



The Cultural Hub of Kerala

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INTRODUCTION

The colours that Ernakulam unites are diverse, the cultures that it represents are vast, but its soul embodies the very essence of God's Own Country. Its inclusive ethos resonates in every single buildings and park here, as the people of this district represent beliefs and traditions that stretch all around the planet. While some may identify it with shopping malls, myriad restaurants and majestic skyscrapers, it also boasts of protected sanctuaries, a fine natural harbour and some of the best exponents of ecotourism in all of God's Own Country. The place has so many ecotourism attractions like Thattekkad, Mangalavanam, Paniyeli Poru, Kodanad, Abhayaranyam and many more.



Thattekkad

A BIRDWATCHER'S HEAVEN

Thattekkad is definitely on most birdwatchers bucket list, as the history that emanates from its 25 square kilometre area is immense. This was the first sanctuary of its kind in Kerala, it is named after the world-renowned ornithologist, Dr. Salim Ali, the legendary 'Birdman of India'. During his ornithological survey of Travancore - Cochin, he found this wonderful site with evergreen lowland forest that is today named after him. Local tribal guides help you manoeuvre around this beautiful haven for a host of avian species.



SAFARIS

Boating in Periyar

The Periyar is renowned for its visuals, but viewings of the avian beings in these parts are truly special. Boat rides give you access to cormorants, kingfishers, and many other birds, which feed off fish and other small creatures in the water.

Best time for boating: February – July
Cost: Rs. 150/- for 20 persons



TREKKING

Salim Ali Bird Trail

This special trail named after the sanctuaries namesake takes you on a unique hike to discover a host of birds in their chosen habitats. This includes a visit to the Butterfly Garden and the interpretation centre. Further information on the local species can be gained from the bird monitoring cell here.

Cost of the package:

Rs. 45/-



BLACK BAZA TRAIL

A 3-hour hike to the heart of Thattekkad gives one a rare look at the intimate routines these species have. Birds awake your very soul with your rhythmic chirping, and an expert guide takes you around the evergreen terrain that this area is famous for. The package includes a guide, entry fee and cost of one bottle drinking water.

*Timings- 06.00 A.M. to 09.00 A.M., 03.00 P.M. to 06.00 P.M.
Maximum 15 persons in a trail*

*Cost of the package
Rs. 500/-*



TROGON TRAIL

The trogon trails that Thattekkad has is among the most intriguing in the area. The guides show you where these magnificent creatures reside, and their knowledge of the place takes you to parts of the sanctuary that visitors normally have no access too.

The package includes a guide, entry fee and cost of one bottle drinking water.

Timing: 06.00 A.M. to 09.00 A.M., 03.00 P.M. to 06.00 P.M.

Maximum 15 persons in a trail

*Cost of the package
Rs. 500/- per person*



Stay over **FROGMOUTH WATCHTOWER**

At night, Thattekkad truly comes to life. Its evergreen terrain is home to some of the rarest avian beings in the entire district, and visitors get to spend a night amidst the clandestine stars. The mist shrouds the area, as the forest truly comes to life from this wonderful vantage point.

This one-night stay programme covers all costs including accommodation, dinner, breakfast and any one of the bird watching trails.

Check-in: 03.00 P.M. and Check-out 12.00 P.M.

Cost

Rs. 2500/- for two persons

Rs. 500/ for extra person



HORNBILL VIEW TOWER

A panoramic view of the entirety of Thattekkad is one of the premier attractions in the area. The stay atop Hornbill tower gives one a good glimpse into the entirety of the reservoir. At night, it feels like one is right in the middle of a choir, watching a sacred abode for birds come to life.

The programmes cover all costs including accommodation, dinner, breakfast and any one of the bird watching trails.

Check-in: 03.00 P.M. and Check-out 12.00 P.M.

Cost

Rs. 2500/- for two persons

Rs. 500/ for extra person

Tree Hut

Tree Huts are some of the most immersive tourist packages that our visitors are offered. The encapsulate everything that is special about the wild, with an in-depth look into their day to day activities.

The package includes accommodation, bird watching, dinner and breakfast.

Check-in: 03.00 pm and Check-out 12.00 pm

Cost

Rs. 2500/- for two persons

Rs. 500/ for extra person



PAID NATURE CAMP

This is a special nature awareness camp that aims at educating people on the importance of protected areas and the steps we as citizens and children of mother earth must follow to conserve it. It is held for students, NGOs, professionals, self-financing students and business groups. Different tariffs are offered for different types of target groups. Minimum of 15 persons is required for conducting a camp.

Where

Thattekkad Bird Sanctuary is situated in Kothamangalam in the district of Ernakulam



PANIYELI PORU

The waves fought the earnest raftsmen as they made their way across the mighty Periyar, and that is how Paniyeli Poru got its name. It lies 20 km away from Perumbavoor and 35 km from Aluva, it is the trek to the falls here that make it such a prime picnic location. The 1.5 km trek to a trail that borders the riverside is extremely beautiful. One needs to walk through the dense forest cover here, and it makes for a truly amazing site to camp as well. The site is usually more accessible when the water is low.

