

Silent Valley

The Heart of Silence



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Introduction

There are only a few places left on this planet where Nature still holds sway, where man and his inventions have not yet breached prehistoric fortresses, and humans can still only explore hesitantly. Rarely do people hear of locations which haven't been completely mapped out and investigated by researchers and scientists alike. In the upper reaches of Northern Kerala, there exists one such place. From the very first step you take, you are enchanted by the unknown stretches that sprawl out in all directions. Every single trail you take is sacred, each turn holy to those who have dwelled and been protected by these forests for more than a few millennia. The greenery here defies mortal expectations, but it is the silence of the cicadas that gave the legendary Silent Valley National Park its name. It is here in God's Own Country that we encounter the legendary mysticism that the State is famous for at its absolute finest.



Geographical Features

The last bastion of evergreen vegetation in the Sahya ranges, the Silent Valley unveils a new surprise every few years, baiting scholars and nature lovers alike to continue their research into this magical green paradise. It is shielded by the Nilgiri Plateau to the North and the Mannarkkad Plains to the South and is the centrepiece of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve.



Historical Significance

Among the most integral parts of the Western Ghats, Silent Valley was christened a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 2012. We are merely visitors to an ancient and undisturbed masterpiece, with the first explorations beginning only in the 19th century. The British are said to have stumbled across this area and sanctioned coffee plantations over a huge number of acres. But the land itself seemed to revolt, and with produce on the downfall, they were forced to leave it alone and simply watch as the forest reclaimed what was always its own.



Mythological Roots

A salient jewel of Palakkad district, Silent Valley has an interesting place in ancient Indian mythology. The place was originally called 'Sairandhrivanam' (the forest of Sairandhri or Panchali), because it was in these divine forests that Panchali and her Pandava husbands (from the epic Mahabharatha) are said to have sought refuge from their cousins, the Kauravas. Add on the fact that the very river that feeds and nurtures this entire area is called Kunthi (after the Pandavas' mother), and the bond seems even more legitimate.



Biodiversity

The sheer magnitude and diversity of the flora and fauna on display in Silent Valley is breath-taking. Visitors are informed that this area is home to tigers, leopards, elephants, snakes, Lion-Tailed Macaques and Malabar Giant Squirrels and hundreds of species of insects, including rare butterflies and moths. Sightings of the legendary Nilgiri Tahr have also been reported. Zoologists throng here in great numbers, as the chance to study these rare beings in their natural habitats is extremely rare. A flowing breeze, an occasional roar and magnificent climate greet all weary visitors. Some love idling by the River Kunthi, watching its ferocious waves carve the nearby rocks, as animals arrive in herds to play, bathe and congregate. Others are introduced to select pockets where one can camp, explore or leisurely absorb the ever prevalent green vibes of the Valley.



Social Significance

These hallowed grounds at Silent Valley have also seen one among the greatest people's movements in the world. A Hydroelectric Dam Project was proposed over River Kunthi in the early 1970's that would affect the livelihood of all life forms over an area of 830 hectares. Sustained protests, led by thousands of nature lovers, NGOs and the local populace ensured that the project was scrapped. It took over a decade to resolve the issue and resulted in Silent Valley being named a National Park. Even without a coordinated movement, people from far and wide thronged together to ensure that the innate beauty of the Park was maintained. In an era where media platforms did not have the reach they have today, it was a remarkable example of people coming together to conserve and protect the environment.



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 ones 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 at Silent Valley

At Silent Valley, its ecotourism initiatives are among the finest in the State. It has a plethora of packages that help one understand the deep-rooted process that has gone into maintaining the beauty of this forest. Our species arrived here late, but the locals and government together have managed to keep away the waves of urbanization from the place. Mari, a famous guide who descends from a line of famous guides of the place, is one among the best people to take you to the trails and paths that have been naturally maintained for eons. The stories told here talk about a concerted effort by everyone involved to ensure the park holds true to its roots.



