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FOOD GUIDE to KARNATAKA

EAT • DRINK • EXPERIENCE

This guide is researched and written by
Supriya Sehgal



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FOREWORD

The Cuisines of Karnataka



DIVYA PRABHAKAR

Karnataka's sweeping coastlines, lush hills, cosmopolitan cities, and tradition-loving towns have resulted in excitingly diverse cuisines, with influences from other states in the region and beyond. With a staggering variety of dosas, idlis, and sweets on the platter, as well as non-veg preparations featuring pork to prawns, no one goes hungry here.

DIGGING INTO HISTORY

Karnataka's culinary heritage has been simmering for a long time, with some food historians saying that its origins go back to the Iron Age. Over time, the topography and external cultural influences—from Islamic to British—have flavoured regional variations. Trade, too, played an important part in importing ingredients from different countries, especially ragi (finger millet), which is said to have originated in Africa in the 8th century. The working class in India adopted this as a nourishing and economical substitute to rice.

Ragi mudde (finger millet balls) are often eaten with soppu saaru (a lentil soup with greens)



However, the cuisine is far from monolithic, with traditional dishes varying from region to region.

NORTHERN REGION

The northern region (p51)—which includes Dharwad, Bijapur, Gulbarga, Belgaum, Raichur, and parts of Bellary, among others—is partial to jowar flour rotis, brinjal, peanut and sesame chutney, a red chilli paste called ranjaka saaru (lentil soup), and desserts like shenga unde (peanut ladoos). The 12th-century Chalukya king Someshvara who ruled this part of the state wrote a book called *Manasollasa* to document royal pastimes, with a focus on royal recipes and the art of cooking. The book mentions several ingredients that are still in use.



Ranjaka (red chilli paste) spices up meals in North Karnataka

SOUTHERN KARNATAKA

This region includes Bengaluru (p14) and Mysuru (p28), and today offers cuisines from around the country and beyond to diners. However, many staples are still rooted in tradition. In many homes, ragi mudde (finger millet balls), benne dosa (butter dosa), akki roti (rice roti), bisi bele bhath (lentil and rice dish), kesari bhath (a saffron-tinged sweet) and vengi bhath (brinjal rice) continue to rule the roost.

UDUPI CUISINE

Udupi cuisine (p40) is rooted in vegetables and fruits, given that it originated in the *ashta mathas* (eight monasteries) founded by the Hindu monk Shri Madhvacharya in the 13th century. The origin of the omnipresent dosa and sambar is also said to be in Udupi, though food historians bicker about this.

COASTAL FARE

Coastal (Bunt), Navayath and North Kanara cuisines include an abundance of seafood delicacies and coconut. The port city of Mangaluru (p38) in particular is a beacon for foodies thanks to the famous neer dosa (thin dosa), kori rotti (shredded roti), and seafood galore, including rich ghee roasts and tamarind-based curries.

COORGI SPECIALITIES

The Kodagu region (p30) commands deep respect amongst non-vegetarians for its meat-heavy dishes, especially pandi (pork) curry. Bamboo shoot and kachampuli (vinegar) are frequently used as flavourings.

MALENADU DISHES

Districts such as Chikkamagaluru (p46), Shimoga, and Belur fall into the region of Malenadu, which roughly translates into the land of the hills (specifically the

TOP
CHOICE

Must-try dishes

With each district offering distinct flavours, Kannadiga cuisine is extremely diverse. Here are some of the essentials that any food-loving traveller must try at least once. Consider this list your first step to understanding the cuisine of Karnataka.

Mysore masala dosa The hallmark of Mysuru's cuisine, this dish is distinguished by a spread of fiery red chillies, onion, and garlic chutney on the inside of the dosa, thus offsetting the mild potato stuffing with a dose of heat and spice. While you are in Mysuru (p28), also make sure to try the other snacks that are credited with having originated here, including the Mysore bonda and the sweet Mysore pak.

Ragi mudde and sopinna saru This is a nutritious and flavourful combination that features in home cuisine more than restaurants but is well worth seeking out: *ragi mudde* are finger millet dough balls that are eaten with a green leaf and lentil soup called *sopinna saru*.

Holige are sweet stuffed crepes



Korri gassi with neer dosa Coastal Karnataka dishes up one of the best country chicken dishes (*korri gassi*), which is eaten with a floppy white and soft dosa, unlike the crispy versions that are more prevalent.

Thatee idli A large flat idli that resembles a disc is a favourite all-time snack. It tastes just like a regular idli, but a little more is always better!

Holige Common to south India and Maharashtra, the sweet Indian flatbread made of lentils and jaggery is also called *obbattu* in the state.

Maddur vada Maddur town in

Western Ghats). In this rainy part of Karnataka, vegetables and fruit abound. The cuisine is rich in bamboo shoots, colocasia leaves, turmeric leaves and raw jackfruit. Popular dishes include *kaalu kadabu* (bean dumplings), *chattituttu* (rice based snack), *voththushaavige uppittu* (rice noodles), bamboo shoot curry, *halasina dosa* (jackfruit dosa) and *kaayi holige* (coconut dessert).

Divya Prabhakar is co-founder of the Bengaluru Oota Company, which serves authentic regional Karnataka cuisine in home-style settings.

