



*God's Own Country*

[www.keralatourism.org/ecotourism](http://www.keralatourism.org/ecotourism)



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# Introduction

*Home of the artisans, base of power, the place where Kerala's culture and heritage are preserved and displayed at their finest; these and many other phrases have been used to describe Thiruvananthapuram. However, the divinity and aura of this place can only be experienced first hand, as the utter volume of history and lore surrounding the place is too immense. A city and its surroundings that has seen some of the most poignant moments in Kerala's history, it is from here that people can trace the path that has led to what Kerala is today.*

*Its name translates to 'The City of Lord Ananta', which is a reference to the presiding deity (Lord Vishnu) of the world famous Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple. Scores of museums and libraries cover the landscape of the city, testament to many stories that chronicle how it managed to sustain its rustic charm. With the advent of modern infrastructure and technology, Thiruvananthapuram is among those rare locations where the original ethos of the land still stands strong. Our visitors fall in love with the many natural wonders that surround this area on all sides.*



# Kottur

## Stay in the cottages of Kottur

An hour away from the capital city lies this picturesque location, famous for its marvellous Elephant Rehabilitation Centre that is a staple among visitors to the area. A 35 km drive, you're surrounded by dense forests on all sides, with each turn revealing noises and sounds that make for a very intensive stay in the wild. Stay for a night or two at Kappukad and let the majestic and turning trails here help you have a perfect adventure filled weekend. There are six cottages available here – Barbler, Peacock, Barbet, Robin, Koel and Hornbill. The accommodation is not inclusive of food, but the place has a good canteen which offers homely food to all of our guests.

Check in and Check out: By Noon (02.00 P.M.) and Check out after 23 hours

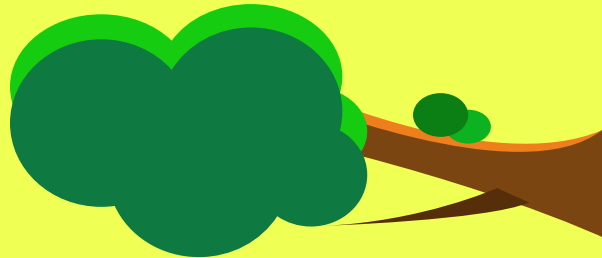
### Rate

Rs. 1600/- for 4 persons (Weekdays)

Rs. 2100/- for 4 persons (Holidays)

### The Elephant Rehabilitation Centre

At the foothills of the Western Ghats, this beautiful site spreads out over 56 kilometres. Trenches surround the place to hold out any surprise intrusions from the wild, visitors can begin their trip at 9 AM. Watch the baby elephants be given baths by expert trainers, along with the majestic tuskers taking dips in the bigger lake. You get an up close and personal view that is mesmerizing, as the silence of an entire jungle joins you in watching these wonderful creatures relax and frolic around in the watery depths of the pristine lake.



# Cruise in

## Neyyar Reservoir

*The Neyyar cruise here is loved by all our visitors, as the visuals are simply amazing, and one gets to see moist deciduous forests and grasslands stretch out in all directions.*

### **Bamboo Rafting**

*A 30-minute ride that simply helps you float through the pleasant and green water of the Neyyar, as a variety of avian species occasionally appear on the horizon.*

#### **Rate:**

*Rs. 500/- for 5 persons*

*Rs. 100/- for extra person*

### **Pedal Boating**

*This romantic exercise is a really interesting way to explore and absorb the Neyyar with your loved ones. The place offers two-seater and four-seater pedal boats. The boating is for 30 minutes.*

*Rs. 200/- for a two-seater*

*Rs. 400/- for four-seater*

### **Bowl Boating (Kuttavanchi)**

*Group activities rarely get more fun than a circular boat, gliding through a calm and picturesque water body. Kallar welcomes you to experience nature at its best through its*



# Trek to Kizhakkumalappara

*A riveting 3 km trek, surrounded by lush greenery, takes on to the summit Kathirmudi. This exotic location is where one can truly enjoy the tranquility and sheer natural beauty of Neyyar, Agasthya Hills and Peppara. Other places that you can find on this trek include Pandipathu, Kurishumala, Ponmudi, Varayadumotta etc. This is a hike that is highly recommended to all trekking aficionados.*



# Neyyar

*30 km from Thiruvananthapuram, a drive that takes one through a mass of greenery on all sides, one reaches the famous Neyyar Dam, straddling the majestic Neyyar river. Among the most beloved picnic spots in Southern Kerala, its serene beauty simply takes your breath away.*



