



## India

Wildlife Exploration – Jungle Trails

# PIONEER EXPEDITIONS



## Itinerary

## India • Jungle Trails of South India

**14 Days • 13 Nights**

Bangalore – Nagarhole National Park – Bandipur National Park – Mudumalai National Park – Munnar – Eravikulam National Park – Periyar National Park – Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary – Alappuzha – Kochi

## HIGHLIGHTS

- 🌿 Bandipur and Periyar National Parks
- 🌿 Elephants of Nagarhole
- 🌿 Mudumalai, the Wildlife Corridor
- 🌿 Kerala's tea city - Munnar
- 🌿 Niligiri Tahrs of Eravikulam

## TOUR ESSENTIALS

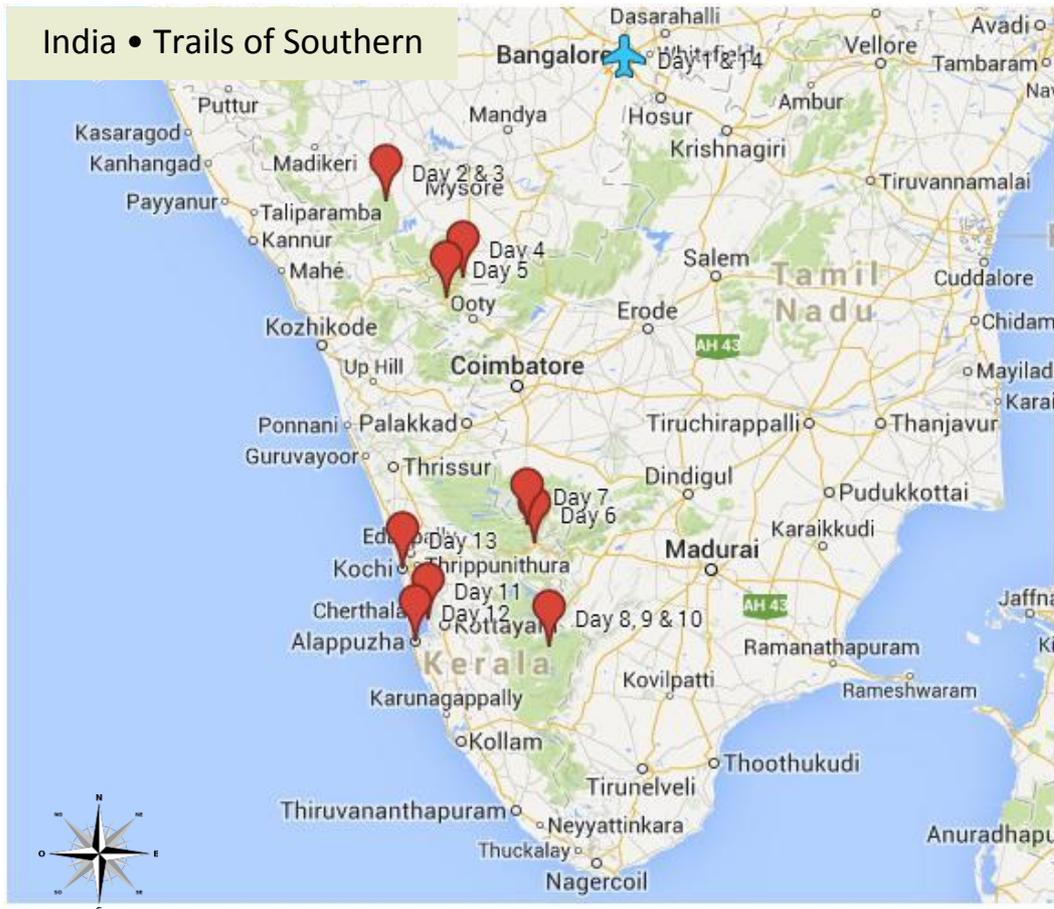
Tour Style	Wildlife Exploration
Tour Start	Bangalore
Tour End	Bangalore
Accommodation	Hotel
Included Meals	13 Breakfasts, 12 lunches, 12 Dinners
Difficulty Level	Medium

Discover the unique beauty of South India! Explore Mudumalai and Bandipur, go boating in Periyar, look out for the rare Nilgiri Tahr in Eravikulam, see the Elephants of Nagarhole and marvel at the birds of Kumarakom. Round off your adventure with a Houseboat cruise down the scenic backwaters of Kerala!

