TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- ☆ Hosted by Chef Joe Thottungal – silver medalist at the 2017 Canadian Culinary Championship
- ☆ 6th edition of this regularly sold-out tour
- ☆ Hands-on cooking demonstrations with award-winning instructors
- ☆ Cultural highlights in North and South India including the Taj Mahal and more
- ☆ Market visits with live bargaining experience
- ☆ Traditional Indian welcome at the home of Chef Joe's in-laws
- ☆ Backwater cruising through scenic Kerala
- ☆ Guided jungle walk at Periyar Tiger Reserve
- ☆ Deluxe accommodation and international airfare included

TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- International airfare Economy class ex Ottawa, Montreal and Toronto (for other cities and upgrades to Business Class please inquire). For US based passengers the airfare is based ex NYC.
- Within India airfare: Mumbai/Cochin/Delhi (based on current fares)
- Accommodation as mentioned or similar, including hotel taxes
- 43 Meals as mentioned (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, Sn=Snacks HT=High Tea, D=Dinner)
- All sightseeing and transfers by private transportation
- Services of local English speaking tour escort
- Entrance fees to museums and sites included in the itinerary
- Cooking classes/demonstrations as mentioned in Mumbai, Cochin, Thekkady, Agra, Delhi & Ramathra
- Cruises/boat rides in Thekkady, Cochin & Alleppey
- Trek Safari with farewell dinner, including Indian spirits, wine and beer at Dera Amer - Jaipur

TOUR PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Airport taxes and airline surcharges (currently at US$ 493 • CA$ 641 per person)
- Insurance/visas • Tips/gratuities to guides and drivers

TOUR LENGTH

19 Days

TOUR SIZE

Min 15 & Max 24 participants

TOUR DATE

Feb 29 - Mar 18, 2020

TOUR PRICE

US$ 6,919 per person sharing
US$ 1,765 single supplement
CA$ 8,995 per person sharing
CA$ 2,295 single supplement

NOTE

Deposits are:
- 1st instalment of $750 per person at the time of booking
- 2nd instalment of $2500 per person on April 10, 2019
- Balance amount due Nov 30, 2019

TESTIMONIALS

A wonderful experience with a wonderful guide. Tour guide was a special person who added immeasurably to the enjoyment of the tour. Good setup with spontaneous additions by the tour guide which added worth. It was the most fabulous adventure.
- James BT of ON, Canada

My trip was wonderful! In the South of India, the culinary tour was fabulous. Chef Joe was lovely; the Team we travelled with were excellent; we had an excellent tour guide; all of the sights were great and, our group itself were all terrific. The cooking demonstrations were exceptional; it goes without saying that the cuisine was superb; we toured a few kitchens, which was very interesting; and we received several recipes as a very nice keepsake, including a very nice booklet that the Spice Villages sent to our individual e-mails. Meeting, and interacting with, Chef Joe and his family was definitely a highlight for me.
- Margaret G of BC, Canada

The Elephant Court Hotel was wonderful! The variety of activities and hotels and shopping and dining offered on this trip was fantastic. A wonderful tour, allowing an in-depth look at Kerala's varied sights, sounds and tastes, including how and where the food and spices are grown. Overall I would highly recommend this tour. ***- Linda M of ON, Canada***

The culinary program arranged by Chef Joe Thottongal was excellent. His contacts and relationships in Kerala were a great asset to him and thus to us. I feel that we missed nothing in his introduction to the culture and cuisine of Kerala. ***- Hallam J of ON, Canada***

FOR RESERVATIONS CONTACT

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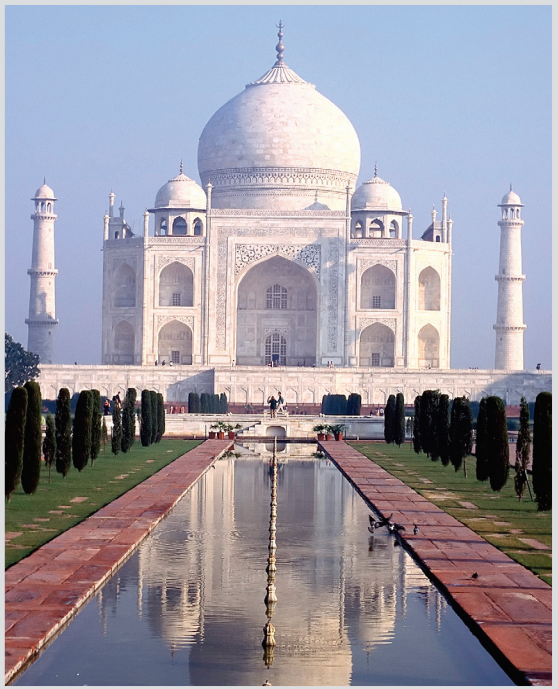
CULINARY JOURNEY OF KERALA & NORTH INDIA

with CHEF JOE THOTTUNGAL

Includes International air

Feb 29 - Mar 18, 2020



bestway.com/culinary-india

TOUR ITINERARY ▼
(detailed Itinerary at bestway.com/culinary-india)

