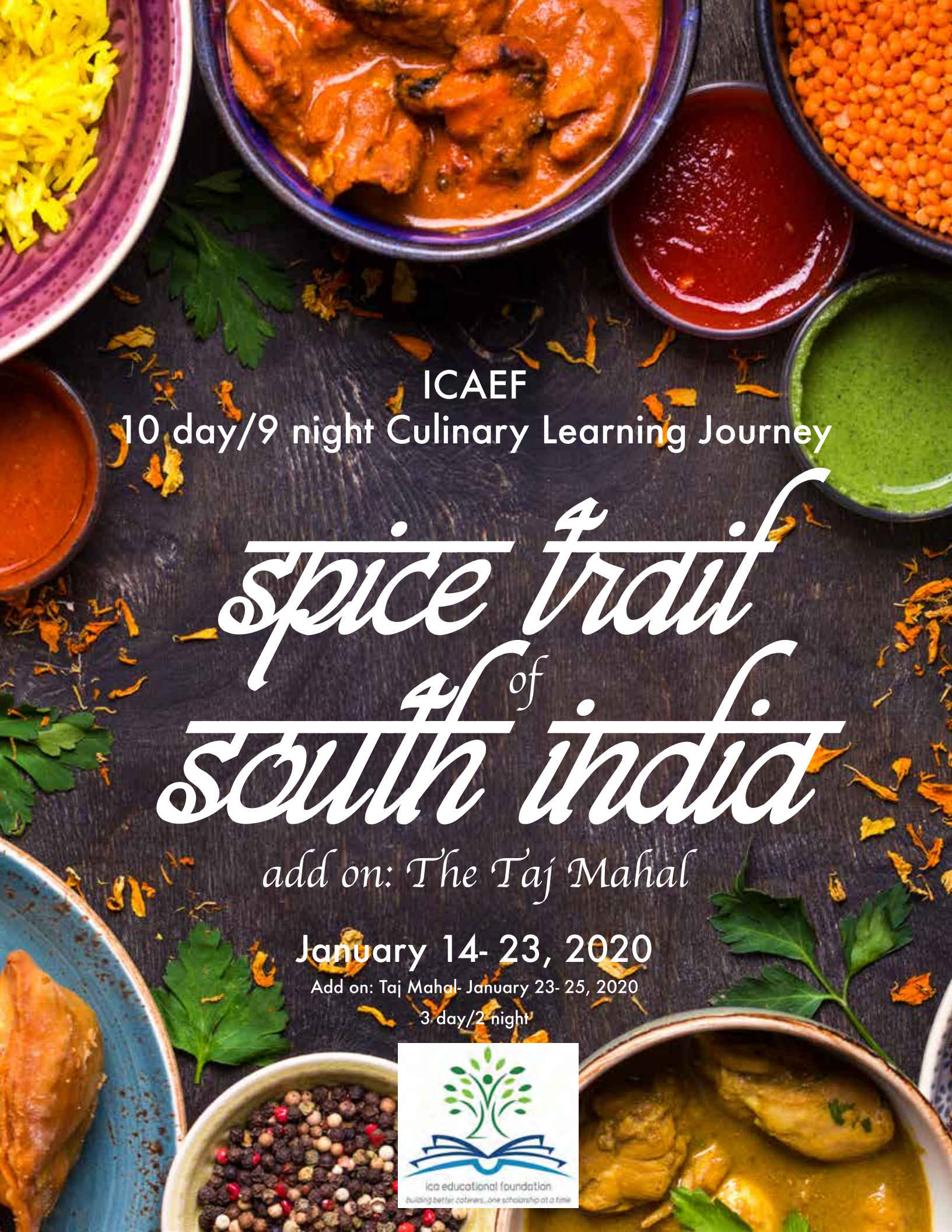

ICAEF

10 day/9 night Culinary Learning Journey

spice trail of south india

add on: The Taj Mahal

January 14- 23, 2020

Add on: Taj Mahal- January 23- 25, 2020

3 day/2 night

ica educational foundation

building better caterers...one scholarship at a time

En-route flavorful experiences across South India (and North to The Taj Mahal)

No discovery of India is complete without an exploration of its culinary landscape. Our excursion goes through Kerala, often called God's Own Country, where you experience the best that India has to offer.

