



THE ARTS



The Great South India Food Journey

9 nights/ 12 days

February 25 – March 8, 2018

\$6,499 (Based on double occupancy)

Journey throughout southern India with Bay Area's Foodie Chap Liam Maycelm and executive Chef Anjan Mitra, while sampling the local cuisine, visiting farms, markets and rural villages and exploring some of the most iconic cultural sites and communities in India.

BOOK NOW 888.747.7501

Program Highlights

- 9 nights / 12-days journey through India
- Explore the **food and spice markets** and chat with the vendors
- Take part in several **cooking lessons**, including an afternoon with vivacious *Anu Mathew* and her Mother at Philipkutty Farm, to learn about the cuisines in the Kerala region
- Visit a spice plantation and learn all about the traditional, organic techniques used to prepare the spices in the kitchen
- **Optional Extension will be available to visit the Taj Mahal**

Food, Community & Culture

- **Interact with local people** as you explore the backwater village of Kumarakom by boat. You will love their laid-back lifestyle and friendly people.
- **Have lunch with a local family in Periyar**
- Coconut Lagoon is equipped with a fine Ayurvedic facility – learn about this eastern specialty way of life
- Enjoy a close interaction with the **local elephants** to not only go for a ride and take them for a bath but learn how they communicate through commands

What's Included:

- 4-5* accommodations throughout
- All transportation and activities outlined
- Group transfers to and from the international airport
- International air to and from Mumbai (gateway city set tentatively for San Francisco)
- Local English speaking guide throughout
- Most meals and tips
- All entrance fees and activities described
- Private transportation throughout

Not Included:

- Personal expenses at the hotels
- Meals not specified
- Tips for maid/cleaning staff & national guide
- Passport and/or renewal fees
- Domestic flight to gateway city
- Departure taxes where applicable



📍 San Francisco, USA

DAY 1 - Fly to Mumbai, India

Depart from San Francisco this afternoon and head for India. You will transit via Delhi to Mumbai.

📍 Mumbai, India

DAY 2 - Arrival and Welcome

After arrival, this evening you will be met by your private national guide and transfer to your local hotel. Meal service will be provided during your flight.

Named by the original inhabitants, the Kolis, after their goddess mother Mumba Devi, Mumbai was once a group of seven islands given to the British as a dowry when Charles II married Catherine of Braganza. The British leased the islands to the East India Company, who in turn began initial development of the city. Today this cosmopolitan city is one of India's most important centres for industry, commerce, foreign trade and Bollywood.

Overnight: Trident Nariman Point

Included meals: N/A



📍 Mumbai, India

DAY 3 – Explore Mumbai

Your day in Mumbai starts with a tour of **Crawford Market**, one of the city's largest wholesale fruit, vegetable, and meat markets!

Late this morning you will stop at **CST Railway Station** to see Mumbai's *Dabbawallahs* in action! The Mumbai Dabbawallahs are a phenomenon you won't believe, until you see it yourself. Their energy is almost tangible, as is their entrepreneurial skill – and you'd look at them handling hundreds of dabbas (tiffin boxes) with skill of a juggler to assure that your everyday office-goer gets his/her tummy-fill in the lunch hours!

After lunch on your own arrangement, visit the **Gandhi Museum** residing in the simple two-story building that served as Mahatma Gandhi's Bombay headquarters from 1917 to 1934. Wander through the library of approximately 50,000 books and periodicals; Gandhi's preserved rooms on the second floor, and a picture gallery documenting important events in his life.

Later drive through the **Dhobi Ghat** (open-air laundromats), hanging gardens and stop to see the **Gateway of India**. The gateway is a monument built during the British Rule era and is located on the waterfront in the Apollo Bunder area overlooking the Arabian Sea.

A welcome dinner will be provided at a local restaurant this evening.

Overnight: Trident Nariman Point

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner



📍 Kochi, India

DAY 4– Fly to Kochi (Cochin)

Depart the hotel early this morning to walk to the nearby fishing port for a **fish market tour**. Start at the **Sassoon Docks** where you will gain insight into the lives of the local fisherman. You will learn about the various kinds of fishing and catch and take in life of the local people. These docks are one of the oldest and most famous in the city. Early morning is the perfect time to see the port when the boats arrive and the fishermen unload their catch. During this walk, you will immerse yourselves in to the bustle of the morning bargaining during the seafood auctions.

