



GOA & THE DEEP SOUTH, (SMC)

Mumbai to Chennai 24 Days, departing 28th February 2023



TRIP OVERVIEW

Trip Style: Overlanding
Route: Mumbai to Chennai
Duration: 24 Days
Transport: Overland Expedition Vehicle, Train, Boat
Accommodation: Comfortable Hotel 2 nights
 Overnight Train 1 night
 Basic Hotel 13 nights
 Guesthouse 6 nights
 Overnight Boat 1 night
Meals: Breakfasts x 6, Lunches x 2, Dinners x 3

Physical Challenge: ● ● ○ ○ ○
 Your itinerary may include easy-paced day walks, bike rides, and other activities that are not too strenuous.

Lifestyle Challenge: ● ● ● ○ ○
 This trip has a bit of everything. Some areas that you travel through may be physically challenging; for example you may be at altitude some of the time and you may be camping for several nights. The pace of the trip can be tiring at times and some facilities will be basic. However there will also be plenty of time to relax and some comfortable accommodation.



DAILY ITINERARY

Day 1 - Mumbai (28th February 2023)

Meals: Breakfast

Border Information: If joining the trip in Mumbai, you will most likely enter India from Mumbai Chhatrapati Shivaji International Airport (IATA code: BOM).

There will be an important group meeting at 6:00pm at the joining hotel in Mumbai - please look out at the reception for a note from you tour leader with further details about this meeting. Otherwise, today is free to explore the sights and sounds of Mumbai.

Accommodation: Hotel Fortune

Day 2 - Mumbai (1st March 2023)

Today will be a free day to explore this amazing city. This is also an opportunity to take a tour of the Dharavi slum areas of Mumbai.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Take a Bollywood dance class in one of Mumbai's premier dance studios

1hr: 500 INR

Take a fascinating tour of Film City one of Mumbai's premier Bollywood filming studios

Entrance: 3,500 INR

Take a guided tour of the backstreets shops and schools of the Dhavari district to experience a slice of the real Mumbai

2.5hr Tour, price for a group of 5: 3,250 INR

4.5hr Tour, price for a group of 5: 6,000 INR

Explore the labyrinth of cave-temples on Elephanta Island near Mumbai some of the most impressive rock carvings in all of India

Boat: 125 INR

Discover the marvellous collection of historical objects and art at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya Museum one of India's premier museums

Entrance: 500 INR

Day 3 - Goa (2nd March 2023)

We will start our journey by taking the train along the coast to Goa. We will stay for 2 nights at the relaxed beaches of Vagator in the northern part of Goa.

Estimated Journey Time (on train) - 11-12 hours.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Experience a local overnight train from Mumbai to Goa

Included

Day 4 - Goa (3rd March 2023)

We will have a 2nd night in North Goa tonight. Most travellers are drawn to Vagator for the stunning sunsets, the laid-back atmosphere and the proximity of some other quieter beaches in the area such as Arambol and Anjuna.

Day 5 - Old Goa (4th March 2023)

After our 2 nights on the northern beaches of Goa, we head off in the truck to the southern end of Goa. En route we will stop off at the site of Old Goa to spend some time independently exploring the area's colonial buildings.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Freely explore the historic churches and ancient streets of the old Portuguese city of Old Goa

Tour, price per group: 2,500 INR

Own exploration: Free

Day 6 - Old Goa (5th March 2023)

We will stay for a 2nd night on either the stunning beach of Agonda or Palolem, these beaches are the perfect places to sit back and watch the fishing boats landing their catch or sample the delicious local cuisine.

Day 7 - Hampi (6th March 2023)

Leaving the beaches of Goa behind us, we set off on a full day drive into the state of Karnataka and to the village of Hampi. The village is located within the ruins of Vijayanagara, the former capital of the ancient Vijayanagara Empire.

