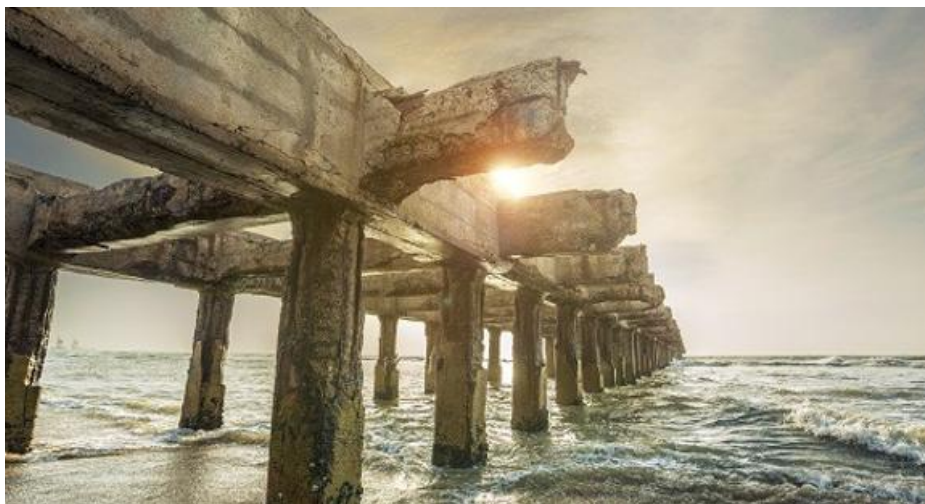


# South India Cycling Tour



Days:	14
Price from:	1810 USD International flight not included
Comfort:	★★★★★
Difficult:	★★★☆☆
🚲 Cycling	

## EXCITING, VIBRANT AND DIVERSE

Complementing our previous tour, this journey explores a different side of Southern India featuring distinct yet equally fascinating destinations and local attractions at a comparatively easier medium pace. Starting out from Mysore and ending up in Trivandrum, we witness a magical mélange of traditional towns, mountainous and coastal landscape, endless white-sand beaches punctuated by sensational South Indian cuisine. This easy-paced cycling journey through Kerala, Karnataka and part of Tamil Nadu is a great way to explore a part of India that's almost untouched by time. Our trail passes through the cool heights of the Western Ghats past the wildlife sanctuaries at Bandipur and Mudumalai offering us a glimpse of wild elephants, tigers and leopards in their natural habitat of Jungles and bamboo forests.

Pedaling through quaint Ooty, high in the Nilgiri Hills, across the rolling hillside, we descend into Kerala, where we cycle past old forts and religious rock shrines as well as through timeless villages. Heading south again, we spend a day in the ancient port of Kochi and enjoy a homestay and an overnight houseboat cruise on the backwaters, Kerala's vast network of channels and lakes, before the final coastal ride to Varkala for a chance to laze on the beach and reflection an unforgettable experience of rural India.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Mysore, famous for its magnificent palace
- Ooty, the queen of hill stations in India
- Guruvayur, the most revered temples in Kerala
- Fort Kochi with its colonial mansions built in Portuguese and Dutch architectural styles
- Alleppey: Verdant backwaters, houseboat cruise
- Relaxing on the picturesque Varkala beach

## Day 1. Arrive Bangalore & transfer to Mysore



- Arrive at the International airport of **Bangalore**. After the traditional welcome at the airport, transfer to the hotel in **Mysore**. Upon arrival, we check into our hotel. In the afternoon, we have time to visit the **central bazaar** and the magnificent **Maharaja's Palace** whose decor is simply stunning. Rebuilt in the 20th century after a fire in 1897, the palace's rich, expressive architecture and extravagant interior provide an insight into the wealth of the Maharajas of Mysore. This afternoon, we also reassemble our bikes (if we have brought our own) or get fitted out with a hire bike.