Mandya district is a popular highway stop for anyone going to Mysore for its distinct namesake *vada*, a fried donut made with flour, semolina, and spices.

Pandi curry It is unlikely for anyone to visit Coorg and not find *pandi curry* (pork curry) on the menu or at their table at a homestay. It has a distinct sour flavour that is best tamed by a side of rice balls.

Bhende puli koddal Okra cooked in freshly made coconut masala without onion or garlic is a Mangalorean dish that vegans in particular will relish.

Davangere benne dosa This dosa, which originated in Davangere, is particularly tasty because of the copious amount of butter that is used to make it. Naturally, the result is deliciously crispy.

Bisi bele bhath Rice, lentils, and vegetables cooked together with tamarind paste and dry coconut (resembling a 'khichdi')—real soul food.

Kesari bhath Is it a dessert? Is it a breakfast dish? It's a bit of both. A yummy concoction of semolina, ghee, and sugar that is sometimes flavoured with coconut, mangoes, bananas, or pineapples. Interestingly despite the name, many people do not use saffron (*kesar*) to prepare this dish.

Bhende puli koddal, a coconutty okra preparation



10 Top Food Experiences in Karnataka

1 BEAN-TO-CUP COFFEE TRAIL

If simply wandering about the lush coffee estates of Coorg or Chikkamagaluru isn't enough, consider joining in a bean-to-cup trail. **The Serai** (p50) in Chikkamagaluru offers a particularly immersive experience. The hotel takes visitors through the entire process of harvesting beans, and then drying, roasting, and grinding them to make the freshest cuppa ever. The experience starts in the morning when you go coffee-picking with a guide, learning from plantation workers as you go along. The carefully selected beans are then dried till they turn brown, after which they are roasted and ground at an in-house facility. Finally, you carefully brew your own cup with help from a coffee expert. If you have less time on your hands, you can still enjoy artisanal coffee at one of Bengaluru's many **cafes** (p26). Sample responsibly sourced, micro-roasted, and utterly delicious local coffee blends at Bengaluru mainstays such as Third Wave Coffee Roasters and Hatti Kaapi, or a good old-fashioned filter brew at Indian Coffee House.



2 FOOD FESTIVALS AND POP-UPS

Bengaluru has a massive appetite for new food experiences and there are interesting workshops and food festivals galore (keep updated via www.insider.in or www.eventshigh.com). Some mainstays include **JW Marriot's Beers of Bangalore**, **Stepping Out Food Festival**, **Know Your Coffee**, **Oktoberfest** (celebrated with gusto by most microbreweries), and **Dessert Bazaar** by Little Black Book (LBB). Bengaluru's popular flea market **Soul Sante** is great to check out the pop-up scene with home cooks and smaller food brands offering their specialities. For Kannadiga delights, MTR's two-day festival **Karunadu Swada** showcases cuisine from six regions (Bidar, Kodagu, Belgaum, Mangaluru, Mysuru, and Udupi) at St. John's Auditorium. Mysuru's **Dasara Food Mela** held during the 10-day festival is another window to the state's array of culinary treats.

3 COASTAL CULINARY JOURNEY

You can relish a complete experience of Karnataka's coastal fare as you drive the nearly 100km stretch along the Arabian Sea from Mangaluru to Kundapura. There's plenty in this region for those who love seafood as well as those who do not. The iconic **Shetty Lunch Home** (p43) is a good place to start, and is widely believed to be the place where the fragrant ghee roast (try prawn, crab, squid, mackerel, chicken or even paneer and baby corn varieties) originated. For vegetarian staples such as veg bondas, Udupi-style



thalis, and desserts such as pineapple kesari bhath, head over to **Woodlands** (p45) near Sri Krishna Matha at Udupi. You can even tuck into a home-cooked Christian meal by booking an afternoon with **Maya and Oswald** (p39) in Kadri, Mangaluru.



4 TEMPLE TREATS

Thousands of temples, many of them several centuries old, dot Karnataka's length and breadth. And the kind of sustenance they offer is not only of the spiritual kind. Most temples offer free food to visitors during certain timings, which is a true blessing for those who come from far-flung villages. Most menus for these community meals feature tasty and wholesome dishes such as rice, sambar, pooris, and local vegetables. One such temple is the **Sringeri Sharada Peetham** (p49) in Chikkamagaluru district, where you can taste some fresh Malnad food.

5 BEER CRAWLS & VINEYARD TOURS

Bengaluru is the place to be if you love swilling new brews. The best way to explore the scene is by undertaking a pub crawl (p19). In addition, **Toit** (p26) offers a 1.5-hour brewery tour on the first Saturday of every month (noon; ₹600 per head; maximum 20 people) where you can savour brews such as the Basmati Blonde or Dark Knight. Wine lovers are in luck too. **Wine tours** (p45) have been gaining ground for the last half a decade, encouraging a number of vineyards to delightfully colonise the outskirts of Bengaluru. To sniff and swirl amid lush countryside, just drive down to one of many hometown vineyards for a tour and tasting with the help of a sommelier.



