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## Goa and South India Birding Tour

Mumbai, Goa, Cochin, Munnar and Thattekad

Best Time: September to March

Duration: 14 Days

Tour Pace: Easy to Moderate Minimum tour participants: 02

Maximum tour participants: 08

Transport: Exclusive

Tour leader / Birding guide: Asian Adventures Guides

Tour Code: 109

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International Flight Details (to be booked by guest): Required

Day 01: Arrive Mumbai in the evening

Day 14: Departure from Mumbai in the early morning / late morning

Domestic flight details (Asian Adventures can book flights on request)

Day 02: Mumbai to Goa (morning flight)

Day 07: Goa to Cochin (day flight)

Day 13: Goa to Cochin (Early afternoon flight)

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### Description

Goa is situated on the west coast of India by the Arabian Sea. Although the smallest state in the country, Goa is a favorite destination for birders as it offers a wide variety of birdlife and habitats ranging from coastal area to marshes, woodlands to the tropical jungles of Western Ghats. Our three Centre tour will offer us some of the best birding available on the Indian Sub-continent and this includes carefully selected accommodation that will enhance our birding experiences, as many species can be seen from within the grounds. Goa is a birders paradise with many excellent habitats: wide river estuaries, mangrove swamps, marshes, scrub-covered hillsides, arid fields, rich forest reserves at the foot of the majestic Western Ghats and a spectacular bird-thronged lake at Carambolim. We'll see many species endemics to peninsular India as well as many wintering species from farther north and more widespread Asian birds. Wonderful birds, exquisite beaches, delicious food and the easygoing Goan lifestyle - it is almost too good to be true! The starts will be mostly early in the mornings. We don't follow a fixed itinerary, as birds are constantly changing feeding and roosting areas according to water levels and other factors; instead the guide will use his expertise to decide our excursions daily. We will visit all the main birding habitats of Goa - returning to the most productive several times. The aim will be for the excursions to be good fun, with a relaxed pace and with the accent on obtaining good views of the birds. We may have packed breakfasts most of the days so that we start birding early.

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On two or three occasions we'll head well inland to the base of the Western Ghats. This involves a drive of two hours or more and an early start – perhaps as early as 04.30. On several days, we'll return to our hotel for a break during the heat of the day, and most days we aim to be back at our hotel before dusk. Thus, grade of this tour is relatively easy, and while a couple of the days will be long and tiring, many will not. The walks will not be particularly strenuous. On most days we'd bird from little-used, paved roads. While most of our walks will be of one or two hours in duration, some will be longer, and when we visit Bondla Wildlife sanctuary in the Western Ghats, we expect to spend all morning walking slowly down the park's approach road. We'll cover perhaps four kilometers with the vehicles catching us up at intervals of between one and two hours. Many of these walks will be flat and over good terrain, and we do not anticipate doing any strenuous uphill walking.

On a couple of occasions, we'll walk through the fields immediately behind our hotel; in years where the monsoon has been particularly substantial, these fields will be damp underfoot. We'll explore other areas, if we consider this area is too wet. Raptors are particularly well represented in Goa with Black and Brahminy Kites everywhere, and we should also see several spectacular White-bellied Sea-Eagles. We'll visit a harrier roost that contains good numbers of both Montagu's and ghostly Pallid Harriers and where Booted Eagle and both Greater and Indian Spotted Eagles are common. We also have a couple of reliable sites for Black, Rufous-bellied and Crested Hawk-Eagles. Other excursions will include a backwater river trip in search of crocodiles and the endemic Goan subspecies of Collared Kingfisher and trips to the local craft and flea markets. Finally, we hope to see one of Goa's avian specialties: Indian Pitta, a much-wanted species spotted frequently by our guides on previous visits. We may also spend time sightseeing in Old Goa and at the Hindu temple of Mangueshi. All the sites that we'll visit in Goa are at a low altitude – none are above 400 meters. Please note that during the festive period, the tour may run in reverse order.

## Kerala

This tour focuses on the endemic birds of the Western Ghats and South India generally. The area is known for its species richness – with more than 450 bird species and a good diversity of mammals ranging from Asian Elephant and Nilgiri Langur monkeys to the rare Mouse Deer to name just a few of the special fauna.

A lot is common with Goa, so we will not repeat the species.

With the help of an excellent bird guide, you should stand a good chance of picking up most of the endemic bird species associated with the Western Ghats Endemic Bird Area. Species include White-bellied Treepie, Crimson-backed Sunbird, Malabar Grey Hornbill, Malabar Parakeet, Nilgiri Woodpigeon and Nilgiri Flycatcher to name a few.

In addition, you will see the enigmatic Ceylon Frogmouth, colorful Malabar Trogon and Indian Pitta. Thattekad is awesome for owls, you will see many species.



