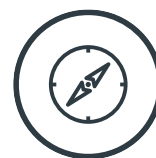




TOPDECKER, meet Asia

Just like the game, this trip through the Southern India is all about awesome temples and epic fun! From spending the night on a traditional houseboat in Kerala to spotting wild elephants in Thekkady (and all the delicious food in between) - this is a trip of a lifetime.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Explorer



Nights



Android/iPhone
app download
info



This is a principal
package.

Hi, and thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

You can rest assured that we'll pull out all the stops to make your trip unforgettable.

Now it's time to get excited about your holiday...

ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – including where to meet and what to bring. We recommend that you read these notes thoroughly so you know what to expect on your trip of a lifetime. Also, you can easily download and print this document off so you can bring it with you when you travel.

Please bear in mind that some points should be taken as a guide only – after all, everyone's different! For example, daily spending money and clothing lists can vary from one person to the next, so don't be alarmed if you don't expect to spend (or even wear) so much!

PLEASE NOTE: We strongly urge you to refresh this document as close to the time of your departure as possible to ensure you have the most up-to-date accommodation list and information available.

ON THE BUCKET LIST (INCLUDED)

- + Visit Mahabalipuram
- + Visit Aurobindo Ashram
- + Walking tours of Pondicherry and Kochi
- + Chettinad cooking class
- + Visit Brihadeeswarah and Srirangam temples
- + Evening worship ceremony at Meenakshi temple
- + Spice plantation tour in Thekkady
- + Traditional Kalaripayattu performance
- + House boat stay in Allepey

MORE INCLUSIONS

- + Visit Mahabalipuram
- + Visit Aurobindo Ashram
- + Pondicherry walking tour
- + Chettinad village tour
- + Chettinad cooking class
- + Visit Brihadeeswarah Temple
- + Srirangam Temple rooftop photo stop
- + Evening ceremony at the Meenakshi temple
- + Thekkady spice plantation tour
- + Kalaripayattu performance
- + House boat stay in Kerala
- + Walking tour of Kochi
- + Departure transfer from Kochi

YOUR TRIP WILL START

PICK UP:

Chennai
India

YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

DROP OFF:

Kochi
India

TRIP CURRENCIES

- + India - INR

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 | CHENNAI, INDIA

Say namaste to India! Tonight, get to know your awesome trip mates over a welcome dinner and cheers to the adventure ahead. This is going to be good.



MEALS:

+ Dinner

DAY 2 | CHENNAI TO PONDICHERRY

UNESCO world heritage site alert! Today we're stopping in at Mahabalipuram to breathe in the salty beachside air and check out the town's mesmerising rock carvings. Then: it's off to French-colonial Pondicherry for change in pace and culture.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Visit Mahabalipuram

DAY 3 | PONDICHERRY

We'll get a feel for the 'French Capital of India' on a walking tour then it's time to get in touch with your spiritual side with a visit to Aurobindo Ashram. Later you can choose to visit the experimental township of Auroville (The City of Dawn) or why not kick back and relax at the beach?



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Visit Aurobindo Ashram
+ Pondicherry walking tour



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

+ Visit Auroville from: 10 USD

DAY 4 | PONDICHERRY TO CHETTINAD

Down that cup of kaapi, we're off to Chettinad! Kick things off with a village tour: passing the towns grand mansions and buzzing local markets. Hungry? Perfect the art of masala on an included cooking class then tuck into your creations at our heritage mansion accommodation. Yum!



MEALS:

+ Breakfast
+ Lunch
+ Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Chettinad village tour
+ Chettinad cooking class

DAY 5 | CHETTINAD TO MADURAI VIA THANJAVUR AND TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

Temple run time! First up it's Brihadeeswarah Temple – a spectacular Hindu structure with one of the tallest temple towers on earth. Next is the spectacular Srirangam Temple to snap some #epic pics from the temple rooftop. Tonight, it's off to Meenakshi temple for an evening worship ceremony.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Visit Brihadeeswarah Temple
- + Srirangam Temple rooftop photo stop
- + Evening ceremony at the Meenakshi temple

DAY 6 | MADURAI TO THEKKADY

Give your senses a work out today on a spice plantation tour in Thekkady. Later, we channel our inner karate kid at a traditional Kalaripayattu performance.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + Thekkady spice plantation tour
- + Kalaripayattu performance

DAY 7 | THEKKADY

Today you've got the option to explore India's best wildlife reserves: Periyar National Park *heart face emoji*. Choose to hike, cruise or bamboo raft as you search for the resident elephants.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- + Bamboo rafting and hiking experience in Periyar National Park from: 30 USD
- + Safari cruise in Periyar National Park from: 30 USD

DAY 8 | THEKKADY TO ALLEPEY

All aboard! Tonight we'll be spending the night on a traditional house boat drifting down the Kerala backwaters. Name a more authentic experience, we'll wait.



