

Ancient Jewish Heritage in South India
9 days – 8 nights
Mumbai, Cochin, Kerala
Heritage, Culture, History, Spirituality

Bombay also known as Mumbai is the economic powerhouse of India. It is young, its lively and a confluence of varied cultural currents and cross currents have given Mumbai a unique position of the most multi-ethnic city of India. Mumbai is the most populous city in India, and the fourth most populous city in the world, with a total metropolitan area population of approximately 20.5 million. Mumbai is also country's financial and commercial hub and has a principal port on the Arabian Sea. It is also the hub of Indian film industry, which has played a pivoted role in the development of cinematography. "Bollywood", as it is called, produces the second most number of pictures in the world every year, next only to Hollywood, U.S.A. Mumbai claims to be the world's largest production center for films.

Day 1 – Wed: Mumbai

On arrival, assisted transfer to the hotel and check in to your accommodation. Spend the afternoon exploring this incredible city. Walk across to the famous Gateway of India, Mumbai's very own victory arch, built to commemorate the landing of King George V and Queen Mary for the Delhi Durbar (Court of Delhi). The Gateway of India was built as a symbol of the power of the British. Ironically, this beautiful structure also marked the end of the British rule, as the last infantry left Indian shores from the Gateway. Next, visit of Prince of Wales Museum. Built in gothic and Moorish architecture, it boasts of a significant collection of Indus valley artifacts some of them dating back to more than 5000 years. Most impressive are the miniature paintings – nearly 2000 of them, from various stylistic schools of India. Drive along Marine Drive, the sea-front boulevard, also known as the Queen's Necklace as in the evening, when the streetlights on this U-shaped road light up, the view from south Bombay's skyscrapers or from the exclusive residential area, is like a Queen's Necklace. Next, visit the dhobi ghats, the massive outdoor laundry site where dhobhi wallahs (laundry workers) beat, wring, iron and code millions of pieces of laundry daily. End the tour with a visit to Mani Bhawan - a memorial dedicated to the life and works of Mahatma Gandhi. [D]

Day 2 – Thu: Mumbai

Start early this morning with the unique experience of watching the bustling city of Mumbai at dawn! Get a peek into the underbelly of the city and insights into what makes this magnificent city tick. From watching the milkmen drive past with canisters, the melee of color at the flower markets, to experiencing the clamor and chaos of the arrival of over 100 tons of vegetables, fruits and meat – The dawning of the day truly defines the mercurial character of Mumbai, like none other. What's interesting is that when you walk the same lanes a few hours later, you wouldn't find any evidence of the morning's hustle bustle. It comes at a price though, waking up at 5.15 for one! You will return to the hotel for breakfast. After breakfast explore the Jewish sites in the city. Visit the architecturally stunning Keneseth Eliyahu Synagogue, with its beautiful interiors, and the David Sassoon Library. Next, visit Shaar Harahamim or Gate of Mercy Synagogue - the oldest synagogue in Mumbai, built in 1796, by Samaji Hasaji Divekar, a Bene Israeli. From here, drive to Magen David Synagogue, a tall blue building with a Gothic feel that towers over all the other buildings in the area. The Synagogue has a beautiful tebah (reader's platform that marks the center of Sefardic synagogues) and hekhal (ark which holds Torahs in cases of hammered silver). Regular worship services are also conducted here. David Sassoon built an elementary school near the synagogue, which is now the Sir Jacob Sassoon Free High School. The synagogue runs under the Sir Jacob Sassoon Charity Trust. Continue towards the stunning Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum (formerly the Victoria and Albert Museum) - the oldest museum in Mumbai, which is built in the style of a synagogue. The museum is a treasure house of the decorative and industrial arts. Today, it is probably one of the finest contemporary Museums in the city. End the tour with a visit to the Tripareth Israel Synagogue - one of the oldest synagogues in Mumbai. Formally known as Jacob Circle Prayer Hall, the synagogue was started in 1886 by the Bene

Israel community of Mumbai. Sabbath worship services are conducted in the community hall, a place where religious studies take place and various other activities are held. [B/D]

