

Munnar is best known for its sprawling tea plantations



MUNNAR

Rising 1700 metres above sea level in the majestic Western Ghats, Munnar is a hill station in Kerala that is a favourite haunt all year round especially for its salubrious climate in the summer. This is where you will be treated to undulating views of tea gardens – the terraced plantations make for a compelling visual here. When you are in Munnar, a visit to the Eravikulam National Park is a must as this where you can spot the endangered Nilgiri Tahr ibex apart from several species of butterflies, animals and birds. The endemic Neelakurinji flower blooms here once in 12 years. To take in the beauty of nature, a trek to the Anamudi Peak is a good idea. It is located within the Eravikulam National Park which is the highest peak in south India. You will need permission from the forest and wildlife authorities at Eravikulam. About 13 km from Munnar is Mattupetty known for its storage masonry dam and a beautiful lake where boat rides are the best way to enjoy the landscape. Do stop at the first hydro-electric project in Kerala at Pallivasal whose scenic beauty makes it a favourite picnic spot. Another place that must be on your itinerary is Chinnakanal whose Power House Waterfalls make for a beautiful sight. From here, seven kilometres away is Anayirangal, which is home to an imposing dam. Since this is tea land, a visit to the Tea Museum located in the Nallathanni Estate of Tata Tea is a must.

Best known for: Tea plantations.

When established: 19th century.

What to shop for: Flavoured teas, local spices, curry powder and cocoa.

Must-try food dishes: Appam with stew, Malabar Parotta, Idiyappam with Egg Curry and Kerala Prawn Curry.



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