

Think of Southern India, the amazing temples, wonderful markets, stunning beaches and views, fresh fish, elephants... and trains. This tour has it all!!



Tour highlights

- Overnight on the backwaters in Kerala
- See elephants roaming in a wildlife park
- The Indian Golden Rock Works and Temple
- Experience a diesel locomotive simulator
- Steam hauled train up to Ooty
- Impressive City Palace at Mysore
- Eat fresh fish on the beach at Cochin
- Extension to Goa

Monday 6 January

Depart at around 1 p.m. from your choice of UK airports to

Tuesday 7 January

.....Mumbai to catch a connecting flight to Tiruchirapalli. Our coach will be waiting to take us to our hotel where you can rest and relax.

Wednesday 8 January

To start the day, you can enjoy the experience of the Indian Railways diesel engine driving simulator. Then we have a visit to the Indian Railways' Golden Rock Works where steam locos have recently been built for both the Ooty and Darjeeling lines. We will then end the day with a visit to The Golden Rock Temple which stands 275 feet above the city on a rocky outcrop with fabulous views of the city.

Thursday 9 January

Today we visit the Sri Ranganathaswamy Centre that has the most impressive architecture that dominates the northern quarter of the city. Close to the station is a recently established small railway museum, which we'll visit prior to catching the 13.35 train to Madurai, due to arrive 16.05.

Friday 10 January

This morning we will visit a carpet showroom, which in itself is interesting, because from their balcony we can enjoy the stunning view of all four gopurams of the Meenakshi Temple before we visit it. We depart by coach leaving at lunchtime for a 92 mile journey (approx 4 hours) to Periyar in the state of Kerala. We'll have frequent stops on the way to enjoy the scenery and local colour



Saturday 11 January



From the hotel's jetty this morning, we board a boat and journey through one of the most captivating wildlife parks. We return to the hotel for a relaxing lunch and later venture out again hopefully to see more animals at a different time of day. The Park is reported to have India's largest population of elephants. The lush green jungle has a beautiful lake which serves as the water source for the wildlife population. You may well witness herds of playful elephants roaming freely and swimming in the lake.

Sunday 12 January

After breakfast we'll journey by coach for about four hours through tea and spice plantations to Kottayam. We then board a houseboat and enjoy a very relaxing trip on our way to Alleppey on the famous Keralan backwaters, but we will have a comfortable overnight on board – in the evening, we'll enjoy a typical local meal cooked on the houseboat. A definite tick on your bucket list!

Monday 13 January

After breakfast we disembark at Alleppey and our coach will take us for the two-hour journey to Cochin, but we can arrange for this journey to be by rail if you prefer. After checking in at our hotel, we will then take a conducted tour of The Old Town for and enjoy the spice market. We stay for two nights in Cochin.



Tuesday 14 January

We visit the very interesting Jewish Synagogue and Quarter and the Mattancherry Palace. It is also wonderful to see the Chinese fishing nets. There are plenty of huts cooking the fresh fish on the side of the harbour. This evening we'll enjoy a traditional, colourful Indian dance performance called Kathakali.

Wednesday 15 January



This morning we will catch the 09.10 train for a 3 hour journey north to Coimbatore. The coach will pick us up there and take us to Mettupalaiyam (at the foot of the Nilgiri Mountain Railway) or, if you wish, we can arrange for you travel by train. We will stay in a very basic Indian hotel close to the station where you'll receive a very warm welcome and great food. There should be plenty of time to explore the station and see the 17.35 steam train from Ooty arrive if you wish.

Thursday 16 January

After an early breakfast we walk from the rear of the hotel, having got their very kind permission, to the station for the 07.10 steam-hauled train to Ooty. We travel 18 miles through lush green scenery to Coonoor with the 0-8-2 rack tank working hard. The last 11 miles to Ooty will be hauled by a diesel engine. A coach will take us to the 5 Star Taj Savoy Hotel. The rest of the afternoon is free to enjoy the hotel's garden or go for a walk and explore this very British hill station.

Friday 17 January

After a wonderful breakfast the rest of the day is free to do what you wish. There is an opportunity to go to Coonoor and explore the locomotive depot there. Alternatively, there is a half an hour journey to where the views of Ooty are stunning, wander around the town, the Botanical Gardens are worth a visit, or you might fancy a boat ride or pedalo on the lake.