6 PIG OUT IN COORG

Even though Kodava cuisine has a rich array of dishes, the pandi (pork) preparations are resounding favourites. The best known is the Coorg pandi curry, a rich dish with a dark gravy that is assertively flavoured with aromatic spices and coriander leaves. Among the many restaurants that feature Coorgi pork dishes are old-timer **Coorg Cuisine** (p35) in Madikeri, which offers a comprehensive selection of regional recipes. The atmospheric **Tiger-Tiger** (p36), **Taste of Coorg** (p37), and **Coorg Foodlands** (p35) are other joints in Madikeri where you can dig into rice-sambar meals with boneless chilli pork, pork pepper fry, pork onion fry, and pandi with bamboo shoots. For a more homely affair, head to **Folksy Food** (p37), where you are spared the anguish of picking from a menu and can just sit back and enjoy homemade pork dishes laced with kachampuli (Coorgi vinegar).





7 GET TRANSPORTED

If ambience matters to you as much as food, Bengaluru has just the thing. **Fly Dining** (p22) is where fine dining meets extreme adventure. Patrons get to enjoy a meal suspended 48m off the ground on an open-air deck with 22 guests around the table, three chefs, a waiter, and a safety inspector. Everyone is strapped to safety harnesses and a net at the bottom further fortifies the set-up. A crane hauls up everyone slowly, affording views of an ever-diminishing city.

8 IFTAAR FEASTS

The days of fasting during the month-long Ramadan period are rewarded by evenings of feasting. Most towns and cities have their own special streets packed with makeshift stalls during the holy month, but the spread is particularly enticing in Bengaluru, Gulbarga, Bidar, Bijapur, Raichur and Dharwad. Some of the best-loved specialities are pathhar ka gosht, bheja (brain) fry, haleem, biryani, and seekh kebabs, with sweet phirni to wrap up. Novel inclusions like chocolate chicken keep food enthusiasts on their toes. In Bengaluru, Frazer Town and Mosque Road come alive with hundreds of food stalls; also popular are the streets near Bilal Mosque on Bannerghatta Road or Johnson Market. Local walks outfit, **Bengaluru by Foot** (p15) organises a curated walk during this period for those who prefer some expert guidance.



9 MTR

Mavalli Tiffin Rooms (MTR, p24), formerly Brahmin Coffee Club, is one of the most iconic restaurants of Bengaluru. It has been serving soul food to devoted patrons and wide-eyed travellers since 1924, in the form of crispy *dosas*, tangy *bisi bele bhath*, the signature *rava idli*, and freshly ground filter coffee. The place has also made idli history: during World War II when rice was in short supply, MTR apparently started substituting the grain with semolina. This innovation turned out to be a big hit and never left the menu.



10 SWEET DELIGHTS

Karnataka offers many a sweet temptation, from the ghee-soaked Mysore pak to the crunchy *chiroti* (layered fried pastry) of Mangaluru. Across the state, you will never be too far from your next hit of *halbai* (coconutty rice cake), *rava kesari bhaat* (semolina, saffron, dry fruits), *holige* (crepes stuffed with jaggery), and regional variations of *payasam* (rice pudding), including a delicious version featuring poppy seeds (*gasagase payasa*).





BENGALURU

Why Go?

You can sample all of Karnataka's scrumptious regional cuisines in Bengaluru, from Mangaluru ghee roasts and Mysuru dosas. Something to drink? There are microbreweries and coffee shops galore.

i Quick Facts

GETTING THERE & AROUND:

Kempegowda International Airport is the state's main air node. Bengaluru is also well connected by train and bus. Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC; www.ksrct.in) has a large fleet of long-distance buses. Within the city, there is a comprehensive local bus network (BMTc; www.mybmtc.com)

and Namma Metro covers more than 40 stations.

WHEN TO GO

The weather is pleasant all year, but March and April can get hot.

GREAT FOR



🚫 Eating in Bengaluru

The dining options in Bengaluru range from humble 'darshinis' and 'military hotels' to elegant restaurants and big-name chains.

Darshinis: Bengaluru is a haven for quick-service south Indian fare, including at chain restaurants like Adigas, Sukh Sagar, Kamath, and Shanthi Sagar (collectively referred to as darshinis) where you can gulp down your vadas and filter kaapi while standing at your metal table.

Military hotels: For robust and cheap non-veg dishes and biryanis, a **military hotel** (p18) is a good bet.

Vintage favourites: Bengaluru is dotted with decades-old restaurants with humble origins but lofty fare, including the legendary **Mavalli**

Tiffin Rooms (MTR, p24), **Vidyarthi Bhavan** (p24), and **Brahmin's Coffee Bar** (p25). Dosas, idlis, rice dishes, and filter coffee rule these kitchens.

Regional delights: Various Kannadiga cuisines are experiencing something of a resurgence. While **Oota Bangalore** (p21) and **Halli Mane** (p25) offer a sampling of dishes from across the state, there are also specialists such as the self-explanatory **Mangalore Pearl** (p23) and **The Restaurant-Coorg** (p20), and the **Bengaluru Oota Company** (p20) which dishes up home-made Gowda and Mangalorean cuisine. For a contemporary twist on home-grown ingredients, **The Permit Room** (p26) is an exciting venue.