This trip offers a complete wildlife experience not generally explored by the traveller to India. As well as the majestic tiger, India is also home to striped hyena, red panda, one horned rhino's as well as a huge offering of other animals, birds and flora.

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# Itinerary



## DAY 1: ARRIVE BANGALORE

After arriving in Bangalore, you will be met at the airport and transferred to your hotel. You have the option of a city tour, or just relax as tomorrow we have an exciting journey to the beautiful jungles of south India.

*Overnight Hotel*

## DAY 2: BANGALORE TO NAGARHOLE NATIONAL PARK (B,L,D)

We leave Bangalore after breakfast and drive to Nagarhole National Park, which is about 5 hours away. Nagarhole is a part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve and is among India's best national parks. Its rich, varied wildlife includes the Tiger, Leopard, Indian Bison, Sloth Bear, Gaur, Sambar Deer, Chital, Common Muntjac and almost 250 species of birds. The park is best known for its large population of Elephants. We arrive at Nagarhole around noon, in time for lunch. After lunch, we set out for our first game drive into the park and will stay inside the park until dusk. We will be spending two nights at Nagarhole.



*Overnight Hotel*



### **DAY 3: NAGARHOLE NATIONAL PARK (B,L,D)**

We begin the day with an early morning game drive into the Nagarhole forest. During the game drive, you will get a glimpse of the park's unspoiled beauty. Mornings are the best time to sight animals and you are likely to see herds of Elephants on the banks of the river.

After the game drive, we return to the lodge for breakfast. Once you finish breakfast, you can take a nature walk and explore the beautiful flora of the park. We return to the lodge for lunch and after lunch, we set out once again to explore Nagarhole.

*Overnight Hotel*

### **DAY 4: NAGARHOLE NATIONAL PARK TO BANDIPUR NATIONAL PARK (B,L,D)**

After an early morning game safari and breakfast at Nagarhole, we head out to Bandipur National Park, which is about 3 hours drive from Nagarhole. Bandipur National Park is one of the best-known protected areas in India and is also a Project Tiger reserve. The park is famous for its Bengal Tigers, Asian Elephants and for the abundance of sandalwood trees. In addition, it is also home to Leopards, Sloth Bears, Panthers, Chevrotains, Dholes (Wild Dogs), Hyenas, Gaur, Wild Boar, Sambar Deer, Chital, Barking Deer and Mouse Deer. On arrival in Bandipur, we check in to our lodge and have lunch. This is followed by a game drive into the park. Bandipur National Park is one of the best-known protected areas in India and is also a Project Tiger reserve. The park is famous for its Bengal Tigers, Asian Elephants and for the abundance of sandalwood trees. In addition, it is also home to Leopards, Sloth Bears, Panthers, Chevrotains, Dholes (Wild Dogs), Hyenas, Gaur, Sambar (Deer), Chital, Wild Boar, Barking Deer and Mouse Deer.

*Overnight Hotel*

### **DAY 5: BANDIPUR NATIONAL PARK TO MUDUMALAI NATIONAL PARK (B,L,D)**

Today, we go on a morning game drive into Bandipur and return to the lodge for breakfast. We will then head out to Mudumalai National Park, which is approximately 45 minutes away. Mudumalai is as an important wildlife habitat due to its strategic position between several other protected areas that are a part of the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve. The animals found here include the Asian Elephant, Bengal Tiger, Leopard, Gaur, Hyena, Sloth Bear, Sambar, Chital, Muntjac, Wild Boar, Nilgiri Tahr, Porcupine and Giant Flying Squirrel. In addition, 8 percent of the bird species in India occur in Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary.

