kerala
God's Own Country

CELEBRATIONS KERALA

Events and Festivals - 2026



January

- Kochi Muziris Biennale
- Kodikuthu Festival
- Arthunkal Perunnal
- Kerala Literature Festival
- Adoor Gajamela
- Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters

February

- Nishagandhi Dance Festival
- Machattu Mamangam
- Chettikulangara Bharani
- Uthralikavu Pooram
- Guruvayoor Aanayottam
- Guruvayoor Festival

March

- Attukal Pongala
- Kodungalloor Bharani
- Painkuni Utsavam
- Malanada Kettukazhcha
- Pattambi Nercha

April

- Nenmara Vallangi Vela
- Vishu
- Thrissur Pooram

June

- Champakulam Boat Race

July

- Aanayoottu
- Aranmula Vallasadya
- Malabar River Festival

August

- Athachamayam
- Nehru Trophy Boat Race
- Payippad Boat Race
- Onam Week Celebrations
- Onam
- Pulikali
- Aranmula Boat Race
- The Champions Boat League

September

- Oachira Kalakettu
- Kerala Travel Mart

October

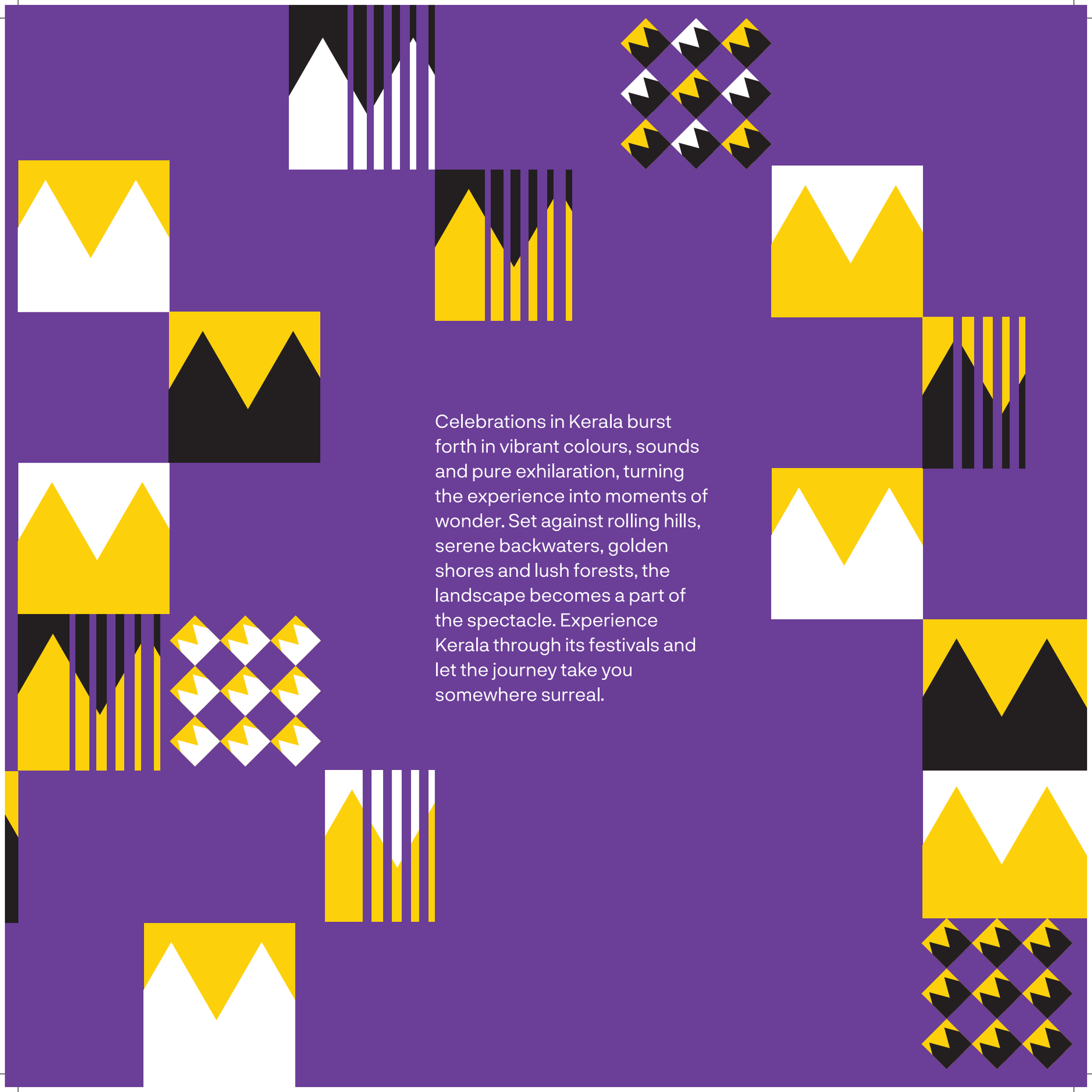
- Chaliyar River Paddle
- Navarathri Sangeetholsavam
- Soorya Dance and Music Festival
- Vidhyarambham
- International Surfing Festival
- International Paragliding Festival

November

- Parumala Perunnal
- Chembai Sangeetholsavam
- Kalpathi Ratholsavam
- Beemapally Uroos

December

- Manorama Hortus
- International Film Festival of Kerala
- Mountain Terrain Biking Championship
- Cochin Carnival



Celebrations in Kerala burst forth in vibrant colours, sounds and pure exhilaration, turning the experience into moments of wonder. Set against rolling hills, serene backwaters, golden shores and lush forests, the landscape becomes a part of the spectacle. Experience Kerala through its festivals and let the journey take you somewhere surreal.



