

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
- Luxury extension to Goa

Tuesday 4 February

Depart at around 9 a.m. from your choice of UK airports to

Wednesday 5 February

.....Chennai, arriving around 0215 . We will take you straight to the hotel for some sleep. The morning is free to recover from the journey, and we will give you a gentle city tour in the afternoon, including the iconic Central Station, Marina Beach and the markets

Thursday 6 February

We return to the airport to catch the flight at 1010 to Tiruchirapalli, where 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 Sri Ranganathaswamy Centre that has the most impressive architecture that dominates the northern quarter of the city

Friday 7 February

Today we visit The Golden Rock Temple which stands 275 feet above the city on a rocky outcrop with fabulous views of the city. Close to the station is a recently established small railway museum, which we'll visit prior to catching the 14.05 train to Madurai, due to arrive 16.25.

Saturday 8 February

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

Sunday 9 February



From the hotel's jetty this morning, we board a boat and journey through one of the most captivating wildlife parks. 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. The afternoon brings a guided walk through the local spice gardens, and there will be a martial arts performance in the evening

Monday 10 February

After breakfast we'll journey by coach for about four hours through tea and spice plantations to Alleppey. We then board a houseboat and enjoy a very relaxing trip on our way to Lake Vembanad 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!

Tuesday 11 February

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.



Wednesday 12 February

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.

Thursday 13 February



This morning we will catch the 09.10 train for a 3½ 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 17.30 steam train from Ooty arrive if you wish.

Friday 14 February

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 superb Accord Highland Hotel. The rest of the afternoon is free to enjoy the hotel's garden or we can take you back to town to explore this very British hill station.

Saturday 15 February

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 or even a ride on the park's toy train.

Sunday 16 February

We say goodbye to the Accord Highland after breakfast 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, we will visit the small but fascinating Railway Museum established in 1979. We will then check in and, after an early dinner, we can walk and see the City Palace lit up at night, definitely worth seeing.



Monday 17 February

In the morning, we'll pay a short visit to the amazingly colourful Spice Market, followed by an excursion to Srirangapatnam for the Gumbaz Tomb, Tipu Sultan's palace, and an evening visit to the 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.

Tuesday 18 February

After a free morning, we will set off on the four hour drive up to Bangalore with a coffee stop on the way. We'll arrange for a decent 'high tea' near the airport to be ready for checking in around 5pm for the 8.20 pm departure, which, after a change in Dubai,.....

Wednesday 19 February

.. gives an early morning arrival back in the UK.

EXTENSION TO GOA



Tuesday 18 February

After dinner in Bangalore, we head out to the airport for the (very) late 11.40pm flight to Goa's Dabolim airport...

Wednesday 19 February

...due to arrive at 12.45 am. We will transfer immediately to our hotel, a 45

minute drive, which will be home for six nights. The hotel is only a short walk from the beach. Relax!

Thursday 20 to Sunday 23 February

At leisure in Goa (see below)

Monday 24 February

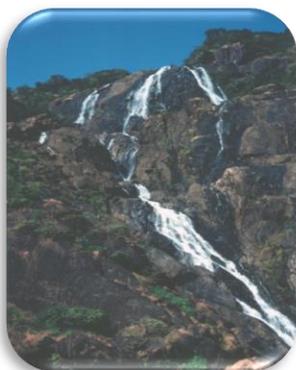
We will transfer back to the airport for the 1pm flight up to Mumbai, where your connecting flight departs at 7.10pm, changing in Dubai....

Tuesday 25 February

... for arrival back in the UK in the afternoon

If you would like some suggestions for things to do, other than enjoying the beach in Goa, we can offer a couple of suggestions.

You 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 may 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.



(Thursday only) You can 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. You will need to hire a car for the return journey by road at 13.00.

(If you would prefer to ride The Konkan line From Goa to Bombay by train, which takes about 12 hours, it can be arranged). Upon arrival, you will transfer to an airport hotel for the night and take a flight home the following day (extra costs involved)



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:	£ 3,965 based on two people sharing
Ground only price (international flights excluded)	£ 3,295
Single supplement:	£ 880
Extension to Goa	£ 765 based on two people sharing
Single supplement:	£ 700

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