# Jungle Safari

## *Bus Safari to Lion Safari Park*

*The Wildlife Sanctuary here at Neyyar is particularly popular for its lions. Visitors are led to an island on a boat, where a forest department vehicle takes you towards the sanctuary. Enjoy visuals of the undisputed King of the Jungle lazily observing the entire park from beneath trees, as visitors mill around in carefully protected groups.*

*There is also a Crocodile Rehabilitation Centre nearby, where visitors are taken on a boat. Treks can be taken that lead to the Deer Park built here as well, and by the end of the trip, one gets an in-depth glimpse into the many activities and plans that have ensured the conservation of wildlife in these parts.*

*Timing: 09.00 A.M. to 05.00 P.M.*

*Duration: 2 hours*

### *Package includes*

*Boating*

*Visit to Lion Park*

*Visit to Crocodile Rehabilitation Centre*

*Visit Deer Rehabilitation Centre*

*Rs. 395/- per person (Indian Adult)*

*Rs. 200/- for children(Indian)*

*Rs. 555/- per person (Foreign Adult)*

*Rs. 315/- for children(Foreign National)*

*Rs. 160/- for the differently abled*



# Bus Safari

*Bus trips are wonderful ways to get a unique perspective on any wildlife sanctuary. Here, visitors are offered a 45-minute bus safari to the Lion Safari Park in a forest department vehicle.*

*Rs. 160/- per person (Indian Adult)*

*Rs. 80/- for children (Indian)*

*Rs. 315/- per person (Foreign Adult)*

*Rs. 200/- for children (Foreign National)*

## *Bus Jumbo Safari*

*A mega trip that involves a cluster of high profile locations in the area is the Jumbo Bus Safari. The sites covered here include Crocodile Rehabilitation Centre, Deer Rehabilitation Centre and the nearby Elephant Rehabilitation Centre at Kottur.*

*Rs. 230/- per person (Indian Adult)*

*Rs. 115/- for children(Indian)*

*Rs. 330/- per person (Foreign Adult)*

*Rs. 330/- for children(Foreign National)*

## *Kombai Cruise*

*Groups of people can improve an entire experience immensely, and the Kombai package is one of those. Up to 8 people can join in on these memorable trip in the Neyyar.*



# Trekking

## Meenmutty Trekking

*The whimsical hike to Meenmutty Falls from Neyyar is among the best treks in the entire Sanctuary. A boat stops you off at Kombai, the tribal life of the locals of these parts opens up all around you. This 6km trek also brings you to Athirumala, which is the base camp for the Agasthyakoodam pilgrimage.*

*Trekkers get relief in the form of food and a place to rest at the forest camp house. You shall be accompanied by a trained guide and cook, which requires the permission of the Forest Department.*

*Duration: One day package.*

*Timing: 08.00 am to 06.00 pm*

*Minimum five persons are needed to start this package. Monday is a holiday.*

*Rs. 4595/- for five persons (Indian)*

*Rs. 919/- for extra person*

*Rs. 6565/- for five persons (Foreigner)*

*Rs. 1313/- for extra person*

*Off to Meenmutty and Kombai Kani Falls*

*This day trip is among the best ways to consume the intrinsic beauty of these mesmerizing falls. A minimum of five people are needed to start this package.*

*Duration: One day package. Monday is a holiday.*

*Rs. 4750/- for five persons*



# Jungle camps



## Meenmutty Camp

*This camping trip is specially organized by the Neyyar forest department. A trek to beautiful Meenmutty falls, a magnificent 13 km boat ride to Kombai along with delicious local food are part of the package.*

*Check-in: 10.00 A.M. and Check-out 12.00 P.M. next day*

### *Duration: 26 hours*

*Rs. 5250/- for five persons (Indian)*

*Rs. 1050/- for extra person*

*Rs. 7750/- for five persons (Foreigner)*

*Rs. 1550/- for extra person*

## Kombai Camp

*Nights in Neyyar are among the most sought out experiences in all of Southern Kerala, and this special package is run by the Neyyar Forest Department near Kombai Falls. Alongside the hike to Meenmutty Falls and Kombai, we also get to visit Kombai's tribal settlement. Delicious meals are also included in the package.*

*Check-in: 10.00 A.M. and Check-out 12.00 P.M. next day*

### *Duration: 26 hours*

*Rs. 4750/- for five persons (Indian)*

*Rs. 950/- for extra person*

*Rs. 6750/- for five persons (Foreigner)*

*Rs. 1350/- for extra person*

### *Accommodation*

*Agasthya Stay: The forest department has made one room available here, that ensures your night stay in the forest is perfect in all regards.*

*Tariff for single room: Rs. 1500/-*

*Neyyar Stay: The night stay at Neyyar is in the one room provided by the Forest Department, which makes sure that your stay in the Neyyar jungle is a memorable event.*

*Tariff – Rs. 975/-*

# Utharam Kayam

## Top Hut

Surrounded by vegetation on all sides, along with the massive Agasthya Hills embracing you, a stay-over and hike at the quaint Utharam Kayam Top Hut is a must while visiting Neyyar. Nature opens up its warm arms to all visitors in these parts. People also love staying at the treehouse at Erumadam. One must take a 13 km ride on a boat from Kombai, and another 2 km hike to this site once you're ashore. It ticks off every checkbox in an adventurers itinerary and is constantly swarmed by nature lovers and thrill seekers.