*Overnight Hotel*

### **DAY 6: BANDIPUR NATIONAL PARK TO MUNNAR (B,L,D)**

Today is our last day at Bandipur and we go for a game drive in the morning and return to the lodge for breakfast. We then drive for about 8 hours to reach Munnar, stopping on the way for lunch. Munnar is a beautiful town up in the hills, best known for the tea grown here.

The tea, which has a delicate flavor of cardamom, can be used to brew the famous Indian 'Chai'! (Tea), Munnar also offers a splendid view of pristine valleys and mountains, exotic species of flora and fauna, and the aroma of cool, spice-scented air! You can spend the evening relaxing and enjoying the lovely weather and the spectacular view.

*Overnight Hotel*



## DAY 7: ERAVIKULAM NATIONAL PARK (B,L,D)

Today we visit the Eravikulam National Park. We carry a picnic lunch with us. As vehicles are not allowed inside the park, we explore the area on foot. After a whole day at Eravikulam, we return to our hotel in the evening for dinner. Eravikulam was established to protect the Nilgiri Tahr, an endangered species of mountain goat. It is the only mountain goat species found south of the Himalayas. Sure-footed herds of Tahr are quite elusive, but you may be able to get a good view of them as they browse the hillside vegetation. Eravikulam is also home to a variety of mammals that include the Nilgiri Langur, Lion-tailed Macaque and several endemic bird species such as the streaky brown Nilgiri Pipit and Blackbird. The Blackbird in particular looks very different from the familiar songster of Europe and is regarded by some taxonomists as a possible separate species.

*Overnight Hotel*

## DAY 8: ERAVIKULAM NATIONAL PARK TO PERIYAR NATIONAL PARK (B,L,D)

After breakfast we embark on a three hour drive to reach the Aranya Niwas Hotel in Periyar. The hotel is located inside the Tiger Reserve in the Cardamom Hills. After a delicious lunch, we visit the spice gardens for which the area is well known. Since the olden times, spices were traded like gold in India and you see why...the cardamom and the pepper grown here has a superb aroma! We return to the hotel at dusk and end the day with dinner. Periyar is one of the Project Tiger Reserves of India. It is one of the most picturesque and beautiful wildlife reserves in the world. In addition to the Tiger, Periyar is also home to the Indian Elephant, Gaur, Sambar (Horse Deer), Barking Deer, Mouse Deer, Dhole (Indian Wild Dog), Fox, Leopard and the elusive Nilgiri Tahr.



*Overnight Hotel*

## DAY 9: PERIYAR NATIONAL PARK (B,L,D)

We begin our day with a ride into spice plantation area on Elephant back. It is the best way to see the forest and the animals! We return to the lodge for breakfast. You get to relax for a while and in the afternoon we head out for a nature walk. As the sun sets and the dusk sets in, its time for us to return to the hotel, have dinner and call it a day.

*Overnight Hotel*

## DAY 10: PERIYAR NATIONAL PARK (B,L,D)

Start the day with a boat ride on the Periyar Lake. It is the best time to spot birds and do keep an eye out for the Flamingos! After the boat ride, we return to the lodge for breakfast. Walking is the best way to explore the Park and you get to see some of the smaller animals, insects and monkeys when you are on foot...we do precisely this and walk in the forest till lunch time. You have the rest of the day to yourself, you can either relax or spend the day exploring the serene surroundings (with optional activities including – bamboo rafting, border hiking.

*Overnight Hotel*



## DAY 11: PERIYAR NATIONAL PARK TO KUMARAKOM BIRD SANCTUARY (B,L,D)

After an early morning boat ride and breakfast in Periyar, we drive to Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary, which is about 4 ½ hours by road. Situated in the backwaters of Kerala, Kumarakom Bird sanctuary is an ornithologist's paradise. The main attractions here are local birds like the Cuckoo, Owl, Cormorant, Moorhen, Darter, Brahminy Kite and Duck. There are many migratory birds like the Siberian Crane that can be spotted here. Parrot, Teal, Lark, Flycatcher, etc. are also often sighted here. Some of Kumarakom's migratory birds come from the Himalayas, and a few from as far away as Siberia. On reaching Kumarakom, we check-in to our resort and have lunch. After lunch, we take a five minute boat ride and walk a short distance to enter the bird sanctuary. Birdwatchers are in for a treat here!! In the afternoons, you are likely to see large numbers of Herons and Egrets fly in to roost here. We stay in the Sanctuary till dusk, and we then return to the lodge for dinner.



