

Information for english speaking rowers

Rowing tours on Kerala Backwaters

Dear Rowers

After we had offered rowing tours in Guilin, China, we will continue offering our rowing tours **from January to March** on Kerala Backwaters in India.

Welcome to the GUILIN INTERNATIONAL ROWING CLUB in Kerala, India.

Jürg and Werner Rosenberger

About Kerala

The **Backwaters in Kerala** are a world of serenity and enchantment. The coastal regions of Kerala have a network of waterways, inlets from the sea, estuaries of over forty rivers, lakes and natural canals connecting coastal towns. This interlinked body of waterways is known as the Backwaters in Kerala. Over 900 Km of the Kerala Backwaters are navigable and have been used for centuries by the local people for transportation.

The Backwaters in Kerala are the source of the local people's livelihood. The fish caught from its waters, the paddy, coconut and other crops harvested along its banks, the boats they build and use to transport them across the labyrinthine Backwaters in Kerala, are all an integral part of their traditional way of life.

Kerala, formed in 1956, is one of the smallest states in the Republic of India. The state has 14 districts and the capital is in Thiruvananthapuram. Kerala is a land of great natural beauty. The country has the highest rate of literacy (100%) among Indian states. The Keralites, famous for their hospitality, use Malayalam as their local language. However, English is more popular in business and education circles.

During the rowing tour you can travel on these waterways on a traditional house boat and enjoy the scenic beauty of the Backwaters in Kerala. Or you can just enjoy the traditional lifestyle while you're rowing. You can also visit different places as temple or historical places. You can see elephant washing or you can enjoy the amazing flora and fauna of the Backwaters, have an Ayurveda Massage on the house boat and even more.

Experience an unforgettable journey to a magical realm when you travel through the Backwaters in Kerala.

About us

The Guilin International Rowing Club was founded by experienced swiss rowers. Our aim is to offer a unique adventure to skilled rowers. After the rowing tours on the Li River in Guilin in China, we will row now on the amazing Backwaters in Kerala, India.

The Guilin International Rowing Club offers rowing tours by order of **Guilin Rowing GmbH in Zürich, Switzerland** by which all the bookings and payment can be done.

Who is behind all this?

Dr. Werner Rosenberger

Initiator of rowing tours on the Li River. Managing Director of Guilin Rowing GmbH, Zürich, Switzerland. Has been rowing since 1969 at the Seeclub in Zurich. Junior Swiss Championship on 2- and 2+. Was placed 7th on Junior World Championship. Has been working for many years for the executive board at the Seeclub Zurich and Regattaverein in Lucerne. He is owner of a Business- and Finance Firm in Zurich, Switzerland. Before he has been working for many years as a member of the board in Swiss Banks.

Jürg Rosenberger

Club Captain of the Guilin International Rowing Club. Has been rowing since he was a junior at the Seeclub in Zurich. Junior Swiss Championship on 4- and 4+. Was placed 5th and 9th on Junior World Championship. Has been working for many years for the executive board at the Seeclub in Zurich. Nowadays owner of a Corporate Design Agency in Zürich, Switzerland.

Rowing tours in Kerala, India

Useful travel information

Arrival

Kerala is located in the Southwestern tip of India. We will meet at the international Airport in Kochi (Cochin). You can fly directly from Europe through Mumbai (Bombay), New Delhi or Dubai. The best connections from Europe are offered by Emirates. Emirates flies from all major European Airports via Dubai directly to Kochi (Cochin).

Entry

For entry in India the passport must be valid at least six months. You also need a tourist visa. The processing time for visas in normal cases will be approx. 4 weeks and in some cases it may take longer.

Visa

All information incl. application form on: http://in.vfsglobal.ch/touristvisa_form.html

Outgoing flight and return flight

This flight must be arranged by a travel agency of your free choice.

Climate

The climate is tropical. The temperature is the whole year approx. between 25°C to 33°C. The climate is from October until May very dry, whereas the air humidity is almost during the whole year very high. Almost the entire amount of rain in a year, falls during the monsoon period which is from June to October.

Language

Malayalam. English is widely spoken.

Religion

Hinduism, Christianity, Islam

History

"Kerala is a bizarre anomaly among developing nations, a place that offers real hope for the future of the Third World... Though mostly a land of paddy-covered plains, statistically Kerala stands out as the Mount Everest of social development..." Bill Mckibben, National Geographic Traveler in October 1999.

Kerala is one of India's most progressive states in terms of social welfare and quality of life. In contrast to the rest of India and most other low-income countries, Keralites enjoy education and health at levels that are on par with the West. The State boasts of one of India's highest literacy rates, highest life expectancy and lowest child mortality rates.

The people of Kerala, at all levels of society, have greater access to services and opportunities - as well as a greater say in their governance. The State has top urbanization rates and is rated India's best in law and order.

Program

We offer the following package:

Program - Sunday (Arrival date) to Saturday (Departure date)

Sunday: Arrival at the International Airport Kochi (Cochin) and transfer to a 4-star Hotel in Fort Kochi.
Monday: Transfer to the house boat.
Tuesday: Rowing. Additional program according to prior agreement with the tour operator.
Wednesday: Rowing. Additional program according to prior agreement with the tour operator.
Thursday: Rowing. Additional program according to prior agreement with the tour operator.
Friday: Rowing and transfer to the 4-star Hotel in Fort Kochi.
Saturday: Transfer to the International Airport Kochi or individual travelling by oneself.

During the rowing tour you have the opportunity to see and visit historical places, temple, market, Cochin which is an enchantress City. You can also take a bath at the sea anytime or if you wish, you can have an Ayurveda Massage on the house boat and if you like to do something exceptionally, then go and see the elephant washing.

Accompaniment is also very welcome. They can stay during the whole rowing tour on the house boat and enjoy every day the lovely environment.

You will stay the first and the last night in a 4-star-hotel in Kochi. We have not decided yet which one. If you plan to travel around in India before or afterwards on your own, we will provide you early enough with the name of the hotel you will stay.

If you need more information for the time being, please contact my brother Jürg who will be the tour operator. He knows Kerala already very well.

Boats

Our boats are from Ted Hale, an Australian top rower who has a shipyard of his own. The boats were built near Guangzhou (Kanton), China especially for the Australian market. The boats are Australian Hing-End Technology built in China.

Booking and contact details

Only entire rowing crews (5 people = 1 boat) can be booked. 2 boats are the maximum. They are identical and can start all at the same time. Accompaniment is also welcome. The best season is from **January to March**.

We organize the following services for you:

- All overnight stay in the hotel and on the house boat
- All meals and beverage (alcohol not included)
- All transfers
- Use of boats
- Tour guide and assistance by Jürg Rosenberger.

Price

Early booking (at least 6 months in advance):

CHF 2'200 p/person, p/week, all included, except flight

Normal price:

CHF 2'500 p/person, p/week, all included, except flight

Travel dates

Please see all details on our website.

For further information see contact details below:

Guilin Rowing GmbH
Albisstrasse 103
8038 Zürich
Switzerland

+41 (0)43 244 6251
mail@guilinrowing.com

Text: Giulia Tenconi - Zurich, 07.02.2012