



Trip Highlights

- River & Backwater Kayaking
- Trekking to Second Highest peak in South India
- Cycling through Rainforest at Thattekkad
- Camping at 8000 feet



At a Glance

This biking and hiking journey through some of the scenically diverse regions, the highest mountains in South India - through tea gardens at Munnar, the wilderness at Periyar, before reaching the legendary backwaters for Kayaking in this land of the 'Green Magic'.

Distance Chart – Cycling

Day 1	Arrive	-
Day 2		60 Kms
Day 3	Kayaking	-
Day 4		55 Kms
Day 5	Trekking	-
Day 6	Trekking	-
Day 7		80 Kms
Day 8	Bamboo Rafting	-
Day 9		90 Kms
Day 10	Free Day	-
Day 11	Kayaking	-
Day 12	Kayaking	-
Day 13	Free Day	-
Day 14	Free Day	-
Day 15	Depart	-

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival at Kochi

On arrival, you would be received at the Airport and transferred to a hotel in Fort Kochi. After lunch, the rest of the afternoon could be spent discovering the beautiful hamlet of Fort Kochi. It's 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. We will discover a little more of the rich cultural history of this place during our visits to museums and temples that dot the city and surrounding areas. In the evening we can enjoy a delightful bouquet of traditional Kerala dances like Kathakali and Mohiniattam.

Day 2: Cycle to Thattekkad

After breakfast we start off on our cycles, heading towards the foothills of the Western Ghats towards the lowland forests of Thattekkad. We pass through scenic countryside with temples, spice gardens, paddy fields and rubber plantations. After a leisurely lunch we reach the River Periyar, the longest river in Kerala, which has been a part of many ancient epics. Our stay will be at the secluded Hornbill Camp - a birder's paradise on the riverside. You will be able to enjoy the gentle Periyar and the exquisite sounds of the forest - the perfect ending to a day of cycling. (Camp: Cottage tents with comfortable beds and en-suite bath/ toilet)

Day 3: Kayaking and exploring Thattekkad

Today we kayak to the Thattekkad sanctuary and explore the forests and the spice gardens which are abundant here. For those interested in birding, Thattekkad is the best birding region in South India. There is also the option of cycling through the forests to Edamalayar, rubber plantation visits and village walks. Optional activities: Birding with guide, visit to elephant rescue centre and lowland rain forest walk.

Day 4: Elephants and Tea

After breakfast, we set off cycling along the Periyar riverbank and through dense low altitude forests of

Neriyamanagalam where reed is extracted for manufacture of traditional household items like baskets and mats. As the scenery slowly changes we glimpse rubber estates, pepper estates, cardamom estates and finally tea plantations. We will stop at Adimali for lunch and make the rest of the way in the accompanying vehicle to the hills of Munnar - a hill town famed for its vast swathes of tea plantations. Munnar, once a favourite summer resort town of the British, is set amidst dramatic mountain scenery, craggy peaks, tall redwood trees, and some of the world's highest tea plantations.

Day 5: Trekking in the Silent Valley

Our journey will take us into the Silent Valley. The trek from an altitude of 1500 m gradually goes to over 2600m, passing through sholas (high altitude rain forests) and grasslands which are typical to the higher areas of the Western Ghats. Guides and porters will accompany. The area also has wildlife - notably elephants, sambar, sloth bear and the Nilgiri Tahr - the latter being endemic and endangered.

The camp is set up at an altitude of approximately 2200m.

Day 6: Trek to Suryanelli

Early start as we head along paths over the undulating mountain grasslands and ascend Meesapulimala - the second highest peak in the Western Ghats. The trek passes through sholas, grasslands and mountain streams which criss-cross the area. When we reach the top, we stop for a rest and enjoy the panoramic views. We can see the world's highest tea estate Kolukkumalai in the undulating hills below. This is a great opportunity to trek off the tourist trail as the paths here are uncharted for the most part and few make the effort to as this area is off most tourist trails. Descend and continue trekking through grasslands and high altitude rainforest to the Anaerangal Camp at Suryanelli.

