

"IT IS ABOUT CREATING GOOD EXPERIENCES"

If you want to switch off from the world but be pampered at the same time, then this is perhaps one of the best places to be in. You can enjoy a houseboat with a Jacuzzi on the top deck; bicycle rides through the village of Munnar and lazy afternoons playing badminton or watching DVDs. Go Now spends a relaxed weekend at the Lemon Tree's Kerala property.

Lemon Tree Vembanad Lake Resort Breathtaking views, floating villa

Its not often that you get a houseboat, along with your hotel stay. But at the Lemon Tree's Kerala property in Alleppey that's exactly what's on offer. If you ask in advance, a dedicated houseboat will take you and your partner across Vembanad Lake. Perfect for a cozy evening with family and friends, the houseboat will give you an experience you will never forget. Enjoy the best of Kerala cuisine with steaming hot appams and stew, specially prepared by the chef, who will turn up early that day, to ensure that as far as the cuisine is concerned, you are not disappointed. You can also watch DVD's in the dining arena, if you so wish, but it would be a shame to miss the breathtaking views, which are the best part of the trip.

Jacuzzi on the top deck

The other attraction on the houseboat is the top deck Jacuzzi, which is a must try. Though I must warn you, being the monsoon period, some of you may find the experience a little cold. Still if you can brave this, do try it out. For those of you, who are a little more adventurous, and want to explore the lake, don't opt for the 'Floating Villa' as the houseboat is called. Instead, get on a motorboat which will lead you into various canals, which the houseboat will not be able to take you into. Here, you will find various types of flora and fauna which is a boon for the botanists among you.

Enjoy the plunge pool

The resort itself is located in the scheduled Vembanad Lake. Thus this retreat is the ideal holiday for those of you, who really want to cut yourself away from work and focus on rejuvenating your body and spirit. There are spectacular close up views of the lake from each room. This, accompanied by the fresh smell of Nature, ensures that your whole body gets a boost. For those of you who wish to stir from your rooms, there is a private plunge pool, and for those of you who wish to enjoy the traditional Kerala ayurvedic massages; a private spa is on hand. A tip to note: if you upgrade to the deluxe rooms, you will get a Jacuzzi in the bathroom. A great option,

especially if you are traveling with small children. The views from the room are mesmerizing. You can just keep staring for hours.

Bring your own booze

For those of you who want to check your emails, be warned, internet usage is not free here. Another thing to note is that the resort does not have a bar license. So if you want to enjoy alcohol, you will have to bring your own, or venture out of the resort. On the other hand, the resort has a good selection of magazines; DVD's and even a badminton court, so there's enough to keep you occupied for the weekend.

Make your way by bicycle

It must be said here that this is not a holiday for those of you who want to do things. This holiday here is meant for doing nothing but lazing by a gorgeous pool. For those of you who wish to get some exercise through, there is always the traditional mode of transport: bicycles. Though I must add that the town of Alleppey is only a short drive away, and there are plenty of taxi and car services on hire to take you there. If you do opt to cycle, make sure you will find the Muhamma village located along the state highway and the lake. If you are adventurous enough, stop at the dhabas and order some local delicacies. A favourite made here is appam with mutta roast (spicy curry made with egg). It is a must try and I guarantee you that the dish will remain long in your mind afterwards. However, I would like to provide a warning to you here. Kerala food is very spicy. So if you cannot stomach spice, make sure to avoid it as much as possible.

Check out the lighthouse

Describe in British times by Lord Curzon as the 'Venice of the East', Alleppey lives up to its name by providing lush green paddy fields, towering coconut trees, shimmering water and long canals. Sightseers are bound to be disappointed, as the only place of note is a lighthouse, which is a major tourist attraction. This is a place for bonding with Nature, reading your favourite books, and exploring your creative side by writing verse. After all, Wordsworth wrote his famous poem Daffodils surrounded by daffodils in his garden. And as the bookworms among you will know, Alleppey was the setting for Booker Prize-winning author Arundhati Roy's book *The God of Small Things*.

Seafood for thought

I cannot finish talking about this resort without mentioning the all important thing: food. Breakfast is served daily in the coffee shop called the Citrus Café and includes a lavish buffet. The spice buffs among you must go for Kerala duck curry, with crispy Kerala parota and

steamed rice. For vegetarians, they have a much talked about vegetable biryani, but I unfortunately did not get the time to try it out. Then there is the seafood. Cooked by a great team of chef, you can expect a lip smacking feast of seafood served fresh from the crystal waters of the lagoon, or a barbecue on the beach. Here, you will have the meal of a lifetime under the stars. If you want to make the setting more cosy; a private castaway dinner can be arranged outside your room. Here, you get an exquisite meal, served by a private chef and waiter, and the serenity and beauty of the Vembanad Lake. Absolute bliss!

Fact file

Lemon Tree Vembanad Lake Resort,
Jana Sakthi Road, Kayippuram Muhamma,
Alleppey, Kerala.
For Reservations- 0478 2861970

Best Way to Reach: By Jetlite to Cochin. It is the most economical and only direct flight from Delhi. From Cochin it takes 1 hour and 30 minutes to reach Alleppey.
Best Time to visit: August-April

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