Day 8 - Hampi (7th March 2023)

Today we will have a guided tour of the historical sites around Hampi by rickshaw and on foot.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Discover the lost kingdom of Vijayanagar in the magnificent ruined city of Hampi

Included

Day 9 - Mysore (8th March 2023)

From Hampi we will have another full day drive to the city of Mysore, one of India's most attractive towns.

Day 10 - Mysore (9th March 2023)

On our 2nd day we will have free time in Mysore to independently explore the city's beautiful gardens, palaces, and the Shir Chamarajendra art gallery.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Explore the amazing Maharajas Palace of Mysore

Included

Optional Activities

Explore Mysore's many parks and gardens

Entrance: Free

Take a stroll through the huge Devarja market, a traditional and colourful bazaar

Price: Free

Climb the 1000 steps to the summit of Chamundi Hill to visit the famous Sri Chamundeshwari Temple and take in the views of the city below

Rickshaw: 100 INR

Day 11 - Wayanad (10th March 2023)

Meals: Dinner

Today we travel up into the cool highlands and head to the hill-station of Wayanad, a small settlement surrounded by tea and coffee plantations.

Whilst in Wayanad we stay as guests of local families at a local guesthouse.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

See the 7000-year-old Neolithic petroglyphs at the Edakkal caves en route

Included

Day 12 - Wayanad (11th March 2023)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

There are many optional activities available in Wayanad which we will have time to do today, from hiking up Chembra Peak, visiting local waterfalls and tea plantations, or the chance to visit the nearby Muthanga Wildlife Sanctuary.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Take a strenuous day-hike up the 2100m Chembra Peak the highest peak in the Wayanad area

Trekking Fee (per 5): 1,800 INR

Guide (cost per group): 2,200 INR

Jeep (taking 4 pax): 2,500 INR

Trekking in the tea and coffee plantations of Wayanad

Entrance: Free

Take a walk through the scenic Wayanad countryside to visit the Meenmutty or Kanthanppara waterfalls

Entrance: 20 INR

Take a jeep safari around Muthanga Wildlife Sanctuary

Entrance: 325 INR

Jeep (taking 5 pax): 700 INR

Day 13 - Kochi (12th March 2023)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we will continue our journey with a full day drive to the coastal city of Kochi.

Day 14 - Kochi (13th March 2023)

This morning we will take a local boat to Fort Cochin and have free time to explore and visit various sites including the Jewish Quarter, St Francis Church and the iconic Chinese fishing nets. In the evening we will be able to see a performance from the famous Kathakali dancers, India's most spectacular dance drama.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Visit Fort Cochin or watch the Kathakali dancers

Included

Evening visit to watch the classical Indian dance drama of Kathakali

Included

Day 15 - Alleppey (14th March 2023)

Meals: Lunch, Dinner

Leaving the bustle of Kochi behind, today we embark on our included overnight houseboat cruise on the tranquil Keralan backwaters of Alleppey. We will often split into smaller groups to board our traditional 'Kettuvallom' boats which will take us around the scenic rivers and spend the night aboard.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Overnight on a houseboat in the Kerala Backwaters, exploring the unique eco-system of this labyrinthine system of lakes, canals and rivers

Included

Day 16 - Varkala (15th March 2023)

Meals: Breakfast

After our fantastic overnight cruise along the Keralan backwaters, we continue our journey with a short drive to the beach resort of Varkala.

Day 17 - Varkala (16th March 2023)

Today we have free time to explore the surrounding areas and relax on the beautiful beaches.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Head out for an evening performance of traditional Keralan Kathakali dancing

Entrance: 400 INR

Get a traditional Ayurvedic massage in the Keralan town of Varkala

Massage: 1,200 INR

Visit the 2000-year-old pilgrimage site of the Janardana Swami Temple, dedicated to a form of the Hindu Lord Vishnu

Entrance: Free

Day 18 - Varkala (17th March 2023)

Our final day in Varkala today, spend more time relaxing the beautiful beaches or why not sample the justifiably-famous Keralan cuisine at one of the great local restaurants.