Bangalore (Bengaluru) 📍  
🚗 140km - ⌚ 3h  
Mysore (Mysuru) 📍

🏠 Accommodation

Sandesh The Prince

## Day 2. Ride to Srirangapatna Ruins & Chamundi Hill (Cycling 40 kms)



Mysore (Mysuru) 📍

- In the morning, we have a leisurely ride out northwards to **Srirangapatna**, towards the ruins of Great Emperor Tipu Sultan's capital, which was destroyed by the British forces in the year 1799 during their decisive battle to secure control of the Southern India. The ruins stand on an island in the middle of the Cauvery River. Once over the bridge, we cycle around the old ramparts to enter **Colonel Bailey's Dungeon** and the **Ranganatha Swamy Temple**. Also, on the island is the **Jama Masjid**, a mosque built by Tipu Sultan in 1787, as well as the **Dariya Daulat Bagh**, which is referred to as Tipu Sultan's Summer palace. After spending some time exploring, we ride back to Mysore for lunch. In the afternoon, we cycle up the **Chamundi Hill** to see Shiva's 5-metre high bull, Nandi, carved from a single block of granite.

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☕ Breakfast	Sandesh The Prince
🏠 Accommodation	Sandesh The Prince

## Day 3. Mysore – Bandipur N.P. via Nanjangud (Cycling 90 kms)



Mysore (Mysuru) 📍  
🚲 90km  
Bandipur National Park 📍

### Mysore (Mysuru) - Bandipur National Park

- After breakfast, we start riding from the hotel and head South on country roads, with most of India's colorful rural life on display. Passing through the villages and watching women in colorful saris carrying water pots on their heads, we head to the important pilgrim centre of **Nanjangud** to visit the impressive **Srikanteshwara Temple** dedicated to the Hindu god, Shiva. After the lunch, we leave the plains for the forested foothills of the Western Ghats (hills), once the hunting preserve of Mysore's Maharajas, now a tiger reserve and part of **Bandipur National Park**. In the late afternoon, we do a **Safari** in open canton in the park.

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☕ Breakfast	Sandesh The Prince
🍴 Lunch	MC Resort
🍷 Dinner	MC Resort
🏠 Accommodation	MC Resort

## Day 4. Bandipur to Mudumalai National Park (Cycling 33 kms)



Bandipur National Park 📍  
🚲 33km  
Mudumalai National Park 📍

### Bandipur National Park - Mudumalai National Park

- In the early morning there's a chance of another Optional Safari in Open Canton. This is the best time to spot the India gaur (Indian bison), wild elephants and sambar. After the breakfast, we relax for a couple of hours before we set off southwards through the well-forested park where we stand a chance to spot deer and monkeys amongst the trees that line the route into the adjacent, **Mudumalai National Park** in Tamil Nadu. The afternoon is free to explore the area of 'Wild Haven', a rustic planter's bungalow with fantastic views of the Nilgiri mountains on one side and **Mudumalai Jungles** on the other. Overnight in the Hotel.

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☕ Breakfast	MC Resort
🏠 Accommodation	Secret Ivory Resort & Hotel

## Day 5. Mudumalai National Park to Ooty-Hill station (Cycling 25 kms)



Mudumalai National Park 📍

🚗 42km - ⌚ 1h 30m

Ooty 📍

- Today is a very interesting day as we head towards the hill-station of Ootacamund (2240m), commonly known as **Ooty**. The 36 hairpin bends give stunning vistas at every turn and there's an immense sense of achievement at the summit. Located in the **Nilgiri Hills**, Ooty has served as a summer capital for the British during colonial days. Its stunning beauty and spring-like climate inspired the British to name it '**Queen of Hill-Stations**'. Some members of the group may prefer to walk or enjoy a relaxed morning and take the hill in the support vehicle. To enjoy the final 1600-metre ascent, we have the option to ride the support vehicle to our pleasant hotel accommodation in Ooty. The cool climate of the Nilgiri hills gives us a break from the hotter plains below. Afternoon is free to explore the town and sample some of its famous Cardamom tea.