CULINARY JOURNEY OF KERALA & NORTH INDIA

with Chef Joe Thottungal

(*) World Heritage Site
B=Breakfast, **L**=Lunch, **Sn**=Snacks, **HT**=High Tea, **D**=Dinner

Day 01: Feb 29, 2020: Arrive Mumbai
Namaste! We are welcomed and transferred to our hotel.
Overnight: **The Leela, Mumbai (2 nights)**

Day 02: Mar 01, 2020: Mumbai
After breakfast, tour the Leela Hotel, where Chef Joe started his cooking career. Savour some of the restaurant's delectable cuisine. Next, tour Mumbai. First stop is Mani Bhawan, where Mahatma Gandhi stayed during the freedom struggle. Then visit the Jain Temple and Hanging Gardens, the Zoroastrian Towers of Silence, and bustling Crawford Market. Drive past the Sufi, Haji Ali's colourful tomb and end at Dhobi Ghat, the world's largest outdoor laundry. Later, enjoy high tea at the famous Taj Mahal Palace & Tower. **(B, L, HT)**

Day 03: Mar 02, 2020: Mumbai/Cochin (Flight)
Short flight to Cochin (Kochi). Evening, visit local culinary icon Mrs. Nimmy Paul, featured in many international publications. Nimmy will tell us about the nuances of traditional Kerala recipes as she prepares four dishes. The dinner that follows will be a "Sadhya", a traditional banana leaf lunch with vegetarian preparations and payasam (sweets) along with favourite Kerala condiments.
Overnight: **Vivanta by Taj Malabar, Cochin (2 nights) (B, D)**

Day 04: Mar 03, 2020: Cochin
Explore Cochin. Stops include St. Francis Church, Roman Catholic Santa Cruz Cathedral, the harbour, the old districts of Mattancherry and Fort Kochi, the 16th century Dutch Palace and Pardesi Synagogue in Jew Town. After lunch, stop at the local fish market, where Joe will teach us to bargain for the fresh catch of the day. The seafood will be used for our dinner, prepared by Chef Joe and the executive chefs of our hotel. Evening, cruise on a chartered boat during sunset, exploring Bolghatty Palace and observing the Chinese fishing nets. After the cruise, attend a Kathakali show where the epic Ramayana comes to life. Enjoy dinner at the hotel. **(B, D)**

Day 05: Mar 04, 2020: Cochin/Kothamanglam/Munnar (Drive)
After breakfast, drive to Kothamanagalam to visit Chef Joe's in-laws Peter and Pushpamma Jose. We are guided through their beautiful rubber and coconut plantation. After lunch, continue to the hill station of Munnar. Balance of the day free.
Overnight: **KTDC Tea County, Munnar (2 nights) (B, L, D)**

Day 06: Mar 05, 2020: Munnar
Visit the Tea Museum and take a short trip to Mattupetty Dam. This imposing dam has created a beautiful lake where wildlife flourishes. After walking through the enchanting tea estates, the rest of the day is free before dinner. **(B, D)**

Day 07: Mar 06, 2020: Munnar/Thekkady (Drive)
Scenic drive to Thekkady. Late afternoon, cruise the lake at the heart of Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary. Enjoy lush scenery and look out for elephant, wild boar and Sambar deer. Evening, enjoy a cooking session followed by an informal feast at Spice Village. The dishes will be chosen by Chef Joe and specially prepared by a team of master chefs from various parts of the region.Overnight: **Spice Village, Thekkady (2 nights) (B, D)**

Day 08: Mar 07, 2020: Thekkady
Early morning, take a guided jungle walk through Periyar Tiger Reserve and National Park. This three-hour easy to moderate walk gives us a chance to see wildlife at close range. Afternoon, visit a native family home and spice plantation. The owners show us the various spices and herbs, and demonstrate a home-cooked meal! We are invited to stay for lunch. Evening, attend a KALARIPAYATTU SHOW, which is the oldest form of martial arts. **(B, L, D)**

