SPICE ROADS
CYCLING



TOURING

KERALA HERITAGE BY BICYCLE

Tour Code
IND-DHB

8 DAYS
7 NIGHTS

Destinations	India
Tour Meets	Kochi
Tour Ends	Kochi
Fly in to	Cochin International Airport (COK)
Fly out of	Cochin International Airport (COK)
Group Size	2-16 riders
Minimum Age	18 (on scheduled departures)

ACTIVITY PROFILE

8 Cycling days	**377** km Total cycling distance
47 km Avg distance / day	**384** m Avg climbing / day

PRICING

Price	US$ 2,225 to US$ 2,290
Bike Hire (E-Bike)	US$ 75
Bike Hire (Mountain Bike)	Included
Single Supplement	US$ 470 to US$ 545

**E-bikes are in limited supply, please enquire to reserve one.*

DEPARTURES

29 Nov - 06 Dec 2026
22 Feb - 01 Mar 2027
27 Sep - 04 Oct 2027
22 Nov - 29 Nov 2027

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ SpiceRoads jersey
- ✓ Water bottle
- ✓ Support vehicle
- ✓ Guide(s)
- ✓ Meals (as indicated)
- ✓ Hotel pick up
- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Bike and helmet
- ✓ Snacks and drinks
- ✓ Entrance fees
- ✓ Ferry/boat fares

WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- ✗ International flights
- ✗ Domestic flights
- ✗ Airport pick up
- ✗ Airport drop off
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Alcohol
- ✗ Tips

TRIP PROFILE

We ride a total of 377 km over 8 cycling days. We begin with hotel pick-ups near Kochi airport, saving us lengthy transfers to and from the city centre, before heading inland. We have a transfer on Day 1 to the cycling start point and short pre- and post-ride transfers on Days 3, 4, and 5; the rest of the rides are hotel-to-hotel. We are on the bike every day of the adventure! This tour takes place in the midlands and lowlands of Kerala, meaning the terrain is consistently flat and rolling. The pace is leisurely with modest distance goals each day, allowing us to take in the colourful scenery as we ride on Kerala's backroads. Non-cycling highlights of the tour include visiting India's largest pineapple market, a tuk-tuk ride through Thrissur, a half-day visit to an academy promoting the region's performance arts, the spiritual ambiance outside Guruvayur Temple, relaxing at a seaside resort near Cherai Beach, and seeing the sights at Fort Kochi. Cuisine is another highlight of the tour, and we will be enjoying many traditional Keralan meals, which are predominantly vegetarian. You also have the option to treat yourself to Ayurvedic spa treatments in some of the locations visited (not included in the tour cost).

The trip is fully supported, and your guide's expert knowledge of the area and terrain means that you always know what is coming up in terms of distance and difficulty. This makes a tremendous difference, as does the constant supply of water and refreshments along the way.

Suitability: This is a moderately difficult trip that anyone with a reasonable level of fitness will enjoy. The terrain is consistently flat or mildly undulating; only one ride exceeds 600 metres of elevation gain, though there are enough hills that some experience with climbing is an asset. Daily distances range between 45 and 70 km, not including the 15 km warm-up ride on Day 1 and the 33 km afternoon ride on Day 5. Navigating narrow village lanes, bumpy country roads, and stretches of hard-packed dirt or gravel requires basic bike-handling skills but does not involve technical manoeuvring. The same applies to riding through local traffic, which can feel chaotic at times. The main challenge of the tour is maintaining stamina over back-to-back riding days and cycling in the tropical heat. However, the pace is leisurely with plenty of refreshment stops, so riders with less experience are more than welcome to join. The support vehicle is always nearby to offer refuge to any weary cyclists.

Biking Conditions: On this tour, riders can expect around 80% of the route to be on paved surfaces, consisting of good-quality asphalt or concrete as well as broken, bumpy, and cratered roads. The remaining 20% is made up of vehicle-width gravel and dirt roads. While much of the route is on quiet countryside roads with minimal traffic, we will be regularly sharing the roads with other vehicles, including cars, motorbikes, tuk-tuks, trucks and buses. This is India, after all — a country constantly on the move! Roadworks are not uncommon and we are likely to encounter wedding, funeral and festival processions spilling onto the streets. There are some unavoidable sections along the shoulders of provincial main roads. In the dry season, the roads can get dusty, and when it rains, they can become muddy. We generally ride rain or shine, but based on the guide's discretion or your level of comfort, modifications to the planned route can be made. It's all part of the adventure! Additionally, during the winter months (October - January), haze may impact air quality on parts of the route.