☕ Breakfast

Secret Ivory Resort & Hotel

🏠 Accommodation

Hotel Gem Park

## Day 6. Ooty to Guruvayur in Tropical Kerala (Cycling 85 kms)



Ooty 📍

🚗 200km - ⌚ 5h 30m

Guruvayur 📍

- Today our stunning ride meanders through the Tea plantations that dominate this part of the rolling **Nilgiri Hills**. It's pleasantly cool at around 2000 metres and this ride showcases the excellent views over the hills below. We continue further through the hills and tea-covered slopes of the Western Ghats to reach **Gudalur (in Tamil Nadu)**, at the junction of the states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala. From this non-descript Indian town, we stock up fresh fruits and continue our descent through ever-more-luxuriant vegetation to a typical Kerala road-side restaurant, the point where we conclude our day's biking programme. From here, we transfer to **Guruvayur** on the coast to avoid a section with busier roads.

☕ Breakfast

Hotel Gem Park

🏠 Accommodation

Hotel Krishna Inn

## Day 7. Guruvayur - Exploration by Bike (Cycling 55 kms)



Guruvayur 📍

- Today we take a morning ride out to the coast at **Chavakkad Beach**, where we see colourful fishing boats and may also see groups of fishermen hauling their nets directly onto the sand. Then we pedal along the country roads in Thrissur district, seeking out some of the quieter back roads of this laid-back rural district. The countryside, with its traditional ways and colorful people, provides many opportunities for photos. We might also encounter some of the many ceremonial elephants that are associated with the Sri Krishna Temple at Guruvayur that comes alive for the night puja, with burning joss-sticks and fragrant flower-stalls adding to the atmosphere. People dressed in their best lungis and saris light up the huge 7m-high pillar of oil lamps in front of the heavy temple doors - a gorgeous spectacle to watch and enjoy.

☕ Breakfast

Hotel Krishna Inn

🏠 Accommodation

Hotel Krishna Inn

## Day 8. Guruvayur to Cochin (Cycling 85 kms)



Guruvayur 📍

🚲 85km

Cochin (Kochi) 📍

- After the breakfast, we set off and follow the coast road southwards, amongst palm trees and through small settlements, keeping the sea on our right all the time. Mango and coconut trees line the roads and life becomes a little bit slower here. We take the opportunity to stop for a swim at a suitable beach and then head for the lunch, find a restaurant with a sea-view to sample some superb sea-food, an important part of Keralan cuisine. After the lunch, we continue our journey to reach a point where we board local ferries to journey into the heart of the city of **Kochi**. This town has a unique place in Indian history, and to soak up the atmosphere we spend two nights here.

☕ Breakfast

Hotel Krishna Inn

## Day 9. In Cochin . Explore Fort Cochin



Cochin (Kochi) 📍

- Today we visit Fort Kochi, founded by the Portuguese in 1503 and it is considered to be one of the earliest site chosen by European colonial power. An odour of spice emerges from warehouses and food stalls offering different delicacy is common sight in each nook and corner of the town. In the afternoon we enjoy a sightseeing tour of Mattancherry Palace, built by the Portuguese as a gift for the Raja of Kochi, the Jewish synagogue dating from 1568 and **St Francis church**. We also explore the town of Kochi, its bazaars and old harbour area. In the evening there is the chance for an **Optional visit** to see a display of Kathakali, a form of classical dance unique to Kerala.

☕ Breakfast

Fort Queen

🏠 Accommodation

Fort Queen

## Day 10. Cochin to Alleppey (Cycling 60 kms)



Cochin (Kochi) 📍

🚲 60km

Alappuzha (Alleppey) 📍

- In the morning, we head South out of the city on a narrow strip of land between the **Laccadive Sea and the Kerala 'backwaters'**. We bike along the quiet coast road, taking it easy and stopping off in small fishing villages and watching the local men tending their nets or hauling their boats up onto the beach on wooden rollers. Since many of these fishing villages have Christian population we will pass a number of churches, the largest of which is at **Cherthala**. Here we have lunch before continuing our journey along the old coast road to **Alleppey** riding through the town following the canal. We arrive at a traditional Keralan house near the town of **Alleppey**. We can spend time in the garden of this simple lodging, looking out over the expanse of **Vembanad Lake**.