JANUARY

Start the year on a high note with festivals that leave you mesmerised. Let the magic of art and the power of words sweep you off your feet.



Kochi-
Muziris
Biennale

KOCHI MUZIRIS BIENNALE

Art around every corner

Kochi
12th December 2025 to
31st March 2026

Step into a world where contemporary art comes alive, with Indian and international artists presenting a vibrant mix of mediums and styles. Set against the beautiful backdrop of Kochi, giant murals transform walls into striking masterpieces, while carefully restored warehouses open up as airy galleries, showcasing an extraordinary array of artwork.









KODIKUTHU FESTIVAL

A night of devotion

Kanjiramattom, Ernakulam
14th January

Held at the Kanjiramattom Mosque, the festival honours the revered Sheikh Fariduddin. Its most captivating moment is the sacred Chandanakkudam ritual, when devotees move in a procession around the mosque, carrying earthen pots adorned with fragrant sandalwood paste, turning the night into a spectacle of faith and devotion.



ARTHUNKAL PERUNNAL

A feast for the senses

Cherthala, Alappuzha
20th January

The charming town of Arthunkal in Alappuzha bursts with life during the ten-day St. Sebastian's Feast at the St. Andrew's Basilica, attracting devotees from across Kerala. The celebrations peak when the revered statue of St. Sebastian is carried in a grand procession from the historic church to the beach and back, filling the air with devotion and fervour.

KERALA LITERATURE FESTIVAL

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Words by the sea

Kozhikode Beach
22nd to 25th January

Unfolding along the shores of Kozhikode Beach, the Kerala Literature Festival is a gathering of celebrated authors, thinkers and activists. It serves as a dynamic hub for deep dives into literature, politics, culture and social issues. This festival offers a unique opportunity to interact with authors and enjoy quality time amidst the sun, sand and surf.

ADOOR GAJAMELA

Tuskers and traditions

Adoor, Pathanamthitta
28th January

Adoor Gajamela is a part of the dazzling ten-day festival at Adoor Parthasarathy Temple in Pathanamthitta. Majestically adorned elephants, flanked by towering parasols, parade before the deity in a stunning procession. The event comes alive with Panchavadyam, bringing rhythm and energy to the festivities.





MATHRUBHUMI INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF LETTERS

Words and ideas

Kanakakkunnu Palace Grounds, Thiruvananthapuram
29th January to 1st February

Experience the Mathrubhumi International Festival of Letters, where writers, thinkers and intellectuals from across the globe come together for lively discussions, book readings and debates. A true hub for literature lovers and curious minds, the festival celebrates ideas, creativity and the love of the written word.

MBIFL'26
MATHRUBHUMI INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF LETTERS




MBIFL
MATHRUBHUMI INTERN
FESTIVAL

FEBRUARY

February in God's Own Country brims with a vibrant mix of events and festivals. From lively cultural celebrations to dance performances, the month offers something for every interest, making it a truly exciting time to experience Kerala.

NISHAGANDHI
DANCE FESTIVAL



NISHAGANDHI DANCE FESTIVAL

Rhythmic bliss

Kanakakkunnu Palace Grounds, Thiruvananthapuram

13th to 20th February

Experience the magic of dance at the Nishagandhi Festival, where India's finest artists showcase their talent. On the grounds of Kanakakkunnu Palace, the festival comes alive with captivating performances, offering an unforgettable celebration of art and culture.

MACHATTU MAMANGAM



A majestic offering

Wadakkanchery, Thrissur
17th February

At the historic Machattu Thiruvanikavu Temple, the Machattu Mamangam festival is a five-day spectacle of tradition and devotion. The celebrations feature grand processions of elaborately decorated horse effigies, or Kuthira Kolams, alongside the powerful rhythm of chenda melam, creating an unforgettable cultural experience.

CHETTIKULANGARA BHARANI

A spectacle of towering effigies

Mavelikkara, Alappuzha
23rd February

Witness the breathtaking parade of colossal effigies at the Chettikulangara Bharani festival. These 90–100 ft. high Kettukazhcha structures, crafted by skilled artisans, honour Goddess Bhagavathy. They feature intricate designs, including chariots, horses and mythological figures, making the procession a truly unforgettable spectacle of devotion and artistry.



UTHRALIKAVU POORAM

A cultural extravaganza

Wadakkanchery, Thrissur
24th February

The Uthralikavu Pooram is an eight-day festival dedicated to Goddess Kali, celebrated with grandeur and devotion. Experience majestic elephant processions, enchanting traditional music and vibrant folk performances.





GURUVAYOOR AANAYOTTAM



A race for glory

Guruvayoor, Thrissur
28th February

Feel the excitement of Guruvayoor Aanayottam, the extraordinary elephant race that marks the start of the annual Guruvayoor festival. Witness these majestic giants compete for the honour of carrying Guruvayoorappan's idol replica during the festival, making this event a spectacular display of power, grace and tradition.



