



Tea pickers near Ooty

## Spice, Trade and Botanicals Histories along the Malabar Coast

20 January – 3 February 2020

2 nights Bangalore – 3 nights Mysore – 3 nights Ooty –  
1 night Madurai – 3 nights Periyar – 2 nights Cochin





Meenakshi Temple in Madurai

The captivating Malabar Coast has been a meeting place of cultures throughout history. Its lush landscapes were fragrant with the precious spices that brought traders from far and wide, making this coastline rich in both wealth and culture. This tour takes you through the most evocative parts of Malabar, taking inspiration from *Hortus Malabaricus* (meaning “Garden of Malabar”).

*Hortus Malabaricus*, with its beautiful illustrations, captured the flora of the Western Ghats. It brought Malabar’s indigenous plant knowledge to the attention of the world. Nearly 30 years in the making, it was published in Amsterdam from 1678 to 1693. K. S. Manilal, the respected Cochin botanist, translated the Latin *Hortus* into English and Malayalam. Each day on the tour has a botanical theme, discussed briefly before dinner.

Arrive in Bangalore – the most vibrant technology hub in South India – and check into your hotel with the first night at leisure.

Bangalore was traditionally known as the Garden City and the next day is devoted to its namesake. Visit the Lal Bagh Botanical Gardens

in the morning, as well as the library with its excellent collection of botanical art. In the afternoon drive to the outskirts of Bangalore to visit the superb Amrutha Vana Ethnomedicinal Garden, which cultivates a vast and beautiful range of plants valued for their medicinal properties according to Ayurvedic medicine. Tour the lush gardens and immaculately catalogued plant library and learn about some of the healing properties of different plants.

Drive to Mysore the following day, stopping en route to visit the elegant summer palace - set in lovely riverside gardens - of Sultan Tipu, notable for its teak pillars and ornamental frescoes



Learn about medicinal plants in Amrutha Vana



Take tea at the Lalitha Mahal Palace (top);  
Traditional Ayurveda processing at BV Pundit's (above)

depicting his struggle against the British. Arrive in Mysore late afternoon and check into your hotel, with the rest of the day at leisure.

Sumptuous Mysore is famed for its palaces and its silk, sandalwood and spices. Next morning visit one of the most astonishingly ornate palaces in India, Mysore Palace. Wander through the colourful throngs of the Devaraj Market and visit a sandalwood factory. Retire for sunset high tea with a local flavour with magnificent views overlooking Mysore from the grand Lalitha Mahal Palace. Return through Mysore by tonga (horse and carriage) to your hotel.

The following day visit a third generation family run traditional Ayurvedic production centre, BV Pundit's of Mysore. This fascinating small factory is run on strict Ayurvedic principles and uses authentic methods of distilling and cooking the herbs, hand rolling the tablets, packaging, etc. The small centre is meticulously organised and everything is done by hand. In the

afternoon visit the huge, beautifully landscaped Brindavan Gardens; one of the great attractions of the area.

Enjoy a spectacular journey the next day, travelling into the Blue Mountains up to the hill station of Ooty. Known as the Queen of the Hill Stations, 'Snooty Ooty' is a cool, tranquil town surrounded by hills and tea slopes. Visit the old cinchona factory and residence of William Graham McIvor, the founder of the Ooty Botanical Garden, before dinner at the Savoy in the evening.

Enjoy the beauty of the undisturbed, high montaine forests in the Blue Mountains the next morning. In the afternoon visit the famous botanical garden at Ooty, which was originally laid out by gardeners from Kew.

The following morning take the toy train to Coonoor on an exhilarating switchback ride through the Blue Mountains. Visit a tea plantation and the tea factory to learn about production of this most essential of leaves before returning to Ooty.

Next day drive across the lush Cardamom Hills to Coimbatore for lunch. Continue to Madurai, where you will take part in a culinary tour in the evening.