☕ Breakfast

Fort Queen

🏠 Accommodation

The Green Palace Health Resort

## Day 11. In Alleppey



Alappuzha (Alleppey) 📍

- After the breakfast, we have time to bike around the town or to explore it on foot. **Alleppey** is one of the centres for exploration of the Kerala backwaters. Around midday we board a fabulous backwater houseboat for an unforgettable trip to **Kollam**. Based on the structure of large traditional cargo boats known as **Kettuvallams**, these houseboats provide surprisingly luxurious accommodation. This is a unique and fascinating water world enclosed by palm trees. We just chill out and watch the world go by. Crafts of all sizes use the lakes and canals that make up this fascinating network of waterways. On one side of the canal are vast paddy fields of iridescent green stretch as far as the eye can see; on the other are fishing nets and coconut trees. As the sun begins to set, the boats are moored together and we gather for sundowners - a moment that is difficult to surpass and forget.

☕ Breakfast

The Green Palace Health Resort

🍴 Lunch

ATDC Houseboat

🍷 Dinner

ATDC Houseboat

🏠 Accommodation

ATDC Houseboat

## Day 12. Alleppey to laid-back Varkala (Cycling 88 kms)





Alappuzha (Alleppey) 📍  
🚲 80km  
Varkala 📍

- Today our breakfast will be served on the **Houseboats** as they would move towards our disembarkation point where we meet our support vehicle and begin the final leg of our bike journey. Again, following the coast road we head South to Valaazhikal, where we cross the river mouth on a local fishing boat. Five kilometers from here, we have a chance to visit a well-known spiritual retreat, '**Hugging Mama Ashram**'. We then join the main road to **Quillon** and take a break for lunch in the vicinity of Kollam before continuing our journey on quiet roads for the last 30 kms to **Varkala**, a serene place with coffee bars and yoga schools perched along its cliff-top.

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☕ Breakfast	ATDC Houseboat
🏠 Accommodation	Deshadan Cliff & Beach Resort

## Day 13. In Varkala - Day Free to relax on the beach



Varkala 📍

- We have a full day to chill out at this laid-back resort, totally free to do whatever we want: from strolling along the two beaches to just wandering around the shops; from savoring sea food in shack restaurants to tasting the tandoori dishes (from north India) cooked in clay ovens to give authentic taste to breads and curries. Overnight in Hotel.

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☕ Breakfast	Deshadan Cliff & Beach Resort
🏠 Accommodation	Deshadan Cliff & Beach Resort

