



## Yoga and Ayurveda Holidays Kerala, South India

Relax, unwind and discover a new way  
of life in exotic, tropical Kerala



- Two-week yoga holidays
- Yoga for all - beginners and experienced
- Exotic South India
- Safe and affordable
- European teacher/owner
- Ayurvedic massage and treatments
- Escape to the sun
- Refresh mind, body and soul



**K**erala is the perfect place to combine yoga with a relaxing and exotic holiday. We invite you for two-week vacations in our comfortable, private house, Kailasam, just three minutes' walk from the beach and the Arabian Sea.

Yoga is taught by Diana, who has teaching diplomas from the British Wheel of Yoga in Norfolk, England, and the Sivananda Ashram in Kerala. Diana grew up in Brighton, England, studied environmental science and made her career in tourism and conservation before her interest in yoga, healing and the spiritual path led her to India.

Diana bought Kailasam, an established yoga centre, in 2001. She lives at Kailasam and teaches hatha yoga in the Sivananda style, a classical form of yoga, originating in South India. She has been teaching yoga for over 10 years. The yoga holidays are 2 weeks in duration, but it is often possible to stay extra nights for bed and breakfast.

Ayurvedic treatments are available with Mohan, who has studied the South Indian traditional healing arts of marma and ayurveda from an early age. Using massage, herbal medicines, and specially prepared natural oils, the treatments are excellent for relaxation and rejuvenation as well as for any physical injuries, stiffness, joint and back pain.

Mohan was born and grew up in a village near to Kailasam, and has over 10 years experience of healing through ayurveda. He has successfully treated British and European people, both in Kerala and the UK.



**Yoga** Holidays are two weeks in duration, starting on a Saturday. We hold two classes each day – in the morning and late afternoon. Yoga is practised on our specially designed, palm-leaf-shaded roof. You will find plenty of time between classes to relax and explore the local vicinity. Saturdays are free days with no yoga classes.

Yoga is a natural and ancient Indian system – an approach to life – which produces a healthy body and a steady, peaceful mind. These are not only goals in themselves, but also thought to aid the spiritual awareness which is the purpose of life.

Diana teaches the Sivananda style of hatha yoga, which was the first style of yoga to be brought from India to the West. Sivananda yoga is a classical system which teaches a series of postures (asanas) which are considered to provide the maximum benefit to body, mind and spirit. These asanas are practised with concentration and awareness which are a first step towards meditation.

Sivananda teaches that there are five main principles of yoga: proper exercise, proper breathing, proper relaxation, proper diet and positive thinking and meditation.

An experienced and well-qualified teacher, Diana has a relaxed and flexible style of teaching. She is used to teaching experienced students but is also very encouraging for beginners.

Our yoga holidays will improve your strength and flexibility, and give you a more steady and calm mind. The advantages of controlling the subtle energy through breath-control (pranayama) and of recharging the body's batteries through relaxation, should have a positive and beneficial effect that will last in your everyday life.

Yoga at Kailasam is accessible and suitable for all – men and women - even if you have not practised before. There is no competition in yoga, and it is possible to adapt the asanas for different body shapes, ages and abilities.

Whatever your reasons for choosing yoga – physical, mental and/or spiritual, we aim to provide you with an enjoyable and memorable holiday, which could even change the quality of your life forever!





**Kailasam** is a private house, set in its own colourful garden, converted to a centre for yoga holidays and ayurveda. It is situated in the seaside village of Kovalam. We have our own massage and ayurveda treatment room in the garden, where you can take advantage of the ancient healing and rejuvenation arts of South India. The massages are an excellent way of complementing the yoga.

We have accommodation for a maximum of 10 people sharing in five comfortable bedrooms, each with en-suite, western-style toilet and shower facilities. All rooms are attractively decorated and have hot water, ceiling fans and mosquito nets on the windows.

We provide breakfasts and there are many local cafes and beach-side restaurants for a choice of Keralan, North Indian or Western-style lunches and dinners. You are welcome to use the kitchen and fridge to make hot drinks or for chilling drinking water, or soft drinks.

Overlooking the paddy fields and surrounded by coconut palms, Kailasam is just three minutes' walk from the popular beach at Kovalam. It is a green and peaceful oasis during the day, but with the advantage of being part of Kovalam village, so you will be able to experience 'real' rural India, whilst still getting away from it all.