The following morning in Madurai visit the soaring, brightly coloured Meenakshi Temple – one of the oldest and most significant Hindu temples in India. In the afternoon set out for the



Chinese fishing nets in Cochin



morning take a walking tour of Fort Cochin, visiting the oldest church in India, 500-year old Portuguese houses, the old spice houses and areas that could be lifted from an English country village. In the evening enjoy a farewell dinner with the group.

The following day depart Cochin for the airport or join a beach extension.

highlands of Periyar, an endlessly spectacular drive past vivid green tea, coffee, rubber, pineapple and spice plantations.

The following day visit Mr and Mrs Abraham and their local spice plantation. Mr Abraham has been proudly nurturing his smallholding for many years and featured in Monty Don's *Around the World in 80 Gardens*. Join him on a tour of his plants in the morning and watch Mrs Abraham preparing lunch using their own spices, which you will then enjoy in the afternoon.

Periyar National Park is pristine and vast, home to herds of elephants and leopards among many other animals and plants. Take a guided nature walk with a local naturalist guide the following morning and spend the afternoon at leisure in the small attractive town of Periyar.

Depart the cooler highlands the next morning and drive to the backwaters, stopping on the way at a rubber plantation to see how rubber is tapped. Continue to Alleppey and board a private converted rice barge for a cruise along the tranquil Keralan backwaters. See Keralan life unfold as you drift past families swimming, fishing and washing in the canals, past vegetable-laden canoes, vivid green rice paddies and coconut farms. Enjoy a delicious Keralan lunch on board before continuing to the coastal city of Cochin.

Cochin is known as 'The Gateway to Kerala' and is a cosmopolitan and historic city. Next



Mr Abraham demonstrating spice harvesting (top);  
Commuting Kerala style; Cruise the backwaters in style  
on Vaikundam rice barge (above)

# Itinerary 20 January – 3 February 2020

**B** = Breakfast **L** = Lunch **D** = Dinner

2 nights Bangalore – 3 nights Mysore – 3 nights Ooty – 1 night Madurai – 3 nights Periyar  
– 2 nights Cochin