Why Kerala

The majestic pines and peeking wildlife that greet you as you enter Silent Valley during your initial trek 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.



Jungle safari

Sairandhri
Ecotourism
Package

Here begins the wild voyage that takes you through a whirlwind ride to witness the unique grandeur of Silent Valley. Visitors availing the Sairandhri Ecotourism Package are taken on a guided tour that traverses the stunningly varied terrain of the National Park, going from moist deciduous forests to evergreen forests. The charming River Kunthi beckons all who seek a place to simply observe the park at its quaint best. There is also a 100 ft. tall watchtower inside the woods where visitors can observe the valley unfold beneath them. It is the ideal location to savour panoramic views of the park as you are lovingly embraced by gusty winds.

The entire trip takes 5 hours and no accommodation is provided inside the park. Visitors are strictly prohibited from bathing in the river. Visitors can journey through the park in jeeps or buses owned by the Silent Valley Forest Development Agency. Vehicles are a prerequisite for availing this package.

Package Timing

07.30 am to 01.00pm

Safari Charge: Rs. 400/-

Rates for hiring jeep/ bus

5 seater Jeep: Rs. 2000/-

15 seater Bus: Rs. 6000/-

25 seater Bus: Rs. 10000/-



For advance

Booking 8589895652

please contact 9645586629

Trekking

Boomiyampadi Ecotourism Package

Hidden around 13 km off Mukkali (base camp of the Silent Valley National Park) is Bommiyampadi, a picturesque haven of surreal beauty located right in the heart of the woods. The Bommiyampadi Ecotourism Package is essentially a jungle retreat that lets one soak in the sheer magnitude of greenery on display at Silent Valley. Visitors stay in a 'Forest Front' Cottage, are treated to local delicacies, and enjoy a guided trip through the wilderness. It also includes a trip to the tribal areas of Attappady. This package includes the Sairandhri Package as well. After a stay at a cottage in the picturesque Bommiyampadi, visitors can avail the Sairandhri Package the next day.

The package provides stay over in three different kinds of cottages: Annapoorna & Vasudha, Vasundhara and Dhatri.

Check In: 12.00 P.M. and Check out: 01.30 P.M.
Cost of the Package

TARIFF FOR COTTAGES:

Annapoorna & Vasudha: Rs. 6000 (2 persons)

Rs. 1500 for extra person

Child below 10 years: Food Charge only

Vasundhara: Rs. 6000 (2 person)

Dhathri: Rs. 14000 for 5 persons

PACKAGE DETAILS

After check-in at the information centre, trekkers need to reach Bommiyampadi with a guide and safari will be provided in the visitor's own vehicle. Lunch, Tea, Dinner and Breakfast are included in the package.



Camping Walk with the Master

Here are the true guardians of the forest, people who have sustained and coexisted in these regions for generations. They are literal extensions of the forest, and their minds contain the secrets of this sacredland. This is a paid Nature Camp that lets nature lovers and students meet and have a conversation with experts or masters in various fields. An open-ended nature programme, it includes topics like nature photography, nature walks and many other specialized ways to get even closer to the very essence of the Silent Valley. .

It is a 2-3 day programme which may include 15-20 selected participants, who are allowed to camp in the National Park.

Check-in: 09.00 A.M. and check-out 03.00 P.M.

Cost of the Package

**Rs. 2000 per head (2days)
2500 per head (3days)**

**For advance booking, please
contact: 9447678519**



Keerippara Camping

Keerippara is the ideal package for those interested in wildlife, and includes packages offering both trekking and an overnight stay. It is a two day package and the trail runs through a tangle of forests in the buffer zone of the Park. Your journey begins with the evergreen and moist deciduous forests before you are led into the secondary grasslands at Keerippara. Here lie the secret abodes of the some of the rarest species of butterflies in the world, along with numerous other endemic avian varieties. You can take a leisurely stroll or simply relax and feel their every flutter dictate the pulse of the forest.

Specifics: Maximum number of persons in one group is five and each group will be accompanied by a guide. The time span for trekking is 4 hrs. The package also provides tent accommodation for interested campers.