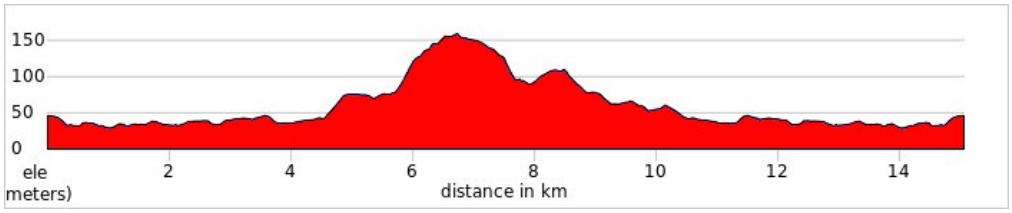
Accommodations: We experience a wide range of accommodation styles on this tour. In the countryside (Days 1, 2, 3, and 5), we stay at a plantation homestay, a bespoke riverside resort, an Ayurvedic wellness retreat, and an elevated farm stay. In the cities (Days 4 and 6), we stay in modern, centrally-located hotels at the 3- to 4-star level. Our final night (Day 7) is at an elegant seaside resort. At all properties, you can expect clean, spacious rooms with air-conditioning and professional service from English-speaking staff. Most, but not all, accommodations also have swimming pools. Our chosen hotels feature hygienic restaurants offering primarily South Indian cuisine, with Western options occasionally available (generally at breakfast). Most properties in Kerala do not serve alcohol or allow consumption in public areas. Please be aware that some older properties, while charming, may show signs of wear and tear, and the service pace in Kerala can generally be more relaxed than you might be accustomed to. For larger groups, we may need to use more than one accommodation and, in case of limited availability, switch to an alternative property from the one listed in the itinerary.



Day 1: Meet in Kochi & Into the Kerala Spice Belt

Welcome to Kochi, the bustling gateway to the state of Kerala. Please arrive a day before the tour starts and stay near the airport to avoid lengthy transfers to and from the city (we are happy to book a partner airport hotel for you). Don't worry — we'll return to Kochi on Day 8 for a deeper exploration! This morning we pick you up near the airport and drive approximately two hours into the heart of the so-called 'Spice Belt' of Kerala, where the coastal flats give way to the rugged foothills of the Western Ghats. This is a fertile rural region where ancient spices like nutmeg, pepper and ginger thrive alongside vast estates growing rubber trees and pineapples. We base ourselves in one of the area's plantation homestays: family-owned, working farms that moonlight as boutique lodgings nestled amidst the rich agrarian bounty of the Keralan hinterland. A late morning guided walk around the property introduces us to the diversity of the estate's crops and traditional cultivation practices, while a post-lunch bike ride gives us our first taste of the midland hills on two wheels. In the evening we convene for a welcome dinner.

Plantation Homestay Lunch, Dinner

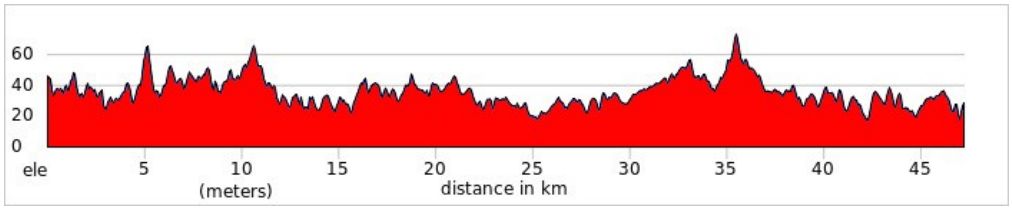


Ride 15km +211m -211m

Day 2: Ride to the Periyar River

Today we enjoy a lovely point-to-point ride through the midlands of Kerala, where swift rivers descending from the Western Ghats carve through a lush terrain of rolling hills and valleys. We take a gentle pace, soaking in scenes of local life in the rice paddies, coconut groves, rubber plantations, tropical fruit orchards and lively towns. We also stop by India's largest pineapple market in Vazhakulam and encounter Kerala's two dominant faiths, Hinduism and Christianity, as we pass by temples and churches. Our destination is a peaceful resort on the banks of the Periyar River, the longest river in Kerala. The afternoon is free to relax by the pool or walk along a trail to the Paniyeli Poru Rapids, a scenic spot of natural rock formations and river cascades surrounded by dense mahogany and teak forests.