<b>20 Jan (Mon)</b>	<b>Bangalore</b> <b>D</b> <b>Botanical Discovery in the Land of the <i>Hortus Malabaricus</i></b>	<b>27 Jan (Mon)</b>	<b>Ooty / Coonoor / Ooty</b> <b>B L</b> <b>Tea: Two Leaves and a Bud in the South</b>
<b>Am</b>	Arrive Bangalore and transfer to the hotel	<b>Am</b>	Take the toy train to Coonoor
<b>Pm</b>	At leisure	<b>Pm</b>	Visit the tea plantation and tea factory
<b>21 Jan (Tue)</b>	<b>Bangalore</b> <b>B D</b> <b>Botanical Art of the “Company School”</b>	<b>28 Jan (Tue)</b>	<b>Ooty / Madurai</b> <b>B D</b> <b>Hill Stations: Healing Nature</b>
<b>Am</b>	Visit the Lal Bagh Botanical Gardens. Visits the library with its fine collection of botanical art	<b>Am</b>	Drive across the Cardamom Hills to Coimbatore
<b>Pm</b>	Visit the Amrutha Vana Ethnomedicinal Garden	<b>Pm</b>	Continue to Madurai and take part in a culinary tour
<b>22 Jan (Wed)</b>	<b>Bangalore / Mysore</b> <b>B D</b> <b>Silk: Made with Mulberries</b>	<b>29 Jan (Wed)</b>	<b>Madurai / Periyar</b> <b>B D</b> <b>Curry: Making the Dish</b>
<b>Am</b>	Drive to Mysore	<b>Am</b>	Visit Meenakshi Temple
<b>Pm</b>	Visit en route Sri Rangapatna – Tipu Sultan’s Summer Palace - and the silk workshop. Arrive Mysore and check into the hotel	<b>Pm</b>	Drive to Periyar
<b>23 Jan (Thur)</b>	<b>Mysore</b> <b>B L</b> <b>Sandalwood: The Scent of Mysore</b>	<b>30 Jan (Thur)</b>	<b>Periyar</b> <b>B L</b> <b>Pepper: Kerala’s Gift</b>
<b>Am</b>	Visit Mysore Maharaja’s Palace	<b>Am</b>	Visit Mr Abraham’s spice smallholding on a guided tour
<b>Pm</b>	Visit Dervaraj Market and see the temple. Visit a sandalwood factory. Take afternoon tea on the balcony of the Lalitha Mahal Palace overlooking Mysore. Return by tonga (horse and carriage) to the hotel	<b>Pm</b>	Watch lunch being prepared with local spices and eat at the Abraham’s house
<b>24 Jan (Fri)</b>	<b>Mysore</b> <b>B D</b> <b>Ayurveda and its Botanicals</b>	<b>31 Feb (Fri)</b>	<b>Periyar</b> <b>B D</b> <b>Spice Plantations: Export Riches</b>
<b>Am</b>	Visit BV Pundit’s traditional Ayurvedic pharmaceutical factory	<b>Am</b>	Morning nature walk in the Periyar National Park
<b>Pm</b>	Visit Brindavan Gardens	<b>Pm</b>	At leisure
<b>25 Jan (Sat)</b>	<b>Mysore / Ooty</b> <b>B D</b> <b>Gin and Tonic, Cinchona Bitters</b>	<b>1 Feb (Sat)</b>	<b>Periyar / Cochin</b> <b>B L D</b> <b>Rubber: Tapping for Wealth</b>
<b>Am</b>	Drive into the Blue Mountains and up to the hill station at Ooty	<b>Am</b>	Drive to Alleppey via rubber plantations (and see tapping). Board a houseboat and cruise the backwaters
<b>Pm</b>	Visit the old cinchona factory and residence of William Graham McIvor, the founder of the Ooty Botanical Gardens	<b>Pm</b>	Continue to Cochin
<b>Eve</b>	Dinner at the Savoy		
<b>26 Jan (Sun)</b>	<b>Ooty</b> <b>B D</b> <b>Planting Gardens</b>	<b>2 Feb (Sun)</b>	<b>Cochin</b> <b>B D</b> <b>Trade: Why the World Came to Cochin</b>
<b>Am</b>	Explore some of the undisturbed, high montaine forests in the Blue Mountains	<b>Am</b>	Explore old Fort Cochin and visit the Dutch Palace and learn of Cochin’s history
<b>Pm</b>	Return in the afternoon and visit Ooty Botanical Gardens	<b>Pm</b>	Visit the old spice houses
		<b>Eve</b>	Farewell dinner
		<b>3 Feb (Mon)</b>	<b>Cochin / Backwaters</b> <b>B</b> If departing transfer to airport OR take the beach extension

All itineraries are subject to change accordingly to local conditions.



## Hotels

### **Lemon Tree Ulsoor Hotel (Bangalore)**

Sleek and contemporary, this comfortable and friendly hotel is situated in the heart of Bangalore.

### **Southern Star (Mysore)**

Centrally located and built within 4 acres of beautifully landscaped gardens with a pool, this hotel provides comfortable and spacious rooms and contemporary style. The customer service is very good.

### **Highland Hotel (Ooty)**

Located in the Blue Mountains on the cool slopes of Ooty, the Highland Hotel has some wonderful views and is known for its excellent cuisine and service.

### **GRT Regency (Madurai)**

A hotel in the contemporary style with well equipped rooms, a lounge bar and a swimming pool. It enjoys a central location and often attracts comments on the quality of its restaurant.

### **Elephant Court (Periyar)**

A welcoming hotel rambling across spacious grounds, Elephant Court provides spacious and elegant rooms, a lovely pool and an excellent restaurant.

### **The Killians Boutique Hotel (Cochin)**

With an unbeatable location right by the port harbour, this boutique hotel nestled in the heart of Old Cochin provides comfortable, contemporary rooms, a swimming pool and a welcoming, comprehensively stocked bar.