Saturday 18 January

We say goodbye to the Taj Savoy at approx 10 a.m. and travel by coach to Mysore. We'll stop at Gudalur for lunch and travel on through Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary. As we arrive in Mysore, check in and have an early dinner and if you wish there will be a visit to Brindavan Gardens. The gardens are built across the river Cauvery and below the Kannambad Dam built in 1924 which is a magnificent example of engineering. The illuminated dancing fountains are a beautiful orchestrated show with colourful lights and music.

Sunday 19 January

This morning we have a tour round the very impressive City Palace and the small but interesting Railway Museum established in 1979. It is an outdoor exhibit of vintage locomotives. After dinner, if you are interested, we can walk and see the City Palace lit up at night, definitely worth seeing.



Monday 20 January

Today we drive to Bangalore airport for the flight to Dubai for your homeward flight.

EXTENSION TO GOA



Monday 20 January

Today we drive to Bangalore airport for our flight to Mangalore, where we will be met and taken to our hotel. The rest of the day is free to walk to the harbour, about 400 metres down the hill, or into the town.

Tuesday 21 January

After breakfast we start the day with a very interesting tour of The Cashew Factory. Mangalore is the largest producer and exporter in India. We will then see Hindu traditions at the stunning Kadri Manjunath temple and enjoy the vibrant central market. We catch the 16.40/20.20 train to Karwar.

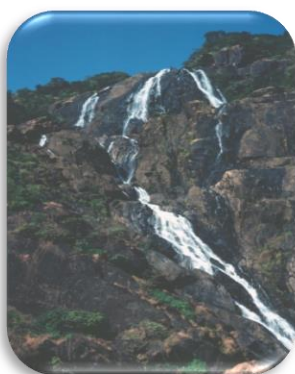
Wednesday 22 January

Karwar is a stunning port with an evergreen forest to the East, the Arabian sea to the West, a harbour to the South and the beautiful Kali river to the North. After a relaxing breakfast the day is free to relax and explore. If you like we could drive up to Sadashivgad Fort for the stunning views well worth seeing and exploring the local area. Most of the day is free before we catch the 17.06 train for the short journey to Madgaon in Goa, arriving at 18.25. Our hotel on Colva Beach is just a short journey away. There, we can relax and enjoy a walk on the beach.

Thursday 23 January

We can venture into Madgaon where there is a wonderful old market full of spices, teas, dried fruits, cashew nuts, a chance to buy local gifts. In the afternoon you are free to stay if you wish and explore the town and railway station. Madgaon is Goa's biggest and busiest railway junction positioned at the intersection of the Konkan Railway and the South-west Railway or you can go back to the hotel, relax and enjoy the beach.





Friday 24 January

Today we'll ride the 09.35 train to Castle Rock passing the magnificent Dudhsagar Waterfalls. It is one of India's tallest waterfalls in 4 tiers, a wonderful journey. At the railway station you can see the old metre gauge tracks. These were converted to broad gauge in the early 1990's. We will then have time for lunch and a wander around before our return journey by road at 13.00.

Saturday 25 January

Today is free to relax and enjoy the beach. We catch the 1840 flight from the local airport Dabolim in Vasco (30 minutes away from Madgaon) to

Mumbai.....

(If you would prefer to ride The Konkan line From Goa to Bombay by train, which takes about 12 hours, it can be arranged)

Sunday 26 January

...to check in for our international flights just after midnight, and we should land in the UK in the early evening.

What's included?

Economy class flights to/from India, breakfast and dinner daily, accommodation in 3-4 star hotels (or best available locally), all transport, charter trains and excursions as set out in the itinerary and the services of a Darjeeling Tours Limited Tour Manager. All tips throughout the tour (except for the Tour Manager) are included and will be dealt with on your behalf. Personal and incidental expenses are not included.



Prices

Fully inclusive price from London:	£ 3,875 based on two people sharing
Ground only price (international flights excluded)	£ 3,275
Single supplement:	£ 595
Extension to Goa	£ 475 based on two people sharing
Single supplement:	£ 240

Please note that carriers, flights times and train times are subject to change.