Timing: 08.00 A.M. to 04.00 P.M.

Rs. 20/- for Adult

Rs. 10/- for children from 5 – 13

Contact Details

Paniyeli Poru

Ph: +91 8547604200

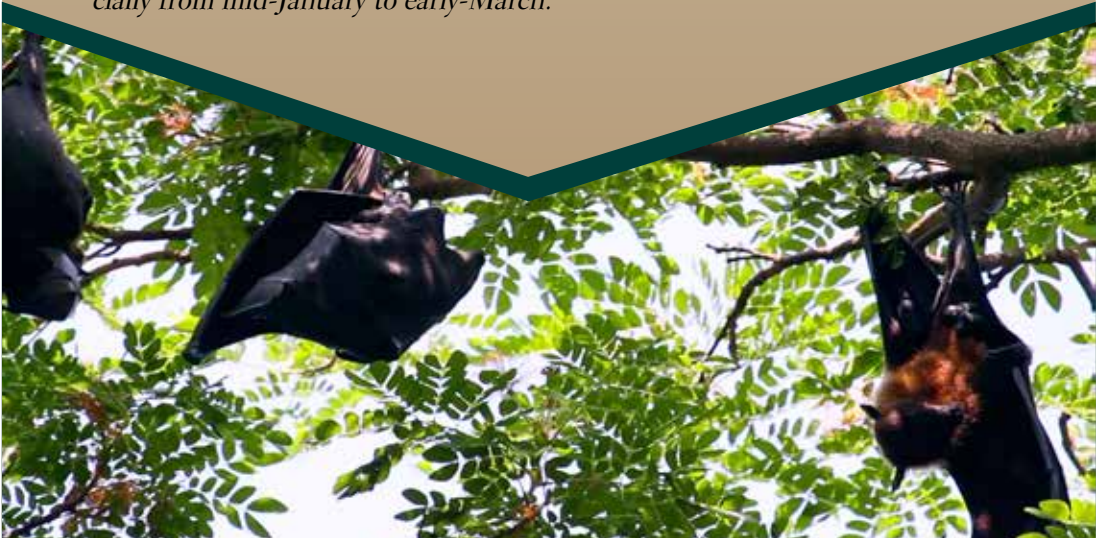


MANGALAVANAM BIRD SANCTUARY

Being nicknamed the 'Green Lung of Kochi', the Mangalavanam Bird Sanctuary is among the most beloved sites in all of Ernakulam. Birdwatchers throng to this green haven in large numbers due to it being a popular host for a lot of migratory birds, with a 2006 census having stated that 94 birds belonging to 32 species could be seen in Mangalavanam.

Located right in the middle of the city, it is situated behind the Kerala High Court building and is surrounded by the Arabian Sea and backwaters. Its terrain supports many types of mangroves and their associated species. Many mammals can be seen here as well, including Indian Flying-fox, Painted Bat, Eurasian Otter, House Rat and Three-striped Palm Squirrel.

The best time to visit the sanctuary is during the early summer months, especially from mid-January to early-March.



ABHAYARANYAM ECOTOURISM PACKAGES

A place where animals are taken care of with genuine love and concern, Abhayaranyam is a nature rehabilitation centre that has gained traction with a lot of our visitors over the years. Situated near Kaprikad at Kunnathukadu Taluk in Ernakulam, you have the mighty Periyar river on one side and a host of orphaned wildlife species that are being attended upon by expert trainers throughout the day. Watching these magnificent beasts being nursed back to health is a beautiful experience. One also gets to see various species of birds, butterflies, spiders and mushrooms. The place boasts of its own elephant shelter and as well as a special training centre for mahouts.

Rates

Rs. 20/- Indian Adults

Rs. 10/- for Children

Rs. 100/- for Foreign Nationals

Rs. 100/- for Photography

Rs. 250//- for Video Camera

Rs. 2000/- for Training as Elephant Mahout

Trekking to PANAMKUZHI

What began as an extension to the famous Abhayaranyam project, Panamkuzhi Ecotourism has now become a staple in the area. The hike to Panamkuzhi from Kaprikad or Abhayaranyam is a riveting experience, the place also offers a chance to visit a Mahogany plantation, a bathing ghat in Periyar, tree houses and bamboo huts.

Entry tickets taken from Abhayaranyam can be used to visit this place.