At a time, a maximum of four persons can avail this package.

Rs. 3000/- for one person (Indian)

Rs. 6000/- for two persons (Indian)

Rs. 12,000/- for four persons(Indian)

Rs. 4000/- for one person (foreigner)

Rs. 8000/- for two persons (foreigner)

The Jungle Falls of Agasthya - Peppara

A visit to Peppara is an invitation to absorb an ancient jungle at its very finest. These are locations that have not changed for centuries and are an extremely important part of our lore.



# Trek to Vazhvanthol Falls

*This intense hike begins at Kaanithara, where one is initially surrounded by eucalyptus plantations. Going upwards on the incline, canopies open up that let people relieve some of their physical exhaustion. This 5 km trek to Vazhvanthol is extra sweet as one gets to see two waterfalls at the summit. A stroll through the forest helps you reach the first, and half a kilometre after it one finally reaches Vazhvanthol Falls. On the way back, visitors love taking a comfortable dip in the waters of the Kallar River. A guide will accompany you for this one-day trekking programme.*

*Rs. 1000/- for 10 persons*

*Contact*

*Asst. Wildlife Warden,*

*Neyyar*

*Phone: 8547602970*



# The Golden Peaks of Ponmudi

*Ponmudi is beloved to all residents of Thiruvananthapuram, as this is among best escapes for city dwellers who need a break from the rigours of urban life. A 60 km drive from the capital, the magnificent Kallar accompanying you the entire way. This hill station is the de facto picnic spot for most people in Southern Kerala. Endless trails, beautiful flora and fauna and overall mesmerizing visuals await all who make this picturesque trip.*



## 10 the Abode of Nilgiri Tahr

# Varayadumotta

For people in the Southern part of the State, Varayadumotta is the best place to encounter the legendary mountain goat, the Nilgiri Tahr. A 40 km journey from the city, it is a full day long guided trekking programme. Its 1100 m height is the highest in the area, the 18 km trek to climb just one side of it is easily among the hardest in all of Kerala. But this trek is worth it, as the summit helps you see some of the best visuals of the area, from an inimitable vantage point that makes up for all the physical exhaustion that takes to get there.

The package is available in two routes – one from Golden Valley (the check post located at the starting point) and the other from Ponmudi. Food is not included in the package and this trekking programme is not available during monsoon time. Best season to avail this trek is November – May. Prior booking is needed to avail this package.

**Timing:** Starts at 07.30 AM (It is a 12 hours trekking programme)

Two guides will accompany the trekkers

Rs. 1500/- for five persons

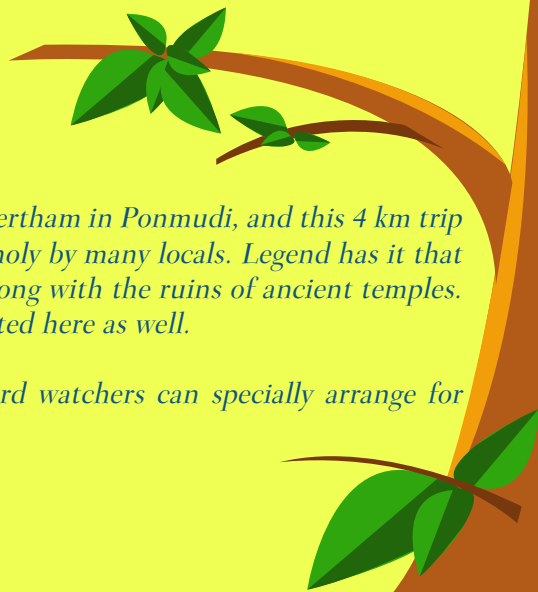
Trek to Seethatheertham

Hike to the majestic streams of Seethatheertham in Ponmudi, and this 4 km trip will help you encounter sites considered holy by many locals. Legend has it that one can see the footprints of Goddess Sita, along with the ruins of ancient temples. Herds of elephants and gaurs can be spotted here as well.

Interested wildlife photographers and bird watchers can specially arrange for this package.