GURUVAYOOR FESTIVAL

A regal pageantry

Guruvayoor, Thrissur
28th February to 9th March

The Guruvayoor Festival is a ten-day spiritual celebration that begins with the hoisting of the flag on the 70-foot-high Dwajasthambam (ornate flagpole). The festival features three daily elephant processions, special prayers, vibrant cultural performances and sumptuous feasts, offering visitors an unforgettable experience of devotion and spectacle.

MARCH

From ritualistic trances and massive gatherings of faith to majestic elephant processions, March offers a breathtaking glimpse into Kerala's heart.



ATTUKAL PONGALA



A sea of devotion

Attukal, Thiruvananthapuram
3rd March

On this holy day, Thiruvananthapuram turns into a living mosaic of devotion as millions of women come together to honour Goddess Attukalamma. Earthen pots simmer with sacred offerings of rice and jaggery, while chants and prayers echo all around.

KODUNGALLOOR BHARANI



Prayers and swords

Kodungalloor, Thrissur
22nd March

Experience the mesmerising Kodungalloor Bharani, where the air vibrates with raw spiritual energy. Witness thousands of Velichappadus (oracles) in crimson robes surrender to a trance-like state, wielding ritual swords in fervent prayer to the Goddess. It is a primal, powerful encounter with the divine that must be seen to be believed.



PAINKUNI UTSAVAM

A festival of myth and faith

Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple, Thiruvananthapuram
24th March to 2nd April

Step into a world of myth and legend at the Painkuni Utsavam, a ten-day celebration at the Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple that commemorates the Pandavas' sacred visit. The festivities are marked by towering effigies of the five brothers, culminating on the final day when the head of the Travancore royal family ceremonially escorts the idols to the shores of the Arabian Sea at Shanghumugham for Arattu (holy bath).



MALANADA KETTUKAZHCHA

A spectacular procession

Poruvazhi, Kollam
27th March

Witness the breathtaking spectacle of the Malanada Kettukazhcha, where the streets of Kollam transform into a stage for towering effigies, the Eduppu Kala and Eduppu Kuthira. These 80-foot-tall masterpieces of craftsmanship sway rhythmically as they are carried by hundreds of devotees or pulled on massive chariots. The air vibrates with the thunderous beat of traditional percussion and fervent chants, in an electrifying display of communal harmony and faith.



PATTAMBI NERCHA

A procession of majestic giants

Pattambi, Palakkad
29th March

During the Nercha Festival, Pattambi comes alive as a radiant spectacle honouring the revered Muslim saint Aloor Valiya Poonkunjikoya Thangal.
A magnificent procession of 70–80 caparisoned elephants, colourful floats, sparkling lights and fireworks fills the town, building up to a stunning finale on the banks of the Bharathapuzha river.

APRIL

As the summer sun warms the landscape, April invites you to witness the timeless myths and magnificent festivals of Kerala. It is a season where the air resonates with the thunder of drums and the sky ignites with vibrant displays.

