



Trip Dossier- 2011-12

# Along the Spice Trails

(KC 01)

This is a cycling holiday to explore the green magic of the Keralan countryside, besides quiet roads, spectacular sceneries and friendly people. As you cycle through the backcountry roads around the spice growing villages, magnificent forests and the magical backwaters, Kerala will mesmerize you. You will be cycling away from the crowded towns and cities and going through the very heart of Kerala - its wonderful villages and people who will greet you with warmth, making this a trip of a lifetime and the best way to take in the real Kerala.

## SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

- \* Historic city of **Kochi**
- \* The lowland Forests at the **Thattekkad** bird sanctuary
- \* **Spice farms** along the entire route & stay at a Spice Plantation Villa with a Keralan family
- \* The legendary **backwaters** of Kerala
- \* **Riceboat** cruise

## GRADE OF THE TRIP

The ride is on level roads for most of the way and is suitable for those interested in an easy and relaxed cycling trip. The distances covered are given below:

Day	Distances
2	50 Km
3	30 Km
4	40 Km
5	30 Km
6	50 km
7	20 Km

## ACCOMMODATION AND MEALS

Meals included are indicated in the itinerary below and are shown as B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner.

## ITINERARY

### Day 1: Kochi

On arrival at the Kochi International Airport, you will be received and transferred to a hotel at Fort Kochi. Set on a cluster of islands and narrow peninsulas, Kochi is a city of cultural diversity. After checking and fitting out our bikes, we can spend the rest of the day exploring Fort Cochin, visiting the synagogue and the Dutch palace, buying a few nick-knacks at the Jew street and spending the evening at the Chinese

fishing nets at the harbor mouth. We end the evening with a cultural extravaganza of classical dances of Kerala. (B)

### Day 2, 3: Thattekkad

From Kochi we commence our ride and head for Thattekkad. The route passes through spices, rubber, and coconut plantations. By noon, we will reach the Thattekkad, located on the banks of the river Periyar. With over 275 species in such a small area, most of them endemics, Thattekkad offers a rare view into the world of birding in Kerala. This place is an ideal and quiet retreat into nature. O/N at the Camp / Resort (B, L, D)

### Day 4, 5: Thodupuzha

From Thattekkad we will cycle along the banks of the Periyar river and head to Thodupuzha - a picturesque little town. Our ride takes us through winding roads running through scores of spice farms and rubber plantations. 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 walking through the herbal gardens, rubber plantations, the forests across the river rounding it off

## Kalypso Adventures

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with a visit to the local village. Overnight at Dewalokam Villa (B, L, D)

## Day 6: Alleppey - Rice boat

We start the day's cycling from Thodupuzha and cycle through the countryside and 'bunds' of the vast waterways of the backwaters. From here we will cycle through the village roads along the paddy fields till we reach Alleppey where we will finish our ride and embark on to the luxurious Riceboat for a unique experience of cruising down the backwaters. Overnight on a Riceboat (B, L, D)

## Day 7: Alleppey - Heritage Villa

We wake up to a spectacular sunrise on the backwaters. Watch the villagers begin their day as we cruise for the shore. The riceboat will take us through these tranquil backwaters. As soon as we disembark, we will once again make our way through the narrow country roads to a backwater heritage villa located along the shores of the backwaters near the ancient city of Alleppey - a perfect place to enjoy a Kerala Ayurvedic massage as we relax in the evening. Overnight at the Heritage Villa (B, L, D)

## Day 8: End of Tour.

Depart for Kochi.

### GENERAL INFO

#### VISAS

Visitors to India must obtain a Visa before departure. You can consult the nearest Indian Embassy/ High Commission/ Consular Office for the same.

#### ACCOMMODATION

You will be put up in Heritage Hotels & Villas, comfortable Luxury cottage tents with en-suite bathroom, Plantation Villas, Homestays and riceboat.

#### CLIMATE

The weather is tropical and warm but most of the cycling is in the forenoon, when the temperatures are lower. Monsoons months are July to August.

#### TRANSPORTATION/ GUIDES

Transportation including airport transfers are included in the cost. The vehicle with roof top carriers will accompany throughout. We provide qualified cycling guide for the tour.

#### FIRST AID

Our guides have been adequately trained in first aid and always carry a comprehensive first-aid kit. In case of any medical emergency we have facilities to transfer you to the nearest hospital immediately.

### FOOD

Food is a very important part of these journeys and we have ensured that Keralan Cuisine is a part of this adventure. Refreshments and bottled mineral water are provided on all cycling days. Any special food requirements can be met if sufficient notice is given.

### PRECAUTIONS

- Drink plenty of fluids. Use only bottled mineral water provided by us.
- Carry your personal medical kit and insect repellent.

### SPENDING MONEY

During the cycling there will be opportunities to do some shopping and money spent along the way would go directly into the hands of the local communities.

### FOREIGN EXCHANGE

You can exchange your money at most major towns. ATMs are found in most Keralan towns. Credit cards are accepted only at Kochi during this tour.

### AIRPORT TAXES

Airport or departure taxes are not applicable if you depart from Kochi.

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## INCLUSIONS

- \* Multi geared Cycles, guide, accompanying vehicle
- \* Helmets ( if you are not bringing your own)
- \* Accommodation in heritage villas, hotels, homestays, luxury cottage tents with en-suite bathroom & a/c deluxe rice boat
- \* Refreshments & Mineral water while cycling
- \* Local sightseeing at Fort Cochin.
- \* Spice plantation visit
- \* Meals as shown above

## EXCLUSIONS

- \* Insurance –please take your own insurance
- \* Tips
- \* Beverages
- \* Laundry
- \* Telephone bills
- \* Expenses of any personal nature

**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)

**Price: US \$ 980 per person** (ex flights), based on TWIN share - minimum 2 people travelling (maximum 6 persons)  
 Single Supplement: USD 210

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## WHAT TO BRING:

### Clothing:

- Cottons
- Biking shorts
- Camelbacks
- Waterproofs
- Casual Shirts/T-shirts

### Others:

- Binocs & Camera (optional)
  - Torch
  - Insect repellent
  - Sunglasses, cap
  - Sun screen of SPF at least 35
  - Canteen
  - Day pack
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