Day 09: Mar 08, 2020: Thekkady/Kumarakom (Drive)
Scenic ride to our next destination, Kumarakom, a beautiful paradise of mangrove forests and emerald green paddies. Check in to hotel with rest of day free.
Overnight: **Coconut Lagoon, Kumarakom (2 nights) (B, D)**

Day 10: Mar 09, 2020: Kumarakom
Morning free. Afternoon, board our private Lakes & Lagoon houseboat for a four-hour cruise along the picturesque backwaters of Kerala from Kumarakom to Alleppey. Lunch is on board. Observe the traditional way of life and activities of the local people along the shores. **(B, L, D)**

Day 11: Mar 10, 2020: Kumarakom/Cochin (Drive) /Delhi (Flight)
Fly from Cochin airport to New Delhi. This evening, enjoy dinner at one of the most famous restaurants in the city, Bukhara at ITC Maurya. Bukhara recreates the charm of the traditional clay oven or tandoor with its succulent tandoor-cooked kebabs. Overnight: **ITC Maurya, Delhi (3 nights) (B, D)**

Day 12: Mar 11, 2020: Delhi
Enjoy an intimate visit with Mrs. Jyoti Agarwal, an award-winning chef. Jyoti introduces us to North India's world-famous cuisine through a cooking demonstration. We will join her family for lunch. Afternoon is spent exploring the cultural highlights of Delhi, including the Qutb Minar, Humayun's Tomb, and Birla House, the last residence of Gandhi. **(B, L, D)**

Day 13: Mar 12, 2020: Delhi
Embark on a specially designed culinary tour. Start at "Parathewali Gali", lined with shops selling Parathas, a stuffed Indian flatbread. Next, visit Asia's biggest wholesale spice market, "Khari Bowli". Continue to famous Chandni Chowk bazaar, the oldest market in Delhi. Next stop is Karim's Restaurant, internationally known for its kebabs. Sample some before continuing to the Red Fort*. Next, stop at Moti Mahal restaurant, the birthplace of butter chicken. Visit India Gate and drive through the House of Parliament and Connaught Palace before heading to our hotel. Enjoy dinner at a famous local restaurant. **(B, Sn, D)**

Day 14: Mar 13, 2020: Delhi/Agra (Drive)
Drive to Agra. Following rest time at our hotel, tour imposing Agra Fort*, encompassing the spectacular imperial city of the Moghul rulers. Evening, a special cooking session is arranged at our hotel. Chef Joe creates a fusion of Kerala and North India cuisine, followed by a barbecue dinner. Overnight: **ITC Mughal, Agra (1 night) (B, D)**

Day 15: Mar 14, 2020: Agra/Ramathra (Drive)
Sunrise tour of the famous Taj Mahal*. Next drive to Ramathra, a thriving religious community. Evening, as we enjoy an intimate dinner under starlit sky, Chef Joe gives insight into the secret ingredients of Indian cuisine. Overnight: **Ramathra Fort, Ramathra (2 nights) (B, D)**

Day 16: Mar 15, 2020: Ramathra
Morning free to enjoy Ramathra Fort. Afternoon, join Chef Joe with our local hosts Ravi and Geetanjali, the owners of Ramathra, for an exclusive cooking session focused on Rajasthani cuisine. Evening, visit a local vegetable organic farm. **(B, L, D)**

Day 17: Mar 16, 2020: Ramathra/Jaipur (Drive)
Journey to Jaipur. Evening, visit a local bazaar and explore famous Jaipur culinary spots, including the sweet shop of Rawat, where we try some mouth-watering local snacks and a yogurt Lassi drink. Dinner at our hotel. Overnight: **ITC Rajputana, Jaipur (2 nights) (B, D)**

Day 18: Mar 17, 2020: Jaipur
Morning, visit Amber Fort, the gem of Jaipur. Next visit the majestic City Palace, the stunning Hawa Mahal, and the Jantar Mantar. Evening, join Chef Joe for a special farewell dinner arranged at Dera Amer. First, embark on a magical elephant trek. When we arrive, enjoy vibrant folk dances and a barbecue dinner, along with a special one-hour bar. **(B, D)**

Day 19: Mar 18, 2020: Jaipur/Delhi (Drive) /Depart Delhi
Drive to Delhi. Check into our hotel with time to wash and change before our final dinner. After dinner, transfer to the airport for departure.
Day use: **Vivanta by Taj Dwarka, New Delhi for Wash & Change until 20:00 hrs (B, D)**