



# Kerala Backwaters and Beach

## Kerala Backwater and Beach Private Tour 9 days

Take a relaxed journey through tropical Kerala, cruising on the backwaters and relaxing on the Malabar Coast.

### Inclusive price includes:

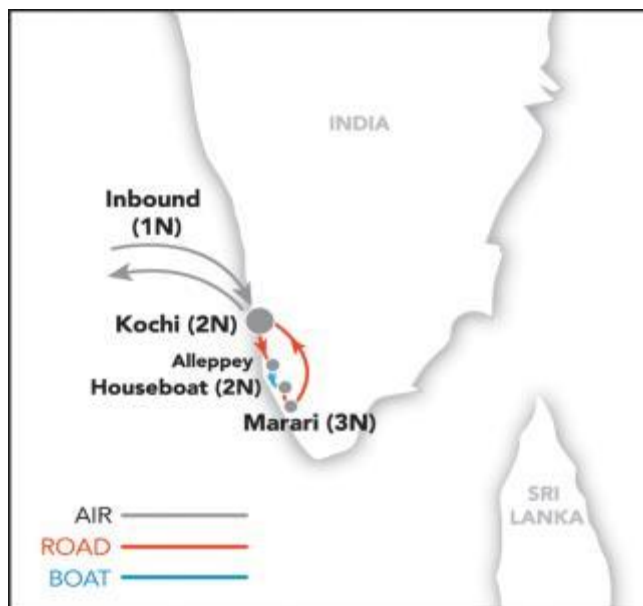
- International flights and current taxes
- Domestic transportation
- Accommodation
- Meals as stated, excluding drinks
- Touring with guides and entrance fees,
- Visa fees for UK passport holders

## Your Tour Dossier

This document is designed to be read in conjunction with the other pre-departure information provided by Wendy Wu Tours including the tour itinerary as described in our brochure and/or website. It aims to provide a straightforward description of the physical activities involved in sightseeing or travelling during the tour.

If there are any particular challenges, from the length of time spent on your feet, the length of drives and flights, to the standard of remote accommodation; they will be explained here.

All passengers must read this document to ensure the itinerary is suitable for their interests and physical capabilities. This is not your final itinerary and therefore does not mention all the sites visited.



## Welcome to Wendy Wu Tours

India continues to amaze, fascinate and thrill our passengers, many of whom have travelled to one country in Asia with us, then another, year after year. We urge you to keep in mind all the rewards, as well as challenges of travelling in a country with a history, culture and attitude so unlike your own.

A typical day's sightseeing may include the bustle and noise of a city street, sights and smells of a local market and interacting with the locals. Travelling in India requires patience as potential delays are to be expected due to standards of service. There is a low level of English spoken throughout India, so your local guides will be indispensable during your trip.

Almost everything will be different to what you may be used to. We have found that our passengers who embark with a sense of humour and adventure, who accept that things do not always go to plan, are those who find their experience most rewarding. It is essential that all passengers recognize the demands of factors such as basic facilities and cultural differences they may encounter in some areas.

## Kerala Backwaters and Beach Private Tour – Comfortable Paced Tour

Our private tours are accessible to everyone. This tour will involve sightseeing on foot and some climbing of stairs.

This tour is not strenuous, and can be taken at a pace which suits the abilities of passengers travelling in your party. If any member of your party has mobility difficulties, please advise Wendy Wu Tours, so that our operators can be made aware, and may rearrange the itinerary to suit your needs. If at any point during the tour you feel you are being rushed, or not moving fast enough, please let your local guide know, so that they may adjust the touring accordingly and provide you with the best experience possible. Similarly, as you are travelling on a private basis, if you would like to change the touring, dates, timings, please speak to your reservations consultant, prior to travelling, or speak to your local guide whilst in India.

*NB: Please note that times and distances listed in the tour dossier are approximate.*

### Days 1-2: UK/Kochi

On Day 2, you will be met at Cochin International airport in the arrivals hall by your Local Guide from Wendy Wu Tours. Be transferred to your hotel and check-in. Transfer is 1 hour and 15 minutes approx.

*No Meals Included*

### Day 3: Journey to Alleppey

Travel to Alleppey (approx. 2 hours) home of the backwaters. Board your traditional houseboat by 12 noon and begin your journey through India's iconic maze of tropical canals.

The House boats are the modern version of the old rice barges which were used to transport merchandise and goods through the waterways of Kerala in the bygone era. The present house boats are much bigger and mechanised with bedroom, attached bath, sundeck, kitchenette etc. The crew comprises of a Captain, helper and a cook who will cater to your requirements.

*Breakfast and Dinner*

### Days 4: Backwater Cruising

Spend the day on board your houseboat, cruising through untouched lagoons and lakes

The house boat will cruise through the tranquil backwaters, wider and narrow canals passing by lush green paddy fields, villages, temples, churches, rustic houses etc. giving you an opportunity to view the life on the backwaters – it beats at

its own gentle rhythm. You will step into a different world altogether – this will surely be the highlight of the tour. The Boat will anchor at a calm bay during Sunset.

*Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner*

### Days 5: Travel to Mararikulam

Disembark your houseboat and drive to Marari Beach (approx. 40 minutes), located on the tropical Malabar Coast.

