



Tourist Map of Kottayam District

Not to scale



ACCESSING KOTTAYAM

Telephone Access Code: +91-481

Air: Nearest Airport • **Kochi** (76 km)

• **Thiruvananthapuram** (160 km)

Rail: The railway station is situated 2 km from the central bus station and is connected to the major cities of India.

Road: An excellent network of roads connect the district to all the major towns and cities of India.

Backwater Ferry Services: There are two ferry stations.

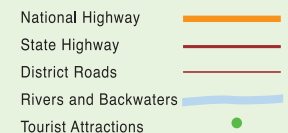
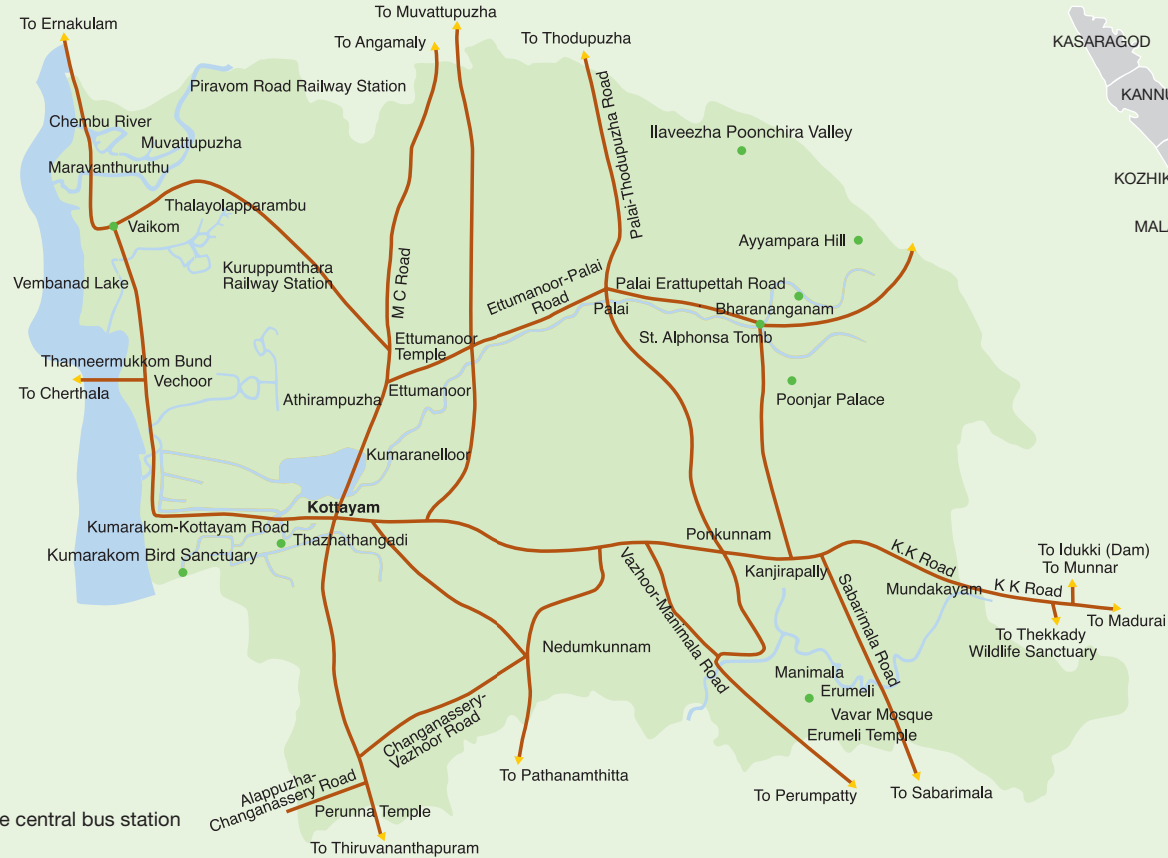
The Town Jetty is about 3 km from the railway station and operates services during the monsoon. During summer, boats are operated from the Kodimatha Jetty.

