

Wattletree Garden Tours

Southern India

Interesting. Intriguing. Incredible!

January 2026

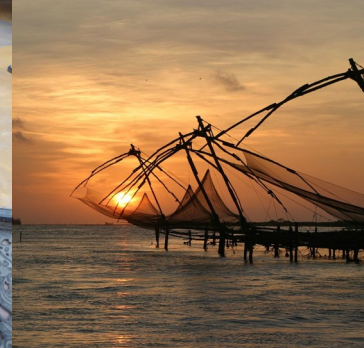


*Explore Cochin, Goa, Mysore, Bangalore, Chennai, Ooty, Coimbatore and
Kumarakom!*

**Join Brian Sams
& Wattletree Garden Tours
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www.wattletreehorticulture.com.au**





Tour highlights

- Local expert guide
- All meals
- Local cuisine
- Hotels with character
- Botanical gardens
- Farm visits
- Mysore Palace at night
- Scenic train journey
- Cruise in Cochin
- Houseboat on the Kerala backwaters
- Ooty train ride
- Time to enjoy

Brian Sams is a Toowoomba based horticulturist involved in running gardening workshops, consultation and leading garden based tours. Brian has been leading garden tours overseas and within Australia since 2006. Why? He loves it!

DAY 1 Friday 16th January – Arrive in Kochi

Fly to India with flight details to be confirmed closer to departure but likely a late evening arrival. Stopover in Singapore a few days earlier will be an option. Upon arrival we will be met and transferred to our resort hotel. (meals in flight)

Trident Hotel or similar – 2 nights

DAY 2 Saturday 17th January - Kochi.

This morning we will have a tour of the local area to include the interesting Mattancherry Palace, Jew town and the Synagogue, Fort Cochin with the iconic fishing nets before we have a cruise on the harbour. This evening we will have a Kathakali dance show after dinner in our hotel. (B, L, D)

DAY 3 – Sunday 18th January Kochi to Alleppey

Later start this morning to enjoy the hotel and local area before we check out and transfer to the Alleppey jetty point to board our overnight houseboat cruise of the Kerala backwaters. Our cruise promises to be a relaxing highlight. Dinner will be served on board overlooking the tranquil waters. (B, L, D)

KLR Houseboat for overnight – 1 night

DAY 4 – Monday 19th January - Arrive in Kumarakom

This morning we will disembark at the lake resort hotel that will be our home for the next 2 nights with breakfast in the resort. Later we will visit a local farm via a boat ride. Next is a visit to Aruvikkuzhi waterfall and then a rubber plantation. Next stop is what I am told is a very interesting driftwood museum! Dinner is in the resort tonight. (B, L, D)

Kumarakom Lake Resort or similar—2 nights

DAY 5 – Tuesday 20th January - Kumarakom

This morning we will visit a nearby bird sanctuary in the hope of seeing some of the Kingfisher famous in the area. After this we will return to the resort to allow some time to relax or explore. (B, L, D)

DAY 6 – Wednesday 21st January Kumarakom to Coimbatore

Today we have an interesting drive to Coimbatore winding our way into hill country. We hope to stop at the Coconut research centre to find out about this important tropical crop. Upon arrival we will visit the Adiyogi statue. This is an incredible bust statue representing Lord Shiva and stands at 34 metres tall and 45 metres wide. Dinner is in our hotel tonight. (B, L, D)

Taj Vivanta or similar – 2 nights

DAY 7 – Thursday 22nd January - Coimbatore

Today we have quite a diverse day. We will visit the Madhumalti snake temple famous for its many hundreds of carvings of snakes (no real ones!) and gold inlay. This temple is located in a forest glade and looks beautiful. Next is a visit for a short walk in the forest at the Nigiri Hills biosphere nature park which is the largest protected forest in India and home to many species of animals including tigers and elephants. Later we will visit the Arulmigu Eachanari Vinayagar temple which is dedicated to Lord Ganesh. Dinner is again in our hotel tonight. (B, L, D)

DAY 8 – Friday 23rd January - Coimbatore to Ooty

Today we take a really scenic rail journey from nearby Coonoor to Ooty aboard the so called toy train. We will travel a little over 46km through the Nigiri Hills. (please be aware that some days this train does not run for no apparent reason....). Upon arrival we will have lunch before our visit to the botanical gardens for a self guided walk. The rest of the day is at leisure. (B, L, D)

Fortune Sullivan Hotel or similar – 2 nights

DAY 9 – Saturday 24th January - Ooty

Ooty is the focus for today with visits to include the Karnataka Siri Horticulture gardens and the Ooty rose garden before lunch. Later we will visit a tea plantation as the area is famous for tea. A tasting is included. Later return to our hotel for free time and dinner. (B, L, D)





DAY 10 – Sunday 25th January - Ooty to Mysore

After breakfast we will drive to Mysore with an orientation and lunch on arrival. Later we will visit the Devaraja Markets which are held in some historic buildings around the old town square. After some time in the markets we will check in to our hotel and after dinner we will drive to the Mysore Palace to see the famous building illuminated by over 10000 lights. (B, L, D)

Raddison Blu or similar – 2 nights

DAY 11 – Monday 26th January - Mysore

First we will take a drive back to the location of the Mysore Palace, Chamundi Hill, where those keen can explore the area on foot. Next is a visit to the Brindavan gardens famous for its formal layout and large scale (60 acres). Expect colour and people. Next is a visit to the summer palace at Srirangapatam and a visit to a local silk factory. Tonight's dinners is a rather special one in the well known Elephant Bar of the Royal Orchid Hotel. Today is both Australia day and India Republic. The restaurant and bar overlook the surrounding gardens. (B, L, D)