*Breakfast*

### Day 6-7: Relax in Mararikulam

Take the next 2 days at your leisure.

*Breakfast*

### Day 8: Drive to Kochi

Depart for Kochi (1 hour 30 minutes transfer), where the rest of the day is at leisure.

*Breakfast*

### Day 9: Fly Kochi to UK

Fly to the UK arriving home later the same or following day.

*Breakfast*

Book now on **0844 499 3899** visit [www.wendywutours.co.uk](http://www.wendywutours.co.uk) or see your preferred travel agent.

### Land Only

If you are travelling on a land only basis, then you will need to make your own way to the starting hotel in Kochi on Day 2. On Day 9, you will checkout from your Kochi hotel, and continue as per your own arrangements.

Please refer to the Wendy Wu Tours brochure and/or website for details on departure dates, prices, itineraries, inclusions and tour extensions available as well as full booking conditions.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Before You Leave

**Itinerary Changes** - The order of events and sightseeing may vary according to local conditions or for operational purposes. For this reason, we have indicated approximate times only. Your Local Guide will inform you of any schedule changes as they are informed of them. Roads in India have generally been improved over recent years, but some road construction and/or weather conditions may still lengthen the driving times.

**Visas** - A visa is required for entry into India. A standard visa processing service is included in your tour cost. You will need to complete the visa application form online at: <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/>. Once completed you will need to print the completed form, and send it to our office along with your passport and 2 photos per person. The photos should be 2 x 2 in size taken within the last 6 months, in order for our office to process your visa with the embassy. We will require all this information 8 weeks prior to departure. As per our standard visa processing service, we will have your passport for at least 4 weeks. Any passports and visa applications that require an express service, or that are received in our office less than 6 weeks prior to departure will incur a £50 per passport express fee. Your passport must be valid for 6 months from your date of return from India, and should have at least 2 blank pages for your Indian visa.

In rare cases, you may be required to provide further information or documentation to the Indian embassy and/or be required to attend an interview at the embassy. If this is the case we will notify you as soon as we are advised.

**Vaccinations and Your Health** - We recommend that you contact either your local GP or a travel doctor for advice on vaccinations and travel health. [www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk](http://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk) is a comprehensive website that you may also find useful.

**Climate** - Please refer to the travel guides on our website for detailed temperature charts.

**Insurance** - It is a condition of booking with us that you take out suitable travel insurance. You must provide us with the name of your insurer, policy number and their 24 hour emergency contact number when you book with us or as soon as possible thereafter. Wendy Wu Tours will not be liable for any costs incurred by you due to your failure to take out suitable travel insurance from the date of booking.

### What to Expect on Tour

**Development** - Although India is developing, it still lacks international standards of civil infrastructure and therefore tourist facilities. For example, you may see a hole in the road without a warning sign or safety barricade; concepts of personal responsibility are different to those in the UK. Consequently, tourist and public facilities may not uphold the same safety standards as in the UK. However, all of our suppliers meet local safety standards as a minimum. We want you to have an enjoyable holiday so we ask that you take extra care, use your common sense as well as refer to notices and follow advice from your Local Guide.

**Accommodation** - Your accommodation is selected for convenience of location, comfort or character, and can range from a business hotel in one city to a family run guesthouse in a smaller town. In more remote areas, accommodation may be of a lower standard and may not have all western amenities. Hotels are generally rated as local three to four star standard, but please note that there is no international classification system for hotels and differences in facilities and quality do exist between the UK and India. Rest assured that all hotels used by Wendy Wu Tours are regularly inspected by our staff and our partners to ensure that standards meet your needs.

Four and five star hotels are also available on private tours. If you would like to upgrade, please speak to one of our reservation consultants.

**Meals** - Some meals are included in our private tours, please see inclusions above. If you would like to travel on a fully inclusive meal basis please speak to Wendy Wu Tours, to arrange this prior to travel. Included meals are designed so that you can experience the local dishes, their individual flavours as well as the different ways they are prepared and cooked

throughout India. For meals not included, local guides will be happy to assist with recommendations on where and what to eat in order to fully appreciate this vastly different cuisine.

**Tipping** - As with most countries, tipping is a way of life in India. For private tours we recommend an amount of US \$5-10 per person per day for tipping to be distributed amongst drivers, restaurants, guides etc. This amount is at your own discretion.

**Optional Extras** - Prior to departure you may wish to add on some extra touring or evening shows to your itinerary, as you are travelling on a private basis, which means you have flexibility and choice. Please speak to one of our reservation consultants to discuss the optional extras available. Whilst on tour, your local guide may offer you some extra touring or unique experiences. The cost can range in price, so please allow extra money if you feel you may participate in any extra activities.

**Personal Expenses**- You will need to take some extra money to cover drinks, laundry and souvenirs, plus any additional sightseeing that may be offered to you. Based on the advice of previous customers an approximate amount of £150 per week should be sufficient; however for those that can't resist a bargain, consider allocating a higher amount.

### **After your Booking**

Once you have booked with Wendy Wu Tours, you will receive a confirmation invoice followed by deposit documentation, which includes a visa application form with help sheet. Your final documentation pack will be sent to you approx. 2-3 weeks prior to departure, and will include a travel wallet, badge, lanyard, feedback form, travel guide, along with your final itinerary and international e-tickets.

Last Updated November 2014