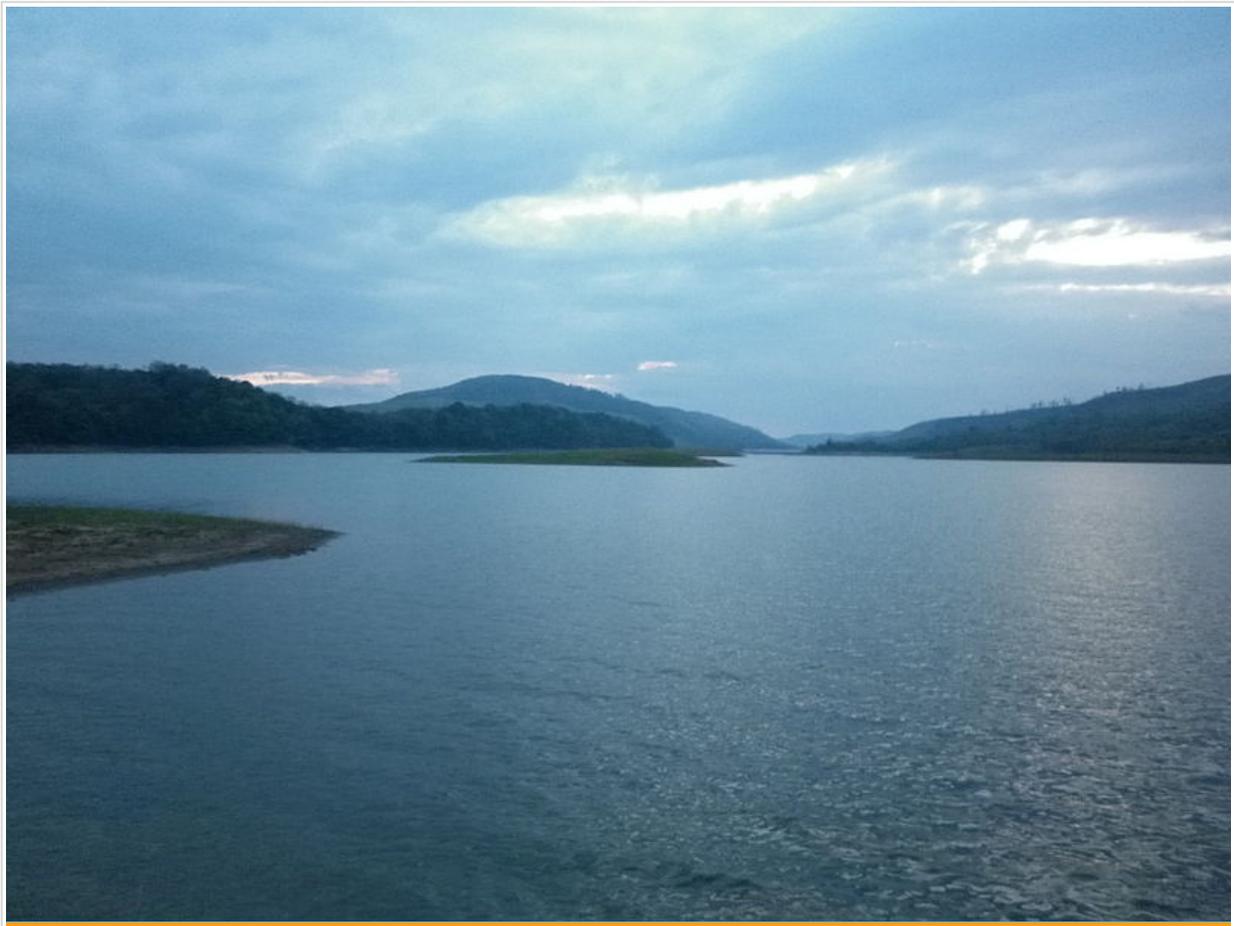


Thekkady, Kerala



Peaceful and calm lake at Thekkady, Kerala

Thekkady in Kerala is famous for the Periyar forest reserve. Outside of the reserve too, spice plantations, ranges of verdant mountains, and quaint towns lodged on hills, make this place one of the finest places in scenic Kerala.

