



Cruise the Backwaters



Take a short cruise through Kerala's beautiful backwaters on our own, traditionally-built houseboat with your own crew consisting of a driver, engineer and steward. You can take a 24-hour trip or a longer cruise down the coast towards Kollam (Quillon) through the lakes and canals, which make up this unique area.



The Vanda is a traditional kettuvallam with two en-suite air-conditioned bedrooms. It is built and furnished from local materials, and we provide you with a luxury cruise whilst minimising our impact on the fragile ecosystems of the backwaters. It runs very quietly, and because it is fairly narrow it can seek out the smaller and more tranquil canals and take longer trips through the inland backwaters and down the coast. Lights and fans are solar-powered. We have no television or music systems. All produce is fresh and locally sourced. Hot water is available. You can cruise the backwaters for up to four days in peace and tranquility, exploring the beautiful out-of-the-way places the larger boats cannot reach.



Your Crew

Your crew members, two driver/engineers and your cook, are here to make your cruise comfortable and enjoyable. They have their own facilities while you are cruising.



We provide you with

a welcome drink, drinking water, chilled drinks, and coffee/tea are available on request, lunch, dinner, and breakfast are served on the overnight cruises. If you tell us in advance, about any special requirements or preferences, we will make your meals according to your taste.

Short Cruises

Day Cruise

Join the boat in mid-morning for a welcome drink and enjoy your trip through the backwaters. Lunch is served on board, and you will be given tea before disembarkation in the late afternoon.

Overnight Cruise

Spend a day and night cruising Lake Vembanad and its surrounding network of canals.

Join the boat for a welcome drink mid morning, before embarking on your journey. The boat visits some unfrequented narrow backwaters, with their visions of life little changed in centuries. Visit the 16th Century church at Chembakulam or the nature reserve at Pathiramanal Island. Lunch and dinner are taken on the deck. After a relaxing night, you can resume your journey after breakfast, returning to your embarkation point by mid morning.



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Longer Cruises

2 Nights/ 3 Day Cruise to Thakazhy and Punnamada

This cruise meanders through the backwaters South of Alleppey, visiting Chambakulam church, and spending the night at Thakazhy. Sightseeing opportunities include the 9th Century black Granite Buddha at Karumadi, the famous Sri Krishna Temple at Ambalapuzha, and the miles of reclaimed farmland. You then return to Alleppey via Kinakari through the Pallathuruthy River, seeing the thousands of migrating birds in the winter months. Visit Alleppey town and beach, staying overnight at Punnamada lakeside. An early start sees the sunrise over Lake Vembanad, before disembarking mid morning.



2 Nights/ 3 Day Cruise of Lake Vembanad

This alternative 2 night cruise has a similar first day, with overnight at Thakazhy, but the second night is spent in Lake Venambad, enabling a visit to Pathiramalan Island. Note it is only possible to stay in the lake during good weather, and the decision of the captain is final. This nature reserve is a recovered island with many birds, and unspoilt fauna. The third day has an early start to see the sunrise over the lake, before disembarking at Alleppey.



3 Night/ 4 Day Cruise to Thotapally

Because the Vanda is narrow and has a shallow draught, it is possible to take a trip far South of Alleppey. Sightseeing opportunities include the 9th Century black Granite Buddha at Karumadi, the famous Sri Krishna Temple at Ambalapuzha, and the miles of reclaimed farmland. The first night is spent at Thottapally, 25 km South of Alleppey. On the second day cruise to Karuvatta and visit the Mannarsala Nagaraja Temple and then on to Thottapally for the overnight stay. Return to Alleppey on the third day, visiting the town and beach. The fourth day has an early start to see the sunrise over the lake, before disembarking at Alleppey.

The Backwaters

The most stunning of Kerala's many beauties are the backwaters. This area of shallow lakes, canals and reclaimed land was known as the rice bowl of India. A barrage across Lake Venambad restrained the monsoon rains and resulted in three crops of rice a year. Today silting and pollution are beginning to degrade the delicate balance of this area, but it is still an enchanting area of narrow waterways, unlikely coconut and cashew plantations floating above lagoons and a bustle of daily life. Taking a slow boat through the canals is a must for any visitor, whether it is on an overnight stay or a short cruise.

There is a huge variety of wildlife to be seen: various types of kingfisher, which sit on electricity wires to watch for fish, snake birds, fish eagles, ducks, cormorants and many migratory species which pass through in the winter.