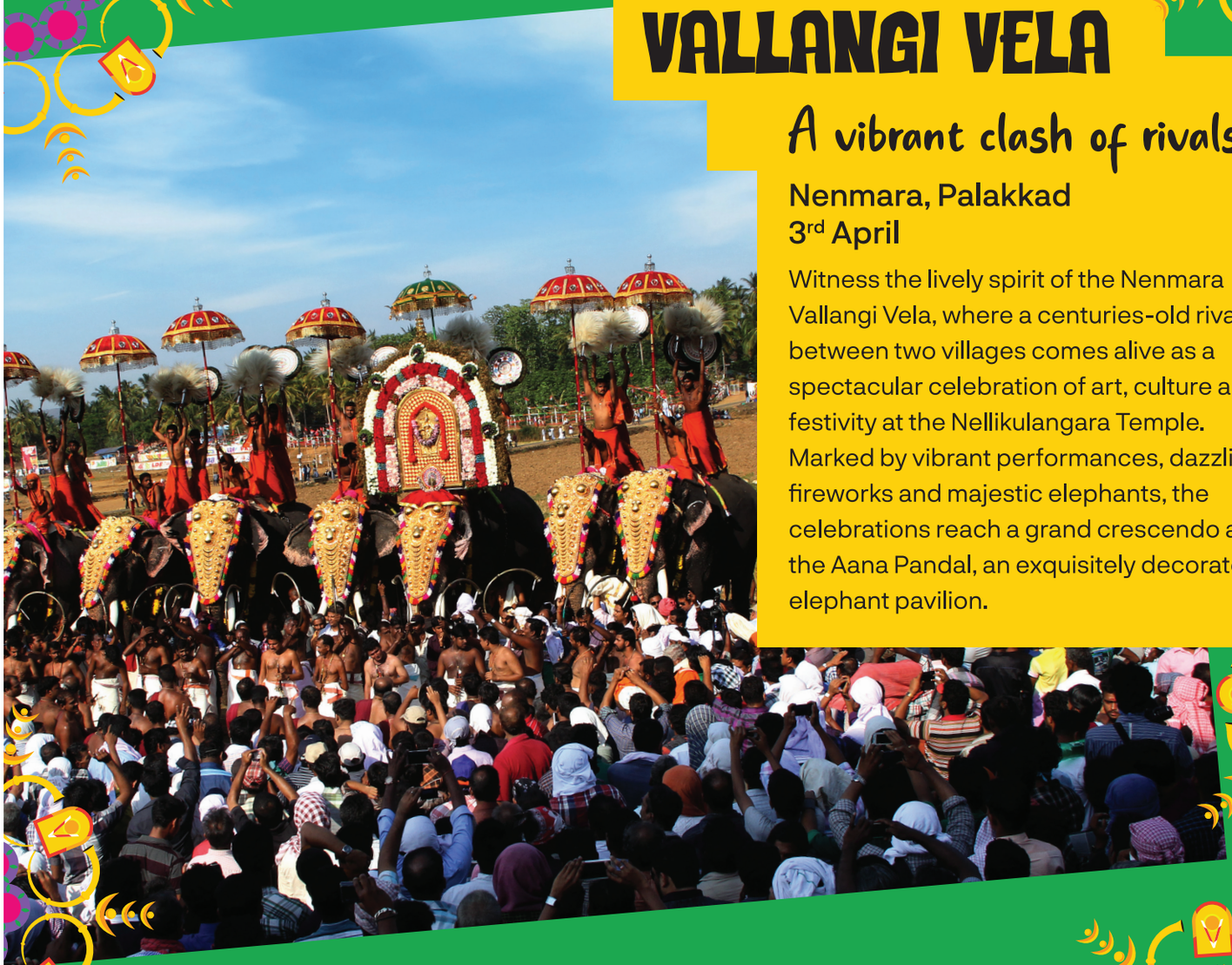


NENMARA VALLANGI VELA

A vibrant clash of rivals

Nenmara, Palakkad
3rd April

Witness the lively spirit of the Nenmara Vallangi Vela, where a centuries-old rivalry between two villages comes alive as a spectacular celebration of art, culture and festivity at the Nellikulangara Temple. Marked by vibrant performances, dazzling fireworks and majestic elephants, the celebrations reach a grand crescendo at the Aana Pandal, an exquisitely decorated elephant pavilion.



VISHU

Fireworks and festive cheer

Across Kerala

15th April

As the morning sun rises over Kerala on Vishu, the air is filled with the promise of a prosperous new beginning, with firecrackers and prayers in the background. The day begins with the Vishu Kani, a sacred arrangement of golden flowers, fruits, and traditional lamps meant to ensure a year of abundance. Family and friends gather for feasts and other merriment on this festive occasion.







THRISSUR POORAM

The festival of festivals

Thekkinkadu Maidanam, Thrissur
26th April

As one of the most renowned festivals of Kerala, the Thrissur Pooram is a breathtaking celebration to witness. This legendary festival captivates the senses with the thunderous rhythm of Chenda Melam, the iconic Kudamattam parasol exchange, and the sight of majestic, gold-adorned elephants. From the vibrant energy of the crowds to the sky-illuminating fireworks, it is a magnificent celebration of heritage that defines the cultural heart of the state.



JUNE

In June, Kerala's backwaters come alive with a thundering display of rhythm, rivalry and raw adrenaline.



CHAMPAKULAM BOAT RACE

Thrill on the backwaters

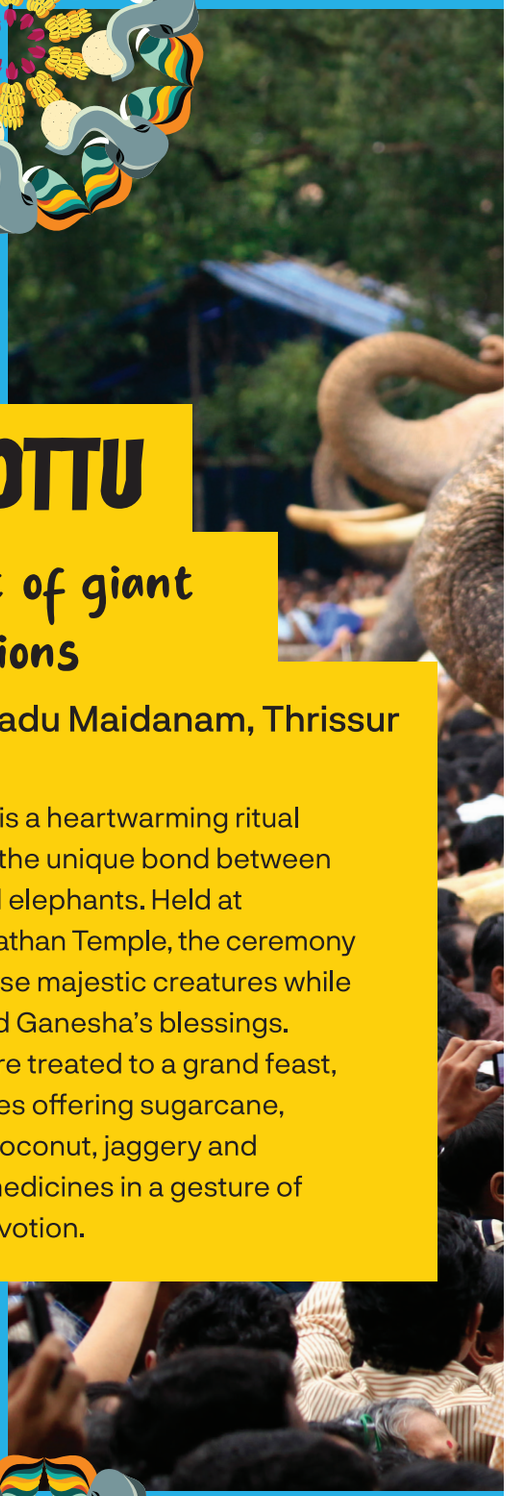
Champakulam, Alappuzha
29th June

Kerala's serene backwaters burst with energy as the Champakulam Boat Race kicks off the iconic racing season. Majestic Chundan Vallams, legendary snake boats, cut through the waters, driven by the rhythmic power of devoted oarsmen. The air hums with anticipation as these backwater champions compete in a thrilling battle for glory.