Day 19 - Kanyakumari (18th March 2023)

Today we will have a morning drive to Kanyakumari (also known as Cape Comorin), the very southern point of India. Here we will have free time to explore the Vivekananda Rock and the surrounding sites.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Take the ferry over to Vivekananda Rock and explore the memorial to the Hindu monk Swami Vivekananda

Express ticket: 200 INR

Regular ticket: 50 INR

Day 20 - Madurai (19th March 2023)

Meals: Breakfast

This morning we have the option to get up early to watch the sunrise from the southern tip of India with thousands of locals, what can be an incredible experience! From Kanyakumari we then start heading back north again, and drive to the holy city of Madurai. In the afternoon we will have an included visit to the Sri Meenakshi Temple in Madurai.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Visit to the historical Hindu Meenakshi Amman Temple dedicated to lord Shiva

Included

Day 21 - Pondicherry (20th March 2023)

Today we head to the French-influenced town of Pondicherry, and will have a free time on arrival in the afternoon.

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Visit the spiritual community of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram founded in the early 20th century by the famous Bengali freedom fighter and spiritual leader

Entrance: Free

Take Bollywood dance class

Dance class: 400 INR

Day 22 - Pondicherry (21st March 2023)

On our 2nd day why not spend the day relaxing and soak up the atmosphere or explore the town and its beautiful colonial architecture.

Day 23 - Chennai (22nd March 2023)

Meals: Breakfast

Today we have a short drive to the ancient city of Mahabalipuram, once the capital of the Pallava Dynasty in the 7th Century CE. On arrival we will have an included visit to the incredible Shore Temples and other monuments around the town (time permitted).

In the afternoon we will finish the short drive to the bustling coastal city of Chennai.

Daily Activities

Included Activities

Visit to the Shore Temples and Pagodas of Mahabalipuram

Included

Day 24 - Chennai - End Date (23rd March 2023)

Border Information: If you are leaving the trip in Chennai, you will most likely exit India from Chennai International Airport (IATA code: MAA).

Today is the end day for passengers finishing their trip in Chennai. Please note there is no accommodation included on the trip tonight - please contact your sales agent if you are interested in booking extra nights of accommodation in order to fully explore and take part in some of the optional activities listed below.

Accommodation:

Daily Activities

Optional Activities

Visit the Fort St. George, the site of the East India Company's first trading station in 1640, and the first British fort in India

Entrance: 100 INR

Visit the Chennai Government Museum, and its incredible selection of antiquities including Roman artefacts and coins from all eras of India's past

Entrance: 250 INR

Visit the many historic temples mosques and churches of Chennai

Entrance: Free

ITINERARY DISCLAIMER

The routes, activities and places visited described in these notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only. By their very nature, overland itineraries need to be flexible and the regions that we are travelling through are often unpredictable. We intend to follow the planned route but exact night stops and inclusions cannot be guaranteed and it sometimes happens that we decide to make a change to our planned itinerary. This may be for a variety of reasons; climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions may demand it. Changes to the itinerary may occur with little notice so please be prepared for modifications to your trip.

Drive Times

Drive times are listed in the day-to-day itinerary. These are the approximate number of hours that the vehicle will be in motion, and does not include any time taken for coffee or lunch stops, border crossings, photo stops, activities en route, comfort breaks, shopping stops, toilet stops, etc. The times given are approximate estimates only and whilst given with the best of intentions, the drive times are heavily dependent on traffic, road conditions, weather, police roadblocks, and many other factors.

Accommodation and Meals Included

The type of accommodation and included meals are listed for each day of the itinerary. These listings show our intention and on most departures the listings will be accurate. However due to the flexible nature of overland itineraries, climatic, bureaucratic or road conditions may demand changes to our listed intentions or groups may simply decide to amend the plans from time to time.