*Overnight Hotel*

## DAY 12: KUMARAKOM BIRD SANCTUARY TO ALAPPUZHA (B,L,D)

We cruise in the backwaters of Kerala on a houseboat, locally known as 'Kettuvalloms'. Located in the southwestern part of India, Kerala is one of the most beautiful parts of India. It is popularly known as 'God's Own Country' because of its exquisite beauty and greenery. The houseboat takes us to Alappuzha (also called Allepey). Savor the beauty of the landscape as we drift along the narrow canals and paddy fields of the scenic backwaters.

*Overnight Hotel*

## DAY 13: ALAPPUZHA TO KOCHI (B,L,D)

At Alappuzha, we leave the houseboat in the morning after breakfast and we drive to Kochi (formerly known as Cochin). You have the day to yourself and can explore Kochi. Kochi is a pleasant market town surrounded by coconut plantations and built on the canals, which serve the area's coir industry. It is also one of India's principal seaports.

*Overnight Sakalava Overnight Hotel*

## DAY 14: HOME FLIGHT (B,L,D)

This is the last day of the tour. You can either explore the town or stay in at the hotel to relax till it is time to go to the airport to board your flight.

**NB:** *This itinerary is subject to change – arrangements, routes and facilities are subject to variation depending on local conditions We can also tailor itineraries to suit your exact requirements.*



# Accommodations

City	Hotel	Room Category	# of nights
Bangalore	Le Meridian	Deluxe Room	1
Kabini	Orange County Resort	Jacuzzi Hut	2
Bandipur	The Windflower Resort & Spa	Suite	2
Munnar	Devonshire Greens	Valley View	2
Periyar	Cardamom County	Periyar Cottage	3
Kumarakom	Aveda Resorts & Spa	Standard Room	1
Alleppey	House Boat	1 Bed Room	1
Kochi	Holiday Inn	Superior Room	1

## What our clients have said

*"We had an absolutely fantastic holiday in South India. We saw a wild boar playing chasing with an elephant at the lakeside, leopards at close view, the nilgri mountain goats, and traditional and tribal dance. Thank you for arranging this for us and thanks to everyone involved"*

-Pauline and Howard Barnes



# Important Information

## INCLUDED

- 13 hotels nights in India inclusive of all meals except at Bengaluru and Kochi where it is on breakfast basis.
- All transfers, sightseeing's & excursions by air conditioned vehicle except jungle safaris.
- Entrance fee at the monuments where ever applicable as per the program. Any hikes in entrance fees will be extra.
- Services of professional English-speaking local guide.
- Basic Porterage at the airport & hotels (not tips).
- Road taxes, parking fee, fuel charges, interstate taxes.
- Assistance on all arrival and departure transfers.
- All currently applicable taxes.

## NOT INCLUDED

- Any expenses of personal nature such as table drinks, laundry, telephone calls, mineral water, soft drinks, tips, shopping etc. unless otherwise specified. It is more cost effective for us to bill you for all beverages based on actual consumption.
- Any camera fees at monuments and sites. This can be added in if desired.
- Any other meals / services not mentioned in the program.
- Air Fares & airport taxes.
- Visa fee for India.
- Any increase in Tax structure levied by the Govt. of India.
- Anything not mentioned in the included section.

# Additional Information

ACTIVITY DURATION

2-5 hours

SEASON

January through December

BEST TIME TO GO

GROUP SIZE

2-8 pax

EXPEDITION SCHEDULE

Tailormade Departures to suit your dates.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL

Our grades have been designated based on our perception of the degree of physical activity you are likely to require to enjoy the adventure. These are only a guideline. This itinerary has a 'Medium' level (2-5 hours per day). This means that you will need an average level of fitness.