The southern part of India is a traveler's paradise, offering rich experiences of history, culture and nature – all close to each other. It's a journey that deserves a long, leisurely holiday. Starting in serene green Kerala, in the wild wonderlands of Thekkady, heading to the backwaters of Kumarakom, an exclusive Houseboat cruise, the forest of Munnar and ending in the historic town of Kochi. Each destination offers an authentic and luxurious experience of the place, including not just eating wonderful Indian food, but also visiting the places of their origin and an exploration of their true traditions.
From Cochin we fly North to Delhi. During our time here we will visit, Old Delhi, where we will indulge in a "Customized Rickshaw ride at Night." Renowned poet Mirza Ghalib, once said, "I asked my soul: what is Delhi? She replied: The world is the body and Delhi its life." The city has always been at the center of all Indian culture, activities, and emotions. Then we will drive to Agra to view the Taj Mahal at Sunrise. The reflections of the rising Sun on this white marble building change from deep Crimson, to red, orange, yellow and white. The experience is soul stirring and very dramatic in the morning. This is a holiday that will stay with you long after you return home. A lifetime of unforgettable experiences await.

Notes on India...

- You must apply for a visa to enter India. More info to follow.
- Some immunizations are recommended before attending this CLJ as well as malaria pills. Please consult your doctor.
- ***Unlike past CLJs, alcohol may not be available or appropriate during some activities or certain meals. This Journey will be a heavier on experiences on the culinary and cultural activities than partaking in alcohol.***
- Meals and drink other than mentioned above are not included.
- Expenses of a personal nature such as laundry, drinks, telephone, room service, calls etc. are not included.
- In my experience, India will undoubtley be overwhelming and a culture shock at times, but you will find it colorful, incredible, flavorful, spiritual and fascinating. It's the kind of trip that you'll be remembering years later.

january 14:
Arrival / Cochin (Kochi)

Late night arrival, meeting and assistance upon arrival as our guides welcome you and escort you to your hotel via car. Whilst the room keys and check-in is organized, our guide will introduce the tour to you and hand over the documents to you.

Welcome to India, or as we say 'AtithiDevoBhava' (The guest is an incarnation of God). Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve you!!

That evening we will enjoy dinner at the Brunton Boatyard Hotel individually. A credit of INR 3000 per person will be included. Any added expenses can be settled on direct payment basis.

Overnight at Brunton Boatyard, Cochin

january 15:
Cochin (Kochi) (Please schedule flights in time to start your journey early this day or day before)

Today, you will Experience the real life of Cochin during an Ethnic tour – start with the visit of the famous Chinese Fishing Nets of Cochin. Here, you can photograph them working and, also see the fishermen making a catch. The fishing community of Cochin uses an ancient cantilevered style of fishing nets. The net is fixed to a pole on the shore. While fishing, the entire net is lowered by a primitive fulcrum mechanism using long bamboo poles. By the same mechanism the pole is lifted along with the catch. The true character of the city is to be found in the older parts of the Fort Cochin area. It more or less exists as it used to be a 1000 years back, when it was first built.

We will next visit the St. Francis CSI Church, the oldest European church in India built in 1503, where the Portuguese explorer Vasco de Gama was originally buried and the Santa Cruz Basilica, one of the finest churches in India. Then take a tuktuk– the most popular mode of transport among the locals. Go along with your local tour and stop at the Dhobi Khana (laundry station), once throbbing with activity, it is now a relic of an older time. Continue through the small streets of Mattanchery, and arrive at the markets where locals get a variety of fresh and organic produces at bargains prices.

Lunch will be a culinary delight with local overtones, the "Chuttulli Meen", a dish pioneered by the Jewish community of Fort Kochi will be featured. This gastronomic gem will provide you with a rich reference point as you go about your conversations on culture, religion and history of the Jewish diaspora in Kerala.

Don't miss a stop at the Spice Market, where exotic odor of the finest ginger, cardamom, cumin, turmeric and cloves emanate from the spice warehouses lining the street. The area is very busy. The potters are loading gunny bags of spices on to carts, which keep running up and down the narrow lanes.