JULY

When the monsoon arrives, Kerala transforms into a lush, rain-kissed arena for adventure and ancient rituals. In July, you get to experience feasts steeped in flavours and festivities rich in tradition.



AANAYOOTTU

A feast of giant proportions

Thekkinkadu Maidanam, Thrissur
17th July

Aanayoottu is a heartwarming ritual celebrating the unique bond between humans and elephants. Held at Vadakkumnathan Temple, the ceremony honours these majestic creatures while seeking Lord Ganesha's blessings. Elephants are treated to a grand feast, with devotees offering sugarcane, rice, ghee, coconut, jaggery and Ayurvedic medicines in a gesture of care and devotion.

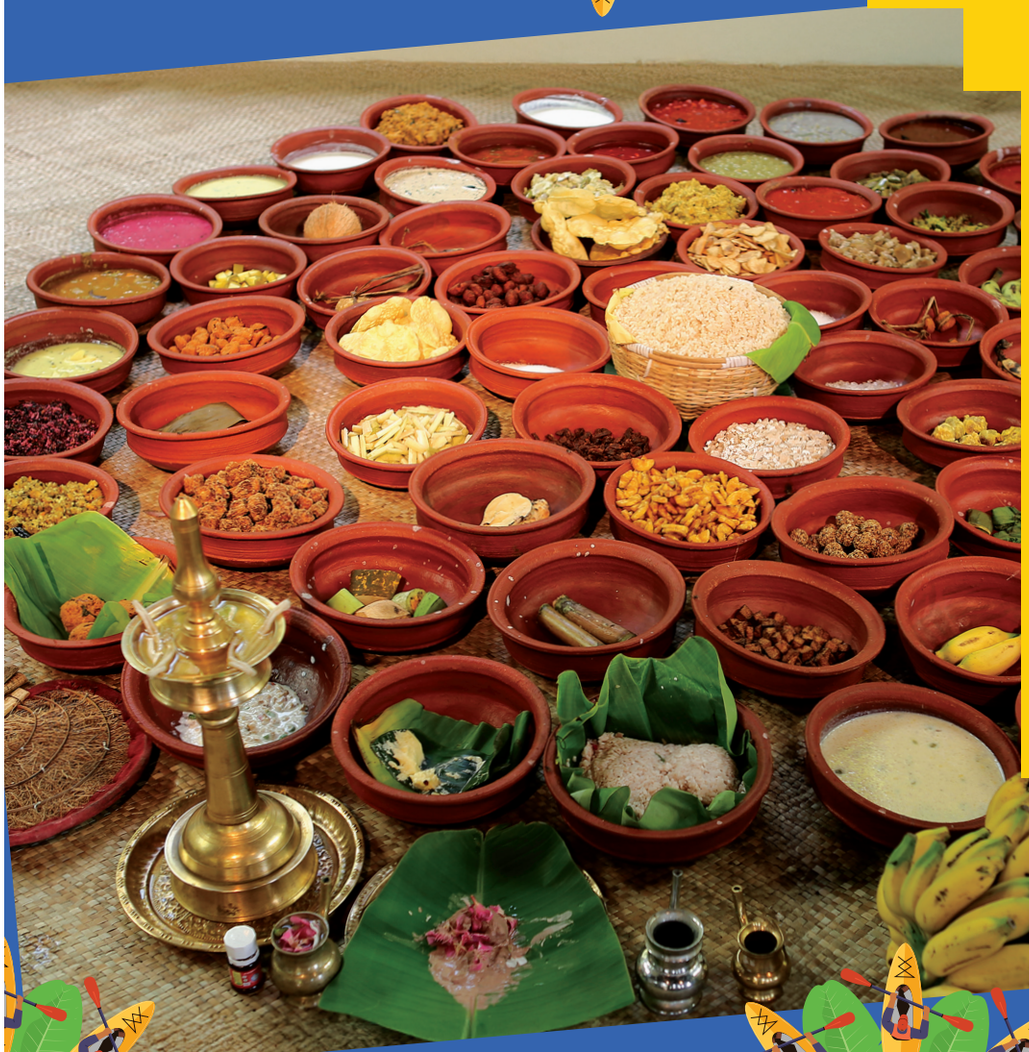


ARANMULA VALLASADYA

A feast fit for the gods

Aranmula, Pathanamthitta
19th July to 16th September

A magnificent fusion of devotion, melody and cuisine, the Aranmula Vallasadya is a ritualistic banquet unlike any other. Held in honour of the oarsmen of the Palliyodams (sacred snake boats), this grand feast at the Aranmula Parthasarathy Temple serves over 60 traditional dishes on a single plantain leaf. The event is a rhythmic performance where the oarsmen "demand" each delicacy through spirited Vanchippattu (boat songs), turning the act of dining into a vibrant celebration of faith and communal hospitality.



MALABAR
RIVER
FESTIVAL

MALABAR RIVER FESTIVAL

Flow with adventure

Iruvazhinjipuzha and Chalipuzha, Kozhikode
30th July to 2nd August

As Asia's largest whitewater kayaking festival, it invites international paddlers to take on the thrilling rapids of Kozhikode's rain-fed rivers. From seasoned pros to adventure enthusiasts, participants can enjoy kayak training, local slalom competitions and a host of exciting water-based events.



