

Sugham Bhavanthu Pvt Ltd

Yoga Teacher Training & Retreat in South India
200hr Foundation Teacher Training – January 2018
500hr Advanced Teacher Training – February 2018
Yoga & Ayurvedic Detox Retreats – January & February 2018

BEFORE DEPARTURE

1. **VISA: Acquire a travel VISA to India.** A visa (from the Latin *charta visa*, meaning "paper which has been seen") is a conditional authorization granted by a country to a foreigner, allowing them to enter and temporarily remain within, or to leave that country. The process can take up to 2 weeks so please don't wait to the last minute.
2. **FLIGHT: Confirm your flight arrangements and send us the details.** Plan for jetlag, and consider arriving a day or more earlier. Let us know your exact arrival and departure dates and times so we can reserve hotel rooms according to your arrival and departure dates. Give a copy of your itinerary to your family and key friends.
3. **PHOTOCOPY: Scan or photocopy your passport/visa.** Email a copy of the airline itinerary (PDF copy in complete form) to us and pack the photocopy so you always have a record of your important documents. Make a note of your Terminal # for departure and arrival.
4. **PRINT: Print your travel documents.** Print the airline itinerary and note that not all airports will accept flight info from your phone.
5. **DOCTOR: Consult your doctor** or travel medicine clinic for recommended inoculations. Unfortunately we cannot recommend vaccination advice.
6. **MEDICINES: Organize and label medicines** and refill prescription drugs. Bring your prescription if you wear glasses in case you lose or break them.
7. **JETLAG: India is 11.5 hours ahead of Chicago time.** Most flights are a minimum of 25-30 hours of travel time and can be as much as 40 hours with layovers, so expect some jetlag both coming and going. The best remedies for jetlag are to drink lots of water (no alcohol), exposure to morning sunlight, and yoga! Yogis do not consume synthetic drugs such as melatonin.

Contacts

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VISA

1. Visit the Cox & Kings website to apply: <http://www.in.ckgs.us>
2. It's best to mark that you are "tourist/entry" instead of "student/yoga".
3. If you think you'll be going back, get a multiple year visa to save money.
4. Please give yourself at least 4 to 6 weeks to do this entire process.
5. Note you need your passport when you visit the Cox & Kings Application center in Chicago.
6. For the address/contact in India, please list the following information...
Surya Villa
Lighthouse Road
Kovalam Beach, Kerala
South India
7. Information from the Indian Consulate website: With effect from April 15, 2015, the single category of Tourist Visa available to US nationals will be a 10 year, multiple-entry Tourist Visa, with a fee of US\$ 100 (exclusive of service provider charges and Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) contribution). The actual duration of the visa will be at the discretion of the Consulate. NOTE: All applications along with relevant documents and the requisite fee should necessarily be sent to Cox & Kings Global Services, USA. The applications sent to the Consulate will not be entertained.

Cox & Kings Global Services, USA

19 South La Salle St, Suite 1003

Chicago, IL 60603

Website: <http://www.in.ckgs.us/>

Helpline: 5162061483, 6465890088

Submission timings - 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM CST (Monday to Friday)

Collection Timings: 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM CST (Monday to Friday)

FLIGHT

It's best to obtain a flight with as few stops as possible, direct to Trivandrum (Thiruvananthapuram is the ancient name of the capital of Kerala), located on the southwestern side of South India. We recommend Emirates (Dubai), Etihad (Abu Dhabi), or Qatar Airways (Oman). These carriers will route your flight from Chicago through the Mideast direct to Trivandrum. Try your best not to fly into Delhi or Mumbai as you'll need another domestic ticket and connection to Trivandrum. We think it is best to purchase your ticket direct from the airline instead of through Orbitz or a ticket broker (but use Orbitz to find the cheapest flight). The cheapest seats sell out early.

