

Jewels of Southern India



Discover India's tropical South on this 13-day highlights tour. Explore Karnataka's rich culture and spectacular wildlife as you travel between Bangalore, the southern capital, and Mysore, the city of Palaces. Revel in the serenity of Nagarahole National Park, southern India's premier tiger park, and enjoy a relaxed stay in Ooty, a former British hill station known for its delicious tea and gentle climate. Your tour ends in the port town of Cochin, after a leisurely overnight cruise in the backwaters of Kerala and a few days spent relaxing on the beach.

Day 1: Arrive Bangalore

You will be met on arrival in Bangalore and transferred by private vehicle to the ITC Windsor Sheraton & Towers for 2 nights (Executive Club Room, B&B basis).



ITC Windsor Sheraton & Towers

The ITC Windsor is a former stately manor that has been converted into a luxury hotel. Built during the era of the Raj, it has a distinctly Georgian aesthetic, with ornate colonnades and balustrades, fluted pillars, magnificent chandeliers and Queen Anne furniture creating an ambience of luxury and old world charm.

The ITC's 240 guest rooms and suites are beautifully-furnished and equipped with all the expected modern amenities.

The ITC enjoys a convenient downtown location, within easy walking distance of Vidhana Soudha and central Bangalore's best restaurants.

Your Financial Protection

All monies paid by you for the air holiday package shown [or flights if appropriate] are ATOL protected by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 3145.

For more information see our booking terms and conditions.

Day 2: Bangalore

Enjoy a half day guided tour of Bangalore, taking in the major sights, including Gavi Gangadhareshwara Temple and Bangalore Palace.

India's southern capital, Bangalore has been transformed in the 60+ years since India gained independence from a sleepy "Garden city" to one of the country's largest and most progressive metropolises. But it hasn't lost its old-world charm or heritage in the process. Bangalore, or Bengaluru as it recently became, remains one of India's most pleasant cities to visit, with a gentle climate, beautiful gardens and lakes, and a rich and vibrant history taking in the British-era Raj and the Karnataka.

Your tour of Bangalore will allow you to explore the architecturally rich heritage of Karnataka, whose forts and palaces, temples, gardens and ancient courts attract visitors from around the world. You can also find time for some shopping – Bangalore's specialties include silk, coffee, and jewellery.



Day 3: Bangalore – Mysore

Depart Bangalore this morning and drive to Mysore, a journey of approx. 3 hours. En-route you might like to stop at Srirangapatna, former capital of the 18th-century ruler, Tippu Sultan. There's a spectacular temple here, Ranganathaswamy Temple, which is widely considered one of the most impressive religious monuments in southern India.

On arrival in Mysore, check into the Royal Orchid Metropole for 1 night in a heritage room, inc. breakfast.



Royal Orchid Metropole

This classic heritage hotel enjoys a convenient location in the very heart of Mysore, close to the Sri Jayachamarajendra Gallery and the famous Mysore Temple.

Built by the former Maharaja of Mysore in the 1920s, the Royal Orchid is steeped in the history and culture of the region. Its 30 guest rooms are decorated in period style but feature all the expected modern amenities, including high-speed WiFi, satellite TV, and tea/coffee maker. Facilities include a swimming pool, 24 hour fitness centre, and an open-air barbecue restaurant.

In the afternoon, enjoy a guided sightseeing tour of Mysore taking in the famous Palace, Chamundi Hill and the Devraja fruit and vegetable market.

Sometimes referred to as the city of palaces, Mysore served as the royal seat of the Wodiyar dynasty from the 15th-century to the independence of India in 1947. The Wodiyars were generally

benign monarchs and patrons of the arts who left behind them a rich heritage in the form of numerous private palaces and public buildings, which continue to define the character of Mysore to this day.



The most magnificent of these constructs is the Mysore Palace. Beautifully lit up at night, photos of its illuminated outline against a night sky have become the favourite postcard shot of Mysore.

Day 4: Mysore – Nagarahole

Depart Mysore this morning and travel by road to Nagarahole, a journey of approx. 2 hours. On arrival, check into Kabini River Lodge for 2 nights in a cottage (full board with game drives).

Kabini River Lodge

This former hunting lodge nestles in the southern fringes of Nagarahole National Park, on the banks of the Kabini River. One of India's top wildlife lodges, it's a wonderful getaway for nature lovers, providing easy access to the park's interior. Accommodation is in cosy cottages with full en-suite facilities. There's a lovely communal gazebo where guests can meet to discuss the day's wildlife sightings and enjoy a drink together. Meals are served in the lodge's original dining room.

After lunch at the lodge, depart on an afternoon game safari in Nagarahole National Park. The safaris take place in 4x4 vehicles and offer the prospect of seeing a huge array of wildlife, with elephant, barking deer, leopard and tiger all present in the park.



Return to the lodge early evening in time for dinner.



Day 5: Nagarahole

Get a different perspective on Nagarahole National Park this morning on an early morning boat safari taking place on the Kabini River. Return to the lodge in time for breakfast.

In the afternoon, join another 4x4 game safari into Nagarahole National Park.

Day 6: Nagarahole – Ooty

Depart after breakfast for Ooty, a drive of approx. six hours. On arrival in Ooty, check into the Taj Savoy Hotel for 2 nights (standard room, B&B basis).

Taj Savoy Hotel

The Taj Savoy sprawls over six acres of landscaped gardens in the old colonial hill town of Ooty. Perched on a high hill in the centre of town, it's a quiet retreat in an isolated setting. Guests sleep in individual cottages, scattered around the English gardens.

Constructed in the early 19th century, the Taj Savoy's rooms have been refurbished to modern standards, but still maintain many of their original features. All offer lots of space, with most containing a fireplace and cosy lounge area.