(Top) Spice-tossed podi idlis
(Across) A pub lunch

✓ Top Tip: Food walk

If you're serious about your food, a guided culinary walk is perfect. Expect an in-depth exploration of a neighbourhood or type of eatery, with a sprinkling of heritage and history. **Unhurried** (www.unhurried.in) offers a range of food walks (one is dedicated to biryani alone) and **Bengaluru by Foot** (www.bengalurubyfoot.com) hosts culinary tours of various localities. Their Pettah walk is great for vegetarians while the Dastarkhwan walk is a "Muslim fine-dining experience".

Culinary Itinerary

Bengaluru is a dining powerhouse. Explore some of the most memorable pubs and restaurants of the city with this day-long guide to sightseeing and sampling food and drinks along the way.

MORNING

Start the day with a morning walk at **Lal Bagh Botanical Gardens** and then fuel up for the day at the famous **Mavalli Tiffin Rooms** (p24). After a hearty breakfast, head to the heart of the town past **Cubbon Park** to the **National Gallery of Modern Art** (NGMA), where you can enjoy a refreshing cup of tea between galleries at the wonderful in-house cafe. From here either travel another

The NGMA has a collection of Mysore paintings



800m to check out **Bangalore Palace**, or loop back via **Vidhana Soudha** for a photo-opportunity and make a quick stop at the **Government Museum**. Want to stop for a quick refreshing milk shake before lunch? Local institution **Lake View Milkbar** (p26) is the perfect place to do that.

Lal Bagh Botanical Gardens

Spread over 240 acres, Lal Bagh was commissioned by Hyder Ali and later completed under the rule of his son Tipu Sultan in 1760. As well as amazing centuries-old trees it claims to have the world's most diverse species of plants. Highlights of the park include a glasshouse and one of the four towers placed by Kempe Gowda to mark the boundaries of Bangalore in 1537. Lal Bagh, Mavalli; entry adults/children/parking ₹10/free/₹10; 6am–7pm

Cubbon Park

In the heart of Bengaluru's business district, the 296-acre expanse of Cubbon Park encompasses three major monuments: the **Seshadri Iyer Memorial Library**, the 1876-built **State Archaeological Museum** and the **Attara Kacheri** (court). Other wonderful colonial architecture around the park includes the colossal neo-Dravidian-style **Vidhana Soudha** (Dr Ambedkar Road), which makes a magnificent backdrop for photo-fanatics. www.horticulture.kar.nic.in/cubbon.htm; Kasturba Rd; 5am–8pm

National Gallery of Modern Art

Housed in a century-old restored mansion—the former vacation home of the Raja of Mysuru—this world-class art museum showcases an impressive permanent collection as well as changing exhibitions. The Old Wing exhibits works from pre-Independence, including paintings by Raja Ravi Varma.  080 22342338; www.ngmaindia.gov.in; 49 Palace Rd, Vasanthanagar; entry adults/children/foreigners ₹10/1/150; 10am–5pm (closed Mon & national holidays)


Bangalore Palace

Surrounded by landscaped gardens, the late 19th-century Bangalore Palace is reminiscent of England's Windsor Castle, with its Tudor-style turrets and towers. Go inside, though, and you will be taken into

The Vidhana Soudha offers great photo ops




the world of Mysore's royal Wodeyar family. Of particular note is the elaborate Durbar Hall, packed with paintings, artefacts, mounted animal heads, and more.

 080 23360818; 1 Palace Rd, Vasanthanagar; entry Indians/foreigners/camera ₹230/465/695; 10am–5.30pm

Government Museum & Venkatappa Art Gallery

An assortment of artefacts, weathered utility objects, weapons, musical instruments and paintings fill this museum. Exhibits range in era from 10th-century Hampi relics to items associated with 18th-century king Tipu Sultan. An attached gallery houses the works and personal memorabilia of K Venkatappa (1887–1962), court painter to the Wodeyar rulers.

 080 22864483; Kasturba Rd; entry adults/children ₹10/5; 10am–5pm (closed Mon & Sat)

Snapshot: Military hotels

Though there is some ambiguity about the exact origins of Bengaluru's military hotels, their name is attributed to the fact that these unfussy establishments mostly served British and Indian soldiers. Food critic and the author of *Bangalore's Sapad Raman* Ajit Saldanha notes, "In the British Indian Army, all classes and castes ate together, and they were expected to eat everything. The idea was that you would toughen up if you ate protein-rich fare. It's thought that soldiers developed a taste for non-vegetarian food which may not have been cooked at home". Some of these longstanding establishments remain popular for their hearty biryanis and other non-veg eats, including **Ranganna Military Hotel** (☎080 43027346; Jayanagar; mains ₹350), **New Govind Rao Military Hotel** (☎98440 20118; Majestic; mains ₹400), **SGS Donne Biryani** (☎98459 58799; Chickpet; mains ₹400), and **Rajanna Military Hotel** (☎99020 02318; Vijayanagar; mains ₹300).

AFTERNOON

For some pre-lunch shopping, swing by **Cauvery Emporium** (p27) on MG Road to pick up well-crafted souvenirs from different parts

Grilled pork chops at Koshy's

of the state, or to **Mysore Saree Udyog** (p27) for stunning saris on the fringes of Commercial Street. Then settle in at **Koshy's** (p23) for lunch amidst the babble of regular patrons. Grilled pork chops and rice and curry combinations are good



picks. For dessert dash around to **Corner House** (☎080 25583262; 45/3 Gopalkrishna Complex, Near Mayo Hall, Residency Rd; 11am–11.30pm) for their sinful 'Death by Chocolate'. If you're looking to relax or just catch up on emails, then **Church Street Social** (p27) is the perfect place. Time dependent, swing by to the latest museum of the city, **Indian Music Experience**, in JP Nagar. Leave before peak hours for evening drinks at Indiranagar.