We hope you will find Kailasam a place to relax and unwind from the cares and worries of modern Western life.

**Kovalam** is a resort on the Arabian Sea with a very friendly, village atmosphere. Two curved, sandy beaches, Lighthouse Beach and Eve's Beach, provide the setting for beach holidays, popular with both Westerners and Indian people. Lighthouse Beach has a backdrop of restaurants and small shops, whilst Eve's Beach is fringed with palms.


The red-and-white striped lighthouse will become a familiar sight on your holiday. Fishing is still carried out from both beaches, and it's fascinating to watch – or even help – the men haul in their nets.

The food in the Kovalam restaurants caters for all tastes, whether you prefer vegetable curries and chapatis or non-spicy food. You can take chai - Indian tea - and banana cakes at the local tea shop or dine in hotels on freshly prepared sea food caught in the traditional way. Whichever you choose, the food is freshly prepared and very reasonably priced. There is always an excellent choice for vegetarians, in Kovalam and throughout Kerala.

Days can be spent visiting local sights, lazing on a sun bed and swimming in the sea, or at one of the local hotel's open-air swimming pools (for a small charge). There are also quieter beaches within walking distance – or you can take a rickshaw if you wish. We are happy to advise you on places to visit nearby: temples, festivals, and markets where you can experience the Kerala way of life, or simply be punted through the rivers of the tranquil Backwaters, alive with birds and other wildlife.

When it's cooler in the evening, you may wish to browse for jewellery, clothes, handicrafts and gifts from the shops that specialise in Kashmiri and Karnataka merchandise. You can also enjoy having your own designs created – or your favourite clothes copied – by the skilled Kovalam tailors.

There are good facilities for internet and international telephone connections in Kovalam.



**Kerala** is the lush, green state forming the south-western strip of India. Its name is thought to mean 'Land of coconuts' – and when you are here, you can see why – palm trees are everywhere, providing food, drink, wood, rope, oil, and many other products. The Kerala people like to refer to their land as 'God's own country', a claim with which we would certainly agree!

With the Arabian Sea on the west, the Western Ghats towering to 500 – 2700 m on the east and with a network of 44 rivers, Kerala is one of the most sought-after tourist destinations in Asia.

The bustling state capital city, Trivandrum, is just half an hour away from Kovalam by bus, taxi or rickshaw, with shops, museum and art gallery, temples and other facilities. The international airport has charter and scheduled connections to London, other European cities and further afield.

The climate is tropical, but as there are sea breezes, it is rarely too hot. The maximum daytime temperature is usually about 32 – 33 degrees. The dry season is officially from November until May, with the monsoon arriving in June. However, there can be rain at any time of year, although usually we enjoy sunny weather during the time we run yoga holidays.

The local language is Malayalam, but English is widely spoken and understood, and many signs are in English. Kerala has an excellent educational system, with the highest literacy rate in India (virtually 100%), and is the only state where females outnumber males. With its world-class health care systems, Kerala enjoys India's lowest infant mortality and highest life expectancy rates.

We are sure you will find the Kerala people are very friendly and warm – be prepared to make friends during your visit here! Let India into your soul and you will return home with many treasures and a fundamental and positive shift in attitude.





## Ayurveda at Kailasam

Ayurveda 'the science of life' is the traditional healing system of India. It is over 5000 years old, making it the oldest known medical system in the world. Ayurveda is a holistic and completely natural approach, using plants and herbs, together with specially blended oils. Therapeutic massage and applications of herbs to the body are key treatments to ensure good physical, mental and spiritual health.



Ayurvedic massage is the ideal treatment to relieve pain from injuries and accidents. It is also a very effective preventative treatment that relaxes and rejuvenates the body, strengthens the immune system, and dissolves the stresses and strains of modern life. It is one of the best general tonics for the body and the mind.

Many people who practice yoga find that a course of two or three massages relieves stiffness, improves performance and flexibility, helping them to achieve and get the benefits of new asanas (postures).

The ayurvedic centre at Kailasam is run by Mohan, who was born into a traditional ayurvedic family, near Kovalam. He studied Kerala martial arts (kalarippayattu) and ayurveda in the ancient tradition from the age of twelve. For countless generations, this secret and precious knowledge has been passed down from parents to sons and daughters, from cousins to cousins and from uncles to nephews. Mohan's teacher is his cousin-brother.

