

## TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- ☆ 4th time running tour hosted by Chef Joe Thottungal - Silver medalist at the 2017 Canadian Culinary championship
- ☆ Private home visits and meet families
- ☆ Guided by local English speaking tour guide
- ☆ Backwater cruising
- ☆ 4 cooking classes with Joe and local chefs
- ☆ Guided jungle walk at Periyar Tiger Reserve
- ☆ Traditional dance performances
- ☆ Market visits with live bargaining experiences
- ☆ Deluxe accommodation
- ☆ International airfare included

## TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- Round trip international airfare from Montreal
- 16 nights accommodation as mentioned or similar
- 34 meals as indicated. Breakfast (B), Lunch (L) and Dinner (D)
- All sightseeing and transfers by private transportation
- Services of local English speaking tour escort
- Entrance fees to museums and sites included in the itinerary
- Kathakali Dance performances at Cochin & Kalaripayattu show at Thekkady
- Cooking classes in Mahabalipuram, Cochin, Thekkady and Coorg
- Cruises/boat rides at Cochin, Alleppey and Thekkady
- Guided Jungle Walk at Thekkady
- Visit to Tea Museum in Munnar

## TOUR PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Airport taxes and airline surcharges (currently at CA\$ 580 per person)
- Insurance/visas
- Tips/gratuities to guides and drivers

## TOUR LENGTH

18 Days

## TOUR SIZE

Min 15 & Max 24 participants

## TOUR DATE

March 1-18, 2019

## TOUR PRICE

CAD \$7,595 per person sharing  
CAD \$1,850 single supplement

## NOTE

Includes International air



Deposits are:

- 1st instalment of \$750 per person at the time of booking
- 2nd instalment of \$1500 per person on April 10, 2018
- Balance amount due Nov 30, 2018

## 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 Thottungal 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  
**BESTWAY**  
TOURS & SAFARIS  
Journées sans frontières since 1978



bestway@bestway.com ♦ www.bestway.com  
1-800-663-0844 ♦ 604-264-7378

DISCOVER THE CULINARY OF SOUTH

**India**

Includes International air

with **CHEF JOE THOTTUNGAL**

**March 01-18, 2019**



**bestway.com /  
culinary-south-india**





## TOUR ITINERARY ▼

(detailed Itinerary at [bestway.com/culinary-south-india](http://bestway.com/culinary-south-india))

# DISCOVER THE CULINARY OF SOUTH INDIA

## with Chef Joe Thottungal

(\*) World Heritage Site  
B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

**Day 01: Friday, Mar 01, 2019: Depart for India**  
Depart home city for Chennai, India.

**Day 02: Saturday, Mar 02, 2019: Arrive Chennai**  
Namaste! We are warmly welcomed and transferred to our hotel.  
Overnight: **Taj Coromandel, Chennai (3 nights)**

**Day 03: Sunday, Mar 03, 2019: Chennai/Mahabalipuram/Chennai (Drive)**  
We start with an excursion to the Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram\*. Carved out of the coast in the 7th and 8th centuries, this group of ancient archaeological wonders is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Join Chef Joe for our first cooking class, followed by a delicious welcome dinner at Taj Fisherman's Cove, Mahabalipuram. (B, D)

**Day 04: Monday, Mar 04, 2019: Chennai**  
Guided tour of Chennai (Madras) includes Art Gallery & Museum, St. Mary's Church -India's oldest British church, People's Park, clock towers and the beautiful Marina Beach. Afternoon free. Enjoy the bustling local bazaar. Dinner at the Southern Spice Restaurant rated as amongst Asia's top dining experiences. (B, D)

**Day 05: Tuesday, Mar 05, 2019: Chennai/Mysore (Train)**  
Early morning scenic train ride on the deluxe Shatabdi train to Mysore. Afternoon is free to enjoy the magnificent palaces, beautiful gardens and the sacred temples of Mysore. Evening we visit the Brindavan Gardens, famous for its dancing musical fountains and symmetric design. Spread over 150 acres, it is one of the most famous gardens in India – a popular setting for many Bollywood films.  
Overnight: **Radisson BLU, Mysore (2 nights) (B, D)**

**Day 06: Wednesday, Mar 06, 2019: Mysore**  
Start our day with a visit to the Maharajah's Palace. This Indo-Saracenic building has elaborate stained-glass ceilings, intricately carved solid gold throne and gallery of exquisite art. After visiting Shri Chamundeswari Temple and Nadi Shiva's Mount our tour ends with an exploration of Srirangapatnam, an island fortress that was once the seat of warrior kings Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan, known as the Tiger of Mysore. (B, D)

**Day 07: Thursday, Mar 07, 2019: Mysore/Coorg (Drive)**  
Drive to Coorg, known for its verdant scenery and lush plantations. Afternoon free. Evening cooking class is followed by dinner prepared by chefs at our world-class hotel, Vivanta by Taj Madikeri.  
Overnight: **Vivanta By Taj Madikeri, Coorg (1 night) (B, D)**



**Day 08: Friday, Mar 08, 2019: Coorg/Calicut (Drive)**  
Drive to Calicut also known as Kozhikode. This bustling town is famous as the spot where Vasco De Gama, the first European to land on Indian coasts, set foot in 1498 AD. A port city located amid the lush green spice plantations, Calicut takes us on a momentous journey through beautiful backwaters, picturesque beaches and ancient palaces.  
Overnight: **The Gateway Hotel, Calicut (1 night) (B, D)**