AUGUST

It's the harvest season in Kerala. The land readies itself for the legendary return of King Mahabali, marked by the fragrance of floral carpets and the thunderous pulse of rhythmic percussion. From the fierce roar of world-famous snake boat races to the whimsical tiger dances, August is all about fun and celebrations.





ATHACHAMAYAM

The grand Onam prelude

Thrippunithura, Ernakulam
16th August

Athachamayam turns the streets of Thrippunithura into a riot of colours, music and movement. Marking the beginning of Onam, this age-old celebration brings Kerala's cultural heritage to life through vibrant processions of folk artists, caparisoned elephants and energetic musical ensembles. The result is a joyful street spectacle that sets the tone for the festive season ahead.


SOLAR
PAPER MART



NEHRU TROPHY BOAT RACE

Chasing glory on water

Punnamada, Alappuzha
22nd August

At Punnamada in Alappuzha, August brings an unforgettable spectacle of speed, skill and tradition. The rhythmic thunder of oars and the roar of cheering crowds fill the air as beautifully adorned boats surge through the backwaters. In this thrilling contest, fierce competition meets deep-rooted pride, bringing Kerala's living heritage to life.

PAYIPPAD BOAT RACE



Legacy on water

Payippad Lake, Alappuzha
26th to 28th August

Dating back to the 16th century, this is believed to be Kerala's oldest boat race. Said to have begun in celebration of the dedication of Lord Subramanyan's idol at the Haripad Sree Subramanya Swamy Temple, the event lives on today as the Payippad Boat Race, a vibrant display of colour, tradition and the enduring spirit of Kerala's boat racing heritage.

ONAM WEEK CELEBRATIONS

A city in celebration

Thiruvananthapuram
Last week of August

As Onam Week arrives, Thiruvananthapuram glows with lights, music and colour. The city buzzes with food stalls, exhibitions and vibrant cultural performances, creating a joyful, festive atmosphere. Celebrations ripple across all 14 districts of Kerala, culminating in a grand pageant in the state capital that showcases the spirit of Onam.





ONAM

An epic harvest festival

Across Kerala
25th to 28th August

Experience the vibrant spirit of Kerala during Onam, a celebration filled with colour and joy. Elaborate floral carpets, traditional vegetarian feasts and folk performances set the mood, while spectacular boat races bring the festivities to a thrilling crescendo.

PULIKALI

Tiger tales

Swaraj Round, Thrissur
29th August

Pulikali is a vibrant folk art that recreates the thrill of a tiger hunt. Performers spend hours painting their bodies with striking tiger stripes before taking to the streets, where pulsating percussion and high-energy movements bring a dramatic tale of courage and adventure to life.





ARANMULA BOAT RACE

A sacred race

Aranmula, Pathanamthitta
30th August

The Aranmula Boat Race is a sacred annual tradition honouring the presiding deity of the Parthasarathy Temple. Ornately decorated Palliyodams glide across the river as thousands gather, creating an atmosphere charged with faith, pageantry and awe.



THE CHAMPIONS BOAT LEAGUE



A backwater showdown

12 backwater venues
August to December

A true test of strength, strategy and teamwork, this demanding competition unfolds across 12 scenic venues, celebrating Kerala's boat racing legacy. As the world's largest team sport, the Champions Boat League showcases the relentless spirit of Kerala's oarsmen as they race for the coveted title.

SEPTEMBER

The celebrations continue as Kerala's festive spirit remains in full swing. In September, the state readies itself to host the world through India's largest tourism buyer-seller mart.



OACHIRA KALAKETTU

Parade of the sacred bull

Oachira, Kollam
22nd September

At the Oachira Kalakettu festival, grand and intricately adorned effigies of Nandi, the celestial bull and sacred vehicle of Lord Shiva, stand as the main attraction in a spectacular procession. Reflecting community pride, each subdivision of the Onattukara region presents its meticulously decorated effigy at the temple, culminating in a magnificent parade and the awarding of a coveted prize for the most striking display.



KERALA TRAVEL MART

KERALA
TRAVEL MART

Where the world meets Kerala

Kochi
24th to 27th September

The Kerala Travel Mart connects the diverse tourism offerings of God's Own Country with a global market. It serves as the ultimate hub for national and international businesses to join Kerala's thriving tourism legacy, fostering new opportunities, professional networking and strategic partnerships.

OCTOBER

October arrives as a season of celebration in Kerala, where dance and music take centre stage in grand festivals across the land. In a culture that reveres learning and craft, the month also marks a moment of renewal, when every art, vocation and skill is honoured with a meaningful new beginning.



CHALIYAR RIVER PADDLE

Taming the rapids

Nilambur to Beypore
October

Top professional kayakers and spirited amateurs embark on adrenaline-charged adventures as the Chaliyar River Kayaking Challenge unfolds over three thrilling days. Covering a formidable 68-km stretch from Nilambur to Beypore, participants take on the mighty Chaliyar while also championing sustainability through an eco-friendly river clean-up drive alongside the competition.