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## Itinerary overview

- Day 01: Arrive Mumbai
- Day 02: Mumbai to Goa
- Day 03: Temdi Surla (Goa)
- Day 04: Temdi Surla (Goa)
- Day 05: Various Habitats of Goa
- Day 06: Various Habitats of Goa
- Day 07: Goa to Munnar via Cochin
- Day 08: Munnar
- Day 09: Munnar
- Day 10: Munnar to Thattekkad
- Day 11: Thattekkad
- Day 12: Thattekkad
- Day 13: Thattekkad to Mumbai via Cochin
- Day 14: Mumbai to Departure



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## Highlights

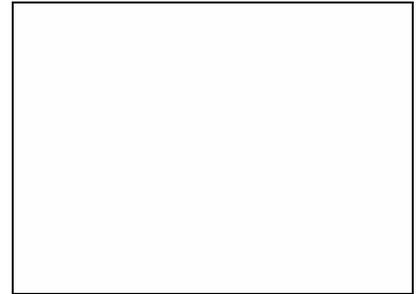
- A large list of bird species
- Endemic variety of birds, great birding
- Excellent seafood & South Indian Food
- Sightseeing
- Amazing landscape of Goa & Kerala
- Comfortable lodging

## ITINERARY

Day 01: Arrive Mumbai

Meals: on own

Arrive Mumbai airport in the evening. You will be met and transferred to airport hotel for overnight stay.



Day 02: Mumbai to Goa

Breakfast in Mumbai and Dinner Goa

Accommodation: Nature's Nest

Connect morning flight from Mumbai to Goa. Arrive Goa in the late morning. You will be met and transferred to Backwoods Camp at the foot of the Western Ghats to spend two nights birding in the forests and along the streams around the camp. Overnight stay



Day 03: Goa (Temdi Surla)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Accommodation: Nature's Nest

Another day of birding around the Overnight stay



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Day 04 & 05: Goa

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel Marinha Dourada

Morning birding in backwoods area. You will be transferred the hotel in Baga.

This will be our base for much of the following days.

After a break we'll do some local late afternoon birding near our hotel.



Day 06: Goa

Meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel Marinha Dourada

Full day birding at Morjim and Baga beach. Overnight stay.



Day 07: Goa to Cochin to Munnar

Meals: Breakfast & Dinner

Accommodation: Olive Brooks or similar

Transfer to Goa airport to connect flight to Cochin via Bangalore at 0815 hrs (airport check-in time for this flight will be 0615 hrs). Arrive Bangalore at 0925 hrs and again board second flight to Cochin at 1240 hrs. Arrive Cochin at 1355 hrs. Transfer to Munnar (4.5 - 5 hours). Arrive Munnar in the late evening. Overnight stay



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Day 08 & 09: Munnar  
Meals: Breakfast  
Accommodation: Olive Brooks

Two full days birding in and around Munnar. Overnight stay

Around Munnar, the pockets of the shola forest and Nilgiri mountain grassland ecosystem are home to several of the endemic birds and various mammals including the endemic Nilgiri Tahr. The altitude above 1600 meters means an agreeable climate throughout the year, though in December-January the temperatures can fall to the single digits. Rainfall of over 300 cm is recorded mainly during June to September, but it can rain at any time of year. Here we will look for several of the South Indian and Nilgiri Hills endemic bird species.



Day 10: Munnar to Thattekad  
Meals: Breakfast, packed lunch and dinner

For a couple of hours, explore on foot along the road from Olivebrook if there was no time the day before, then leave around 12 noon (after early lunch or with packed lunch) for Thattekad. Check in at Soma Birds Lagoon, then in the late afternoon, head out for some local birdwatching around the signalling station. Overnight stay



Day 11: Thattekad  
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Thattekad Bird Sanctuary, also known as Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary, is the prime birding destination in South India. Overnight stay





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Day 12: Thattekad

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Explore some superb forest areas outside of Thattekkad Bird Sanctuary.  
Overnight stay



Day 13: Thattekkad to Kochi (Cochin) - Mumbai

Meals: Breakfast,

Morning birding in Thattekad. Leave for Cochin airport at 1100 hrs, to connect flight back to Mumbai at 1600 hrs (check-in time will be at 1400 hrs). Arrive Mumbai at 1800 hrs. Transfer to airport hotel for overnight stay.



Day 14: Mumbai to Departure

Meals: Breakfast

Transfer to Mumbai airport International terminal to connect your international flight back to home. Tour ends.



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Tour cost (per person)

INR 158000 (minimum 06-08 paying persons)

INR 164000 (minimum 04 paying persons)

INR 185000 (minimum 02 paying persons)

Single room Supplement: INR 37500



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Services includes only:

- Accommodation on twin/Single sharing basis
- Meals as per the itinerary
- Guided birding throughout in Goa
- Guided birding throughout in Kerala
- Permits and entry fee
- All surface transfers by a private air-conditioned vehicle
- All taxes



Above cost does not include:

- Optional tours, tips, laundry, phone calls, alcohol, camera fee, boat ride etc.
- International & Domestic air fare, visa, insurance, any services not specified in inclusions



Passport details required of all the participants for booking safaris & tickets

- Full Names as mentioned on passport
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Nationality
- Passport Number; Issue & Expiry Date