Return to the hotel to check out and drive to the airport., Fly to **Kochi** (Cochin), which has the best natural harbor in the country and is set amidst lagoons and backwaters, with a romantic backdrop of swaying coconut palms. Lunch is by individual arrangement this afternoon.

After arrival, this afternoon you will be met and transferred to check into your local hotel. Enjoy some free time before your dinner and evening entertainment.

This evening witness one of the most spectacular dances of India called **Kathakali**. It has a unique combination of literature, music, painting, acting and dance. It is believed that the extraordinary costumes and makeup serve to raise the dancers above the level of mere mortals, so that they may transport the audience to a world of wonders. Dinner will be provided this evening.

Overnight: Crowne Plaza

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner



📍 Kochi, India

DAY 5 – Cooking Class & City Tour

Explore Kochi today starting with a stop at the **Dutch Palace**, **Jewish Synagogue** built in 1568, and **St. Francis' Church** - the oldest church built by Europeans in India. Vasco da Gama was originally buried here.

See the fascinating Chinese fishing nets, and participate in Kochi's main enterprise, commerce, by stopping at any of numerous shops selling tea, jute, chilies, turmeric, cashew, ginger, cardamom and pepper.

Later dive deeper into the captivating culture of India on this Kochi food tour that takes you on a flavorful journey through the Muslim, Hindu, and Christian areas of this fascinating city. Take a walk down the road through a **bazaar**, and glimpse into the life of the **spice traders**. Stop for a tea or coffee and snacks at a local tea shop, easing you nicely into the culture of Kochi.

This afternoon set off on foot, delving into the heart of **Mattancherry**, a treasure trove of Muslim culture and food. This neighborhood is also famous for antique showrooms, Jewish Synagogues and has a long history as an ancient trading port.

This evening, join a chef for a **hands-on cooking session** which will introduce to the flavors of the Malabar Coast.

Overnight: Crowne Plaza

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner



📍 Periyar, India

DAY 6– Drive to Periyar

After breakfast check-out of your hotel for your drive to **Periyar**, known as the spice coast, the region boasts some of the country's finest spice plantations. Periyar is located in the Southernmost state of Kerala and is home to one of the most picturesque and beautiful wildlife sanctuaries in the world. With its waterways, forests and grasslands, it provides a magnificent venue for both mammal and bird watching.

In route stop at a plantation for **lunch with a local family**. Enjoy some time to chat with the family and inquire about topics of mutual interest over your meal.

After lunch say goodbye to your new friends and visit a **tea factory** to learn about the cultivation and processing of Indian tea.

Continue onward to Periyar and check in at the resort this afternoon. **Spice Village** recreates the mood of a tribal community, thatched in elephant grass and set in a lush spice garden. Spice Village is the essence of a mountain tribal village, re-imagined for the modern independent traveler. A tribute to ancient ways of life and to one man's patience and passion. Of course, the comforts of a modern hotel exist, but they never intrude. Modern plumbing, comfortable beds and hot showers find their place, but in a setting stripped down to its natural essence.

Dinner is by individual arrangement this evening.

Overnight: Spice Village

Included meals: Breakfast & Lunch



📍 Periyar, India

DAY 7– Explore Periyar

Begin the day with a spiritually refreshing **yoga session** at your hotel (*optional*). Yoga is perhaps the world's first system that recognizes the interconnection and Interaction between body and mind.

This morning visit a nearby **spice plantation**. Pepper, cardamom, cloves and cinnamon are all cultivated here and you will learn all about the traditional, organic techniques used to prepare the spices for the kitchen. Later explore the local spice markets with your guide.

Take part in a **cooking lesson at your resort**. The chef at Spice Village is a strict follower of 50-mile diet, which means, all the ingredients are procured from a 50-mile radius, and chunks of it come merely from 50 yards away. Spice village grows its kitchen vegetables in an organic farm, fish is caught fresh from the river for cooking, and spices are all-around. Join the chef later in morning for a wonderful cooking class, the Kerala way.

This afternoon you will have an up close and personal interaction with the local **Indian elephants**. You will be encouraged to get to know this wonderful animal in their tranquil setting. Your elephant ride may be a mix of adrenalin and excitement interspersed with long period of utter peace. Later you'll get an opportunity to take them for a bath, feeding, and to learn some communication commands.

This evening attend a martial art performance before dinner.