Whispering Waters Resort Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

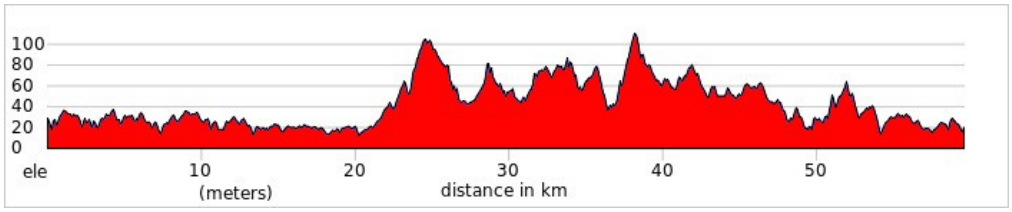


Ride 47km +487m -505m

Day 3: Ride to the Chalakudy River

Starting our ride from the hotel, we pedal around 10 km to an elephant rescue centre tucked away in the forest along the Periyar River. Elephants are inextricably linked to the cultural heritage of Kerala, though their conservation in the wild faces major challenges in the modern world. We'll greet the gentle giants residing here in peace before crossing the Periyar River and, at around 20 km, settle in for an undulating ride at the edge of the Western Ghats foothills. We cycle through rubber and teak plantations on quiet roads, gently rising and falling with the contours of the terrain, before reaching the valley of the Chalakudy River — another of the state's vital waterways. The final 20 km take us across the plain dotted with oil palm trees, where we also pause for the thrill of walking across a suspension bridge. Our ride ends at a tranquil nature retreat where urbanites (and sweaty cyclists like ourselves!) come to rejuvenate with Ayurvedic treatments and healthy, farm-to-table vegetarian cuisine.

Rasa Gurukul or Back to Roots Ayurveda Retreat Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

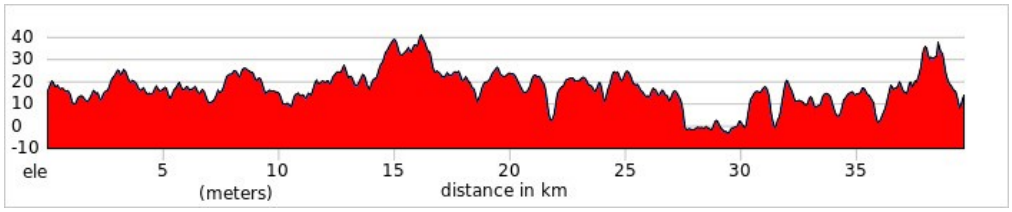


Ride 60km +640m -648m

Day 4: Ride to Thrissur

Today's ride takes us north into a densely populated area in Central Kerala where it is often difficult to tell where one village ends and the next begins! But linking them is a network of backroads slicing through a colourful cross-section of daily life in the communities, markets, and rice paddies of the Malabar Plain. We end our ride with lunch at a local restaurant after 40 km and drive a short transfer into the city of Thrissur. Late this afternoon we hop into iconic Indian tuk-tuks (motorised rickshaws) and zip through the streets to discover Thrissur's landmarks. First up is the Our Lady of Dolours Basilica, an Indo-Gothic marvel whose soaring white spires and 79-metre Bible Tower dominate the city skyline. Next, we head to Vadakkunnathan Temple to admire its monumental stone gateways and sweeping copper-clad roofs. While only Hindus are allowed inside the temple, we can still catch a glimpse of the heady atmosphere from the surrounding parkland as devotees come to pray to Lord Shiva. Tonight we sleep in a sleek modern hotel in the heart of town, giving ourselves a change of pace from the upcountry lodgings we've enjoyed so far.