Stop at one of the local tea shops to enjoy a refreshing cup of tea. There is also an opportunity to interact with Brahmin Families. The Brahmin are the highest of the four Hindu castes, made up of priests and scholars of Hindu scriptures. Then you will be invited to get traditional Henna designs on your hands. This ritual called Mehndi arts holds plenty of cultural significance in Indian traditions and is one of the most important pre-wedding ceremonies in India. Later, visit the Jewish Synagogue at the heart of the Jewish area of town, and finally the Dutch Palace with its beautiful mural paintings from the 17th century.

Later in the evening, we will visit a local, but, renowned Seafood restaurant where you can pick your own seafood, fresh, and have it cooked as per your taste and preferences.

Overnight at Brunton Boatyard, Cochin

January 16:
Cochin/Kumarakom

After breakfast we will drive to Kumarakom.

On arrival check into the Coconut Lagoon Resort, Kumarakom which has rightly carved its place among the top heritage resorts of the world. This wonderful backwater resort is hailed as a "Living" Kerala village re-created with real old Keralan homes, some dating back to 200 years. At Coconut Lagoon, you have everything that you expect from a Kumarakom experience, but much more by way of peace, freshness, tranquility, and, total privacy. The beauty of the Coconut Lagoon Resort was described by the renowned international travel magazine Condé Nast Traveler as one of the 25 best getaways in the world. The rooms of this heritage bungalow are well equipped with all the modern facilities backed by the special quality of Indian hospitality. Also, you can go out canoing along the lakes and streams of this delightful resort.

In the afternoon we will enjoy wine (2 glasses) & lunch at the Coconut Lagoon.

Exclusive Sunset Cruise: 4:00pm (At Coconut lagoon). It is an extraordinary cruise in a beautifully restored kettuvallam (traditional boat), taking guest to the middle of Lake Vembanad watching the sun go down while sipping on Wine.

Overnight at Coconut Lagoon

January 17:
Kumarakom / Phillip Kutty

Early in the morning today, we will have an inspiring session of Kalaripayattu Demonstration (Kerala Martial Art) at the resort. This Martial art form is indigenous to Kerala. Kalaripayattu is the oldest existing martial art form, dating back more than 2000 years. Learn the movements and the training will be given in the authentic way at the Kalari Centre.

Later, following breakfast, we will drive to Philip Kutty where we will visit the farm as well as have a cooking demonstration with the locals, and have a delicious South Indian lunch.

A short boat cruise brings us to 'Philip Kutty's Farm' to see an extraordinary way of life, farming and fishing. Here, we learn the intricacies of Keralan food preparations. The type of cooking you will be exposed to, is predominantly with a Christian and backwater influence, IE, plenty of meat and fish preparations as well as other vegetarian dishes and also the little family touches passed down over the generations.

Evening, We will have a great time with the chefs of Coconut Lagoon preparing authentic Kerala dishes and you get a hands on experience all through the activity accompanied by a couple of glasses of Wine.

Overnight at Coconut Lagoon

january 18:
Kumarakom

This morning, proceed for a demonstration and preparation of a 'Sadhya' (vegetarian wedding feast). We enjoy a delicious and mouth-watering South Indian food on banana leaves (which is traditionally eaten with your hands).

Later, enjoy Ayurveda Massages and treatments. The Ayurveda center at Coconut Lagoon offers a range of herbal massages and therapies to help one get rid of accumulated stress and rejeuvenate a bit while you are here.

Dinner at the Interactive farm kitchen at Marari Beach resort. The restaurant has an organic garden spread over four acres where a variety of vegetables and fruits are grown. Here we can enjoy the experience of plucking the vegetables from the garden and cooking the same with the help of the in house chef.

Overnight at Coconut Lagoon

january 19:
Kumarakom / Periyar (Thekkady)

After breakfast, we will drive to Periyar. Upon arrival check into Spice Village..

We will relish a hot south Indian lunch at the Kofiland. Later, we proceed for spice plantation tour. The spice plantation in Periyar is one of the major spice plantations in Kerala. The spice plantations in Kerala are captivating farms to wander in, since different spices are cultivated in different sections of each plantation.