Attractions and activities in Thekkady

- 1. Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary:** Almost half of Periyar is covered in thick evergreen forest. Famous for close views of herd of wild elephants that come to bathe in its lakes, Periyar offers another unique feature. Visitors are even encouraged to go on a boat ride that takes them to the center of the Periyar Lake. The views from here are breathtaking and quite a number of animals may also be sighted. The boat is huge and accommodates about eighty passengers. Guided treks are available, and in the monsoon months of July-August, not only is the scenery great but a large number of wild animals can also be seen. Animals seen in the park include wild elephants, wild buffaloes, bears, deer, langoors, giant squirrels and rarely, a tiger. Elephant rides are also offered.
- 2. Mangala Devi Temple:** This temple, dedicated to Indian goddess Kannagi, (not to be confused with Mangladevi Temple in Mangalore), is at an altitude of 4386feet from the ground and a little more than a ten-mile drive from Thekkady. The temple can only be visited during the festival of Chitra Pournima that falls in the months of April- May. On other days, a special permit from a forest ranger is needed to visit the place. Jeeps ply to the Mangala Devi temple. Not only is the way up breathtaking, but the 360 degree view from the top is spectacular. Views of the Periyar Sanctuary, Western Ghats and the Tamil Nadu Plains can be seen from here.
- 3. Mullaperiyar Dam:** One of the oldest dams in India, this dam still carries the stamp of the colonial era. The area surrounding the dam exudes a tranquil charm that draws visitors by the droves. The historic India dam row has also drawn a lot of curious onlookers to this site.
- 4. Green Park Ayurvedic Spice Plantation:** An eco-friendly spice plantation, offering an hour-long informative tour of the plantation at a nominal hundred rupees, and stay options in the form of en suite tree houses. A two-hundred foot suspension bridge leads up to the tree-houses. At the end of the tour visitors are taken to a shop where there spices are available for sale.

5. Elephant Junction: For people mesmerized by these giant creatures, it is a good idea to take the complete package: elephant ride, log pull and shower. The ride takes visitors through a lush inland plantation. Then visitors can watch the elephants pull logs in its traditional role of a beast of burden. Finally, in a movie-like scenario, elephants drench their riders with water. All the while the mahout doubles up as a photographer and clicks pictures to take back home.

Accommodation

Lake Palace and Aryan Nivas are set on the shores of the Periyar Lake inside the Periyar National Park. The Spice Village is a resort that lies just at the outskirts of Thekkady town. It blends perfectly well the concept of ecological living with modern facilities. A restaurant, reception area, swimming pool and more than fifty thatched cottages are available. While the architecture of the cottages keeps in mind the tribal traditional of using elephant grass for the rooves, modern facilities like Wi-Fi, hot showers and modern plumbing take care of the comfort of the modern-day traveler. Another resort, the Silvercrest under the aegis of the Sealord Group of Hotels, offers stay-options at cottages that are built in traditional Nalukettu and Nadumuttam style and are set in lush verdant settings. Another preferred stay-location is the Greenwoods Resort. Not only do they offer stay options like tree-houses, but they organize a variety of tours to make a guest's stay interesting, even if it is an overnight stay. There is the spice garden and biogas plant visit, and dhoti and saree tying experiences, for international guests who are curious to learn about Indian traditional outfits. A coffeehouse among the trees serves some really flavorsome coffee. Another resort that has earned quite a reputation for customer service and excellent location is the Thekkady Wild Corridor. The rooms have large balconies with spectacular views of the surrounding. Another hotel popular with tour operators is Grand Thekkady. The best part of the hotel is that it is centrally located.

Facts about Thekkady, Kerala

1. The Periyar Sanctuary was declared a tiger reserve in 1978.
2. John Pennycuick constructed the Mullaperiyar dam between the years 1887 to 1895.
3. . There is a political twist to the tale of the 120-year old Mullaperiyar dam. Though on the lands of Kerala, the dam is a source of water to the state of Tamil Nadu, as per a very old agreement. So, while Kerala government says the dilapidated dam may crumble any moment and cause harm to life, the Tamil Nadu government does not agree.

Where is Thekkady, Kerala ?

Thekkady is in the Idukki district of Kerala, India.

Reach By Air:

Two airports, viz, the Madurai Airport and the Cochin International Airport, lie at a driving distance from Thekkady. The Madurai Airport is about 71 miles from Thekkady, and the Cochin International Airport is around 90 miles from Thekkady.

From Madurai Airport, a cab will take roughly three hours to get to Thekkady via NH49 and NH220. From Cochin International Airport, a cab will take around three hours and a half to reach Thekkady, via SH 44.

Reach By Rail:

The Kottayam Railway Station is also at a distance of 70 miles from Thekkady. From there it is a drive of a little more than two hours and half to the Thekkady.

Best time to visit Thekkady, Kerala

Wildlife lovers would do well to visit around July since that is the time when a large number of animals can be seen at Periyar wildlife sanctuary. The monsoons are also good if visiting Kerala for Ayurvedic treatments. The months from October to March are, however, the most pleasant.

More on Thekkady, Kerala

Here are some tips for those planning to visit Thekkady:

While trekking through the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary, make sure to put on protective leech socks that are meant to protect a walker from leech bites.

There are several spice plantations in the area where condiments are available for sale.

However, buying them from the local market outside is more economical.

Kerala is famous for Ayurvedic spas and massages. So, if you are an international tourist visiting this place a visit to an Ayurvedic Center would be a novel experience.

Image credit : [Sibyperiyar](#)

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