Indian Music Experience

This interactive museum has floor-to-ceiling display of more than 100 indigenous instruments from all over the country. There are sections for not just classical and folk music but also Indian rock greats such as Pentagram and Indian Ocean. www.indianmusicexperience.org; Brigade Millennium Ave, Opp. Wood Rose Club, JP Nagar 7th phase; adults/children/foreigners ₹250/150/500 10am–6pm, Tue–Sun

EVENING

Spend the evening for pub hopping in Indiranagar, starting from **Bob's Bar** (p27); also pop into **Levitate** (p27), to shop for boho accessories. Then walk down to mainstay **Toit** (p27), **Sly Granny** (where there are interesting European eats, p22). The 12th Main Road in the neighbourhood is dotted with bars and you can quite possibly stop every 100m for a quick swig. **The Humming Tree** (☎98866 18386, Indiranagar) at the end of this road hosts a number of live gigs.

WINDING UP

Luckily, you can stay in the same neighbourhood for dinner if you are the worse for wear. **Forage** (p22) is perfect for a salad if you've had one snack too many, but for something more indulgent try **Bombay Brasserie** (p22). If you're still energetic, grab a cab to Whitefield for a coastal-style or even Malnad meal at **Oota Bangalore** (p21).

Top Tip: Street eats

There's nothing quite like street food to experience a city's food culture. Don't miss a visit to **Thindi Beedi** or Eat Street (Old Market Rd, VV Puram, 6.30–11.30pm), which stirs to life at dusk with people hollering for their *chaat* orders, juice, paper dosas, and sweets. Try local Kannadiga favourites such as milk-dipping chiroti.

Chiroti is a layered pastry that becomes even tastier when doused in saffron milk



Accommodation

Taj West End HERITAGE ₹₹₹

📞 080 66605660; www.tajhotels.com; 25, Race Course Rd, High Grounds; d incl breakfast from ₹13,999, Bathed in colonial-era elegance, Taj West End sits in one of the greenest pockets of the city. It's centrally located, the service is impeccable, and the food is great at Blue Ginger (Vietnamese) and Masala Klub (north Indian).

Taj Vivanta HOTEL ₹₹₹

📞 080 66604444; www.vivantabytaj.com; 41/3 MG Rd; d incl breakfast from ₹10,000 At the end of the arterial MG Road, the Taj Vivanta offers five-star luxury, complete with swimming pool, spa, gym, and an award-winning European restaurant called Graze.

ITC Windsor HOTEL ₹₹₹

📞 1800 1022333; www.itchotels.in; 25, Golf Course Rd; d incl breakfast from ₹9000 If you appreciate Raj-era aesthetics,

then this hotel is the perfect fit, with its verandahs, wood-panelled bar, and clutch of restaurants, including the glasshouse-like Raj Pavilion.

Grand Mercure HOTEL ₹₹₹

📞 080 45121212; www.grandmercurebangalore.com; 12th Main, 3rd Block, Koramangala; d incl breakfast from ₹8550 Contemporary decor, a poolside cafe, gym, spa, a deli, wi-fi facilities, and cycles to hire make it a convenient option in Koramangala.

Kumarakrupa Hotel HOTEL ₹₹₹

📞 080 22259404; www.kstdc.co; d (AC deluxe) ₹2250, incl breakfast This KSTDC run hotel is located in the heart of the city. The green setting offers a relaxing ambience to unwind, as do the plush interiors of the well-equipped rooms. An in-house restaurant serving authentic Kannada food (the thali is great), a gym and sprawling gardens complete the experience.

TOP CHOICE Home-style dining

Bangalore Oota Company Pre-book three or five course meals steeped in Gowda and Mangalorean roots. Dive into fantastic regional flavours with the owners themselves hosting you. The yellow interiors and red door are enticing enough, but wait till you taste the mamsa saaru (traditional mutton curry), bassaru (greens and lentil curry), and ammani jamuns for dessert.

📞 94483 02628; www.bangaluruootacompany.com; No. 5, Cambridge Cross Rd, Cambridge Layout; ₹2000 and above for two; noon–3.30pm, 7–11pm

The Restaurant–Coorg A 'weekend only' pop-up that serves fantastic homemade Coorgi food. Owners Priya and KC Aiyappa make sure to use traditional techniques and the freshest of spices. The rooftop buffet lunch gets booked fast. 📞 09845493688; 477 Krishna Temple Rd, 1st Stage, Indiranagar; mains ₹500–750; Fri 8–11pm & Sat/Sun noon–3.30pm & 8pm–11pm

Snapshot: Korean & Japanese restaurants

Given that Bengaluru is home away from home for many Korean and Japanese expats, there is a thriving food scene from these countries. **Soora Sang** (📞 080 4130 3435), **Hae Kum Gang** (📞 98802 16262), and **Arirang** (📞 080 4173 2581) are exactly where you need to go for a Korean kimchi or barbecue craving. For authentic Japanese fare, visit **Harima** (📞 080 4132 5757; Residency Rd) or **Edo** (📞 080 2211 9898; ITC Gardenia) if you're in the mood for something indulgent. **IQ1** (📞 080 49652864; www.iq1.in) serves everything from bento boxes to tuna tatakai.

