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Yoga and Wellness Vacation in Exotic Kerala, South India

Relax and Explore for 15 days

February 3 - February 17th 2019

We begin in Trivandrum (Kovalam) and end in Cochin (Kochi)

Day 1 Sunday February 3: We are welcomed at the airport in Trivandrum (aka Kovalam) and are transferred to our home for 7 days, the unique **Bethsaida Ayurvedic Hermitage**. Here we recuperate from the long journey and begin our deep relaxing holistic vacation.

Day 2 Monday February 4 We awaken to the sounds and sights of the Arabian Ocean, starting at a leisurely pace our week here together. Daily yoga, meditation and visits to the Ayurvedic resort for an individually designed program of Ayurvedic treatments. Think massage, sesame oil, steam baths and scrubs. Love your body. Time to slow down and relax!

Day 3 to day 7 Tuesday to Saturday February 5 to 9th : We continue our yoga Ayurvedic vacation. Pampered relaxation between meals and treatments, beach walks, cooking classes, visits to nearby villages and meeting local fishermen on the beach, you can easily fill the days with nearby places and activities, or just stay in the hammock! One of the days we have a tour of Kovalam, where we will see the hustle and bustle of city life.

Day 8 Sunday Feb 10th. After morning treatments and breakfast, we say goodbye to our Hermitage to drive the short distance to **Amritapuri** in **Kovalam**, the ashram founded by Amma-ji, aka The hugging Saint. Here we be assigned rooms for one night, and then participate in ashram activities. If we are lucky enough, Amma will be in residence.

Day 9 Monday Feb 11th: Amrithapuri - Thekkady.

After morning activities and breakfast at the ashram, we are taken on the short drive to **Alleppey** where we board a houseboat for a private tour of the famous backwaters of **Kerala**. We then proceed to **Thekkady** to visit the Elephant Sanctuary for a close encounter with the Indian elephant. Check into the lovely **Greenwood Resort** for two nights. After dinner we can do a group meditation and sharing circle.

Day 10 Tuesday 12 Feb: Thekkady.

After a delicious and leisurely breakfast we head out for the nature trek and spice garden tour. The afternoon takes us the **Periyar National Park** where we view wildlife from our boat on the



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lake. The panorama spreads into tropical jungles full of wild elephants, Indian Gaur, monkeys, spotted deer, barking deer, wild boar and birds of myriad varieties. Encompassing an area of 300 square miles, the sanctuary lies at an elevation between 3000 and 6000 feet meters above the sea level. Sumptuous dinner at the **Greenwood Resort** and an evening meditation and sharing circle.

Day 11 Wednesday 13 Feb: Thekkady – Munnar.

We head for the hills. A scenic drive to **Munnar**, a mountainous hill station, perfect for growing tea. With its British roots, this pretty little haven offers hiking and exploring with heavenly vistas. The **Parraket Resort** is our home for two nights. Dinner and meditation.

Day 12 Thursday 14 Feb: Munnar.

We learn all about the fine British heritage, the art of tea! Visit an estate for tea leaf picking and see how it is prepared for export at the tea factory..

We spend the afternoon in the **Eravikulam National Park** to see the rare **Nilgiri Tahr ibex**. Dinner meditation at **Parakkat Resort**.

Day 13 Friday 15 Feb: Munnar-Cochin.

We leave the countryside to explore the most important city of **Cochin**; an historic harbor city that has deep roots with the Jewish, Dutch, Portuguese as well as Chinese cultures.

We check into the **Crown Plaza** hotel, our home for two nights. Tonight it's theatre for a Kathakali dance performance.

Day 14 Saturday 16 Feb: Cochin city tour.

Accompanied by a local guide, we visit some of the historical monuments & landmarks in Fort Cochin. The tour begins from St. Francis Church, established by the Portuguese Franciscan friars in 1503. Vasco Da Gama was buried in the courtyard of this European church, one of the first built in India. See the Chinese fishing nets, more than a century old and still in use, they are a great part of this tour. Continue to the Jewish Synagogue where services will be happening as it is Saturday today. It has beautiful Belgian glass chandeliers and paved with painted tiles from China. We complete the tour with a visit to the Dutch Palace with its wonderful murals depicting the entire story of the Ramayana.

Lunch is at the home of a central Kerala's Orthodox Christian family.

Our final afternoon is free for shopping.

Our farewell dinner is at a specialty restaurant and the final night is at **Crown Plaza**.

Day 15 Sunday Feb 17: We are transferred to Cochin international airport to board our flight back home. Remember that Monday February 18 is President's Day.



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Cost of this trip: \$3,780 per person sharing
(\$950 extra for single room)

Includes:

- full board, yoga and treatments at Ayurvedic Bethsaida Hermitage.
- Full board and simple lodge at Amma's Ashram.
- Breakfast and dinner in 4 star hotels
- All ground transportation.
- English speaking guides for city tours of Kovalam and Cochin.
- Daily yoga and meditation, where space is available.

Not included:

- Alcoholic drinks
- Meals not on itinerary - a few lunches.
- International air tickets.
- Gratuities for drivers, spa practitioners and guides.