Check-In (Day 1): 03.00 P.M.

Check-Out (Day 2): 08.30 A.M.

Package Cost

Rs. 2000 (per person)

Rs. 8500 (for 5 persons)



How to Reach

By Air: The Coimbatore International Airport located 91 km away is the nearest airport to Silent Valley Park. The airport is well connected to the major metropolitan cities of India and overseas. It receives regular air traffic from destinations across the world.

By Rail: The nearest railway station to Silent Valley is the Palakkad Junction Railway Station, situated 45 km from the park.

By Road: The Silent Valley Park is well connected to nearby cities through a well maintained road network. Trips from nearby cities like Bangalore and Coimbatore are an enchanting experience. There are numerous private buses as well as those run by the State Corporations that provide regular services to the area.



Photo
Gallery

Bommiyampadi



Keeripara Camping



Sairandhri Watch tower

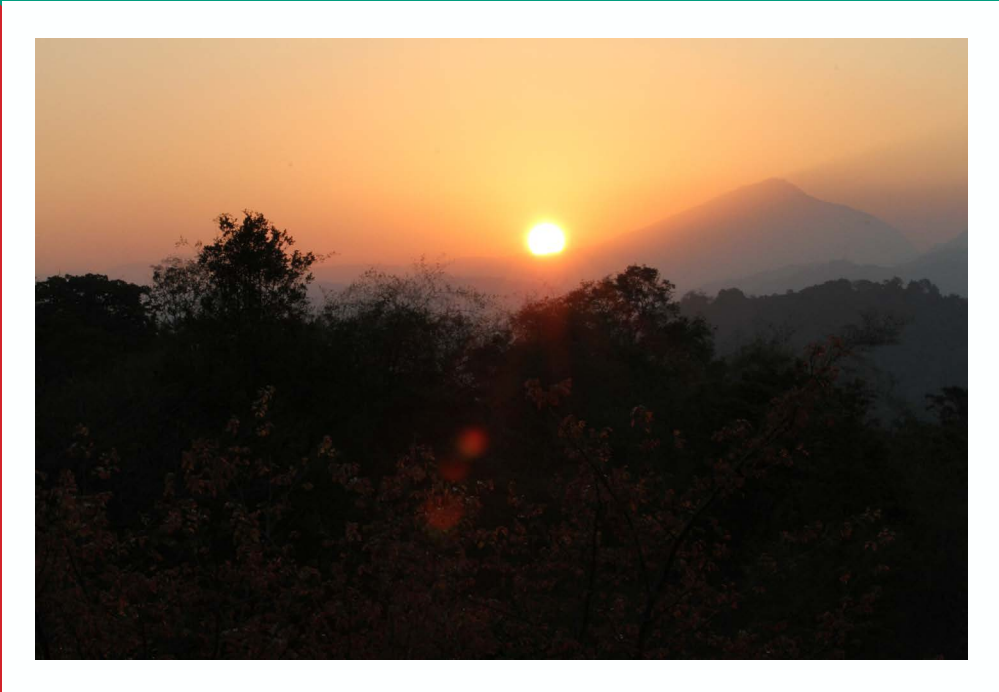


Inside view of *Forest Front Cottage at Bommiyampadi*



Evening

Silent Valley



River Kunthi



*journey
through the
pristine blanket of green.*



*Freely flowing
Kunthi River inside
Silent Valley National Park*



On the way to Bommiyampadi



Forest Front Cottage at Bommiyampadi



Video Gallery



Trip to Sairandhri

Video Gallery



Trek to Sairandhri Watch Tower

Video Gallery



**Malleshwara Temple
Festival, Attappady**

Video Gallery



Keerippara Camping

Video Gallery



On the way to Bommiyampadi

Video Gallery



Bommiyampadi Package

Contact Details

Wildlife Warden
Silent Valley Division
Mannarkkad, Palakkad
Kerala - 678582
Email: mail@silentvalley.gov.in