Bike, Hike and Kayak

15 Days

Multi Activity Holiday

Day 7: Lakes, Spice Gardens and Amazing Wildlife

We resume our cycling around the Anaerangal Lake ('Lake where the elephants come down') and along wonderful mountain roads to reach Nedungandom by lunchtime. Most of the way we pass through thick forests, cardamom estates and spice gardens that have made these Cardamom Hills world famous. In the afternoon we continue to our destination – Periyar and check into an eco lodge. Here we can relax or explore the jungle. Periyar is one of the best wildlife reserves in India and has large herds of Asiatic elephants, Indian Bison as well as Tigers. For ornithologists it has over 330 species of birds including the majestic Great Hornbill. Here is a chance to meet some of the local people and see their fascinating lifestyles before we eat and retire for a good nights sleep.

Day 8: Bamboo Rafting or trekking with local community members and indigenous people as guides.

Mannans are among the oldest indigenous group of people to inhabit the Periyar Tiger Reserve. As late as the 1940's, they lived in the remotest areas of the tiger reserve eking out a simple living by fishing in the lake and cultivating a few crops. Today they are the main conservators of the forest; enjoy your walk and talk with them as you discover the endemic flora and fauna of the region. We have a choice of activities organized by these tribal's – Bamboo Rafting or a full day forest trek.

Day 9: Spectacular Biking to the plains

Our destination today is Dewalokam - an exceptionally beautiful farm on the banks of Kannadipuzha in the lower ranges of the Western Ghats. Here we can take a walk around the spice garden with nutmeg, cinnamon and pepper vines. We will also go around the herbal gardens, visit the rubber plantations, walk through the forests across the river and visit the local village.

Day 10: Aboard the Rice Boat

We start our cruise on the world-renowned rice boats – a luxurious way to see the backwaters and the life by the backwater countryside villages. We will explore the

backwater villages, cruise past ancient temples, paddy fields, lagoons and lakes.

Overnight stay on rice boat. (Air-conditioned rice boat with en-suite bath & toilet, a/c from 10 PM to 6AM)

Day 11: Kayaking through the backwaters

We will commence our kayaking from near the coastal town of Alleppey & paddle through the famed backwaters – exploring the lagoons and the lakes. The vast expanse of water, the friendly people, and their life styles from up close is bound to mesmerize you. We will settle into the Akkarakalam backwater Villa – a small cozy family owned resort in the midst of the backwaters!

Day 12: Explore the Backwater Villages

We will continue paddling through the narrow canals of Pulinkunnu to island of Kavalam – an erstwhile headquarters of affluent agrarian families. The majestic homes stand as testimony to their past grandeur. After a brief stopover for lunch at an enchanting coconut grove on a 'bund' by the lakeshore, we will continue our kayaking and return to the heritage villa by evening.

Day 13, 14: Wonderful beaches and relax by the pool

We will drive towards the fabulous Marari beach and check into a beach villa or hotel – a perfect place to relax after the 2 week adventure in Kerala.

Day 15: Depart

Drop off to the airport. End of tour.

Inclusions

- Cycles
- Guide
- Accompanying vehicle
- Refreshments & mineral water during activities
- Accommodation and most meals

Bikes: Trek/ Giant/ Merida

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

Other equipment provided: Pedals, bar ends, helmets - however it is recommended that you bring your own helmets and camelbaks.

Bike Specifications

Bike type: Trek/ Giant/ Merida

Number of gears: 21-24

Brakes: V-Brakes

Suspension: Front

Pedals: Standard

frame range: 13.5" - 19.5"

Bike bag provided: Yes

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: Yes (on request)

Kayaks: Prijon Capri I & II (Single & Tandem)

Kayaking Gear: Paddles and life jackets will be provided

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.