Day 3 – Fri: Mumbai

This morning, travel by motor launch to Mandva and continue onward by bus to Alibagh on the Konkan Coast. During the religious persecutions in Israel in the time of King Antiochus 2,200 years ago, some Jews escaped to India and were shipwrecked off the coast of Bombay. The few survivors came ashore, kept the faith, lived in interior villages, and were unknown to the Jewish world until they were discovered in the 1700s. They were known as the Bene Israel or "Sabbath oil pressers". At Alibagh, visit the picturesque Synagogue. After lunch at the Radisson Hotel, return to the city in time to prepare for Sabbath. This evening, attend the Shabbat services at the 19th century Keneseth Eliyahoo Synagogue. Shabbat Shalom! [B/L]

Note: To visit the Synagogues, guests need to carry a copy of their passport during the visit

Day 4 – Sat: Mumbai

Morning, attend Shabbat Services at the Keneseth Eliyahoo Synagogue. In the afternoon, explore some of Mumbai's unique nooks and corners, which are paradises for curios, designers, jewelry, textiles and antiques. If there's anything special you wish to buy, you can make a request and our guide can help you find the right place. [B/D]

Kochi, or more familiarly Cochin is spread across islands and promontories in a stunning location between the Arabian Sea and the Backwaters. The city was founded in 1341 when a flood created a natural safe port, which became the principal harbor for Malabar Coast's spice trade. Cochin was on the main trade route between Europe and China. The rulers invited people of various religions to settle here, attracting the Jews and the Christians who built places of worship and their own communities.

Day 5 – Sun: Mumbai, Cochin

Early morning assisted transfer to the airport and fly to Cochin (6:20 am-8:15 am). Arrive in Cochin and start on a guided excursion to Thekkumbhagam Synagogue and Muziris. Also visit the Jewish settlement area in Mala (Confirmation required). Muziris is also known as the Jerusalem of the East and the cradle of several religions. The first Jewish, Christian and Islamic settlements in India were here during 961 BC, 52 AD and 629 AD respectively. It is one of India's ancient harbors, approximately 3000 years old. The rare remnants of the Jewish Settlement can be seen in Mala. In ancient times Mala Street was known after Jews and it was called "Jews Street Mala". In 1948, when Israel was formed, the Jews left this place and went back to their motherland. There is currently no Jewish community left in Mala but there is a Jewish Cemetery, which exudes memories of Ancestors of Mala's Jewish Community. There were 40 Jewish families settled in Mala and they were the first Jewish community that migrated from Kerala to Israel. The name "Mala" might have originated from the Hebrew word "Mal-Aha" which means "Center of Refugee". [B/L]

Day 6 – Mon: Cochin

This morning visit Ernakulam's Kadavumbagam Synagogue, whose origin dates back to the 13th century and learn about its history. Visit a Hindu temple, shop for local handicrafts and savor the fragrant spices at the nearby market. Later drive to Mattancherry and visit Dutch Palace, built in 1555 with its elegant coronation hall and magnificent murals. Continue to the Paradesi Synagogue, the oldest in India, (circa 1568). The flooring consists of 18th century blue Cantonese ceramic tiles, each one hand painted and different from the others. The Paradesi Synagogue site was given to the Jews by one of the most famous of the Maharajas, Bhaskar Ravi Varman (1565-1601) and is located very near his palace and temple in "Jew Town", which indicates the importance given by the Raja to the Jewish community. In the evening, visit a local theatre to experience a Kathakali performance. Kathakali literally meaning "story dance" is the pantomimic dance drama, the dancing and the acting being