*“Variety of cultural visits excellent.”*

Frida Garrod, Malabar Journey 2017

Elegant Bangalore (top); Lalitha Mahal at sunset; Take the toy train to Coonoor; A mural in old Cochin (above)



Sorting turmeric in Cochin

## Tour Leaders

**Bill Bynum** is Professor Emeritus at University College London. A Yale graduate in medicine, he began his career in the history of medicine with a Cambridge PhD before moving to the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine. His *'History of Medicine: A Very Short Introduction'* and *'A Little History of Science'* have been translated into 14 languages.

After a PhD in the History of Medicine from University College London, **Helen Bynum** lectured at the University of Liverpool before beginning a freelance career as a medical historian and popular science writer. Together with Bill she edited *'Great Discoveries in Medicine'* before turning their attention to the world of plants and their histories in *'Remarkable Plants that Shape our World'* and *'Botanical Sketchbooks'*. 'Team Bynum' have led and lectured on several successful tours and cruises for Jon Baines Tours.

*"Bill and Helen were excellent leaders. Helen demonstrated great patience and kindness."*

Sally and Peter Wrigley, The History of Science and Medicine in Morocco, October 2018

**The cost of the tour is US \$3,472 per person sharing (excluding international flights and transfers)**

### The cost includes:

- 14 nights' accommodation in twin-bedded rooms within medium grade, heritage and boutique hotels

### The single room supplement is US \$683

- UK tour leaders (Bill and Helen Bynum)
- Comprehensive briefing notes
- Breakfast and lunch or dinner daily (3 days with lunch and dinner)
- Two train trips and all transport as per the itinerary
- A full programme of cultural visits
- Admission fees where applicable
- National guide throughout ('Prince' Charles)
- Tips

### The cost excludes:

- International flights (please contact us if you would like help booking these)
- Airport transfers
- Indian visa and travel insurance
- All personal extras such as portage, laundry, inoculation fees and drinks
- All optional excursions, tours and visits

### Kerala Extension Cost:

There is a 2-night post tour extension to **Marari Sands Beach Resort in Kerala**.

The cost is **US \$347 pp sharing**. Includes daily breakfast and arrival and departure airport transfers.

Single supplement: **USD \$193**

Please contact the office for more information.

*"Charles, the local guide, is exceptional. He behaved like our host and couldn't do enough for us. Very well organised, knowledgeable."*

Christine Pugh and Tony Renshaw,  
Malabar Journey 2017

## About Us

To travel with us is to dig below the surface, revealing the deeper destination. Of course, you will visit the great historical sites; marvel at the wonders of architecture and engineering; be moved by the riches of culture and art; and experience the most spectacular landscapes in the world. What we also do is make sure that you see the country as it is today, giving you privileged access that independent travel and other tour companies rarely get close to. We give you a variety of experiences, from the sublime to the humble, in the company of intelligent, curious, like-minded people. And while we can be worthy, we also make sure that you have a lot of fun.

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**Jon Baines Tours (London)**  
Hyde Park House, 5 Manfred Road,  
London, SW15 2RS  
Tel: +44 (0) 207 223 9485 / 5618  
Email: [info@jonbainestours.co.uk](mailto:info@jonbainestours.co.uk)  
[www.jonbainestours.co.uk](http://www.jonbainestours.co.uk)

**Jon Baines Tours (Melbourne)**  
PO Box 68, South Brunswick,  
Victoria 3055  
Tel: +61 (0) 3 9343 6367  
Fax: +61 (0) 3 9012 4228  
Email: [info@jonbainestours.com.au](mailto:info@jonbainestours.com.au)  
[www.jonbainestours.com](http://www.jonbainestours.com)



Mysore Palace (top); On the road in Periyar; Spice seller in Mysore;  
The Keralan backwaters (above)



Jon Baines  
tours