PACK LIGHT & EASY

Layer lightweight clothes for the plane, and get a ride to the airport so you're less exposed to winter. You cannot afford the weight and space of taking heavy clothing with you. You won't even wear a sweater or a light jacket once you arrive. It's all sandals/flip flops and casual/light/beachwear in a beach town. Kerala weather is relatively humid, with sunny 90° weather during the day, while the early mornings are a little cooler and less humid. Dress is casual and comfortable, and the general Indian dress code (especially for women) is relaxed here, though if you're traveling through other parts of India, women should be more modest,

covering their arms (nothing sleeveless) and legs (no shorts or short skirts). Indian women swim in full sarees, but non-Indian women wear bathing suits.

Expect to take multiple showers a day—after yoga, after panchakarma, to cool off before going to sleep—and you’ll want lightweight, versatile clothing that you can easily change, and that will quickly dry if rinsed or washed. In this heat and humidity, you’ll sweat much more in asana practice than you usually do. The daily panchakarma treatments slather you with oil, wrap you in a lungi cloth for your return walk to the hotel, and recommend that you wait an hour to let the oil soak in before showering. Imagine a very basic personal care routine without blow dryers or hair gels!

Pack only easy, quick, versatile, lightweight, and comfortable clothing. Mix and match light cottons, easy T-shirts, loose pants, lightweight dresses or skirts. Guys often live in their shorts or swimsuit, no shirt. Women should rely on the versatility of a comfortable lightweight dress with lightweight leggings (that preferably can double as yoga gear) to wear over yoga clothing on the way to the studio, over a bathing suit, or to dinner. A dress, some leggings, and a scarf, or a loose top and pants are the standards for women here. For men, shorts or loose cotton pants with a T-shirt or cotton shirt.

Waterproof footwear, like flip flops, sandals, or Croc sandals are best since you’ll need to rinse feet and shoes often. Only bring sandals or shoes that easily slip on and off since you’ll constantly be removing shoes before entering buildings. The panchakarma oil can stain shoes and clothing, so don’t bring precious items.

Local clothing is plentiful and reasonably priced, so pack light (one India travel article suggests no more than 10 clothing items), leave room in your bag and pick up a few lightweight items in India. If you have a shirt, pants, or a dress that you especially love, bring it and select fabric from one of the many local tailors who will reproduce your item for you in a few days, generally for about \$10.

Luggage. Pack LIGHT!

- One small to medium bag that easily fits in overhead and one carry-on bag or suitcase with wheels, half-empty. Otherwise you have no room for gifts or purchases!
- Lightweight day bag for bottled water, phone, money, scarf, snacks, bug spray, book, etc.
- Small lightweight bag or money belt for valuables (cash for the day, credit cards, phone, small tablet and pen, receipts, etc).
- A little notebook or journal that’s easy to carry, a few good pens.
- Have at least twenty \$1 dollar bills handy for tipping or small purchases for arrival and return journeys.
- Bring a water bottle to reduce plastic waste.
- Don’t bring more than one book, and consider audio-books instead.
- If you expect to buy a lot of gifts, leave a lot of room or buy a cheap bag at the market to bring back as your 2nd piece of luggage.

Clothing. Pack LIGHT!

- Travel Space Bags. Consider purchasing 3 to 5 Space Bags from the Container Store (<http://www.containerstore.com/shop/?productId=10006747>). They’re cheap and super easy to use (roll filled bag by hand, and one-way valves squeeze out air to compress contents, no equipment needed). Bring an extra one for gifts or purchases.

- Easy travel clothes (for travel: a long-sleeved shirt/sweatshirt, pants, socks)
- Tennis shoes for travel, 1 pair beach shoes (flip flops, easy sandals, preferably waterproof, like Crocs sandals). You'll take them off constantly to enter yoga studio, panchakarma center, temples, homes, etc.
- 1 or 2 pair lightweight pants, lightweight shirts, tops, easy skirt or dress for women
- No dress shoes or clothing. It's casual, you won't wear them.
- You can bring favorite summer pants, shirt, skirt, or dress for local tailors to copy at reasonable price. A standard practice here, little tailor shops everywhere.

