



EDUCATIONAL



11 Days

India

Bananas about Coffee

Kerala, a state in southern India, is famous for its palm-lined beaches, legendary backwaters and rolling hills lined with vibrant green tea and spice plantations. The region is a tropical symphony of wildlife, pristine hiking trails, glistening canals, hill stations and ancient temples. On this educational journey we visit cloud forests, nature sanctuaries and hydroelectric dams. We will learn first hand about the nature world and agriculture in rural Kerala, Fairtrade and the affects of climate change. Whilst we're here it would be rude not to take advantage of the trekking, cycling, kayaking and river cruise opportunities too! This is an enchanting journey in a world well away from the frenzy of northern India. Prepare to be enchanted by the magic of Kerala.



Why Fairtrade?

Imagine what life would be like if only one type of career was available to you.
Imagine if that job wasn't guaranteed or secured by a contract.
Imagine if, after all the hard work you do, you're not paid enough to provide for yourself and your family. This is the reality for many farmers around the world.
Fairtrade is working hard to change it.

What is Fairtrade?

Fairtrade is a global movement, represented in the UK by the Fairtrade Foundation www.fairtrade.org.uk
Fairtrade is all about better prices and working conditions, encouraging **sustainability** and ensuring fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world. It's about tackling poverty in **communities** and working to ensure farmers earn a **fair wage** to pay for their basic needs like food, clean water, education and housing.

Fairtrade & STC Expeditions

As a leading expedition company in responsible travel, STC Expeditions was founded on **ethical business values** and this is also what Fairtrade is all about. Travel and tourism has the potential to bring a huge positive impact to the communities we visit. For example, we employ local Expedition Leaders from your destination rather than sending one from the UK. We also hire local skilled workers to help on projects and use local and independent service providers such as hotels and restaurants wherever possible. These are just a few examples. By using an ethical approach, we are helping to **put more money into the local economy**. And if you ever pop into our office in Exeter, you can join us for a Fairtrade coffee and chocolate!

"People know Fairtrade and see the label, but don't get to see what it means on the other end." L.W. (student)

What do our Fairtrade trips involve?

- * **Inspirational** educational journeys in southern India and Ghana
- * **Visit** Fairtrade certified farms
- * **Meet** local farmers & workers
- * **Learn, experience & discuss** human right topics and empowerment
- * **Become** a Fairtrade school



Recommended itinerary

Day
1-2

Depart the UK on an overnight flight and arrive Kerala

On arrival in Kochi, we meet our local STC Expedition Leader and transfer to our hotel. After freshening up, we set out to visit the heritage city, Fort Cochin and see the world famous Kathakali art. This evening we have a welcome briefing and enjoy our first dinner in Kochi, followed by a Kathakali Dance performance in the evening.

Day
3

Bananas about Coffee

After a leisurely breakfast we set off to visit one of the largest organic producers of coffee, spices and rubber in India. The organisation is owned and managed by the farmers themselves. A morning lecture gives us an insight into sustainable farming practices, marketing and the exportation of organic products from India.

This afternoon we head further from the city to visit a local farmhouse and learn to make a traditional banana leaf 'sadhyā' lunch. Next is our first visit to a Fairtrade certified farm where we have a guided tour of the farm and its crops of fruit trees, spices, coffee and vegetables. This is followed by a session planting our own fruit seedlings! Coffee fans can also learn the four stages of coffee tasting or 'cupping' - most likely the freshest coffee you've ever had!

Day
4

Thattekad, birds and elephants

After breakfast, we transfer to Thattekad where we first visit the renowned Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary, named after the late Dr Salim Moizzudin Abdul Ali, India's best known ornithologist. The sanctuary was created to protect the thriving birdlife living in the surrounding mangroves and marshland.

Next we will visit an elephant orphanage and Sacred Grove (kaavu) where we will learn more about these incredible giants as well as traditional Hinduism. Tonight we stay overnight at the spectacular 'Hornbill Camp', nestled between lowland plantations of rubber, pepper and vanilla.