NAVARATHRI SANGEETHOLSAVAM

Echoes of a maestro king

Navarathri Mandapam,
Fort Palace Complex,
Thiruvananthapuram
12th to 20th October

Classical music unfolds as a sublime tribute to Swathi Thirunal, the visionary ruler and celebrated composer of the erstwhile Travancore Kingdom, at the Navarathri Sangeetholsavam. Set within the majestic Navarathri Mandapam, where earthen pots naturally soften echoes, and oil lamps cast a gentle glow, the setting becomes as timeless as the music itself.



SOORYA DANCE AND MUSIC FESTIVAL

A symphony of movement and music

Ganesham Soorya Nataka Kalari and Tagore Theatre, Thiruvananthapuram
October onwards

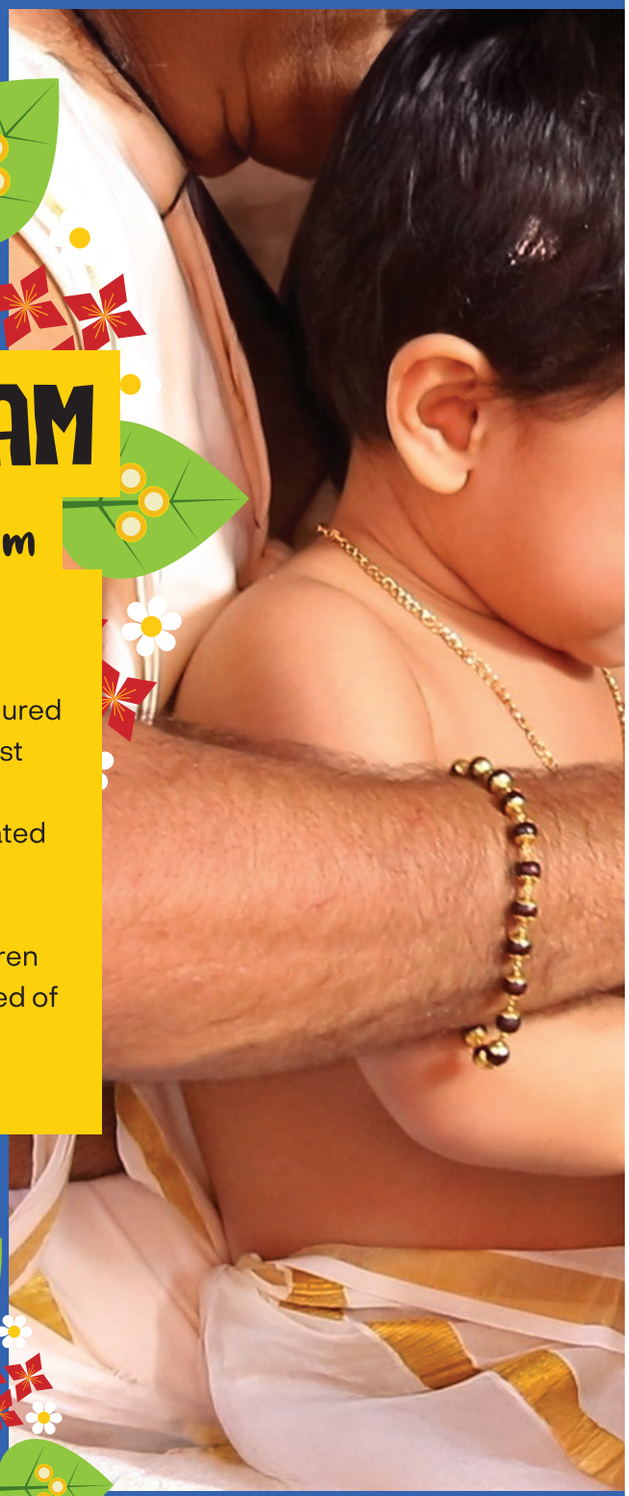
The festival unites celebrated artists from across India, presenting masterful performances in classical forms such as Kathak, Manipuri, Odissi, Kuchipudi, Bharatanatyam, Kathakali and Mohiniyattam. Complemented by evocative instrumental recitals and spirited jugalbandi performances, it unfolds as a rich and memorable cultural experience.

VIDHYARAMBHAM

First steps to wisdom

Across Kerala
21st October

In a heartwarming and time-honoured ritual, young children take their first step into learning through the Vidyarambham ceremony dedicated to Saraswathi, the goddess of knowledge. A parent, teacher or revered elder gently guides children to trace their first letters onto a bed of rice, marking the beginning of a lifelong journey of learning.






INTERNATIONAL
SURFING
FESTIVAL
KERALA
VARKALA
INTERNATIONAL SURFING FESTIVAL
Waves of exhilaration
Varkala, Thiruvananthapuram
October
The International Surfing Festival at Varkala draws professional surfers and amateurs from across the world, all united by their love for the ocean and surfing. Dive into exhilarating days of sand, sea, surf and pure adventure.



