

# *Kozhikode*

## A Slice Of Malabar Magic

KETKI GADRE

Kozhikode, often called the 'City of Spices', boasts a rich cultural heritage. Known for its historical importance as a prominent trading port, India's first UNESCO City of Literature now charms visitors with its picturesque beaches, bustling bazaars, mouthwatering cuisine, and thriving arts scene.







**8:00 AM**

### MOSEY IN THE MANGROVES

As you make your leisurely way through the Kadalundi mangroves, prepare to be enchanted by the vibrant colours, interplay of shadows, varying sizes of the mangrove trees – and the sound of nothingness. By taking a boat ride across the Kadalundi, which emerges from the heights of Cherakomban, you can get close to nature. The mangroves attract over a hundred species of birds, turtles and fish, and there's no better way to start the day in Kozhikode than by catching these on camera.

**10:00 AM**

### ADMIRE THE ART OF URU-MAKING

The Uru is a traditional wooden ship or dhow, meticulously handcrafted by skilled carpenters and artisans in the Beypore locality of Kozhikode. The construction of these massive boats is a remarkable art form, done entirely without blueprints; visitors should not miss the opportunity to witness this fascinating craft in action. Building an Uru can take up to four years, and the vessel stands as a symbol of Kerala's centuries-old trade ties with the countries of the Gulf.



**12:00 PM**

### EMBRACE KOZHIKODE'S PLURALISM

Being a cultural hotpot, Kozhikode is a close-knit community embracing all religions. Within a five-kilometre radius, visitors can marvel at the stunning architecture of the medieval Mishkal Mosque, offer a prayer at the Mother of God Cathedral, and pay homage at the Tali Maha Shiva Kshetram, a notable 14th-century temple. Don't miss the Tali Temple Heritage Pavilion, where relief



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murals beautifully narrate the story of the shrine and of the Zamorins, the erstwhile rulers of the Malabar region.

**3:00 PM**

### IMBIBE THE VIBE IN VALIYANGADI

Valiyangadi literally means 'big bazaar'. An hour or two in this enormous wholesale market specialising in spice and rice, and you'll understand why Kozhikode is recognised as the City of Spices. Get ready to have your senses assaulted as you walk around the godowns and interact with the traders who transport the spices across India and the globe.



**4:00 PM**

### INDULGE YOUR SWEET TOOTH

No visit to Kozhikode is complete without relishing the iconic Kozhikode Halwa, just as no trip to Kerala is complete without tasting its famous banana chips. The Sweetmeat (S.M.) Street, originally named for its *halwa* stalls, remains a lively hub for both locals and tourists. Lined with rows of shops offering an array of sweets, savoury treats, and other delights, the street is one of the busiest in the district. You can also observe the fascinating process of *halwa*-making by practiced cooks, who prepare cauldrons of this delectable sweet every day.

**5:30 PM**

### CHILL AT KAPPAD BEACH

While there are popular beaches like Kozhikode and Bepore, Kappad Beach is the celebrated stretch of sand where Vasco da Gama is said to have first set foot in India, in 1498. Here, you can take a dip, enjoy the food from beachside shacks, or go on a short cruise.

**8:00 PM**

### A SPREAD TO SAVOUR

End your day with a delightful feast of traditional Malabar cuisine at Paragon, ranked as the fifth most legendary restaurant in the world. Their signature Chicken Malabar Biryani, a cherished recipe perfected over seven decades, boasts bold flavours that keep visitors coming back for more. Vegetarians, too, will find plenty of delicious options to sample while exploring the region's culinary abundance •



### BEST TIME TO VISIT

Between November and April, Kozhikode is pleasant and ideal for sightseeing. January is particularly special, for that's when Malabar Mahotsavam – an annual cultural festival celebrating the rich history of the Malabar region of Kerala – is held.

### WHAT TO EAT

Kozhikode presents a range of culinary traditions shaped by diverse cultural influences over the years. Dishes prepared with coconut milk and coconut oil stand out, offering a distinct and authentic taste. Must-try specialities include Malabar Biryani (made with chicken or mutton); the iconic Kozhikode Halwa, created from wheat, sugar, and coconut oil; Pazham Pori, crispy banana fritters; and Pathiri, a delicate rice-flour flatbread often paired with flavourful fish curry.

### WHERE TO STAY

The city has a variety of accommodations suiting all budgets, from luxurious resorts to hotels and guesthouses. For a premium experience with stunning views of the Arabian Sea, consider the Sea Queen Hotel or the Beach Hotel. For a comfortable and convenient stay, Malabar Palace and Tiara are excellent choices.

