



THE ARTS



The Great South India Food Journey

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. Visit Kumarakom rated by Condé Nast Traveler among the 25 best getaways in the world.

BOOK NOW 888.747.7501

Program Highlights

- 8 nights / 11-days journey through India
- Explore the **food and spice markets** and chat with the vendors
- Take part in several **cooking lessons**, including and 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
- ***Extend your journey to include 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 where you can enjoy massages and other treatments to rejuvenate and relax.
- 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



SOUTH INDIA FOOD JOURNEY | DAY-BY-DAY

📍 San Francisco, USA

DAY 1 - Fly to Kochi, India

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

📍 Kochi, India

DAY 2 - Arrival and Welcome

Welcome to Kochi (formerly known as Cochin), also known as Ernakulam, the commercial capital of Kerala. The word Ernakulam was derived from a Tamil word “Erayanarkulam” which means “Lord Shiva’s abode.” Upon arrival at the Kochi airport, our representative will meet and greet you at the airport and help you with the transfer to your hotel. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure as you to settle into your new space.

Overnight: CGH Eighth Bastion

Included meals: N/A



📍 Kochi, India

DAY 3 – Explore Kochi

As you welcome a new morning in Kochi, we’ll discover this eclectic city by taking a **tuk-tuk** through Willington Island and the historic part of old Kochi (Fort Cochin and Mattancherry) dotted with tiled roofs and pastel-colored buildings. Kochi has the best natural harbor in the country. It is set amidst picturesque lagoons and backwaters famous across the world. Enjoy the breeze passing through the romantic backdrop of swaying coconut and palm trees.

Catch a glimpse of 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.

The tour includes **the Dutch Palace, Jewish Synagogue** built in 1568 and St Francis Church – the oldest church built by Europeans in India.

Later immerse yourself in a **culinary experience** where you shop, cook and eat in the atmosphere of **a local family’s home** filled with stories of indigenous recipes and history. You shall also, get a whiff of the local market produce with our guide as you pick the ingredients for your culinary experience.

Overnight: CGH Eighth Bastion

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner



SOUTH INDIA FOOD JOURNEY | DAY-BY-DAY

📍 Kochi, India

DAY 4– Drive to Periyar

Today we drive to Periyar known as the **spice coast**. Settle yourself in your cozy hotel modelled on tribal community homes, thatched in elephant grass and set in a lush spice garden. You can also, indulge in their exquisite Ayurvedic facility in your free time.

Pepper, cardamom, cloves and cinnamon you shall be meeting all these spices this afternoon and learn about the traditional, organic techniques used to prepare them for the kitchen.

We said adventure awaits you! It's time for an interaction with the **mighty elephants at a Private Cardamom Estate**. We encourage you to spend time with these wonderful beings through a long walk, feeding and learning how to communicate with them.

In the evening enjoy '**Kalaripayattu**' the traditional martial art of Kerala, which is specifically used for defense and resistance. This martial art helps to maintain our body physical energy and releases emotional stress. It provides relaxation, gives new energy, and improves mental awareness.

Overnight: CGH Spice Village

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner



📍 Periyar, 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: CGH Spice Village

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner



📍 Periyar, India

DAY 6– Cooking and Spices

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.

About CHG Earth Hotels - CGH EARTH's business model is based on sustainable and responsible tourism. Every thought and action is born out of this commitment to the environment and the local communities where it operates.

Overnight: CGH Spice Village

Included meals: Breakfast & Dinner



📍 Munnar, India

DAY 7– Tea Plantation and Community Visit

Today we head to the alluring **hills of Munnar**. The journey through winding shaded roads from sea level to 6,000 ft takes you through a fantastic range of Kerala's lush landscapes. Feast your eyes with views of the plantations of coconuts, pineapples, rubber, coffee, pepper, cardamom, and vanilla to eventually emerge into an endless vista of verdant **tea gardens**. Munnar, literally meaning 'three rivers', situated at the confluence of three mountain streams, is the perfect setting of absolute solitude and enjoying moments away from the bustling city life.

On arrival at Munnar, visit a **Tea Factory** where you can learn the story tea and know the cultivation and processing of tea. Meet the workers and enjoy the favors of tea.

Late this afternoon visit **Srishti Charitable Trust**, an NGO dedicated to the rehabilitation & generation of sustainable livelihoods for the differently-abled children & young adults of the rural plantation community of Munnar, Kerala.

Overnight: CGH Spice Tree

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner





📍 Munnar, India

DAY 8 – Trekking and Tea Plantations

Buckle up to head for a **trekking experience** at the peak of the magnificent Lakshmi Hills. Rocky mountain terrains, grasslands, tea plantations with patches of Shola forest, spice gardens and various birds are all ready to welcome you. If we are lucky and the weather is clear we could view **Anaimudi** (the highest peak in South India) and the waters of Idukki Dam which is listed as the highest arch dams in Asia and 3rd tallest dam in India.

Refreshments/**picnic lunch** we be served at a suitable place during the trek as you soak in the views.

This trek will acquaint you with the **local tea plantation workers, their stories** and how the business has changed hands over the years, over a warm cup of tea of course ☺ Walk around the Munnar village, breathe in the fresh air of the meadows and relax. This is your time to unwind with nature!

Overnight: CGH Spice Tree

Included meals: Breakfast & Lunch



📍 Kumarakom, India

DAY 9– Village Life in Kumarakom

This morning, drive to Kumarakom. This place captures the essence and the beauty of Kerala by offering myriad views. Nothing has been added that does not already belong. And if the comforts of life enter (as they must), they do so in a harmonious way. Here is where you will see the **famous 'backwaters'**, a complex network of lakes, canals and rivers that support a beautiful and fragile eco-system. Including a quiet village tucked away on the banks of the picturesque Vembanad Lake. Experience the slow-paced village life and their livelihood activities like coir yarn processing which is **Kerala's oldest industry**. If you wish, you can laze around through the paddy fields and meet the locals too.

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. Enjoy lunch at a community house

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

Overnight: CGH Coconut Lagoon

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner





SOUTH INDIA FOOD JOURNEY | DAY-BY-DAY

📍 Kumarakom, India

DAY 10 – Village Life

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 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.

This evening, get ready to dress in the **traditional Attire**, wear comfortable cotton dresses. (saree for women and mundu for men).

Late in the evening, **enjoy farewell dinner** followed by cultural dance performance.

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





SOUTH INDIA FOOD JOURNEY | DAY-BY-DAY

📍 Munnar

Spice Tree

Nariman Point
Mumbai 400 021, India

International number: +91-22-6632-4343

<http://www.spicetree.com>



📍 Kochi (Cochin)

CGH Eighth Bastion

Napier Street
Kochi 689 001, India

International number: + 484 221-3500

<http://www.cghearth.com/eighth-bastion>



📍 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>