The spice plantation in Periyar is a prime attraction of this beautiful land. Though sprawling tea estates cover much of the landscape of Periyar, plantations of cardamom, rubber, vanilla and coffee are also plentiful. We have the option for nature walks, bird watching, tasting the various spices and breathing in the fragrant air while exploring the spice plantation in Periyar. Pick up a few packets of the tea and spices grown here to enjoy when you get back home. The most abundantly found spice in Periyar is pepper. There are also a variety of cinnamon, clove, nutmeg, ginger, turmeric and curry leaves on the slanting slopes of the spice plantation. We will also visit the Sahyadri Organic tea factory in Peermade. There are specially designed vantage points for you to view this factory housed in a white-washed building.

In the afternoon we will experience a unique time with elephants, this two hour tour offers you the chance to experience the idyllic natural beauty of Thekkady and getting up close and personal with Kerala's iconic elephants. Start off on elephant back for a marvelous trek through the nearby forest, a beautiful & very exotic experience. This is the ultimate 'hands-on' experience! You get quality time with the elephants, starting with a ride through the jungle & ending in the river where you can bathe them. The elephants will 'seat' you on their trunk and splash water upon you! If you can stay long enough on their backs you might get to hear the elephants laugh!! Elephants will love it just as much as you do. You are guaranteed to have a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Your adventure includes witnessing elephants timber dragging and, hand feeding of these gentle beasts. You will see human-like behavior from the elephants, and get to understand their amazing sense of humor and see the bonding between the keepers and the elephants. After a genuinely thrilling experience you will be served a refreshing cup of a Tea or Coffee. Go home with a 'trunk' full of memories.

Dinner at the 50 Mile restaurant, everything served here is grown within a fifty-mile radius. You'll be surprised at what wonders this can achieve for both the planet and your palate.

Overnight at Spice Village

january 20
Periyar (Thekkady)

Half Day Trekking and Bamboo Rafting at Periyar Tiger Reserve -A dawn to afternoon range hiking and rafting program through some of the richest forest tracts of Periyar Tiger Reserve. A mosaic of habitats will be traversed before the party gets into rafts made of bamboo. When rafting the lake, you will get a panoramic view of forest-clad hills. Animals like elephant, gaur and sambar are sighted keeping close to the edges of the lake.

Following, our trekking experience we will have a little downtime and have lunch at the Elephant Court.

In the evening, we will a enjoy Tribal Art Performance of indigenous tribal communities and forests. The youth of the Mannan and Paliyan tribes living on the fringes of the park are eager to revive their forgotten culture and the folklore. This one-hour tribal dance performance also includes a brief introduction to the tribal communities, information on various musical performances as well as a memorable photo session with the communities.

Overnight at Spice Village

january 21:
Periyar / Cochin

After breakfast we will drive to Cochin. Upon arrival in Cochin, check into hotel.

We will now proceed for lunch and couple of glasses of wine in one the premier restaurants in Cochin.

After rest and relaxation, we will enjoy Kerala Kaleidoscope a daily show at Greenix Village. A medley of various dances, Kaleidoscope Kerala redefines the intangibly elusive aesthetics of bliss as it evokes the eternally alluring charm of this many-splendor land and it's infinitely enriching cultural ethos. It's a celebration of a spectacular array of dance forms and musical styles, pure classics along with distinctively ethnic, blending seamlessly with indigenous elements of ritualized theatre, folk traditions and stupefying displays of the native martial art techniques of Kalarippayattu.

Overnight at Brunton Boatyard, Cochin

january 21:
Cochin

Morning, transport and guide available for local shopping. We suggest that you visit the Broadway for this. The area is characterized by narrow roads, quite opposite to its name! One can buy a huge variety of clothes and spices here which are famous in Kochi. Electronic goods, umbrellas (from Colombo Umbrella House), spices, clothes, jewelry, leather goods, stationary, and watches are just a few of the items available here. Nearby is Ernakulam Market where you can get wholesale prices for many items. Broadway features many hole-in-the-wall spice shops. No need to look for them, the delightful smell of the spices will guide you there.
Later, we visit a traditional family to learn traditional Kerala Cooking. The family belongs to Syrian Christian Community in Kerala. They enjoy having guests and serve delicious food. Your hosts will also explain the nuances of traditional Kerala recipes. This will be an ideal activity to experience the true flavors and preparations of Kerala food in a comfortable and informal manner. Your host will make your visit a special event, an occasion that will get to your heart through your stomach.