Tourist Information Offices: • District Office, Dept. of Tourism, Kottayam, Kumarakom & Tourist Information Counter Ph: 2524343
Email: ddktm@keralatourism.org

• **DTPC**, Ph: 2560479 www.dtpckottayam.com
info@dtpckottayam.com

Responsible Tourism Travel Desk, Kumarakom Ph: 2523097,
Mob: 9633992977 Email: vlkumarakom@gmail.com,

KTDC, Kumarakom Ph: 2527650 Email: waterscapes@ktdc.com





Kumarakom:

Learn to thatch a roof, ret a yarn of coir, climb a coconut tree or try different methods of fishing at Kumarakom which is much more than just a picturesque destination. Find your way to the bountiful lush backwaters if you want to experience rural living at its best. Kerala's first Responsible Tourism destination, Kumarakom has won the prestigious UNWTO Ulysses Award for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism as well as the National Award for the Best Tourism Project.

Located on the banks of the Vembanad Lake, the Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary, an ornithologist's paradise, is a favourite haunt of migratory birds. A cruise along the Vembanad Lake is the best way to experience the sanctuary.

Vembanad Backwaters: Take a canoe ride through the Vembanad Lake, one of the largest lakes in the country, to appreciate the backwaters in close quarters. It is the venue for many a boat race. Row through the intricate streaks of lagoons and canals emerging from the Vembanad Lake, which supports many villages and acts as the default mode of transportation for thousands. Drift into the green inlands and you'll witness an ordinary world unfurl on either side of you; kids getting ready for school and waiting for their boat, women going about their chores, and bleating goats tied to fences. Most of the

houses would have a canoe tied to a pole in front of them and you get to see a paddling of ducks crusading through the waters, separating to make way for commoners transporting their daily yields to the market. However, for a postcard experience opt for a houseboat, furnished with all modern amenities, that languidly drifts across the vast and tranquil waters with an on-board cook preparing the local fare to suit your tastebuds.

Ilaveezha Poonchira Valley: There is poetry even in the names of places in Kerala. 'Ilaveezhapoonchira' translates to 'a pond of flowers where leaves don't wither and fall'. Skirting Kottayam District are the beautiful valleys of Ilaveezhapoonchira, spread over thousands of acres making for the best sunrise and sunset vistas. If you decide against trekking, pack some sandwiches, a bottle of fresh juice and an engaging novel when you visit this delightful picnic spot located in the midst of beautiful hillocks near Kanjar. During the monsoons the valley swells to form a scenic lake. From above you can see almost six neighbouring districts and the Malankara Reservoir gushing past the steep valleys.

Ayyampara Hill: Legend has it that it was in the Ayyampara Hill that the Pandavas, the five brothers from the epic story of Mahabharata, hid during their years of exile. 'Ayyampara' stands for five pillar rocks, each representing one of the five mythological heroes. Some

believe the name owes its origin to the Ayyampara Temple here which has four pillars to support a flat piece of rock that forms the roof. On one side of the rock is a cave that can accommodate over 15 people. A soft trekking experience, the high point here offers a birds-eye view of the nearby towns like Erattupetta and Pala, and also the zigzag course of the many tributaries of the Meenachal river.

Aymanam:

(1.5 hour boat ride from Kumarakom)
Arundhati Roy's novel 'The God of small things' is set in this beautiful village. It is a typical riverside hamlet with scenic backwaters, a vivid green network of rivers and canals, and vast stretches of green paddy fields and coconut farms. Migratory birds come seeking this verdant landscape every summer and frolic in its natural splendour. Country boat rides through the interior canals is a great way to relax and enjoy nature's bounties.

Cheepumkal: (1 km from Kavanattinkara)

The Public Water Transport Jetty and the House Boat Terminal are located here. Motor boat trips to Maniaramb, Mannanam and Parippu are a memorable experience. Vast stretches of paddy fields, coconut farms, plantain farms and the village life of the local people can be seen here.

Daivathinte Munamb:

(7 km from Kumarakom)
Daivathinte Munamb (God's island), is an

enchanting picnic spot, which provides boating, fishing and sightseeing experiences. Walking along the banks of the lake is a memorable experience. Life of the local people can be observed very closely here. The small island, a little far away from the main shore, is fascinating and offers a beautiful view of the sunset.