Overnight: Spice Village

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner





📍 Kumarakom, India

DAY 8 – Boat Ride and Local Interaction

This morning you will take a **boat ride on Periyar Lake**, formed by the construction of a dam on the Periyar River.

Later check-out from your hotel and drive to **Kumarakom**, a cluster of little islands on Vembanad Lake. Kumarakom captures the essence of Kerala in a unique and lovely setting. Conde Nast Traveller rated Kumarakom among the 25 best getaways in the world.

Enjoy **lunch with a local family** today. Continue your drive to Kumarakom and check in at your local hotel.

Your exquisite hotel is constructed from fragments of Keralan palaces, with beautiful carvings and brass work, and is set on an abandoned coconut plantation that can be reached only by boat.

Dinner is by individual arrangement this evening.

Overnight: Coconut Lagoon

Included meals: Breakfast & Lunch



📍 Kumarakom, India

DAY 9– Village Life in Kumarakom

Optional Morning Activity: *Now that you have been sampling some most exotic foods, here comes time for much relaxation and rejuvenation. Ancient India's gem, Ayurveda is a specialty of Kerala, and Coconut Lagoon is equipped with a fine Ayurvedic facility where you'll be treated with massages and other treatments this morning (at your own expense).*

Enjoy some free time this morning to relax before you depart for your afternoon boat cruise.

This afternoon cruise through the Kerala Backwaters on one the region's trademark **houseboats**. Built without a single nail, the planks of these shallow barges are tied together with strong coir rope. From your comfortable vantage point, observe the rituals of **village life**; farmers tilling fields with buffaloes, women washing laundry and children splashing in the water.

You will see shallow, palm-fringed lakes studded with Chinese fishing nets and shady canals where coir (coconut fibre), copra (dried coconut meat) and cashews are loaded onto dugouts. A Keralan lunch will be prepared and served on board.

Dinner will be provided this evening.

Overnight: Coconut Lagoon

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner





📍 Kumarakom, India

DAY 10 – Village Life

Early this morning, **explore the nearby backwater villages by country boat**. You will love the life style of people living in village. They live a laid back and scheduled life unlike the fast life in the city.

This afternoon, you'd be joined by the vivacious **Anu Mathew and her Mother at Philipkutty Farm**, to know cooking – the Kerala way! Learn her age-old recipes cooked in earthy wholesome goodness. Perhaps she will teach you how to make *Meen-Moilee*, the extravagant freshwater fish curry, prepared with exotic spices, and the fish caught perhaps within the hour.

Late this afternoon drop in to **Café Kudumbashree** for an evening snack and some local Chai (tea). The government of Kerala encouraged women to start canteen and catering groups across the state. Intensive training on health, food habits, customer management, and the concept of service were provided to the potential entrepreneurs. No change is made in the recipes to retain the taste and flavor of ethnic delicacies of each locality. Cafe Kudumbashree is the brand developed by *Mission* for its food fests and it has developed a service and production protocol for the entrepreneurs who intend to participate in the fests.

Enjoy a cultural dance performance this evening followed by a farewell dinner.

Overnight: Coconut Lagoon

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner



📍 Kumarakom, India

DAY 11 – Depart

After breakfast, check out and head to the airport in Kochi (Cochin) for your early afternoon flight back to Delhi (via Mumbai).

Say goodbye to India as you head back to San Francisco late this evening (arrival the next day).

Included meals: Breakfast

📍 San Francisco, California

DAY 12 – Arrival

Arrive back in San Francisco this morning.





SOUTH INDIA FOOD JOURNEY | DAY-BY-DAY

📍 Mumbai

Trident Nariman Point

Nariman Point
Mumbai 400 021, India

International number: +91-22-6632-4343

<http://www.tridenthotels.com/hotels-in-mumbai-nariman-point>



📍 Kochi (Cochin)

Crowne Plaza

XI/641A Kundanoor Junction, NH-47 Bypass,
Maradu, PO Ernakulam, Kochi, Kerala

International number: + 484 286-5000

<https://www.ihg.com/crowneplaza/hotels/gb/en/kochi/cokch/hoteldetail>



📍 Periyar

Spice Village

Kumily Road, Thekkady
Idukki 685 536, India

International number: +4869-224-514

<http://www.cghearth.com/spice-village>



📍 Kumarakom

Coconut Lagoon

Kumarakom
Kottayam 686 563, India

International number: + 481-252-5834

<http://www.cghearth.com/coconut-lagoon>