Radisson Thrissur East Fort Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

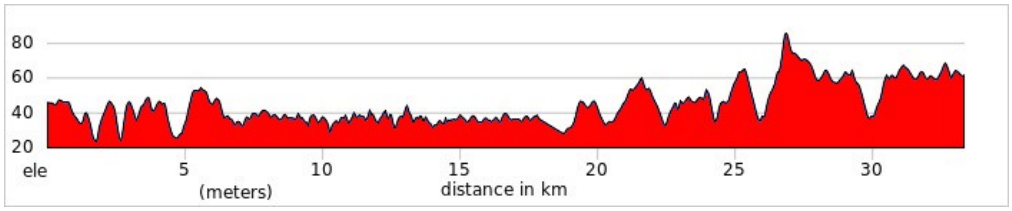


Ride 40km +303m -307m

Day 5: Keralan Art & Ride to Ottapalam

We spend the first half of the day at Kerala Kalamandalam, the state's premier academy for the preservation of Kerala's traditional performing arts rooted in ancient temple rituals and the grand storytelling of Hindu epics. Located an hour's drive north of Thrissur, this vast campus invites visitors for a behind-the-curtains look at Keralan classical theatre and dance. Led by knowledgeable staff, we are guided through classrooms to witness students mastering the precise hand gestures, intense facial expressions, and rhythmic footwork accompanied by the thunderous beats of temple drums. The visit ends at 13:00 (1 pm), the perfect time to switch from Kerala's artistic to its culinary traditions, treating ourselves to Sadhya, a quintessential vegetarian feast served on a banana leaf. To help with digestion, we'll round off the day with a slow-paced afternoon ride through the scenic rice basin sprawling along the banks of the Nila River. We spend the night at a bespoke farmhouse in Ottapalam, a laid-back town renowned as a major filming location for Malayalam cinema due to its unmistakable Old-World charm.

Kalappura Farm House Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner



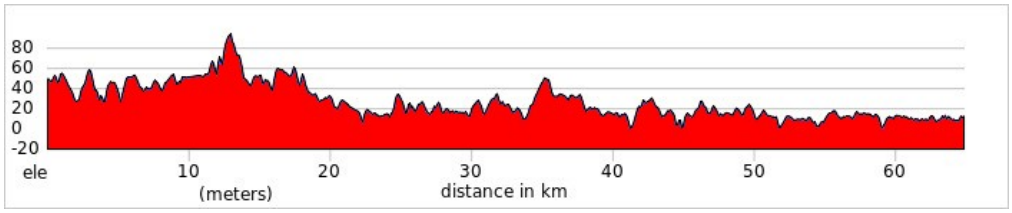
Ride 33km +366m -349m

Day 6: Ride to Guruvayur

From Ottapalam, we fast-track ourselves a little further west via a 30-minute vehicle transfer. Our ride today is a longer-distance effort as we begin our transition from the Kerala Midlands to the Malabar Coast. We are in no hurry and take a relaxed pace, savouring the scenery of the rice paddies that sprawl along the plains of the mighty Nila River, tackling a few hills and refuelling with fresh fruit like mangoes or jackfruit (depending on the season). The last few kilometres get busy as we enter the high-energy temple town of Guruvayur, home to one of India's most revered places of worship dedicated to Lord Krishna. We stay at a cosy hotel catering primarily to pilgrims just around the corner from the complex, perfect for an evening stroll through the market that surrounds the massive gateway where, at dusk, thousands of oil lamps are lit. If you've got a

sweet tooth, make sure to try some of the local treats on offer, such as neypayasam, a rich ghee pudding.