Rates

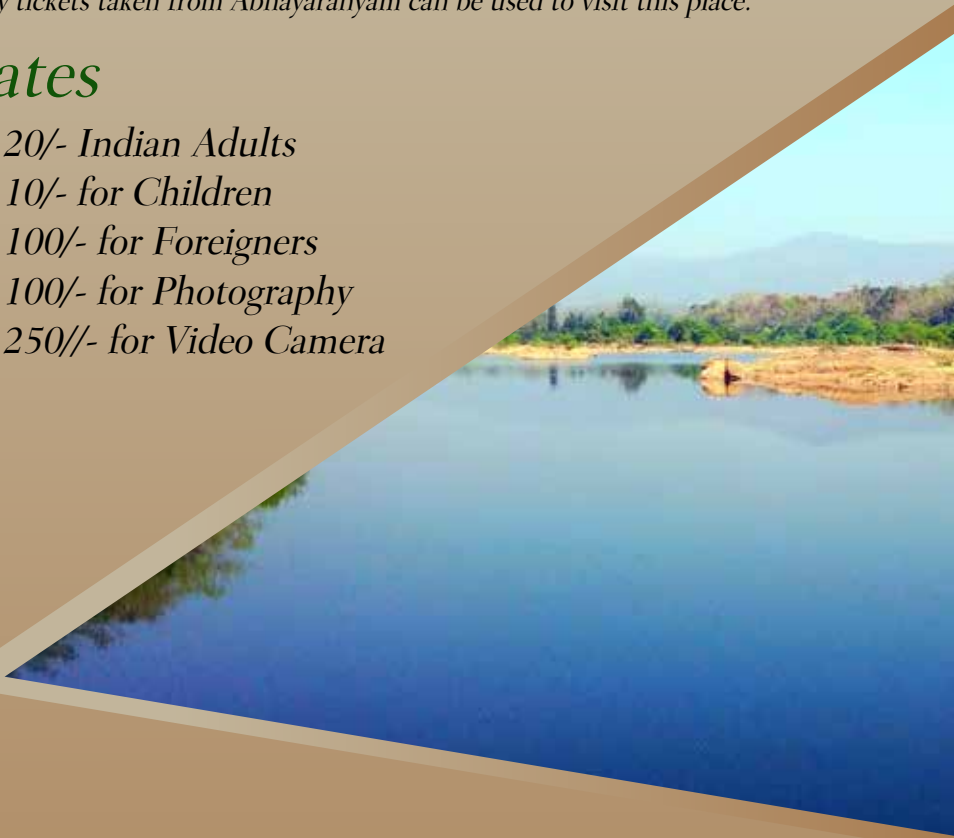
Rs. 20/- Indian Adults

Rs. 10/- for Children

Rs. 100/- for Foreigners

Rs. 100/- for Photography

Rs. 250//- for Video Camera



SUVARNODYANAM

Biological Ecotourism Park

In Nedumbassery

Suvarnodyanam Biological Ecotourism Park is a treasure trove of leisure zones for tourists, including a Butterfly Park, Fern House, Orchidarium and Cacti Garden. Add to these a Spice Garden, Medicinal Plant Garden and Palm and Bamboo Houses, and one is sure to be entertained for an entire day. Placed near Nedumbassery, it has its own Interpretation Centre, named the Salim Ali Nature Study Hall, where one gets provisions for trekking and nature camp facilities.

Rates

Rs. 10/- Indian Adults

Rs. 5/- for children

Rs. 50/- for Foreign Nationals

Rs. 100/- for Photography

Rs. 250/- for Video Cameras

Rs. 2000/-one day rent for the hall



KODANAD

At Kodanad, tourists get to visit one of the largest elephant training centres in Kerala. Flanked by the Periyar river, this place has played a major role in the rehabilitation of the majestic tuskers since the ban on capturing elephants was enforced. The vibe of the place is endearing, as it represents a safe haven for these docile animals and their interactions with their trainers and mahouts reinforces the same.



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 ERNAKULAM

The impact of modern civilization and urbanization has not been felt anywhere as prominently in all of Kerala as in Ernakulam. An area where a vast majority of industries have sprung up over the last few decades, a lot has been done to ensure that the greenery that the place was blessed with is maintained. The main attractions and natural wonders have extensive packages and camps that educate tourists, students and normal citizens on the different ways in which they can conserve their surroundings and these special destinations that Ernakulam has blessed with. These locations regularly act as beacons of hope in an ever-changing world where more and more greenery is being swallowed for industrial purposes.



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: Ernakulam Junction Railway Station is the major station in Ernakulam

Ph: 131; Ernakulam Town, Enquiry Ph: 2395198

Aluva Enquiry Ph: 2624141



By air: Cochin International Airport at Nedumbassery (32 km from the city)



By water: There are two ferry stations in Ernakulam. The main Boat Jetty is 1 km from the Junction Railway Station and the other is near the High Court. Ferry timings (From the main boat jetty): Vypeen: Frequent services (1/2 hr journey) Mattancherry: Daily 6 ferries (1/2 hr journey) Fort Kochi: Daily 30 services (20 min. journey). First

PHOTOS



Bhoothathankettu

PHOTOS



Baby Elephant at Kodanad

PHOTOS



Elephants at Kodanad

PHOTOS



Kochi Backwaters

PHOTOS



Magical blooms at Bhoothathankettu

PHOTOS



Mangalavanam Bird Sanctuary

PHOTOS



On the way to Old Bhoothathankettu

PHOTOS



Paris Peacock Butterfly

PHOTOS



River Periyar in Bhoothathankettu

PHOTOS



Thattekkad Bird Sanctuary

VIDEOS



Thattekkad Bird Sanctuary

VIDEOS



River Periyar

VIDEOS



Mangalavanam Bird Sanctuary

VIDEOS



Kodanad Elephant Centre

VIDEOS



Kochi Harbour

VIDEOS



Bhoothathankettu