Yoga Stuff. Pack LIGHT!

- Yoga shorts, leggings, or lightweight long pants and a few tops. Rinse daily.
- You can purchase a sticky mat locally for about 350 Rs (approximately \$6).
- Towel or lightweight yoga blanket as prop, to cover slippery mat, etc.
- A block and strap. These items are not easily available in India.

Toiletries. Pack LIGHT!

- **Earplugs** if you're a light sleeper. India never sleeps. The sassy bird starts at 4:30 am, then the crows, then the muslim call to prayer at 5 am. At night, it can be loud and unruly with late night partiers, dogs barking, babies crying, music playing. The perpetual soundtrack of India!
- Insect repellent: we recommend Cedarcide, an organic, non-toxic, non-oily effective spray with pleasant scent of cedar. It was a hit at Stonehouse this summer. Order small spray bottles from cedarcide.com. There are ayurvedic insect repellants available locally, but they tend to be oily.
- Anti-itch antiseptic sticks for the inevitable bug bites to eliminate itch.
- Toiletries: Ayurvedic toiletries available locally such as shampoo and soap – save space in your bag by buying your toiletries upon arrival.
- Consider headbands, bobby pins, elastics to tame unruly hair in the heat!
- Recommended: Dr. Bronner's Peppermint Liquid Soap; multiple uses as soap, shampoo, suitable for hand washing garments. Peppermint is natural insect repellent. Bring in 3 oz. bottle inside ziplock bag. I went through 6 ounces!
- Recommended: Grapefruit Seed Extract liquid concentrate (available at Whole Foods). Use to rinse toothbrush, add to water as a natural antibiotic, sprinkle on fruit or any food if you're feeling cautious.
- Sun block and sunglasses with UV protection. The sun is overhead and super hot here.
- Women: Feminine products (such as tampons). Not easy to find in India, and perhaps some cleansing wipes. Most public restrooms do not have toilet paper, but instead little hoses to spray yourself. You'll dry quickly in the hot air, but you might want to have a few wipes for public restrooms in restaurants, and when traveling between destinations.
- Travel clothesline to dry clothes, or just some thin rope and a few clothespins. You can also purchase locally. You'll need to rinse or wash clothes often, and it can take a while to dry in the humidity.

Optional Supplements. PACK LIGHT!

- Probiotic that does not need refrigeration.
- Chia seeds or psyllium husk capsules for constipation (seems to happen with traveling).
- Snack ideas for the road: Kind Bars, almond butter, nuts and seeds.

ARRIVAL

Transportation from the Airport. When you exit the Trivandrum terminal, you'll be surrounded by cabbies all vying for your attention. The prearranged cab driver will have a sign with your name, and he'll also have your flight information in case your flight is delayed. The one-way cab fare to Kovalam will be 500-800 Rs (\$8-\$12) in the day, a bit more if you arrive in the evening or late night. Confirm with the cab that he is taking you to Lighthouse Road. There are two ends of Kovalam, one nearer to the Lighthouse (where you'll go); the other is Kovalam Beach road.

Entering Kovalam Beach via Lighthouse Road. As the road nears the beach, it becomes too steep for cars. Your cab will pull over near the Lighthouse, and then you'll walk down the hill to the beginning of the boardwalk area. Aji or the cabbie or one of the many luggage carriers will walk you along the boardwalk area to Surya Villa. Have rupees with you to tip the cab driver and the luggage handler if you use them.