Lilac Hotel Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

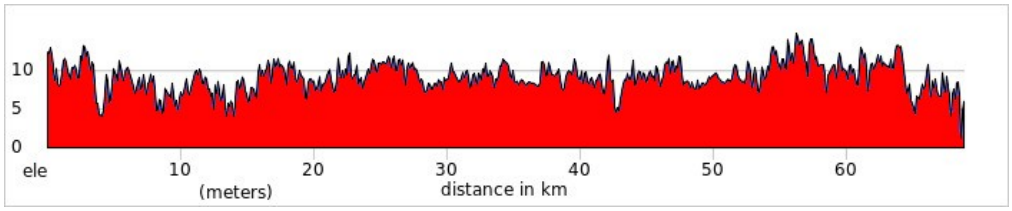


Ride 65km +597m -634m

Day 7: Ride to Cherai Beach

Today is the longest ride of the tour but as we're now firmly in the coastal plains of Kerala, the terrain is flat. Upon weaving out of Guruvayur, we ride past the whitewashed façade of a church believed to have been founded by St Thomas in the 1st century AD. As a little-known fact in world history, Christianity arrived and took hold in India at that time as the apostle travelled to the Malabar Coast along the spice trade maritime routes. This two-millennia-old legacy lives on in the many Syriac Christian communities dotted along today's route. By the 20 km point, we arrive at the shores of the Arabian Sea and enjoy a long stretch of coastal cycling, passing beaches, towering palm trees, and a labyrinth of lush coconut groves. After crossing a bridge over the wide estuary of the Periyar River, our ride concludes with a final jaunt to Cherai Beach. Sitting on a narrow strip of land wedged between the ocean to the west and a lagoon to the east, Cherai Beach is one of the state's best-kept tourism secrets, with scenically positioned wellness resorts making the choice to stay here all too easy.

Akanta Ayurveda & Yoga Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

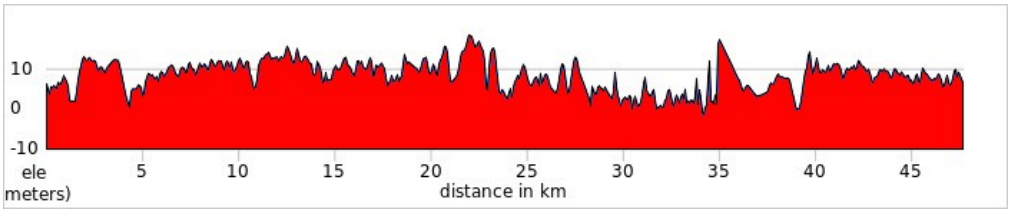


Ride 69km +257m -264m

Day 8: Ride to Fort Kochi

Time for the home stretch! We dart off from Cherai Beach and head inland through the backwaters of Kerala, an aquatic world of river mouths, interlocking lagoons, prawn farms and the hustle and bustle of Keralites on the move. After around 30 km we reach the shores of Vembanad Lake and hop on a ferry to cross over to Fort Kochi where we embark on a heritage-focused biking loop. As a bustling maritime port since ancient times, Fort Kochi's townscape reflects a rich cosmopolitan history, showcasing influences from Chinese, Arab, Portuguese, Dutch, and British cultures. With much to see, our loop is designed to be flexible, with possible stops at the old harbour area, St Francis Church, the Dutch Palace, Santa Cruz Basilica, Vasco House, and the ornate Paradesi Synagogue. We'll also visit the massive and iconic Chinese fishing nets. We draw our Keralan cycling journey to a close with a final lunch together and say our goodbyes. We recommend extending your stay in Fort Kochi for at least one night to fully soak in its charm. If you need assistance with post-tour hotel bookings or airport transfers, please let us know.

Breakfast, Lunch



Ride 48km +209m -207m

Disclaimer: The adventure cycling tours we operate often go beyond the beaten track, and the countries where we ride are not always predictable. Due to these reasons, it is occasionally necessary to reroute or update itineraries. Our guarantee is that we will not change a trip unless for safety or to improve it. Our listed hotels are always accurate at the time of writing, but should we have to change any hotel, it will always be for a similar or better one.

NUTS & BOLTS

Bikes

Included in this tour are well-known makes of mountain bikes. We also have E-Bikes available for hire, but they are limited in number & size - please send an email to us to check on availability.

Bike Repairs

Basic spares and tools are carried by the guide and on the support vehicle, though we cannot guarantee having spares for every conceivable problem. Carrying a basic tool kit, a spare tube and a pump while riding is recommended.