Eating

Fly Dining ADVENTURE EXPERIENCE ₹₹₹

📞 84484 44960; www.flydining.com; House Of Life, Near Manyata Tech Park, Nagawara; ₹14,000 for two This unusual restaurant promises an 'adventure dining' experience (complete with an indemnity form!) and entails being lifted by a crane about 50m above ground level on an open platform. There, around a table that can seat at most 24 people, a chef whips up treats from a set menu as you feast your eyes on views of the city.

Oota Bangalore REGIONAL ₹₹₹

📞 88802 33322; Above Windmills Craftworks; 5B Rd EPIP Zone, Basavanna Nagar, Whitefield; mains above ₹1500; noon–3.30pm, 7–11.30pm An ode to the culinary heritage of Karnataka, Oota Bangalore has curated a spectacular menu of authentic cuisine from different parts of the state. How would a novice know what to order? Easy. Take a look at

the tablet menu, which points to the region on a map and explains what ingredients have gone into the dish. Here's where you can try everything from Bhatkal-style brinjal curry to Dharwad pedas.

Spicy and sour Bhatkal-style brinjal curry



Salvadore's Fine Dining

ANGLO-INDIAN ₹₹₹

☎080 49653492; www.salvadores.co.in; Central Mall, 5th Floor, MG Rd; mains above ₹2000; 11am–11pm (weekend breakfasts at 9am) Salvadores is all about paying homage to the past with a contemporary twist. Try nostalgic Raj-era delicacies such as dak bungalow chicken curry, railway mutton curry, and Irish stew. The menu also has French and Mediterranean dishes. Rooftop breakfasts on weekends are packed.

Sly Granny

EUROPEAN ₹₹₹

☎080 48536712; www.slystories.in; 3rd and 4th Floor, 618, HAL 2nd Stage, Indiranagar; mains above ₹2000; noon–11.30pm Done up like the imagined lair of an eccentric granny, this place feature fabulous pop-art and a gilded door. The menu has influences from

Experiencing the 'high' life at Fly Dining



all over Europe—think everything from tapas to rigatoni to duck.

Bombay Brasserie

MODERN
INDIAN ₹₹₹

☎080 41471004; 2989/B, 12th Main Rd, HAL 2nd Stage, Indiranagar; mains ₹1000–2000; noon–11pm (Mon–Thu), noon–midnight (Fri, Sat, Sun) Modern Indian cuisine meets a Mediterranean vibe. The food for the most part consists of old favourites with little twists—think gunpowder potatoes and Naga ghost pepper wings.

By the Peepal

GASTROPUB ₹₹₹

☎99867 97575; 637, 14th Cross Rd, 3rd Phase, JP Nagar; mains ₹1700; noon–1am Standing adjacent to a peepal tree, this is the perfect place to wind down. Highlights include multiple homegrown beers from its own microbrewery, a good selection of pizzas, and snacks ranging from tikkas to BBQ pork ribs. There are lovely green views on all three floors.

Forage

EUROPEAN ₹₹₹

☎88840 02112; 318, 6th Main Rd, HAL 2nd Stage, Indiranagar; mains ₹750–1000; 12:30–3:30pm, 7:30–10:30pm Ideal for an afternoon salad (try the lentils and red wine) or tapas (think spare ribs spiced with orange and ginger). Forage has a rather healthy menu, served amid plenty of greenery.

Dindigul Thalappakatti

BIRYANI ₹₹

☎080 4229 7250; www.thalappakatti.com; 100 Feet Rd, HAL 2nd Stage, Indiranagar; mains ₹500–750; noon–4pm, 6.30–11pm



Dindigul Thalappakatti is most famous for biryani, available in 10 iterations

You get all sorts of South Indian fare here, but the biryani is what it's justifiably famous for.

Nagarjuna

ANDHRA ₹₹

☎080 4280 0900; www.nagarjunarestaurants.com; #195, Indiranagar Double Rd, Near HDFC Bank, Stage 2, Hoysala Nagar, Indiranagar; mains ₹500–750; noon–4pm, 7–11pm Scrumptious thali and biryani, with humongous portions

The Hole in the Wall

BREAKFAST ₹₹

☎080 40949490; No.4, 8th Main, Koramangala 4th Block; mains ₹250–500; Tue–Fri 8am–3pm, 5.30–8.30pm & Sat/Sun 8am–3pm, Mon closed After a night out, this place offers hangover remedies such as juicy sausages, perfectly done eggs, and fresh juices.

Mangalore Pearl

COASTAL
KARNATAKA ₹₹

☎080 25578855; www.mangalorepearl.com; #3 Coles Rd, Above KC Das Sweets, Frazer Town; mains ₹500–750; noon–2.45pm & 7.30–10.30pm Dive into spicy coastal delicacies (especially the succulent prawns) and wash it all down with sol kadi (a refreshing pink drink of kokum and curd).