KOVALAM BEACH

There are NO cars in Kovalam Beach, so everything will now be walking distance—from the boardwalk to the hotel, from the hotel to the panchakarma studio, from your hotel to restaurants, etc. With no cars and relative proximity to everything you need, your time in Kovalam will take on the feeling of village life. You'll always hear the waves, no matter where you are. You'll probably rise early for some chai in the open air by the beach from the "chai lady" where a cup of tea is 10 Rs (about 15 cents) or a fresh coconut is 50 Rs. You'll meet at Surya Villa at 8am for yoga, followed by a south Indian breakfast at the Surya Villa. Panchakarma treatments for retreat participants can be scheduled at noon, 2pm or 4pm, followed by a little rest while the oils soak in, then a shower and a change of clothing. Before or after your treatment are for resting, the beach, a light lunch on your own, or one of the many small walking excursions through Kovalam. For teacher trainees, after breakfast we will meet for the training class from 10:30am to 3:30pm with a 30 minute break for snacks or a light lunch. Optional treatments for trainees are available from 4-6pm. Dinner is on your own at one of the many restaurants in Kovalam, preferably by 6, followed by the evening wisdom talk/satsang, generally from 7pm until 8pm. Wednesday evenings and Saturdays are scheduled as free times if you want to take a day trip or arrange an excursion outside of Kovalam, but in general, rest and relaxation is strongly recommended for the panchakarma effects to be fully realized.

AYURVEDIC TREATMENT & PANCHAKARMA

We have reserved appointments each day for each of you, and while you have the option to cancel or rearrange, it is highly recommended that you take the full seven-day treatment. There is nothing like it in the US, and Dr. Unni and the Agastya Center are well known and deeply respected for their work that continues the unaltered, ancient tradition of Ayurveda. You'll receive a mind-blowing combination of a one-hour "foot massage" (a full body massage deftly provided by a barefoot practitioner who uses their feet and the weight of their body with copious amounts of healing oils). This is the perfect complement to a yoga practice. The aches and pains of the current retreat participants have been miraculously healed—nagging shoulder aches, sore knees, aching limbs, even injuries like a stubbed toe receive individual treatments. You'll meet briefly with the doctor each day to discuss your progress, and the additional treatments will be efficiently, wordlessly, nearly telepathically determined for you on

a day-to-day basis. The daily foot massage is followed by any of a number of cleansing treatments that can include a full body rub with dry herbs, a warm bath of milk and rice powder to reduce pain and inflammation, variations of shirodhara (oil dripping on forehead, or sometimes sore joints surrounded by a dam made from chapatti dough, then filled with warm oil), as well as a purgative day (think "cleansing" in the extreme) and/or a variety of vasti days (warm oil enemas). The experience of a daily two-hour treatment that is never hurried and always feels generous and caring is a stark contrast to western medicine. The combination of yoga with us and panchakarma treatments are healing, but can also be tiring. Expect to rest, observe a cleansing diet of mostly rice and cooked vegetables, and adapt to a relaxed lifestyle. Distractions, ambitious sight-seeing, or side trips are not recommended during the seven-day treatment. You've come to India for yoga and panchakarma, so allow time (not 21st century time) for these ancient practices to have their full effect on body, mind, and spirit.

FINANCES & CURRENCY

The US dollar is currently worth 67 rupees (Rs) as of 1/31/17, so prices are reasonable for Americans. For the modest traveler, expect hotel rooms to run 1200 to 1500 Rs (\$20 to \$25)/night; food 400-600 Rs a day (\$7 to \$10), and panchakarma treatments 17,800 Rs (\$300) per week. The cab fare to and from the airport is around 1000 Rs, and you'll probably want to tip your 3 panchakarma practitioners (usually 500 Rs each, a little more for the foot therapist), and about the same for the hotel attendant. Hotel rates and exchange rates subject to change.

How to quickly convert Rupees to Dollars: Take off 2 decimal points, then add an additional half and round up a little. For 10,000 Rupees: take off the last 2 zeroes to arrive at 100, then add half of 100 back for 150, so figure \$150 or round up a little more for 10,000 Rs. You can quickly grasp prices and bills with this general formula. Otherwise you're left standing and staring when someone tells you that something cost 1500 rupees. (Oh, 15 + 8, about \$23, maybe \$25. Got it!) For cash, either convert American dollars at the plentiful exchange counters, or make periodic withdrawals from your bank via ATM. Credit card advances are costly and have multiple service charges and foreign transaction fees. More on that:

- **There are 2 ATMs** within walking distance on the road outside Kovalam that usually (but not always) work.
- **For ATM withdrawals, notify your bank** of your upcoming travels, and your card will work fine in most places. Withdrawals are generally limited 10,000-20,000 Rs per transaction.
- **Pack \$100 bills to easily exchange dollars for rupees** rather than credit card advances or ATM withdrawals. They're lightweight, and easy to convert and the cheapest way to change money.
- **You can pay for the hotels with a credit card, but otherwise, they are not accepted in most places. Panchakarma? Cash only.**
- **If you don't have a card without foreign transaction fees**, apply for one now. An approved application usually requires at least 7 days for the card to be mailed.
- **Notify your credit card company** that you will be using your card in India for purchases or cash advances; it may still get declined the first time you use it. If so, you'll need to call the credit card company to lift the fraud alerts, so enable your phone for international calls.

ELECTRONICS

- **Highly recommended: A Smartphone with free international service** (such as T-Mobile) and no international roaming charges. In addition to easily making calls as needed, you should have unlimited text and email. Your phone will function as your camera, calculator, clock, alarm, you name it -- your main means of communication.
- **Super charger:** Batteries seem to die just when you really need them. Go to Target and get a \$16 charger that holds up to 10 recharges, and make sure you have the proper connecting cables for your devices. There is no Apple store or Target here, and with flights in excess of 25 hours, your risk landing without any phone power. Not good!
- **Three-pronged GUF electrical adaptor.** Borrow one if you can, since you may not use again, or purchase through Amazon at <http://www.amazon.com/Grounded-Adapter-Plug-India-Middle/dp/B000BMHH9E>. Or you can purchase one in Kovalam.
- **Power cords for phone, laptop, etc.** Seems obvious, but challenging if forgotten. Apple products are difficult to find in India.
- Stop by your phone service provider to check out what to do to make international use easy. Learn how to switch between cell and WiFi service, deal with SIM cards for storage of photos, unlock your phone, or do whatever it takes to have reliable texting, email, Skype, and/or calls while in India without excessive charges.
- Set up DropBox for photo storage, or have plenty of storage on phone.

Thank you so much for your interest and consideration. Let us know if you have any questions at all.

Namaste,

Daren & Vipin

Sugham Bhavanthu Pvt Ltd

India Checklist

Application & Tuition

- Complete** the application online for the 200hr or 500hr teacher training program.
- Pay** your \$100 non-refundable application fee.
- Submit** a headshot photo and a letter of recommendation before December 15 to complete your application.
- Arrange** payment of tuition in full by the deadline dates below (we prefer checks if possible)...
 - \$2,400 if paid by October 15
 - \$2,600 if paid by November 15
 - \$2,800 if paid by December 15
 - \$3,000 if paid after December 15 or Payment Plan

Contact our office to make payment arrangements if you chose a payment plan. A deposit of \$1,500 is due by December 15.

Transportation & Accommodations

- Obtain** an India Visa (you can't get into the country without one).
- Purchase** your airline ticket to Trivandrum (Thiruvananthapuram is the ancient name) and do your best to arrive 2-3 days earlier than the start date to recover from jet-lag.
- Email** a copy of the airline itinerary PDF to info@mokshayoga.com so we may arrange your airport pick-up. We will arrange a taxi and meet you at airport arrivals.
- Email** a scanned copy or photo of your passport AND visa to info@mokshayoga.com.
- Email** us your hotel choice pricing level to info@mokshayoga.com.
- Arrange** payment of food/housing before December 15. The earlier the better.

Other Stuff

- Pack** \$20 in small US bills for arrival; for a better exchange rate, change money in India or better yet wait until you arrive in Kovalam for the best rate.
- Confirm** your chosen Ayurvedic Panchakarma appointment time/schedule with us.
- Print** your TT manual/workbook and bring with you if participating in the Training.
- Did we say PACK LIGHT? **Now take out 1/2 of what you put into your suitcase.**
- Depart** for your incredible South India trip!