Safety

Wearing a helmet is required on all our biking adventures and is non negotiable. If you do not wear a helmet you will not be allowed to cycle. Your tour leader is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding. It is therefore compulsory that you take out travel insurance that will cover you for a mountain biking tour.

Guides

You will be led by a local English-speaking guide and if the group is 9 people or more we will add another guide to the tour. All our guides are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your guide is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

THE NITTY GRITTY

Passports and Visas

Please make sure that your passport is still valid for at least six months at the end of the tour. An electronic visa (e-visa) is available for passport holders of 150 countries including Australia, New Zealand, UK, USA and citizens of EU countries, with the application and the fee submitted at least 4 days before date of arrival. Fees vary depending on nationality. The visa is valid up to 60 days from the date of arrival. Visit here to apply and for the full list of eligible countries. For citizens of countries not specified a visa must be acquired *before* arriving in India. Please contact your local Indian embassy to receive a standard tourist visa. Locations on embassies worldwide are available here.

Health

There are no compulsory vaccinations although it is strongly recommended that you are vaccinated against Typhoid, and Hepatitis A and B. Tetanus and polio vaccinations should also be up to date at the time of travel. Please speak to your doctor/physician for the most recent information.

Weather

As India is such a large country, the climate and weather conditions vary across the vast region. However, the country is divided into six main climatic zones ranging from arid desert in the west, alpine tundra and glaciers in the north, and humid tropical in the southwest and the island territories.

We have tours in the following regions

Rajasthan: weather can be divided into four seasons - summer, monsoon, post-monsoon, and winter. Summer from April to June is the hottest season with temperatures ranging from 32C to 45C. Monsoon extends from July to September with a slight drop in temperature but plenty of rain. The post-monsoon period is from October to November where the lowest temperatures can reach as low as 18C. From December to March is the cold season and the best time to visit Rajasthan. Temperatures range from 15C-18C with little or no humidity.

Kerala: mostly has a tropical wet climate, which can be divided into three seasons. Summer is from February to May and is generally hot and humid. Monsoon season begins in June till around October or November. December to January holds the best weather for travel as it is cooler and the rains have subsided.

Tamil Nadu: Tamil Nadu has a tropical climate with hot weather year-round and an average annual temperature of 24 to 32 degrees Celsius. Summers from April to June are very hot, often above 40 degrees inland. The months from October to March usually have daytime temperatures between 20 and 28 degrees, making this the most pleasant season to visit.

Leh/Ladakh has a cold desert like climate with somewhat extreme conditions. summers bring in harsh direct sunlight at such high altitudes while winters can get as cold as below freezing point. Lowest ever recorded was -23C. May to August is the best time for tourists to enjoy the weather and everything it has to offer.

Sikkim: has a very temperate climate with enjoyable 5 seasons. Depending on the location and altitude, the weather can vary. In Summer, the lowest temperatures reach 13C up to 28°C while in winter Temperature between 0C to 13C. The monsoon season hits around June to September.

Food

Meals are included in the itinerary where B = breakfast, L = lunch, and D = dinner. Any special dietary requirements can also be catered for as well. Please let us know at the time of booking.

Drink

Keeping you completely hydrated is a job we take very seriously. Cold water and energy-restoring drinks are included in the tour price while riding. Soft drinks and other beverages during meals are not included. Beer and alcohol are available, but NOT included in the price.

Solo Travelers

SpiceRoads does not require you to pay a surcharge for traveling alone. We will arrange for you to share accommodation with another traveler of the same gender and if we can not match you up we will provide a single room at no extra charge. If you prefer not to share a single supplement is payable to guarantee your own room. The cost of the single supplement is listed above.

Extra Expenses

We recommend that you tuck away a few extra dollars a day for incidentals. Included entrance fees are those for the listed sites and national parks that are part of the itinerary. Any other site fees are not included.

Money

The currency is the Indian rupee (Rs) and there are ATMs in major cities and most towns that take international cards. However, we suggest that you withdraw money at the airport at the start of your tour. During the tour, our guide will inform you of the ATM locations in different cities.

GENERAL BOOKING INFO

If this is the tour for you here's what you need to do to confirm your place:

FLEXIBLE BOOKING CONDITIONS

Booking a SpiceRoads cycling adventure is easy and we try to do everything possible to make sure you have full flexibility and peace of mind. We do not require a deposit to hold your place on a tour

and once full payment has been made your money is protected in our client account and you have the flexibility to cancel or change your booking if needed.