MEALS:

- + Breakfast
- + Lunch
- + Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- + House boat stay in Kerala

DAY 9 | ALLEPEY TO KOCHI

Time to make tracks to our final destination for the trip: the eclectic city of Kochi. Tonight, why not jump on board an optional sunset cruise and watch the sky turn 50 shades of orange over the Arabian Sea.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

+ Sunset cruise in Kochi from:
15 USD

DAY 10 | KOCHI

Kick off the day with a walking tour exploring the magnificent synagogue, Dutch-era houses and giant Chinese fishing nets. The afternoon is yours to soak up the relaxed seaside vibes. Want more? A traditional Kathakali dance show is on the cards for tonight.



MEALS:

+ Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Walking tour of Kochi



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

+ Kathakali dance show in
Kochi from: 8 USD

DAY 11 | KOCHI

Swap those numbers and get one last group photo together, we're out of here after breakfast. Who's up for the next adventure?



MEALS:

+ Breakfast

+ Please note: Indian airports

+ All domestic flights on our India trips have a capped luggage allowance of 15kgs - so make sure you pack light! If you really can't go without it, you'll be able to purchase an extra 5kgs at the airport for approximately £25 or \$45 AUD.

+ Please be aware that power banks cannot be stored in your check-in luggage - you must carry these in your hand luggage instead (otherwise, your checked luggage will not be allowed on the plane).

+ Please carry a printed copy of your flight details and your e-visa (if applicable) for security checks.

+ If you require any supporting information for your e-visa, please contact our Customer Service Team.



INCLUDED TODAY:

+ Departure transfer from
Kochi

TIPPING

NO TIP NECESSARY

Your Topdeck Trip Leaders and Drivers never expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. We also know how much tipping can cost you. So go ahead – spoil yourself with the money you save traveling with us (just don't forget Mum's souvenir).

TOPDECK TRAVEL APP

Our app is available to download before you travel. With a range of cool features including a currency converter, budget planner, check-in tool and group chat, it'll help you plan your trip like a pro. Think of it as your very own Topdeck Trip Leader in the palm of your hand.

TRIP GROUP CHAT

Connect with your fellow Topdeckers before you depart and begin your magical friendship in the flash of a winking face emoji.

ITINERARY VIEWER

Get the lowdown on where you'll be going and what activities you'll be doing on each day of your trip with this handy little tool.

CHECK-IN

Plug in all your vital deets and we'll keep them safe for when you really need them. Making your life easier, one swipe at a time.

BUDGET TRACKER

Keep an eye on your holiday spending, leaving you with more FUN-ds to play with. Think: elaborate Spanish feasts (not questionable supermarket sandwiches).

MAPS

Navigate your way to meeting points and lesser-known local gems using pins dropped by your Trip Leader, seek out your own bucket list sites and take to the streets like a pro.

Once the trip is over, you'll need the app to give us feedback about your trip experience. We love to hear what you thought about your trip, as it helps to give us an idea of the things we're doing well and the things we could be doing better.

PLEASE NOTE: The Topdeck Travel App should only be downloaded once you have booked your trip. You will not be able to log in unless you have a Topdeck booking reference number.

[GET IT FOR IPHONE](#)

[GET IT FOR ANDROID](#)



PASSENGER SAFETY

NIGHTS OUT

One of the best parts of travelling is experiencing the nightlife and entertainment each city has to offer. However, amidst the fun and excitement, it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety as well. Before you hit the road with us, be sure to familiarise yourself with the following safety information.

When you're on a night out, remember to avoid walking alone, particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation details so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. It's also a good idea to get your Topdeck trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking, and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

RESPECTING FELLOW PASSENGERS

Here at Topdeck, we're all about inclusivity. We want to make sure that everyone has a great time on our trips, and that everyone feels like they're part of one happy Topdeck family.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong – that's just not what families do. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow passengers. The golden rules? Always remember to respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation and treat others how you'd wish to be treated yourself. Easy!

DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Passengers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana, even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

REMEMBER – if you are found in possession of drugs, not only could you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if drugs are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you wouldn't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up again.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- + Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- + Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!
- + Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink, you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations
- + Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home, too – so they're sure to know of some tried-and-tested ways to beat the blues
- + Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (trust us).

HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome holiday AND have a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- + Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your hotel towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- + Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- + Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets and book tours and activities run by local guides
- + Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- + Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

OTHER INFORMATION

INSURANCE

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.

World Nomads provides comprehensive travel insurance for people from over 140 countries. For more information, visit www.topdeck.travel/travel-insurance.

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling.

PLEASE NOTE: Some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it! (As long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is.)

- + 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes
- + 1 pair of smart casual shoes
- + 1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
- + 2 pairs of jeans/trousers
- + 2 pairs of shorts/skirts
- + 4 shirts/T-shirts
- + 2 sweaters/jumpers
- + Smart casual evening wear
- + 1 rainproof jacket
- + 1 warm jacket
- + Underwear and socks
- + Swimwear
- + Towel
- + Toiletries
- + Hat and sunscreen
- + Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- + Insect repellent
- + Conversion plug
- + Reusable water bottle
- + Snow gear



THAT'S IT!