Ooty, also known as Udhagamandalam, is the sleepy capital of the Blue Mountains, or Nilgiris. During the British Raj, this quiet hill station was a popular summer and weekend getaway for the British resident in India, thanks to its cool climate and beautiful setting.

The most striking feature of Ooty is its scenery. Misty mountains loom over deep, forested valleys, creating a stunning picture. City attractions include the Ooty Botanical Gardens, which occupy a 50 acre plot on the slopes of Doddabetta, the highest peak in the Nilgiris.

Also of note is the tea factory and museum, showcasing the local tea production, for which the region is famous.

Day 7: Ooty to Coonoor

Depart Ooty after breakfast and travel by “toy train” to neighbouring town Coonoor. The toy train is a well-known attraction, a mountain train route on ratchet and pinion tracks which winds its way over high passes and past deep ravines, gurgling streams and tea plantations before terminating in Coonoor.



Like Ooty, Coonoor is a quiet colonial hill station set amid beautiful scenery. After lunch and a leisurely afternoon in Coonoor, meet with your driver and return to Ooty.

The rest of the evening is at leisure.

Day 8: Ooty - Coimbatore

Depart Ooty after breakfast and travel to Coimbatore by road, a journey of approx. 3 hours. On arrival at Coimbatore Railway Station, board the train bound for Cochin (1st Class Carriage).

The train departs just after 1pm and arrives at Cochin at 5pm. You will be met on arrival in Cochin and transferred to Brunton Boatyard for one night in a sea facing room (B&B basis).

Brunton Boatyard

Situated on Cochin's lively harbourfront, the Brunton Boatyard Hotel is a tribute to another age. Converted from a Victorian shipbuilding yard, it's a unique piece of 19th-century history in a city not lacking in historical attractions, and manages to blend in perfectly with the old colonial-era trading houses and port buildings that surround it.

The Boatyard's interiors are an eclectic blend of English, Portuguese and Dutch influences, with high ceilings, hanging fans, and everywhere artefacts and curios from the great age of steam and sail. All of the 22 rooms overlook the sea – both from the bedrooms and en-suite bathrooms. The cuisine is an equally eclectic melange, drawing on the melting pot of cultures that has helped shape the character of Cochin. Meals are served in the dining room overlooking the harbour.



Day 9: Cochin

After breakfast set off on a morning tour of Old Cochin and the Chinese fishing nets.

The gateway to Kerala, Cochin (or Kochi) is a vibrant city. Subject to a succession of colonial rulers over the years, Cochin bears the influences of its Arab, Chinese, Portuguese, British and Dutch former masters, all of whom have left their own mark on the history and development of the bustling city. Today, however, Cochin is a major port in a thriving and fiercely independent India.



Cochin's core attractions are its beautiful synagogue, built in 1568 and famous for its giant Old Testament scrolls; the Dutch Palace, with its fine mural paintings, constructed by the Portuguese but heavily adapted by the Dutch before being presented to the Raja of Kochi in the 17th century; and St Francis Church, the oldest European church in India, and burial ground of Vasco de Gama.

Perhaps Cochin's most photographed attraction, however, are the Chinese fishing nets at Fort Cochin. Arranged on the shore in neat line formation, these unique fishing nets are supported by large bamboo and teak poles and operated by a stone counterweight. They are still used to this day to haul in fish. Most days, you can watch the fishermen at work. Come in the evening, however, and you can get a wonderful view of the nets in silhouette against the setting sun.

Depart Cochin this afternoon and drive to Alleppey, a journey of two hours. In Alleppey, board the Spice Routes Houseboat and embark on an overnight cruise around the backwaters of Kerala (full board).



Your journey on the Kerala backwaters will allow you to relive the experiences of a past era when large barges laden with goods and spices plied through the intricate canals of Alleppey. Today, the old trading routes of Kerala have mostly been replaced by more convenient road and air routes, but the boats continue to operate, albeit now as luxury houseboats offering pleasure cruises!

Spice Routes Cardamom

Spice Routes Cardamom is one of Kerala's top-end luxury houseboats. It features just two spacious rooms – Njallany and Alleppey Green Bold – each of them beautifully furnished. The rooms are air-conditioned and feature en-suite bathrooms and wide windows to make the most of the view.



Day 10: Alleppey - Mararikulam

After breakfast on board disembark the Cardamom at Alleppey and drive 45 mins to the coastal village of Mararikulam. On arrival, check into the Beach Symphony Resort for 3 nights in a Beach Cottage (B&B basis).

Beach Symphony

Beach Symphony is a wonderfully intimate retreat set on a beautiful stretch of beach just outside Mararikulam. The lodge offers just four cottages, each with a unique design, but all furnished to the same high standards. Air-conditioned lounges and private verandahs with hammocks invite you to kick back and relax. The beach comes right up to your verandah at Beach Symphony, and the sea is only a few steps away.



Days 11 & 12: Mararikulam

At leisure to enjoy the beach and coast.

Day 13: Mararikulam - Cochin

At leisure until your departure to Cochin Airport for your onward transfer/connecting flight home.

Price Guide:

From **£1,985 per person**, based on twin/double accommodation and subject to availability at the time of booking. For more information, or if you would like to enquire about a tailor-made holiday combining part or all of the above itinerary, please [contact us](#).

Includes:

- Accommodation and meals as described
- All transfers, sightseeing and excursions as per the itinerary
- Private vehicle transfers
- Qualified English-speaking guides
- Entrance fees
- All currently applicable taxes

Excludes:

- International flights
- Meals not specified
- Camera fee wherever levied
- Personal expenses
- Tips and gratuities
- Travel insurance – ask us for a quote