## Day 14. Final Departure : Varkala- Trivandrum Airport



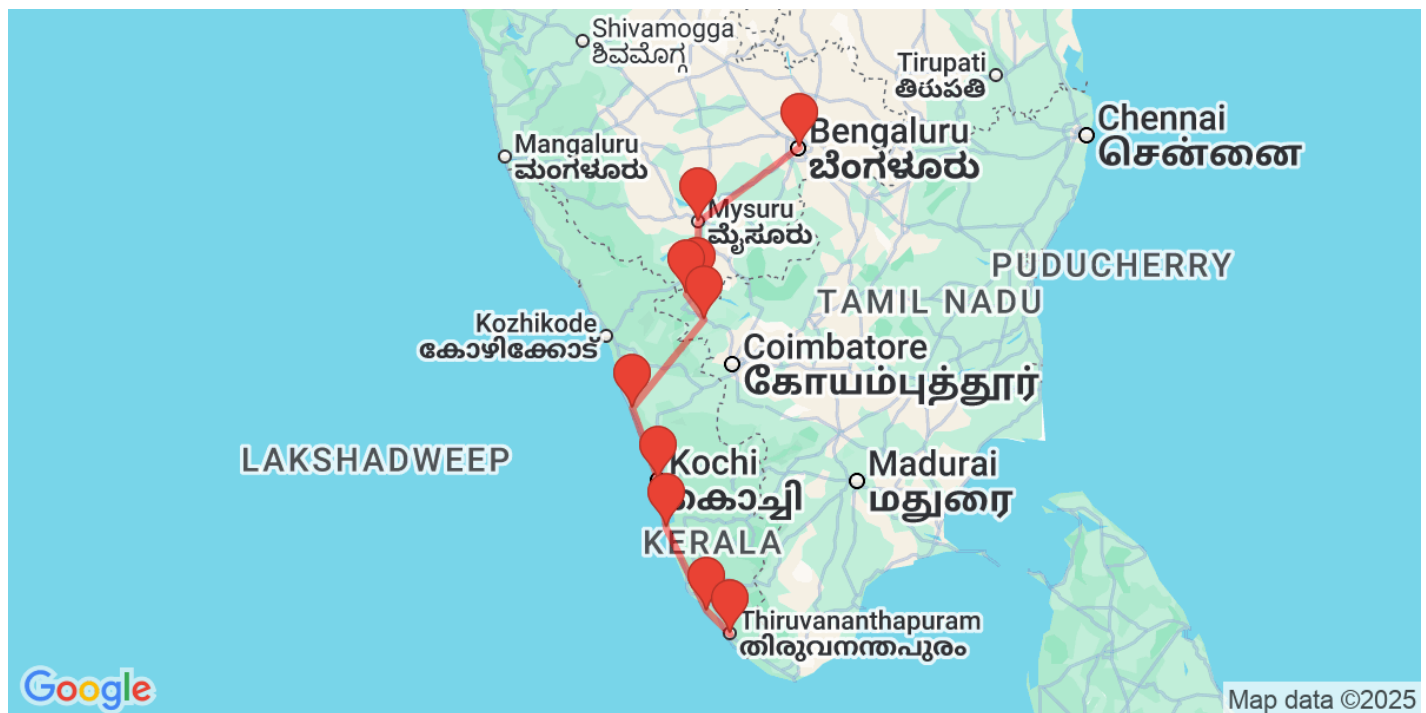
Varkala 📍  
🚗 50km - ⌚ 1h 30m  
Thiruvananthapuram  
(Trivandrum) 📍

- In the morning, we will be transferred to the International Airport of **Trivandrum** to board our flights to our respective destinations.

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☕ Breakfast	Deshadan Cliff & Beach Resort
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## Itinerary map



## Individual price per person

2-3	4-5	6-8	9-12
3150 USD	2210 USD	2010 USD	1810 USD

## Included

- Accommodation for 11 nights in a double room in the hotels mentioned or equivalent on breakfast basis
- 01 night on Full board in hotel in Bandipur
- 01 night on Full board in House Boat in Alleppey
- Support Vehicle and back-up equipment
- All ground transportation included in the program using private air-conditioned vehicle with English speaking driver
- One game drive in Open Cantor in Bandipur National Park
- One ferry ride in Cochin on seat sharing basis
- Entrance fees to the park and monuments as described in the program
- Professional English speaking Cycling tour leader throughout the trip
- Govt Taxes

## Not included

- International flight tickets
- Travel insurance
- These rates will not be valid for peak season from 20 December 2019 to 10 January 2020 , Christmas and New Year's extra supplement cost will be charged during this period
- Lunch and Dinner through out the trip except Full board in Alleppey and Bandipur National Park
- Miscellaneous Expenses - drinks, souvenir, personal expenses etc.
- Tips for driver and other local staff
- Charges for Camera in the monuments and Parks
- The cancellation and baggage insurance, assistance and repatriation
- Indian Visa
- All services not mentioned in "Inclusion"