Overnight at Brunton Boatyard, Cochin

january 23:
Cochin/ (add on: Delhi)

Morning, transfer to the Cochin airport to board your onward flight. Or transfer to the airport to board your flight to Delhi for the "Add On" Tour!

notes:

Notes on the Itinerary...

• All restaurants and excursions in the itinerary are accurate at the time of this printing, but the producer reserves the right to make any changes they feel will enhance the trip or make it more enjoyable for all involved. This printed itinerary is merely a guide – and should not be used as an hour by hour guide of our actual travels. Those of you have attended former CLJ's know that flexibility is the key here!

Note on the hotels in the itinerary...

• The hotels we are using are truly exquisite hotels. As such, most do not have single rooms, but can provide "double rooms for single use" which means the cost of these rooms is just slightly less than the cost of the regular double room – hence the single supplement for this trip, is far greater than previous trips. (Breakdown and "share" kids...The twin rooms are spacious and very affordable.)

• Also, you need to note that all of the rooms in these hotels are unique. In some hotels no two rooms are identical. They are all beautiful, but some are outrageously beautiful. Rooms are being distributed on a first come basis.... so the first deposits received will get the "outrageous" rooms, and the later deposits, will get the "merely beautiful" rooms.

taj mahal: northern india

Add on 3 days/2 nights: January 23- January 25, 2020

Travel North for another traditional journey through India!

After dipping your feet in the water of calm Kerala, travel with us to North India. Everything that you may already think of India, the buildings, the food and the buzz. Here you will eat North Indian favorites like paneer, chicken tikka masala, and jalub gamun.

add on: january 23:

Meeting and assistance upon arrival at the Delhi airport and transfer to hotel, Hotel Imperial

This evening go for a night rickshaw ride in Old Delhi - one of the best examples in the world where one can witness the cultural mixtures of "old and new". Uncover the different flavors of "Purani Dilli" (Old Delhi) through the narrow alleys, and shops. Our major highlights will include a visit to the Jama Masjid, Nai Sadak (famous for books), Chandni Chowk market (literally meaning the moonlit square), Darba Kalan (a 17th century jewel street), Kinari bazaar (a market, especially for wedding & traditional outfits), Kari Baoli (Asia's largest spice market), as well as the Paranthewali Gali(Lane of stuffed breads). Moreover, the people and the streets here have many tales to tell you about the glorious past of Delhi!! This magical experience will give you a perfect opportunity to discover the less known heritage and intrigues of this ancient part of Delhi. It holds in its bosom so many stories going back many centuries.

Overnight at Hotel Imperial – a 5 Downtown Hotel*

add on: january 24:

Agra (04 Hrs Drive)

After breakfast, we will drive to Agra.

Upon arrival in Agra, check in to Trident hotel. After rest and relaxation, we ride to the massive Agra Fort. The elegant buildings inside reflect an interesting synthesis of Hindu and Central Asian architectural styles. Built by Emperor Akbar, the maze of the courtyards, mosques & private chambers of the fort echo the story of the Mughal Empire

In the evening, we will visit Mehtab Bagh. The Moonlight Garden was an extension of the Taj Mahal Garden - on the other side of the river. In 1652 Aurangzeb wrote to his father telling of a visit to 'the blessed tomb and commenting that the Mehtab Garden. The octagonal pool and the pavilion around it are in splendid condition. The MehtabBagh was lost under the mud but re-excavated in the 1990s. Originally, the garden was planted with fragrant flowers and used in the cool of the night as a place from which to view the Taj Mahal reflected in the octagonal pool and in the river.

