



# TROPER TOURS

## Kerala Houseboat Booking Checklist

What to Check Before You Pay for an Alleppey / Kerala Houseboat

**A practical traveller's guide to comparing boats, inclusions, air-conditioning, cruising times, meals, safety and booking terms.**

Prepared by Troper Tours • Kerala Tour Operator

# Before You Book: The 60-Second Rule

Do not choose a Kerala houseboat on photographs and headline price alone. Ask what is included, when the boat actually cruises, when the air-conditioning operates, what meals are included, where the boat boards, and what happens if weather or operational conditions change.

Kerala Tourism describes houseboats as available across several backwater destinations and provides information on accredited service providers. It also lists a pre-paid houseboat counter operated by the District Tourism Promotion Council (DTPC) in Alappuzha.

This checklist is designed to help you get the important details in writing before making payment.

## 1. Confirm Exactly What You Are Booking

- Is the boat private/exclusive for our group, or shared?
- How many bedrooms are included?
- Is the quoted price for the whole boat or per person?
- Is the boat the exact vessel shown in the photographs, or a similar boat?
- What is the boat category or classification stated on the booking?
- What is the maximum passenger capacity?
- Is the booking for a day cruise or an overnight stay?
- Is the boarding point confirmed in writing?
- Is the drop-off point confirmed in writing?

## 2. Check the Air-Conditioning Carefully

This is one of the most important questions to ask. "AC houseboat" does not automatically mean that the air-conditioner operates continuously throughout the day and night.

Kerala Tourism examples for AC Deluxe houseboats commonly state that AC operates from around 9 PM to 6 AM, while some higher-category boats may offer full-time AC. The exact arrangement can vary, so confirm the schedule and whether full-time AC costs extra.

- Is the boat air-conditioned?
- Is AC available in every bedroom?
- What exact hours will the AC operate?
- Is daytime AC included or charged separately?
- Is the AC dependent on the generator?
- Does the AC continue during the overnight anchoring period?
- Is there an extra charge for 24-hour AC?
- Is the AC schedule written on the booking confirmation?

## 3. Understand the Cruise Schedule

An overnight houseboat is not a boat that cruises continuously for 24 hours. Kerala Tourism booking examples describe a typical pattern in which the boat checks in around noon, cruises during the afternoon, anchors for the night, and resumes cruising the following morning. Exact timings can vary by operator and current operating conditions.

- What time is check-in?

- What time does cruising begin?
- How long will the boat cruise on the first day?
- When does the boat stop cruising for the night?
- Where will the boat anchor overnight?
- What time does cruising resume the next morning?
- What time is checkout?
- Is the quoted itinerary a standard route or customised?

## Typical Timing Pattern to Ask About

| Stage          | Common Example       | Confirm Before Booking                      |
|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Boarding       | Around 12 noon       | Exact boarding location and time            |
| Day cruise     | Afternoon until dusk | Actual cruising route and duration          |
| Night          | Boat anchored        | Anchoring location and overnight facilities |
| Morning cruise | After breakfast      | Departure and checkout time                 |

## 4. Check Exactly What Is Included in the Price

A low headline price can become expensive if important items are excluded. Ask for an itemised confirmation rather than relying on a verbal promise.

- Private boat / exclusive use included?
- Accommodation included?
- Lunch included?
- Dinner included?
- Breakfast included?
- Welcome drink included?
- Tea / snacks included?
- Drinking water included?
- Fuel / cruising charges included?
- Taxes included?
- Port or boarding charges included?
- Any activity or sightseeing charges included?
- Any additional crew or service charges?

## 5. Meals & Food Preferences

Kerala Tourism booking examples commonly include lunch, dinner and breakfast on overnight houseboat packages, but meal arrangements differ between bookings. Ask for the exact meal plan in writing.

- What meals are included?
- Are tea and snacks included?
- Is bottled/mineral water included?
- Can vegetarian meals be provided?
- Can seafood be requested?
- Can allergies or dietary restrictions be accommodated?
- Are special meals charged extra?
- What time is lunch served?