Koshy's

MULTICUISINE ₹₹

☎080 22213793; No. 39, St. Marks Rd; mains ₹500–750; 9am–11pm This old-timer has hosted illustrious guests such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Queen Elizabeth and remains popular. Today, uniformed waiters flit around busily with steel trays containing favourites such as mutton cutlets, baked beans, pots of tea, and caramel custard.

Halli Mane SOUTH INDIAN ₹

☎080 65611222; www.hallimane.com; 3rd Cross, Sampige Rd, Malleshwaram; mains ₹250–500; noon–3.30pm & 7–11.30pm The mud-plastered walls, Carnatic music, and traditionally dressed waiters are in sync with the typical South Indian rural fare (think ragi mudde, kundapura pathrode, and akki rotti) that is served here. A ₹150 coupon gets you an elaborate lunch.

Mavalli Tiffin Rooms (MTR) SOUTH INDIAN ₹

☎080 2222 0022; www.mavallitiffinrooms.com; #14, Lal Bagh Main Rd, Doddamavalli, Sudhama Nagar; mains less than ₹200; 6.30–11am, 12.30–9.30pm, Mon closed This legendary eatery (particularly the Lal Bagh branch) has had Bengaluru eating out of its hands

since 1924. Tuck into buttery dosas, capped by frothing filter coffee.

CTR (Shri Sagar) SOUTH INDIAN ₹

☎080 2331 7531; 7th Cross, Margosa Road, Malleshwaram; mains below ₹250; 7.30am–12.30pm, 4–9.15pm Another lazy Sunday favourite (it is also loved by actress Deepika Padukone), CTR's coffee is made personally by owner Sandesh Poojari. Try the benne dosa or a sweet-and-savoury novelty called chowchow *bhath*.

Airlines BREAKFAST ₹

☎080 22273783; No 4 Madras Bank Rd, Off Lavelle Rd; less than ₹200; 7am–10pm Early morning joggers, students bunking college, and other breakfast-seekers congregate under the shade of two large banyan trees

♥ If You Like: On-trend veg cuisine

Sante Spa A creative menu featuring the likes of quinoa upma and chilled avocado soup. (☎080 45128828; Indiranagar; 11am–11pm)

Paradigm Shift A vegan outfit focused on Thai food and multi-grain bakes. (☎96329 03999; 8, Terrace, Above GKB Opticals, 80 Feet Rd, Opp Sony Centre, Koramangala 4th Block; mains ₹800; 11am–11pm)

Carrots A 100% vegan restaurant with plenty of organic, gluten-free, sugar-free, and low-fat items such as the brinjal-mushroom platter and jaggery muffins. (☎080 41172812; www.carrots-india.com; No. 607, First Floor, 80 Feet Rd, Koramangala 6th Block; mains above ₹1000; noon–4pm, 7–10.30pm (weekdays) and 11.30am–11pm (weekends))

Vaathsalya Millet Café The millet thali here is a wholesome option packed with healthy sprouts, millet rotis, salads, and more. (☎94490 64494; 15th Cross Rd, Outer Ring Road, 277, 21st Main Rd, J P Nagar Phase 5, JP Nagar; mains ₹500–750; 10am–noon, 4–8pm, closed on Tue and Fri)

Enerjuvate Café Studio Try zucchini noodles and vegan shakes. (☎080 48148585; 82, 7th Main, Koramangala 4th Block; mains ₹500–750; 11.30am–10.30pm)

✓ Top Tip: Under-one-roof dining

A sprawling dining and shopping complex off MG Road, **UB City** (Vittal Mallya Rd, Lavelle Rd; 11am–12.30pm) offers plenty of choice in a single location. Fava, Farzi Café, Shiro, Rasovara and Sanchez are some of the popular restaurants that skirt a large open courtyard.

for delicious 'tiffin' items such as shivage bhath, idlis, and dosas. The coffee is especially good.

Vidyarthi Bhavan SOUTH INDIAN ₹

☎080 26677588; #32, Gandhi Bazaar Main Rd, Basavanagudi; mains below ₹200; Mon–Thurs 6.30am–11.30am, 2pm–8pm and Sat/Sun/govt. holidays 6.30am–2pm, 2.30–8pm, Fri closed Perfect for some old-world ambience (it's been around since 1943), crackling dosas and kara bhath (semolina cooked with chillies, spices, and a healthy dose of vegetables).

A crisp ghee dosa at MTR

Brahmin's Coffee Bar SOUTH INDIAN ₹

No.3, Ranga Rao Rd, Shankarapuram; mains below ₹200; 6am–noon, 3–7pm, Sun closed The popularity of this no-frills café in Old Bengaluru hinges on six items: idli, vada, khara bhath, kesari bhath, coffee, and badam milk.

Sri Krishna Cafe SOUTH INDIAN ₹

☎080 41104345; 143, KHB Colony, 1st Fl, 60 Feet Rd, 5th Block, Koramangala; mains ₹250–500; 7.30–11am, noon–3.30pm, 5.30–10.30pm Come to this simple place for a stomach-busting Tamil-style lunch of idlis, utthappams, idiyappams, and vadas.