The use of rare Indian herbs, the making of special treatment oils and decoctions, the knowledge of the subtle energy paths (nadis) and centres (chakras) and of the vital points of the body (marma) are all part of the detailed and sacred study.

Mohan has over 10 years professional practice in Kerala and the UK. His speciality is 'foot therapy' (chavittithirumal), a rejuvenating full body massage using his feet and special oils. This is very effective for back pain, severe muscle pain and joint pains.

Treatments can include massage and manipulation for specific problems, e.g. hand, knee, shoulder. Price will depend on the length of each treatment and how many are required. Many conditions will respond to three or four treatments, sometimes less.





## Travel arrangements

Trivandrum is the nearest airport. Scheduled flights depart daily from London Heathrow throughout the year. Current operators include Sri Lankan Airlines, Gulf Air and Kuwait Air. Charter flights are available with Manos and JMC departing London Gatwick on Fridays between November and March. There are also regular connections to other major European cities and beyond.

Travel arrangements and insurance are your own responsibility.

A visa is required to travel. In the UK contact: Indian High Commission, Aldwych, London WC2.

On arrival, you will be met at Trivandrum airport and we will provide a complimentary taxi transfer to Kovalam (30 minutes). There is a short walk to Kailasam. A porter will carry your luggage.

## What is included in your holiday

Bed and breakfast, all yoga classes, transfer from Trivandrum airport.

## What is not included in your holiday

Flight and travel costs to Trivandrum, insurance, transfer to Trivandrum airport at the end of your holiday. Transport is easily arranged.

Ayurvedic massage and treatments, midday and evening meals.

## What to bring

As well as light weight clothing, toiletries and personal items, you will need a torch, flat shoes or sandals. Sunscreen, sun hat and mosquito repellent are also useful. If you plan to swim, bring a waterproof sunscreen, or an old T-shirt. An umbrella can also be useful.

You should bring your own towels and non-slip yoga mat.

Loose, cool, cotton clothing is more appropriate and comfortable than lycra and leggings for practising yoga.

If you plan to take ayurvedic massages, old clothes/sarong and old underwear are useful, as the oil can stain.

It is OK for women to wear a bikini on the beach, but should cover up whilst walking around. Outside Kovalam, you will probably feel more comfortable with your shoulders and legs covered. The roads and paths here are not conducive to high heels!

## Health

Your doctor will be able to advise you about immunisations – there are currently no compulsory ones for India, unless you have come from an area with yellow fever. Both homeopathic and allopathic medicines are available against malaria, although the risk is very small in this area and many people prefer not to take allopathic drugs.

Most visitors to Kerala enjoy excellent health whilst here – and even feel better than at home. We advise you to drink only bottled water (easily available everywhere) and to avoid ice and drinks diluted with water.

The beach area and the path between Kailasam and the sea are flat, but some of the paths are uneven and there are steep hills in Kovalam. This may not, therefore, be a suitable holiday if you have breathing or walking difficulties.

Whilst we will do all we can to ensure your enjoyment and safety, we do expect you to take responsibility for yourself and for your yoga practice whilst staying with us.

## Disclaimer

All information is correct at time of going to press. However, due to sickness or 'Acts of God' or other circumstances beyond our control, some holidays may be temporarily altered. If this should happen, we will do our best to ensure an acceptable alternative. We do not accept any liability for any of the above events, or for any others beyond our control: loss or damage to your personal property, or any medical condition which may develop during or after your holiday. Your holiday insurance should cover these and any other contingencies.



## What past students have said:

*"Your yoga sessions gave me not only a complete physical workout but a spiritual workout too. Your teaching was a truly holistic experience and I left each session feeling that I had done something very good for myself."* Carol, Stockholm

*"The classic approach you take has been particularly helpful to me as I feel I get right to the restful heart of yoga through your teaching."* Barbara, Norwich.

*"Many thanks for giving me such a great time, and such good yoga classes."* Christian, Munich

*"Thanks to your beautifully calming voice and well-structured classes, I feel very relaxed and ready for life!"* Jyoti, India

## How to book

All bookings are taken by

Free Spirit Travel (UK), Brighton, BN1 8LA.

Telephone: 00 44 (0) 1273 564230.

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## Kailasam Yoga and Ayurveda Holidays

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