Day
5

Day hike to Kalypso Camp

This morning we transfer to Suryanelli, a small town near the famous Munnar Hill Station. This is our gateway into the stunning Western Ghats mountain range, and a rich area of bio-diversity. Here we will be surrounded by flocks of birds and rolling hills dotted with tea and cardamom plantations established by the British in the late 19th century.

We reach Suryanelli by midday and begin our afternoon trek, 6km through grassland and pine forest until we reach Kalypso Camp, where we stay overnight. This evening we explore the local area on a walk with a naturalist who will teach us about the global environmental issues which are impacting the local area and economy.





Day
6

Nature walk, hydro electric project and on to Munnar

This morning we can walk to a viewpoint to watch the spectacular sunrise over the mountains! Back at camp and after breakfast we meet up again with our naturalist who will guide us on another nature walk, this time learning about the endemic mountain ecosystem. Next we visit the Idukki Dam, Asia's first and largest arch dam and part of the Idukki Hydro Electric Project. From here we travel on to our overnight stop in a vintage bungalow, nestled between tea and rubber plantations.

Day
7-8

Fairtrade Experiences

Over the next two days we really get to grips with Fairtrade and projects in Kerala. We spend time with the local farmers, workers and community to learn about their daily lives, the challenges they face and what Fairtrade means to them. We overnight in homestays in the community and learn to cook ethnic dishes using organic and local ingredients.

Munnar is well known for growing some of the best tea in the world, helped by its year round cool climate. It became a hotspot for tea cultivation having been introduced by the British during the colonial rule. We explore the seemingly endless tea plantations, estates and gardens before visiting the 100 year old Lockhart Tea Factory. We hear from social service organisations that work to connect and empower marginal spice farmers across the southern districts, by providing assistance in improving the quality of products and ensuring farmers receive the premium price.

Be prepared to get hands on - harvesting our own crops, farming with traditional methods, tasting exotic spices and fruits and living alongside the locals.

Day
9-10

Alleppey, Cycles, Kayaks & Cruise

Alleppey (or Alappuzha) is best known for houseboat cruises along the rustic Kerala backwaters, a network of tranquil canals and lagoons. Having checked in to our hotel, we head out for a cycling tour of the local area.

Upon reaching the more remote backwater areas, we get stuck in with our own Environment Clean Up Project and help to clear waste in and alongside the waterways.



On day 10 we explore these legendary backwaters and beaches by kayak. After lunch we can relax and explore the vibrant local markets. Tonight we will step aboard our private houseboat for an unforgettable dinner whilst watching the sunset on this tropical paradise.

Day
11

Fly to London

After an exhilarating adventure in southern India, we transfer to the airport in time for our flight back to the UK. We return with a far deeper understanding of life in Kerala and the importance of buying Fairtrade.

Further information

Look what's included!

- International flights
- All accommodation
- All food
- All transportation and activities
- Bi-lingual, first-aid qualified local expedition leader
- Parent and student expedition launch evening
- Comprehensive pre-expedition training programme
- **Fairtrade** interactive lesson for group
- **Fairtrade** lesson materials
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for staff

- ATOL financial protection
- Medical Emergency / Repatriation Travel Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Carbon offsetting of all flights
- Free t-shirt for every participant and teacher

What's excluded?

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations

- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Cancellation and personal effects insurance

Your educational journey timeline



Physical expedition rating:



Some low level physical activities included in your trip, including walking on uneven terrain, maybe a morning/afternoon trek of two to four hours. That said, no physical preparation is required to make the most of the tour. High humidity and temperatures can occur at certain times of the year.

Culture shock rating:



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey

1 Get your tailor-made proposal and further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an itinerary just for you. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk assessments and destination threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your pre-booking information pack too.

3 Arrange an expedition launch evening at your school

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening with opportunity for questions.



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