CONFIRMING YOUR BOOKING

Just complete our online booking form or send your booking details offline (email or post), and we will confirm your participation. No deposit is needed to confirm your place on a SpiceRoads tour.

You are advised to read our Booking Conditions in full before you make your payment and should you require further clarifications of any of the conditions below, please email us or call our office.

TRIP STATUS

There is a minimum number of participants (usually 2) required to enable the trip to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to Depart'. Once a trip is guaranteed to depart you are free to book your flights and make other travel arrangements. If the trip status is 'Limited' will mean we have only a small number of spaces available for booking. If you are unsure about the trip status, please email us or call our office.

BOOKING ONLINE

From the tour page, click the 'Book Now' link. All departures for this tour will appear, just select the date you'd like to travel. For the next steps, you'll need to know the names of the people travelling. If you wish you can also provide extra details such as passport numbers, height (for bike hire), or you can add that later by logging into Manage My Trip (we'll set up an account for you automatically if you don't already have one). Our system will contact you from time to time to fill in the missing information, as it will be required before departure. However, if the trip that you are booking offers a child discount, you will have to fill out the date of birth of each rider (so we can calculate the appropriate discount).

If you are having any problems please send us an email, or give us a call (+66 026 3295) and one of our travel specialists will assist you with your booking.

BOOKING OFFLINE

Just call us or send an email indicating which trip you want to join and we will happily send you a list of questions and process your booking for you.

DEPOSITS AND PAYMENTS

We do not require a deposit or full payment to book a place for you on a tour.

The balance of the tour's cost (final invoice) will need to be paid 60 days before the departure date with fees for any bicycle rental(s), single supplement(s) and extra hotel nights.

In the case where a booking is made when there are less than 60 days until the tour departure date, the tour's cost should be paid in full within 72 hours of receiving an invoice from SpiceRoads. Payment can be made by credit card using our online payment gateway or by bank transfer. When making payment online you will need to confirm that you have read these booking conditions during the "checkout" process, which equates to agreeing to the terms of services and stipulations as indicated in this document.

In all cases, tour fees need to be paid "in full" before participation in a tour. No person(s) will be allowed to join a tour without fully settling their invoice and receiving a confirmation number from SpiceRoads.

The exception can be made for last-minute miscellaneous fees that can be paid locally (visas, additional local hotel bookings, etc.) can be settled on the day of arrival.

FULL FLEXIBILITY FOR TOUR CANCELATIONS

If the tour is cancelled or postponed by SpiceRoads because we didn't make the trip numbers and the tour can't run, we will make a full cash refund (by bank transfer or on your credit card).

If the tour is cancelled for any other reason, including due to Covid related travel restrictions, we will give you a full credit (with no deductions for admin or any other small-print item) to use on any SpiceRoads tour with no time limit. (Exceptions being flights, special permits and other non-refundable items and these will be advised when booking the trip).

Before paying for your tour, you can cancel your booking with no charge and up until 40 days before departure, you can change your booking to another travel date or move your booking onto another SpiceRoads tour with no charges.

If you need to cancel after you have made full payment, please see our cancellation policy.

Loyalty Riders Club

For those who have been on several long tours with us, we reward customer loyalty by offering repeat customers a special discount off the tour price (excludes single supplement and bike rental). If this is your fourth scheduled tour or more you will receive a 5% discount. If this is your eighth scheduled tour or more we will extend a 10% discount. The discount will be reflected in your online booking, but please contact us if any questions. Loyalty discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Note: Only tours of 7 days or more will be applicable for a loyalty discount.

International Flights

International flights, to and from the start and finish points are not included in the tour price. Once your tour is Guaranteed to Depart you can book your flight. Please contact us for advice before arranging flights for the best arrival and departure times. We would only cancel a trip for an extreme circumstance, but in that case, where we cancel your trip, we cannot be liable for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made. Please claim any losses from your travel insurance that you acquired when you booked your holiday.

Newsletter

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from SpiceRoads, be sure to subscribe.

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