



IDUKKI: Kerala's Spice Land



A small hill town, with wooded valleys and meandering streams, surrounded by the three main rivers of Periyar, Thalayar and Thodupuzhayar and their tributaries, Idukki is one of the most nature-rich areas of Kerala. High ranges and wooded valleys are girded by these three main rivers. As a tourist destination, Idukki offers diverse attractions like wildlife sanctuaries, hill stations, spice plantation, elephant rides, etc.

Idukki is located in the middle part of Kerala. The name 'Idukki' is supposed to be derived from the Malayalam word 'Idukku' which means a narrow gorge. Periyar, which is one of the largest rivers of Kerala, flowing through Idukki gorge formed between the two high massive rocks called 'Kuravan' and 'Kurathi', is the site of the gigantic Idukki arch dam.

Sprawling over an area of 5,061 sq. kms, the district is marked by undulating hills and valleys. The high ranges vary in altitude from 2,500 ft. above the sea level in Kulamavu to more than 5,000 ft. in Munnar.

Wildlife Sanctuaries

Idukki Wildlife sanctuary is a major tourist attraction. The sanctuary extends over the Thodupuzha and Udumpanchola taluks of Idukki district spreading over 77sq km. A picturesque lake, a majestic arch dam across two hills and roaming herds of elephants and gaur are sights that lure you to this enchanting canopy of tropical semi-evergreen and deciduous forests. Idukki and elephants are synonymous and one cannot be thought of without the other. Herds of playful wild elephants have made their favourite haunt for frolicking in the water. Scores of them can be witnessed bathing and swimming here.

Observatory Hills

If you keep an interest in watching the stars and planets, come here to spend your time at this hill. This hill gives you a non-polluted clear sky.

Idukki Arch Dam

This is the world's second and Asia's first

arch dam, constructed across the Kuravan and Kurathi hills. 550 ft high and 650 ft wide, the dam lies close to the Cheruthathi barrage. To its west is the Kulamavu dam. Idukki wild life sanctuary is located nearby.

Other places

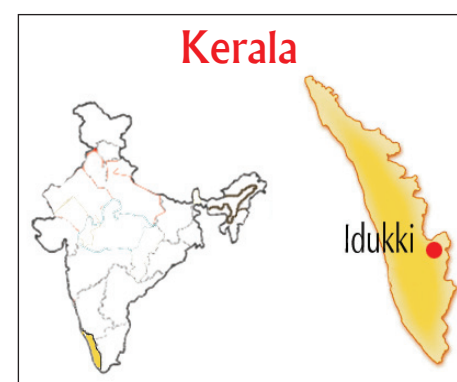
Thekkady, India's largest wildlife sanctuary, 114 km off Kottayam and 190 km off Kochi, is a dream destination for any tourist visiting Kerala. This sanctuary spreads over an area of 777sq. km, surrounded by an artificial lake.

Peerumed

With its abundant natural beauty, this place awaits the tourists who come to sip the natural beauty, escaping from the stress and strain of life. Barren hills dense with tea estates add more beauty to the place.

Thommankuthu

Thommankuthu, famous for its numerous waterfalls, is situated at a distance of 21



km from Thodupuzha.

As this place is suitable for trekking, adventurous youth are attracted to this place. Meenuliyarmudi (at Vannapuram Panchayathu), Keezharkuthu (at Umpannoor) and Irukallumud (Velliyammattom) are other famous small tourist centres near Thommankuthu.

TOURIST INFORMATION

How to reach

By Air: Nearest airports are Madurai (Tamil Nadu) 140 km, Kochi (Nedumbassery - 190 km), Thiruvananthapuram (265 km).

By Rail: Nearest railway station is Kumarakom, 114 km, and Madurai station is about 136 km from Idukki.

By Road: An excellent road network links the district to all major towns and cities in India.

Best time to visit: Best time to visit Idukki is between September and July.

Accommodation: There are numerous hotels and resorts in Idukki. Paradise Plantation Retreat and Greenberg Holiday Resorts are some such resorts.

For more, visit:
www.keralatourism.org
www.kerala.gov.in
www.hcilondon.net



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