ensuite bath.

**Overnight accommodation at a Eco Lodge (B, L, D)**

### Day 7, 8 – Periyar

Today is a day of CHALLENGE as we continue our biking around the Anaerangal lake (literally meaning the 'Lake where the elephants come down') and dense tropical forests to our next destination - the world famous Periyar Tiger Reserve. Periyar is one of the best managed wildlife reserves in India and has large herds of Asiatic elephants, Indian bisons as well as tigers. We see a little of the tribal population and their lifestyles before we retire for a good night's sleep. On the second day, we have time to go boating to spot wildlife, trekking into the forest, and visit the spice plantations.

**Overnight accommodation at a hotel (B)**

### Day 9, 10: Thodupuzha

We will take the roads down to the foothills to a home stay tucked away in the deep interiors of Kerala, set on the banks of the Kannadipuzha River. Here we can take a walk around the spice garden with nutmeg, cinnamon and pepper vines. We will also go around the herbal

# Plains, Hills & Backwaters

14 Days

## Cycling Holiday

gardens, visit the rubber plantations, walk through the forests across the river and visit the local village. The 'Thomas Falls' is a few miles upstream and makes an ideal spot to take a picnic basket.

**Overnight accommodation at a home stay (B, L, D)**

### Day 11: Kumarakom

We cycle through the rubber country of Palai to Kumarakom, the gateway to the backwaters. We will embark on one of Kerala's most luxurious forms of accommodation – the rice boat. Reclining on cushions and drifting through quiet canals, we pass through paddy fields grazed by ducks, floating markets, local toddy shops, temples and churches.

**Overnight accommodation at a hotel (B, L, D)**

### Day 12 & 13 – Alleppey

We will disembark and make our way to a heritage villa along the backwaters. We will cycle through the backwater villages to see close at hand the life of the people living along the backwaters. Upon arrival, its time to relax and chill out - reading in the hammock, dangling your toes in the water, getting an Ayurvedic massage and trying out the local tea shop. You can also visit the fruit and vegetable market, the ancient temple or the local pottery factory. A more adventurous choice would be to go cycling through the necklace of villages of Kuttanadu, go walking through the countryside or learn to cook in the family kitchens.

**Overnight accommodation at a heritage villa (B, L, D)**

**Day 14 – Say your goodbyes & depart. Tour ends**

### Inclusions

- Cycles
- Guide
- Accompanying vehicle
- Refreshments & mineral water while cycling
- Accommodation and most meals



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## Bikes: Trek/ Cannondale/ Merida

**Bike Hire:** Free. You may bring your own bikes, but in this case let us know in advance.

## Bike Specifications

Bike type: Trek/ Cannondale/ Merida

Number of gears: 21-24

Brakes: V-Brakes

Suspension: Front

Pedals: Standard

frame range: 13.5" - 19.5"

Bike bag provided: No

Water bottle holder provided: Yes

Water bottle provided: No

Adjustable handlebars: No

Female saddles provided: No

Gel saddles provided: No

Option to fit own saddle: Yes

Option to fit own pedal: Yes

Bar ends: No

## Things to carry on a Cycling Trip

- Casual Shirts / T-shirts
- Shorts
- Sunglass
- Sunscreen lotion (SPF minimum 35)
- Gloves
- Camera (optional)
- Warm clothes
- Waterproof jacket (during Monsoons)

## General Info

### Visas

**Visitors to India must obtain a Visa before departure.**

For details and an application form please contact the local Indian Embassy or High Commission.

### Airport taxes

There are no airport taxes if you depart from Kochi International Airport. However, in some airports departure taxes are applicable - please check with your ticketing agent for more details.

### Currency Exchange

You can exchange your money at most major towns. ATMs are found in most towns. Credit cards are accepted only at major cities en-route during this tour.

### Telephone and Internet Access

You would have access to telephone and internet at most of the hotels. In case there are no internet access at the hotel, you would be able access it in the nearest town.

### Climate

The weather in South India is tropical - warm, humid and often wet. During the main monsoon, (July to October) there is heavy rain.

### Safety

You would be accompanied by a guide throughout the trip. The guides are experienced, trained in First Aid and fully qualified for the purpose of the tour. They would handle all concerns with regards to your safety and well being.

### Insurance

We recommended that you take your insurance that covers illnesses and accidents abroad.