Kaippuzhamuttu:

(2 km from Kavanattinkara Boat Terminal)
Houseboat making units, traditional coir making units, coconut processing centres, duck farms, paddy fields, migratory birds, etc. are some of the attractions at this scenic place.

Kannadichal: (3 km from Kumarakom)

Witness various types of traditional fishing techniques practiced by the villagers at Kannadichal. During the harvest season, tonnes of paddy is harvested from this place. Migratory birds and common birds can also be seen here. The one hour sightseeing trip through the winding canal in a country boat via Naragathara, Muthalymada, Mathrankayal to Daivathinte Munamb is an unforgettable experience.

Manchadikkari: (4 km from the Boat Terminal at Kavanattinkara)

With its unending vast green paddy fields and vegetable farms, and practices like toddy tapping, net fishing, country boat rides, screw pine weaving, coconut leaf weaving, traditional coir making unit, duck farms and bird





watching, Manchadikkari has much in store for tourists. This place provides a truly unique village experience. In the summer season, migratory birds like the Siberian stork, darter, egret, heron and common varieties like water hen, crane and skylark can be spotted here.

Mooleapadom: (4 km from Kavanattinkara)

The unique attraction here is the vellaveesal style of Karimeen fishing (a special technique of fishing using tender coconut leaves that are tied in ropes). A crew of at least eight fishermen is required for this type of fishing. A ride in a country boat through the narrow canal is a memorable experience. Vegetable farms, toddy tapping, coconut leaf thatched houses and bird watching are the main attractions of this place.

Naragathara:

(8 km from the Boat Terminal at Kavanattinkara)

This remote village is where the snake boat race trials are conducted during the festival season in the Malayalam month of Chingam. Winding narrow canals, vast stretches of paddy fields, vegetable farms, and migratory and common birds are the other attractions here.

Attamangalam Church:

(10 km from Kottayam)

The famed paintings of Saint Parumala Thirumeni by the legendary painter Raja Ravi

Varma is preserved at the Attamangalam Church. The canals around the church and the beautiful surroundings are the other interesting sights here.

BOAT RACES IN KUMARAKOM

Kumarakom Sreenarayana Jayanthi Boat Race:

The boat races are conducted every year on the Chathayam Naal, the fourth day of Onam. The race starts from Kottathod near Kumarakom Market Junction. The procession in the Kettuvallam (houseboat) through Kottathodu is an attractive sight. Kolkali, Thiruvathira Kali, Garudanthookkam, Panchavadyam, etc. are performed in the Kettuvallam during the procession. The boat races featuring all types of snake boats are held after the procession.

Kavanattinkara Tourism Boat Race:

This boat race is conducted on the Avittam day of the Malayalam month Chingam. Snake boats such as Iruttukuty, Chundan, Churulan, Veppu and Kothumpuvallam participate in the competition. Hundreds of people gather to witness this boat race.

Kottayam Thazhathangadi Boat Race:

This race is conducted during the last week of the Malayalam month of Chingam in the River Meenachil. The Chundan snake boat race is the most important event in the race. Vanchipattu competition, relay race, etc. are conducted in connection with the boat race.

RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

TOUR PACKAGES

1. A DAY WITH THE FARMERS

- Kavanattinkara - Cheepumkal - Kaippuzhamuttu - Manchadikkari - Traditional Coir Making Unit - Duck Farm - Village Boating - Farm Fishing - Toddy Tapping - Coconut Leaf Weaving - Screw Pine Weaving - Vegetable Farm - Bird Watching - Village Life Experience - Backwater Trek • Guide Service/Lunch/Transportation etc. Tariff: Rs. 2,500/- per head

2. VILLAGE LIFE EXPERIENCE AT

KUMARAKOM • Kumarakom - Anganvadi

- Visit - Weaving - Making of Miniature Snake Boats - Toddy Tapping - Karimeen Farm - Village Boat Ride - Bow and Arrow Fishing - Village Walking (Half Day Tour) • Guide Service/Refreshments/Transport, etc. Tariff: Rs. 1,500/- per head