

**KERALA RETREAT LOGISTICS
8-18 DECEMBER 2019**

Developing inner mastery

A 9-day spiritual awakening retreat to “God’s own country”, Kerala, India

Flights

Participants are responsible for booking and covering the costs of their own flights. Flight prices will vary depending on when they are booked and are likely to substantially increase the closer it gets to Christmas. It is therefore recommended to book flights as early as possible.

The closest airport to the retreat location is Trivandrum, Kerala (locally called Thiruvananthapuram). Airlines that travel from London to Trivandrum include Emirates, Oman, Etihad and Qatar. It is also possible to get good deals sometimes through travel agent, Tickets to India (<https://www.ticketstoindia.co.uk/>). Please see recommended flights below.

Recommended flights

Oman

Outbound:

Saturday 7 December

Dep London Heathrow 20.05 – arr Thiruvananthapuram 14.15+1day

1 hr 50 min stop over in Muscat-Oman

Return:

Wednesday 18 December

Dep Thiruvananthapuram 08.30 – arr London Heathrow 18:25

3 hr 45 min stop over in Muscat-Oman

Emirates

Outbound:

Saturday 7 December

Dep London Heathrow 09.10 – arr Thiruvananthapuram 03:10+1day

1 hr 40 min stop over in Dubai

Return:

Wednesday 18 December

Dep Thiruvananthapuram 04:30 – arr London Heathrow 13:50

2 hr 25 min stop over in Dubai

Qatar Airways

Outbound:

Saturday 7 December

Dep London Heathrow 08.00 – arr Thiruvananthapuram 02:25+1day

1 hr 35 min stop over in Doha

Return:

Wednesday 18 December

Dep Thiruvananthapuram 03:25 – arr London Heathrow 13:20

2 hr 50 min stop over in Doha

Arrival and departure

Hotel check-in is from 10am on Sunday 8 December 2019 and the retreat commences at 6pm on Sunday 8 December with an opening talk and yoga/meditation, followed by dinner. The first full day of the retreat is Monday 9 December 2019. The Oman flight arrives in Kerala at 2.15pm on Sunday 8th whereas other flights arrive very early in the morning. If you prefer to take one of these flights it may be possible to have your room early depending on availability. Alternatively, you will be able to wait in a communal area until your room is free at 10am. For those that arrive early, this will be a rest and orientation day, and breakfast and lunch can be provided with advance notification.

Check-out on the day of departure is by 10am on 18 December 2019.

Airport transfers

Airport transfers are not included in the price. A taxi from the airport costs in the region of 1850 Indian rupees (roughly £20-25 dependent on exchange rate) and takes about an hour and a half dependent on traffic. Pre-paid taxis can be booked from Trivandrum airport or directly through the hotel. Taxis can take up to 4 people and where possible taxi shares will be coordinated.

Visa

All foreign national visitors require a visa to enter India. It is now possible to obtain an electronic tourist visa online by visiting:

<https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>).

An e-visa is valid for 120 days after being issued. This means you must enter India within a period no longer than 120 days after obtaining your visa. They take about 72 hours to process and you should apply no later than 4 days in advance of your arrival (though allowing significantly more time is recommended in case of any unforeseen issues). E-visas are valid for a 60-day period and the fee for UK nationals at time of posting is listed as 100USD (roughly £80).

Paper visas can be obtained by visiting the High Commission, which is a far lengthier process. Further details available at:

https://www.vfsglobal.com/india/uk/visa_types.html

Vaccinations

Please see <https://www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk/destinations/asia-east/india#immunisations> for recommended vaccinations for travel to India. Additional advice can be sought from your GP.

Costs

There is an early bird fee of £999 (before 30 August) per person based on sharing twin or double room; thereafter £1099. For a £200 supplement, you can secure your own room.

Booking / cancellation policy

This will be a small held group with limited spaces so early booking is highly recommended. A £300 non-refundable deposit is required to secure your place, with the balance payable by 31 October 2019. Bookings taken after 31 October 2019 will require payment in full.

Travel insurance

All participants must have fully comprehensive travel insurance in place in order to take part in this retreat, which can be obtained through any major provider. It is recommended that travel insurance, including cancellation insurance, is taken out prior to booking the retreat.

