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Kerala is an elegantly painted fresco by maker with all the charm and uniqueness. With its multifaceted attractions like pristine beaches, enchanting hill stations, winding backwaters, exotic flora and fauna, emerald landscape and suave art forms Kerala attracts millions to its fold.

Kerala is located in the Malabar Coast of south western India. This emerald piece of gem is nestled between Western Ghats and Arabian Sea.

Out of the many attractions Kerala holds, backwaters is unique to it. Backwaters are a phenomenon found only in Kerala. Lakes and branches of rivers combine with canals and inlets which are manmade and natural to form a complex network known as backwaters. Backwaters were the transportation means for local people before ferries, bridges and roads came. They also depended on backwaters for means of livelihood such as fishing and agriculture. Backwaters are continuing to play the pivotal role in economy by contributing substantially through tourism.

Backwaters also make for fascinating setting. The shores are adorned by monuments, swaying coconut trees, emerald vegetation and lush green paddy fields, fishing nets and various acts of human life. Backwaters are embellished by water flowers especially water lilies. Cruises savoring this landscape are memorable affairs.

Houseboats are now the poster boys of backwater tourism. Houseboat in Kerala are modeled on erstwhile “Kettuvallams”. Kettuvallams were used to carry rice and other household items through backwaters. They came with thatched roofs over wooden hulls to offer protection from vagaries of nature. Although the shape remains unaltered, Houseboats are two to three storied affairs with one to five bedrooms included. Apart from sleeping space and dining space, a balcony open on all sides is also provided. From the balcony the exquisite charm of backwaters can be savored. Houseboats come adjoined with generators providing for air conditioning. A crew including a cook accompanies the guests. The menu is usually indigenous variety with local fish included. Other cuisines are also supplied according to the taste of guests. Although houseboats are motorized, they are run at a sluggish pace letting the guests savor the beauty around completely.

Spending a night with houseboat docked in backwaters is a prominent attraction of Kerala houseboat packages. It is a blissful affair and moonlit night adds to the beauty. You can see monuments and boats far away as static and moving illumination respectively. To get a local feel, you can ask to switch off electric lamps and spend night in light of lanterns alone. If the goddess of good fortune bless, you could witness fireflies adorning tree branches, blinking eternally.

Kerala houseboats usually have a length of ninety five feet to one hundred and fifteen feet. Its width varies from thirteen to fifteen feet. The hull is carved out of “Anjili” (Wild Jack) wood. The accessories used are local and eco friendly. No nails are used and coir is used for tying.

The epicenters of backwater tourism are Alleppey, Kochi, Kollam and Kumarakom. Kumarakom is usually preferred by honeymooners and nature lovers. Kumarakom is a tiny village blessed by all the beauties of backwaters. There is also a bird sanctuary which is frequented by migratory birds especially Siberian Cranes. Kumarakom Houseboats and resorts are also renowned for the superlative accommodation facilities and round the clock quality service they offer. Houseboat cruises can be arranged in Kumarakom also.

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[Rama Shankar Diwakar](#) - About Author:

Rama Shankar is an eminent analyst and writer in Travel & Tours related topics. He has authored many books on a [Kerala houseboat packages](#) and a [Houseboats kerala](#). Find more information at a <http://www.houseboats-kerala.org/>.

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