Overnight at The Trident – a 5 Oberoi Group Hotel*

add on: january 25

Agra/Delhi/Departure

Agra is the city of the Taj Mahal, perhaps the most photographed monument in the world. However, there is a degree of enigma about the Taj. Once you hear about a building so much and once you see so many pictures of a building your expectations can be very high; and this is the enigma about the Taj Mahal. No matter how many pictures you have seen or no matter how high your expectations are the Taj never lets you down - the unparalleled glory and beauty of the building surpasses beyond all human imagination. At sunrise we visit one of the greatest sights of one's lifetime - Taj Mahal. A dawn visit to the fabled Taj Mahal to witness the magical effects caused by the reflections of the changing colors of the rising Sun on this brilliant white marble building. Later we return back to our hotel for breakfast.

As a part of our Agra tour, we take you in pursuit of a truly natural and cultural experience in an Indian home. Here, we will experience traditional Indian food served on leaf plates as well as learn the little nuances of Indian food in the kitchen. The laughter and the entertaining conversations will only be the add-on of this session, along with the mouth-watering food and memories to take away.

Later, we will drive to Delhi along one of India's finest freeways. Upon arrival in Delhi transfer to the international airport to board your onward flight. *Please schedule flights after 9pm on January 25th!*

No Hotel Quoted For This Day

Spice Trail of South India - *An ICAEF Culinary Learning Journey* ~ January 14-23, 2020

EXTENSION TOUR OPTION: Taj Mahal Journey- January 23-25, 2020

1st Attendee FULL NAME ON PASSPORT: _____

2nd Attendee FULL NAME ON PASSPORT: _____

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

City: State/Province: Zip: _____

Attendee 1 Email: _____ Attendee 2 Email: _____

Attendee 1 Cell Phone: _____Attendee 2 Cell Phone:_____

$5,990.00 USD per person - based on double occupancy for the full Culinary Program-including 9 nights in hotels, meals and experiences outlined in the Program Guide. **If paying by credit card, we will add a $150 processing fee per person. **NOTE: Until June 1st, the MAXIMUM number of people per company is FOUR.** If space is available after June 1st, we will allow additional members from the same company.

Indicate bed preference: One Bed _____ Twin Beds _____

Single Supplement - Add $1,400

_____ **Extension Tour Option: Taj Mahal $1,990.00 USD per person double; Single Supplement: Add $310.00**

Terms: $500 NON-REFUNDABLE PER PERSON DEPOSIT DUE NOW TO CONFIRM BOOKING

50% of balance due by April 1, 2019; Full Balance due by October 1, 2019

Please make check payable to ICAEF and mail with this form to: ICAEF, 8711 E. Pinnacle Peak Road, #104, Scottsdale, AZ 85255

OR Please fax your application to: ICAEF at 480-513-3207

Credit Card payment: Visa; Master Card; American Express

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date:_____

3 or 4 Digit (4 digits for AMX) Security Code: _____ Billing Zip Code: _____

Signature: _____

For more information regarding billing, please contact Corinne Dudine at czd@icaef.org Phone (Arizona) 480.513.0756

For more information about trip, please contact Brittney Melnick at bwithatwist@yahoo.com

***Cancellations:* _____ PLEASE INITIAL HERE THAT YOU HAVE READ AND AGREE TO THE CANCELLATION POLICY**

All cancellations must be submitted in writing. Cancellations received on or before October 1, 2019 will incur a $250.00 cancellation fee. Cancellations after October 1, 2019 will incur a $500.00 cancellation fee unless there is a waiting list for this Journey and your place can be re-sold. Substitutions will be accepted at no additional charge.

Flights: TRANSATLANTIC AIRFARE IS NOT INCLUDED IN FEES. Please arrive into Cochin (Kochi) (COK)) no later than late night January 14, 2020. If no extension tour is added, please depart from the same airport on January 23 in morning for complimentary transfer.

If adding on the Taj Mahal tour- Flights from Cochin to Delhi are included in the price. DEPART FROM Delhi airport-Indira Gandhi International Airport (DEL) late night January 25.

Itinerary is accurate at the time of this printing, but the producer reserves the right to make any changes they feel will enhance the trip or make it more enjoyable for all involved.