Optional Activities

A selection of optional activities is listed in the day-to-day itinerary. This list is designed to be a helpful guide as to what is commonly available in each location, and is neither an exhaustive list, a guarantee that the activity is available, or an endorsement or recommendation. Certain activities may not be available on your particular visit and it may not be possible to do all the activities listed in the time available at each destination. It is recommended to give yourself extra time in your joining or ending city if you would like to participate in some optional activities there. Prices listed are for entrance only and do not include transport costs to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated. The prices are displayed according to our latest information and in the best faith, but prices do fluctuate due to exchange rates, season, numbers of participants, and simple increases from the operator, and therefore any prices listed are a guide only and cannot be guaranteed. If you partake in any optional activities, you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Dragoman. You may be required to sign/complete a waiver form or optional activity form for some optional activities. For more information around activity safety and insurance, please see the Essential Information document.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In the event of a real emergency once you have left your home country, please contact us on our out of office hours number. If you cannot get through on the phone, please leave a message with your name, reference number, contact details and a message with the help that you need and we will get back to you. Please bear in mind that real progress or action may not be possible until normal office hours, depending on the issue.

If your flight is delayed, please inform us as soon as you can and then make your way to the joining hotel as instructed in the Joining Point section of these notes.

Out of hours Number: +44 (0) 7985 106564

A FEW RULES

We expect all group members to act respectfully towards our staff and other group members. Bullying will not be tolerated.

Engaging in commercial or exploitative sexual activities, committing acts of violence or threatening violence towards local people, other group members or any member of our staff is not allowed. Any customer engaging in such activities will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

You must at all times comply with the laws, customs, foreign exchange and drug regulations of all countries visited and conduct yourself in accordance with our responsible travel policy. Any customer found contravening such laws or regulations will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

Although we are aware that in some parts of the world taking, carrying or selling drugs, or carrying weapons may be legal, it is not acceptable for Dragoman customers and our tour leaders have the right to ask you to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price if you are found to be engaging in such activities.

ISSUES ON THE TRIP

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip, it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on customer-relations@dragoman.co.uk.

You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip, but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

IMPORTANT NOTES

OVERLANDING LIFESTYLE

Dragoman was founded in 1981, and has had many years of experience of leading overland trips across 4 continents. Overlanding is all about sharing a great travelling experience with like-minded people. On your trip you'll travel in one of Dragoman's purpose-built iconic expedition vehicles on an off-the-beaten-track adventure along rugged roads, experiencing the sights, sounds and smells of the world up-close. Your journey will be overland, sometimes across vast distances, so some long days spent driving are inevitable - but these will be interspersed with breaks of a day or two at a destination or activity.

On an overland journey, you are more than just a passenger and everyone gets involved setting up camp - we supply the tent but it's up to you to pitch it! As part of your trip, you will be assigned a truck job which could be collecting firewood or water, luggage loading, organising food, stores, etc. Like all great adventures, the more you put in the more you'll get out! For more details of how an overlanding trip works, please see the Essential Information document.

SAFETY STANDARDS

We run adventure journeys in off the beaten track areas, which often have poor infrastructure. You should expect that some of these areas do not adhere to 'Western' safety standards. For more information, please see the Essential Information document

MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN REMOTE AREAS

We will be travelling to areas in remote locations where medical assistance will not be available, and communications may be sparse. We do not carry satellite phones on our regular trips. Therefore, if you have a medical condition such as a heart condition that would put you at risk, we would suggest that this is not the trip for you. Also, please be aware that should an emergency occur, there is likely to be a considerable delay in accessing medical care, and by joining our trip you accept this risk.

VISAS, HEALTH, INSURANCE & MONEY

Before you travel there are vital things to consider such as:

- Any visas needed for your trip
- Any vaccinations needed (please consult your GP or travel clinic)
- Organising your local payment (the kitty)
- Buying travel insurance (insurance is compulsory to be allowed to join our trips)

For more information on these topics, please see the Essential Information Document.

INDIA NOTES

Please ensure you have an up to date version of these notes. **These notes were printed on the 21st June 2021**