## 6. Compare the Boat, Not Just the Bedroom

Two boats can have similar-looking bedrooms while offering very different common areas, deck space, maintenance standards and cruising experiences.

| Check     | What to Look For                                                              |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bedrooms  | Actual room count, bed configuration, ventilation, windows and storage.       |
| Bathrooms | Private bathroom, shower arrangement, hot-water availability and cleanliness. |
| Deck      | Open seating, shade, dining area and space to enjoy the backwaters.           |
| Windows   | Natural ventilation and unobstructed views.                                   |
| Kitchen   | On-board cooking arrangement and hygiene.                                     |

| Check       | What to Look For                                                          |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Maintenance | General cleanliness, paintwork, fittings, linens and equipment condition. |
| Crew        | Who operates the boat and who prepares meals.                             |

## 7. Ask About Safety & Legitimacy

Kerala has an inland vessel regulatory framework, and Kerala Tourism provides an accredited-service-provider directory. Travellers should ask the operator to confirm that the vessel is properly registered/approved for operation and that the booking is with an identifiable operator.

- Is the houseboat registered/approved as required?
- Can the operator provide the vessel/operator identification details?
- Is the boat covered by the required insurance?
- Are life-saving/safety arrangements available?
- Is the crew identified on the booking?
- Is there an emergency contact number?
- Is the operator's business name and payment account clear?

## 8. Check the Booking & Cancellation Terms

- What deposit is required?
- When is the balance payment due?
- What happens if you cancel?
- What happens if the operator cancels?
- What happens if weather or operational conditions prevent the cruise?
- Can the date be changed?
- Is the boat substitution policy stated?
- Will you receive a booking voucher or written confirmation?
- Does the confirmation list the exact boat/category and inclusions?

## 9. Questions to Send Your Houseboat Operator

Copy and send these questions before you pay:

1. Is the houseboat private for our group?
2. How many bedrooms and bathrooms does it have?
3. What exact boat/category are we booking?
4. What time is boarding and checkout?
5. What hours does the AC operate?
6. Is daytime or 24-hour AC included?
7. What meals and drinks are included?
8. What route will the boat cruise?
9. Where will the boat anchor overnight?
10. Are taxes, fuel, crew and other charges included?
11. What happens if the boat shown is unavailable?
12. What are the cancellation and refund terms?
13. Will you send all inclusions and timings in writing?

## Red Flags Before You Pay

Be cautious when a seller:

- Refuses to identify the exact boat or operator.
- Gives a very low price but cannot explain what is excluded.
- Says "AC houseboat" without specifying AC operating hours.
- Promises continuous cruising through the night without explaining the operating arrangement.
- Will not provide written cancellation terms.
- Uses photographs that cannot be connected to the actual boat.
- Requests payment to an unclear or unrelated account without documentation.
- Avoids answering basic questions about boarding, meals, accommodation or the crew.

## How Troper Tours Approaches Houseboat Planning

A houseboat should fit the rest of your Kerala itinerary rather than being booked as an isolated activity. Arrival time, road travel from Munnar or Thekkady, boarding time, overnight cruising restrictions and the following day's departure all affect how relaxed the experience feels.

If you are travelling from Munnar or Thekkady, allow enough road time to reach the boarding point before the confirmed check-in window. Kerala Tourism package examples also recommend early starts on some routes to reach the houseboat around noon. ■cite■turn0search12■turn0search13■

For a broader itinerary, explore our **Kerala Tour Packages** and compare routes that include an overnight backwater experience.

For couples, see our **Kerala Honeymoon Packages** for itineraries that combine houseboats with Munnar, Thekkady and the coast.

Families can explore our **Kerala Tour Packages** and ask for a route designed around children, older travellers and preferred travel pace.



Use the **South India Trip Cost Calculator** to estimate a Kerala holiday budget before requesting a customis

When you are ready to discuss your trip, visit **Contact Troper Tours** for customised itinerary assistance.

## Official Reference & Verification

Kerala Tourism provides information on houseboats, accredited service providers and typical package arrangements. Current Kerala Tourism examples show overnight houseboat patterns with midday check-in, afternoon cruising, overnight anchoring and morning departure, while AC operating hours can vary by boat category. Always confirm the exact terms of your own booking in writing. ■cite■turn0search6■turn0search7■turn0search0■

Source: Kerala Tourism — Houseboats and accredited service-provider/package information.

## Troper Tours

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This checklist is an independent travel-planning resource. Houseboat schedules, prices, boat availability, AC arrangements, routes and regulations can change. Confirm current details directly with your operator before payment and travel.