**Day 09: Saturday, Mar 09, 2019: Calicut/Guruvayur/Thrissur/Cochin (Drive)**  
Visit the famous Guruvayur Temple dedicated to lord Vishnu and continue to the rural town of Thrissur where we are invited to Chef Joe's parents Joseph & Mary Thottungal's home. Enjoy a magnificent feast and rare insight into Indian family traditions. Joe had his first cooking lesson at his mother's knee and Mary will share many stories from Joe's childhood. We are shown around the massive garden where the family grows and process spices. We meet members of Joe's extended family. Few visitors to India are privy to such an intimate and personal touch! We bid farewell to the senior Thottungals as we drive to Cochin.  
Overnight: **Courtyard by Marriott Cochin Airport, Cochin (1 night) (B, L, D)**

**Day 10: Sunday, Mar 10, 2019: Cochin/Kothamanagalam/Munnar (Drive)**  
Experience another family hospitality today. At Kothamanagalam we are invited to the home Peter & Pushamma Jose – Joe's in laws. They will guide us as we explore their scenic rubber and coconut plantation. After lunch, scenic drive to Munnar, a hill station. Once the summer resort of South India's British administration, it retains its colonial charm. Munnar is famous for its spectacular scenery, emerald tea plantations; sprawling estates, sparkling waterfalls and picture perfect hamlets.  
Overnight: **KTDC Tea County Munnar, Munnar (2 nights) (B, L, D)**



**Day 11: Monday, Mar 11, 2019: Munnar**  
Visit to the Tea Museum followed by the Mattupetty Dam. This imposing dam has created a beautiful lake where wildlife flourishes. Optional boat rides.  
Enjoy walking through the enchanting tea estates. Balance of the day is free. Enjoy an optional Ayurvedic massage. (B, D)

**Day 12: Tuesday, Mar 12, 2019: Munnar/Thekkady (Drive)**  
Scenic drive to Thekkady, (Periyar) - a wildlife reserve, famous for wild elephants, bison, deer and numerous varieties of birds. Afternoon we cruise the lake enjoying the lush scenery surroundings. Look out for animals coming to the edge of the water for a drink. Here we can often spy herds of elephants, scurrying wild boars and magnificent Sambar deer. After a cooking session we are invited to an informal feast at Spice Village. The dishes are selected by Chef Joe and specially prepared by a team of master chefs from various parts of the region. Chefs at Spice Village specialize in popular regional cuisines, and each chef will cook delicacies from his region, treating us to an incredible variety of authentic flavours.  
Overnight: **Spice Village, Thekkady (2 nights) (B, D)**

**Day 13: Wednesday, Mar 13, 2019: Thekkady**  
Morning guided jungle easy walk through Periyar Tiger Reserve for a chance to see wildlife including leopards and tigers at close range. Breakfast at our hotel. Afternoon, we visit a native family home and spice plantation that grows spices and herbs for culinary and medicinal purposes. This organic plantation uses natural forms of pest control. After a demonstration of home-cooked meal using spices grown here we join the family for lunch. Evening, enjoy a Kalaripayattu performance - the 3000 years old form of martial arts. (B, L)



**Day 14: Thursday, Mar 14, 2019: Thekkady/Kumarakom (Drive)**  
Scenic ride to Kumarakom, a beautiful paradise of mangrove forests, emerald green paddies and coconut groves interspersed with enchanting waterways and white-lily filled canals. Balance of the day is free.  
Overnight: **Coconut Lagoon, Kumarakom (B, D)**

**Day 15: Friday, Mar 15, 2019: Kumarakom**  
Afternoon, we take a four-hour houseboat cruise along the famous backwaters of Kerala from Kumarakom to Alleppey with lunch on board. Cruise through the picturesque backwaters and small lakes relaxing in the tranquility of Kerala's beautiful scenery. We observe the traditional way of life and activities of the local people. (B, L, D)

**Day 16: Saturday, Mar 16, 2019: Kumarakom/Cochin (Drive)**  
Short drive to the charming town of Cochin known for its Dutch, Portuguese and British architecture. Evening, we savour a cooking class at the home of Nalini Verma, a professional instructor who has authored four cookbooks. Nalini offers a unique opportunity to get acquainted with the finer nuances of traditional Kerala cuisine through her special cooking classes.  
Overnight: **Vivanta by Taj Malabar, Cochin (2 nights) (Breakfast, Dinner with cooking class at the House of Nalini Verma)**

**Day 17: Sunday, Mar 17, 2019: Cochin**  
Guided tour includes St. Francis Church, the oldest European church in India. The remains of Vasco De Gama, the first European to find India by sea were buried here before being taken to Portugal. Next visit the 16Th Century Portuguese built Roman Catholic Santa Cruz Cathedral. At the stunning harbour we see Chinese fishing nets in action. Wander the old districts of Mattancherry and Fort Kochi. End with visits to the Dutch Palace, which boasts colourful murals, and the Pardesi Synagogue in Jew Town. After lunch we visit the local fish market, where Joe will teach us how to recognize and bargain for the fresh catch of the day. After a careful selection and much price haggling seafood will be purchased for our dinner to be prepared by Chef Joe. Evening, sunset cruise exploring Bolghatty Palace, observing fascinating Chinese fishing nets in action, a sight coveted by photographers internationally. We are treated to a live Kathakali performance where the epic Ramayana comes to life. The day ends with a memorable mouth-watering dinner prepared by Joe and hotel chefs. (B, L, D)

**Day 18: Monday, Mar 18, 2019: Depart Cochin**  
After an interesting and unforgettable culinary tour of South India, we are transferred to Kochi Airport for our flight back home.