DAY 12 – Tuesday 27th January - Mysore to Bangalore to Goa

Travel today firstly to Bangalore, upon arrival we will explore the city to visit the state parliament, army barracks buildings and the Lal Bagh Botanical gardens. The gardens are huge so we will use electric carts to orientate ourselves before some free time to explore. Later we will have a flight to the coast resort town of Goa. Upon arrival transfer to our hotel and have dinner. (B, L, D)

Zuri White Sands Resort or similar - 3 nights

DAY 13 – Wednesday 28th January - Goa

This morning is for relaxation in the resort or to explore the local area by foot. Later in the day meet for a tour of Goa to include the Portuguese mansion and other sites along the way. Dinner in the resort. (B, L, D)

DAY 14 – Thursday 29th January -

Free day to soak up the relaxed atmosphere of Goa. You may elect to do some spa treatments in the resort or explore the local area on foot. Meals are included today with full details to be supplied on site.

DAY 15 – Friday 30th January - Goa to Chennai

Later start this morning before visits to include the Basilica of Bom which is supposed to contain the relics of the body of St Francis Xavier. This is probably the most famous Christian church in India. We have a late flight to Chennai so we will have dinner before our flight and upon arrival transfer to our hotel. (B, L, D)

Trident Hotel or similar – 1 night

This morning we . (B, L, D).

DAY 16 – Saturday 31st January - Chennai to Mahabalipuram

Sightseeing in Chennai this morning including visiting Kapaleswarar temple, St Georges Fort, Government museum, Rippon House and Government House. We will have lunch in Chennai before visiting St Thomas Basilica and a coffee in the Amethyst Garden Restaurant. Later we will take the coastal drive to Mahabalipuram. (B, L, D)

ITC Welcome Hotel (formally Sheraton) or similar - 1 night

DAY 17 – Sunday 1st February - Mahabalipuram to Chennai to fly home

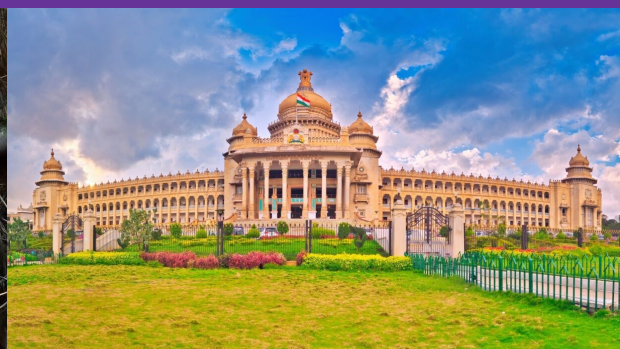
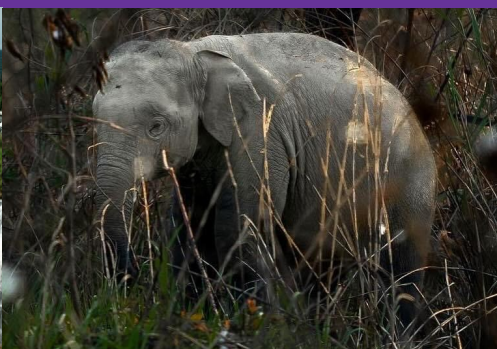
After a leisurely start to the day we will have a half day visiting the fascinating sites of the local area including the Shore temple, Arjuna Penance and seashell temple. Lunch will be in a local hotel before we journey back to Chennai. We will have our final dinner near the airport before our late evening flight home via Singapore. (B, L, D)

DAY 18 – Monday 2nd February - arrive home

Arrive home. (meals in flight)



Our tour guide will be Rajeev Butali who we have formed a real friendship with over the course of the several tours. Those who have travelled with me on previous tours rate him in the top tier - as do I!



Quality matters!

- ⇒ Quality hotels
- ⇒ Experienced Indian tour guide—Rajeev Butalia (pictured below)
- ⇒ Local dining experiences included to explore the culinary culture of each area
- ⇒ We will have enough time to experience each region
- ⇒ We always seem to have a wonderful, friendly & fun group to travel with!



Pricing Details

Land only tour price	\$6495
Air fare component (actual price available upon air booking)	\$1500 (approx.)
Tour deposit—deductible from final tour price	\$500
Single supplement - if you wish to twin share please let us know and we will put you in contact with others who are keen to share.	\$1995

Important dates

1. Deposit – Payable asap to secure a place as seats are limited, please complete booking form.
2. Final payment 60 days before departure

The tour prices includes:

- Beautiful hotel accommodation
- Internal exclusive coach travel and airfares
- All tipping for national guides, drivers and portorage (where applicable)
- Entry to all sightseeing, national parks and gardens as detailed in itinerary
- Quality meals listed in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- English speaking guide and accompanied all the way with Australian garden guide – Brian Sams
- Taxes where appropriate (but subject to change based on prevailing rates)
- Airport transfers (for whole group only—other arrangements to be made as required)

The tour price excludes:

- All items not stated as included
- Visa
- Travel insurance—recommended for all travelers. Please discuss if you need help to organize.

Full terms and conditions are on the booking form.



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