Terms and conditions

It is fully intended that the retreat goes ahead as advertised; if, however, any changes are necessary due to unforeseen circumstances, such as factors affecting availability of venue or teacher, participants will be notified at the earliest opportunity. In the event of cancellation, a full refund of any monies paid for the retreat will be provided. Refunds are not provided for any costs incurred for airfare or other travel arrangements however. It is strongly recommended that participants take out fully comprehensive travel insurance prior to booking a place on this retreat.

What's included in the cost

Accommodation from 8th – 18th December 2019 (10 nights)

3 x vegan meals per day (except for at the Ashram)

24-hour trip to Amritapuri (basic Ashram accommodation and return travel)

2 x daily Kundalini Yoga & meditation

Other practices to include:

Shamanic Journeying, connecting with different spirit guides, silent practices connecting with nature, and sharing circles.

1 x 1-2-1 Shamanic Healing

1 x double Ayurvedic treatment

What's not included

Flights

Indian Visa / e-visa

Travel insurance

Vaccinations if needed

Food whilst at Amritapuri (basic free Indian food is available or food can be purchased for a reasonable price from a variety of Western and Indian canteens)

Airport transfers

Optional extras

Additional Ayurvedic treatments/massages can be purchased at own cost

Spending money whilst at the Ashram if desired – there are a number of clothes, food and gift shops at Amritapuri

There will also be the opportunity to book a Puja whilst at the Ashram (variable fees starting from c 35 USD). Those interested should bring their birth time, date and location with them in order to ascertain their birth star. It is also possible to observe a Puja free of charge.

Money for laundry (hand-washing is also possible and there are washing lines available)

What to bring

Yoga mat and blanket/shawl

Clothes for doing yoga in

Comfortable loose fitting general clothing

Swimwear (if desired) for beach

Additional old clothes that can get oily/dirty for Ayurveda treatments

Journal and pen

Photocopies of passport and visa are useful to have in the Ashram in case of using the bank or booking pujas

Toiletries including sun screen and natural mosquito repellent

Refillable water bottle (filtered drinking water is available in both locations)

Beach towel (other towels are provided)

Weather will be hot but you may like to bring a jumper or shawl in case of cooler evenings/early mornings

An alarm clock

Some people may wish to bring a mosquito net

Location and accommodation

The retreat takes place in an eco-friendly 3-star hotel set within an idyllic and secluded nature-based location, with Odayam beach to one side, and rice plantations to the other. Rooms are simple, but comfortable, and consist of double or twin beds and there is one apartment with 2 separate rooms which can host between 2 and 4 participants. All rooms have ensuite bathrooms.

One night will be spent in Amritapuri, Amma's Ashram, which is basic (sometimes mattresses on floor) and shared with up to 3 per room. Participants will need to provide their full name, passport number and DOB in advance in order for a group booking to be arranged (meaning participants can stay together). It is likely that limited time will be spent in the actual rooms.

Food

Kerala retreat logistic

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There will be 3 lovingly prepared authentic, local vegan meals a day. Breakfast is served outside your rooms after an early morning Kundalini Yoga and meditation practice and lunch and dinner will be buffet style. Lunch will be the main meal and dinner usually a simple soup. This retreat is alcohol and sugar free (except for natural sugar found in fruit). It is also recommended that participants abstain from caffeine. If anyone suffers from any food allergies they should let me know in advance of the retreat. Whilst on the retreat, it is strongly recommended that participants only eat food from the retreat premises and Ashram as cleanliness of food purchased from other locations cannot be guaranteed.

Weather

The retreat takes place during peak season in Kerala with average daily temperatures of around 31°C and little to no rainfall expected (December marks the beginning of the dry season).

Dress code

It is generally best practice to dress modestly and not expose too much flesh whilst in India. Whilst at the beach in Odayam it is common for locals to see Westerners in less modest clothing, including swim wear, it is otherwise generally best practice to wear loose fitting clothing that does not expose too much skin, such as loose fitting cotton trousers or skirts and tops that cover the shoulders. Modest attire is essential for the Ashram.

Money

The local currency is Indian rupees which you can exchange in the UK and bring with you or in the airport upon departure or on arrival. It is also possible to draw money out through cash machines. There is a cash machine/money exchange facilities at the airport and at the ashram and in the local town to the retreat.

Pre-project practice

It is strongly recommended that all participants carry out a 40-day home Kundalini Yoga and meditation practice in order to prepare themselves more fully for the trip commencing by 28 October 2019. For those that feel called to go deeper in to the practice, this can be extended to a 90-day practice, commencing by 8 September 2019. Recommended Kriya and meditation will be sent to all participants upon request / signing up for the retreat.