Rs. 500/- for 10 persons

Rs. 60/- for extra person



# Trekking Manachala

*A specially trained local guide takes visitors to the base camp of Varayadumotta Peak. Organized by Ponmudi Ecotourism, this 6 km trek is a wonderful way to begin the day.*

*Timing: Starts at 07.30 A.M.*

*Rs. 500/- for 10 persons*

*Rs. 60/- for extra person*



# Trekking *Maruthuwamala*

*This is a special offseason trekking programme led by Ponmudi Ecotourism to the very interior of forests of the Western Ghats.*

*Timing: Starts at 07.30 A.M.*

*Rs. 500/- for 10 persons*

*Rs. 60/- for extra person*



# Ecotourism

*This planet we are on nurtures over 7 billion inhabitants on a daily basis. While its marvels are beyond the realm of any one person's imagination, it is easy to notice the damages that are being caused on each and every front, due to the rise in population and the spread of civilization. Even the uninhabited corners of Mother Earth are now being turned into urban centres, and this affects the fragile balance that has kept the planet afloat this entire time.*

*Tourism is a great bonding element, mixing and mashing cultural experiences from across the world. People gain empathy for those they may have nothing in common with, with places their ancestors may never have heard of or traditions they could never have even dreamt of. Hence, the combination of environmentally driven ecological sites being used as prime tourist destinations leads to the wonderful concept of ecotourism.*



# Significance of Ecotourism

*Ecotourism lets people appreciate the many boons that Mother Earth has bestowed us with. It is the epitome of making people realize the true value of the treasures that we are endangering with our reckless actions. It is the clarion call that resonates within one's soul in a seamless but provocative manner, evoking the basic empathy that is the first step in battling the environmental dangers we are facing in this day and age.*



# Ecotourism in Thiruvananthapuram

*The capital of Kerala is among the best examples of how people can balance the rising influences of urbanization on our culture with our traditional values. From historic locations within the city to a plethora of natural wonders on all sides, people have come together to ensure that the ancient charm and cleanliness of this site has been maintained at all costs. Casual walks and strolls around the area reveal among the most efficient garbage collection services in the entire country. All destinations are strictly regulated, with visitors being reminded of their responsibility and duty in ensuring that these boons of nature remain in the condition we found them, that generations after us can fall in love with them just as we did.*



# Why Kerala

*The majestic trees and peeking wildlife that greet you during your journey are hallmarks of Kerala and its endless bounty of natural beauty. Much of our lore and tradition emanates from these parts, and they are treasure troves of our past and heritage. They are priceless cultural landmarks, behemoths of history and proud jewels that adorn our vast landscape. Kerala and its people have known for a long time the immense responsibility they have inherited from their ancestors; true crusaders who ensured the well-being of this land for centuries. It is now our moment, our time in history, to repay the gifts that the land has blessed us with. Hence, the people and governments at all levels have come together to formulate ways to conserve and protect the myriad floral and faunal species that grace our unique landscape.*

*Concerted efforts have been made in the last few decades, alongside budgetary allotments and specific policy changes, that has made Kerala one among the pioneers in the Ecotourism movement around the world. Being a region with such an abundance of natural resources, it seems only fitting that we set an example and lead the way in the global resistance against any threats to our environment.*



# Getting There

## By Rail



*There are direct trains from Thiruvananthapuram to all the main towns in Kerala as well as the major cities in India. Railway enquiry Ph: 132*

## By Air



*Trivandrum International Airport (6 km from the city)*



*Long distance buses operate from the Central Bus Station at Thampanoor, opposite the Railway Station Thampanoor KSRTC Bus Terminal Ph: 2323886. Short distance buses operate from the City Bus Station, East Fort Ph: 2575495*

# Photo Gallery



*Tranquil Neyyar Reservoir*

# Photo Gallery



*Visitors enjoying the bamboo rafting*

# Photo Gallery



*Safari at the Lion Park*

# Photo Gallery



*Pedal boats at Neyyar reservoir*

# Photo Gallery



*Meenmutty Falls*

# Photo Gallery



*Its time for bath*

# Photo Gallery



*Deer Park at Neyyar*

# Photo Gallery



*Crocodile Rearing Centre, Neyyar*

# Photo Gallery



*Bamboo Rafting, Kottur*

# Photo Gallery



*And the happy Jumbo at Kottur*

# Youtube Gallery



*Feeding the elephants at Kottur*

# Youtube Gallery



*Elephant's day out*

# Youtube Gallery



*Bamboo Rafting at Kottur*

# Youtube Gallery



*Meenmutty falls, Kallar*

# Youtube Gallery



*Neyyar Reservoir*

# Youtube Gallery



*Lion Safari at Neyyar*