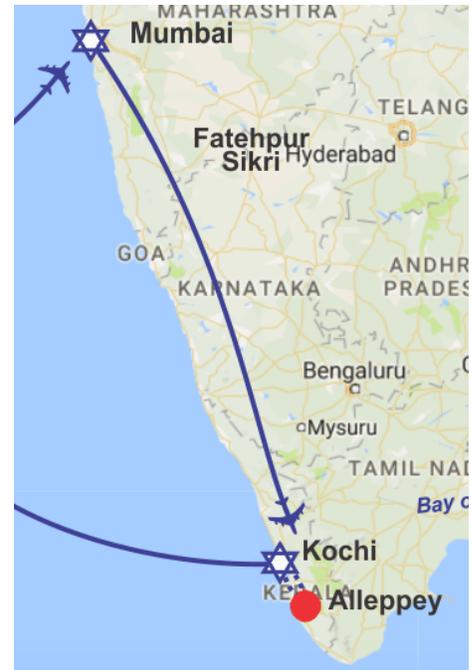
blended together into an inseparable form. It is a combination of facial expressions and body movements, which brings out the thought and emotion of the character. This evening enjoy a farewell dinner at local specialty restaurant. [B/D]

Note: To visit to Synagogues, guests need to carry a copy of their passport during the visit

Day 7 – Tue: Cochin, Alleppey, Houseboat

This morning you will be driven to Alleppey to embark on a Houseboat. Then, cruise through the canals and experience the local life and watch the snake boats used during a snake boat race. Float in sheer bliss as Kerala's traditional Kettuvalloms or houseboats, styled according to traditional norms yet equipped with every available luxury and modern amenity offering you the opportunity to relax on the serene waters of the Lake Vembanad. Stay, dine and truly indulge the timeless beauty of life along the banks of Kerala. [B/L/D]

Note: Houseboats sail only during daytime and come to a halt in the night because local fishermen place fishing nets on the backwaters during the night.



Day 8 – Wed: Houseboat

Continue cruising and relaxing on the calm backwaters of Kerala. [B/L/D]

Day 9 - Thu: Kumarakom, Kochin, USA

This morning, after breakfast, check out of the hotel to be driven to Cochin's airport to board your homebound flight. [B]

[B] = Breakfast | [D] = Dinner | [B/L] = Breakfast and Lunch | [B/D] = Breakfast and Dinner | [B/L/D] = Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Your Tour includes:

- Transfers where required
- Speedboat/catamaran transfer from Mumbai jetty to Mandva
- 9 nights hotel accommodation:
 - Mumbai – 4 nights
 - Cochin - 2 nights
 - Alleppey – 2 nights on [option1] or 1 night on Option2
 - Kumarakom - 1 night on Option 2, only
- Meals:
 - Breakfast daily
 - 4 lunches
 - 6 buffet dinners
- Shared speed boat/catamaran transfer from Mumbai jetty to Mandva
- Mumbai by Dawn Tour Mumbai
- Enjoy the Kathakali Dance performance in local theatre of Cochin
- Transportation by A/C vehicles
- Entrance fees at sites and monuments
- Services of English-speaking local guides

- Packaged drinking water in the vehicle throughout
- All currently applicable taxes

Your Tour does not include:

- International or Domestic airfares
- Any taxes and surcharges relating to airfares
- Travel insurance
- Wi-Fi at hotels
- Visa fees for India
- Kosher Meal/ meal during Sabbath
- Any guide services in Alleppey during the boat journey
- Camera fees at the monuments (if applicable)
- All alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks
- Other meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Extras and gratuities
- Early check-in, late check-out

Hotels in your Tour:

City	Hotel Name	Room Type	Tripadvisor
Mumbai	The Taj Mahal Palace	Superior City view	4.5
Cochin	Vivanta by Taj Malabar	Superior	4.5
Allepey	Premium House Boat	AC Room	4
Kumarakom	Kumarakom Lake Resort	Meandering Pool Villa	4.5

Hotels will be confirmed at time of booking

Tour Prices:

Departure Dates	2-3 Pax		4-6 Pax		7-9 Pax	
	Double	Single	Double	Single	Double	Single
2020 Departures						
Jan 15,22,29	\$3,729	\$5,619	\$3,465	\$5,349	\$3,315	\$5,199
Feb 5,12,19,26						
Mar 4,11,18,25						
Oct 7,13,20,27						
Nov 4,11,18,25						
Dec 2,9						

Prices are per person and may change without notice

Airfare Supplement:

Description	Fare
Economy class Mumbai - Cochin	\$145

Airfare may be cheaper if calculated with the international itinerary. Consult your Travel Agent or HWDT

Tour Code: IN10BOM20IT