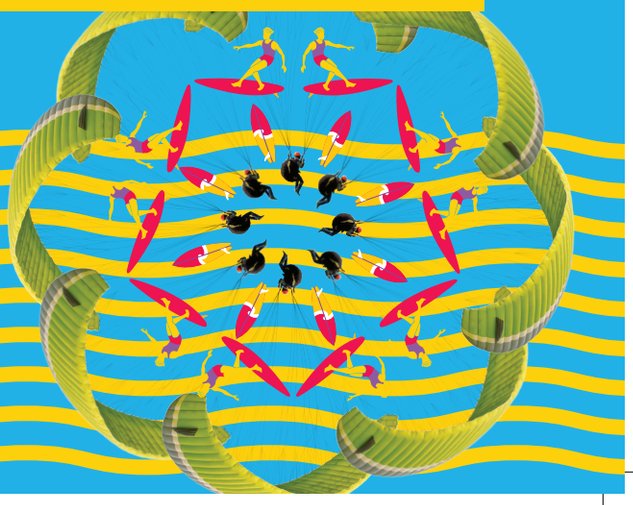
INTERNATIONAL PARAGLIDING FESTIVAL

An adventure in the skies

Vagamon, Idukki
October

Prepare for an exhilarating experience as paragliders from across the globe converge on the emerald slopes of Vagamon. Against the picturesque backdrop of rolling hills and mist-laden valleys, adventure-seekers take to the skies in a thrilling display of skill and daring. Watch as colourful wings catch the mountain breeze, pushing the limits of flight in a dance with the clouds. Whether you are a seasoned pilot or a wide-eyed spectator, this festival offers a front-line view of the ultimate aerial adventure.





NOVEMBER

As the air turns crisp, November ushers in a renewed vibrancy across Kerala's cultural canvas. A succession of festivals gathers momentum through the month, culminating in a majestic finale of divine classical music that brings the season to a close.

PARUMALA PERUNNAL

A festive tribute

Thiruvalla, Pathanamthitta
2nd November

Each year, devotees from across Kerala come together to honour Bishop Mar Gregorios Metropolitan, the first canonised saint of the Malankara Orthodox Church. Marking his death anniversary, the Parumala Perunnal unfolds as a solemn procession, a lasting tribute to the life, faith and enduring legacy of the revered saint.



CHEMBAI SANGEETHOLSAVAM



Music at its most divine

Guruvayoor, Thrissur
7th to 21st November

Each year, more than 2,000 Carnatic musicians come together to honour the legendary Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar, a celebrated exponent of Carnatic music and an ardent devotee of Lord Guruvayoorappan. This ten-day music festival reaches its pinnacle with a grand group concert, featuring five of Chembai's most beloved compositions and celebrating the enduring legacy of Carnatic music.



KALPATHI RATHOLSAVAM

Tradition in full splendour

Kalpathi, Palakkad
14th to 16th November

In the festival's climactic final three days, you can witness the Nagara Pradakshinam (procession), where resplendently decorated chariots move through the streets of Kalpathi to the Viswanatha Swamy Temple. Guided by the rhythmic beats of musicians, the graceful movements of dancers and the fervent prayers of thousands of devotees, the procession is a truly unforgettable celebration.

BEEMAPALLY UROOS

Honouring a legacy

Beemapally, Thiruvananthapuram November/December

This annual festival, held in memory of Beema Beevi, celebrates the enduring strength of faith and tradition. Its centrepiece, the Chandanakkudam Mahotsavam, sees devotees offering earthen pots decorated with sandalwood paste and filled with coins. The celebrations are further enriched by a vibrant display of traditional art forms, making the event a truly memorable cultural experience.



DECEMBER

As the year draws to a close, Kerala prepares for a spectacular finale. Culture meets adventure as the State hosts the prestigious International Film Festival and the vibrant Cochin Carnival. It's a season where high-energy celebrations come together to end the year on a high note.





MANORAMA ഹോർത്തൂസ്
Celebrates Art & Literature

MANORAMA HORTUS

The best of art and literature

Subash Park, Kochi
3rd to 6th December

As the meeting ground of the brightest minds, this annual festival of literature and the arts draws writers, artists, thinkers, humanitarians, politicians, sportspersons and entertainers from across the world. Here, conversations flow, performances unfold into exhibitions and workshops spark unexpected exchanges. Inspired by Hortus Malabaricus, the legendary 17th-century botanical chronicle of the Malabar coast, the festival takes root in a deep spirit of curiosity and creative exploration, inviting you to wander and discover.



INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF KERALA

The magic of cinema

Thiruvananthapuram
11th to 18th December

As a premier destination for global cinema, IFFK unites film lovers through a spectacular showcase of world, Indian and Malayalam masterpieces. Across the city's iconic venues, discover bold new voices and connect with a global community of cinephiles in the heart of Kerala.


29



MOUNTAIN TERRAIN BIKING CHAMPIONSHIP

Thrill in the hills

Mananthavady, Wayanad
December

Hosted in Kerala's rocky landscape, this Mountain Terrain Biking (MTB) event is built to test skill, stamina and nerve. Steep ascents and sudden twists define a course that challenges even seasoned riders. Part of the prestigious Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) MTB Championships, it promises thrilling action and fierce competition.

COCHIN CARNIVAL



The grand finale

Fort Kochi
31st December

As the year comes to a close, the eclectic pulse of Fort Kochi erupts into a festive extravaganza. From the high-speed energy of bike races and beach football to the charm of bustling flea markets and cultural shows, the carnival is a feast for the senses. The celebration culminates on New Year's Eve with the historic burning of the 'Pappanji', a towering effigy that marks a spectacular farewell to the old year.



God's Own Country

Kerala Tourism Park View
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keralatourism.org

Only a select few festivals and events are mentioned in this brochure. Please note that the festival dates are decided in accordance with the Malayalam calendar as well as the local traditions and customs. However, the dates may change as per the customs and rituals associated with each place of worship. You are therefore requested to confirm the exact dates with the respective organisers. You may also visit keralatourism.org/festivalcalendar

Scan for Kerala Festival Calendar

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