TOP CHOICE Cafes & teashops

Indian Coffee House Perfect for coffee served with a splash of nostalgia. Take in the crumbling walls, old coffee posters, and constant chatter with some rose milk and cutlets. (☎080 25587088; Coffee House, 19, Ground Floor, Church St, Brigade Gardens; 8am–8.30pm)

Hatti Kaapi A perfect blend of classic Karnataka coffee packaged in modern coffee shops. There are outlets all over town. www.hattikaapi.com

Third Wave Roasters Responsibly sourced coffee from the estates of Chikkamagaluru. Outlets in Koramangala and Indiranagar. (www.thirdwavacoffee.in)

Infinitea An impressive selection of orthodox teas from the best estates. Their food (soups, salads, smoked chicken wings) also scores highly. (www.infinitea.in; 2 Shah Sultan Complex, Cunningham Rd; 11am–11pm)

Lake View Milk Bar DESSERTS ₹

☎080 25582161; www.lakeviewmilkbar.com; 89 Kanan Building, MG Rd; mains below ₹200; 8.30am–12am Having started its innings in 1930, this MG Road institution is still going strong and serves all manner of sundaes, waffles, and cakes (we recommend the Black Forest variety).

Idliappams are soothing rice noodle hoppers that go perfectly with hot curries



Drinking

Toit BREW PUB

☎080 25201460; www.toit.in; 298, 100 Feet Rd, Metro Pillar 62, Indiranagar; 11am–11pm This quirky wood-floored brewery has been “sending it” (a Bengaluru term for downing drinks) since 2010. Try the Toit Weiss white beer with some grilled fish.

Arbor Brewing Company BREW PUB

☎080 50144477; www.arborbrewing.in; Magrath Rd; noon–11.30pm Seven special brews and more to come are the highlight of this spacious brewery. The menu offers suggestions on the best pub fare to pair with different ales.

The Permit Room PUB

☎90191 13388; www.thepermitroom.in; 16/3, Ram Kunj, Opp Garuda Mall, Magrath Rd; mains above ₹1000; noon–

11.30pm; noon–1am (Fri) Try whisky-laced rasam, Guntur chilli with vodka and mango juice, or sample nouvelle south Indian cuisine—think along the lines of filter kaapi mousse.

Toast & Tonic PUB

☎080 4111 6879; www.toastandtonic.com; 14/1, Wood St, Ashok Nagar; noon–3pm; 7–11.30, 9am–3pm; 7–10.30 (Sunday) This place is known for the smooth gin ‘n’ tonic-based cocktails. Try the ‘British Raj’, which is infused with cinnamon and pomegranate. Nibble on gin-marinated duck buns.

Bob’s Bar PUB

☎78990 25176; 777/1, 100 Feet Rd, HAL 2nd Stage, Doopanahalli, Indiranagar; 11.30am–1pm The name is a throwback to the city’s ‘cantonment’ days, when bar-goers would call strangers at the next table ‘Bob’ to initiate a chat. Bengaluru-themed graffiti, old-style rattan chairs, and prices that hark back to a more affordable past ensure that this place is always packed. The kheema dosa packs a punch.

Church Street Social PUB

☎91520 17971; www.socialoffline.in; 46/1, Cobalt Building, Church St; 9am–1am A co-working space by day and a buzzing pub by night, this warehouse-style place checks all the boxes for an evening with buddies—lively ambience, inventive cocktails, enjoyable eats (the calamari with gunpowder goes great with beer), and friendly prices.



Bengaluru’s affection for craft beers is famous

Shopping

Mysore Saree Udyog

www.mysoresareeudyog.com; 1st fl, 316 Kamaraj Rd; 10.30am–8.30pm A great choice for top quality silk saris, blouses, fabrics and men’s shirts.

Levitare

☎080 64528190; Mezzanine Floor, 100 Ft Boutique Restaurant, 777/1, 100 Ft Rd, Indiranagar; 11am–9.30pm Vibrant boho apparel, kitschy knick-knacks, silver and costume jewellery, and other lovingly crafted accessories.

Cauvery Arts & Craft Emporium

☎080 25581118; www.cauverycrafts.com; 49 MG Rd; 10am–8.30pm An expansive collection of quality handicrafts from across Karnataka at prices to suit all budgets. A great option for souvenirs and gifts.

Detour: Mysuru

Historic Mysuru (formerly known as Mysore) is one of south India's most enchanting cities, famed for its glittering royal heritage and magnificent monuments (visit www.karnatakaturism.org/Mysore/en for a list of notable buildings). The city is also rich in tradition, with an atmospheric bazaar district and a well-earned fame for its vegetarian delicacies. Indeed, the Maharaja of Mysore Krishnaraja Wodeyar (1884–1940) was quite the connoisseur and made his staff experiment with different cuisines in the royal kitchen of Amba Vilas.

CULINARY SPECIALITIES

The city's name features on several iconic dishes, not the least of which is the Mysore masala dosa, which is distinguished by a chillies-and-garlic chutney on the inside of the pancake. You'll find it at any number of South Indian eateries in the city, including **Dasaprakash Paradise** (☎0821 400 8400; 104, Vivekananda Rd, Brindavan Ext, Yadavagiri; 24 hours) where you can also grab that 3am cup of filter coffee.

Another unmissable treat is the sweet and rich Mysore pak. Choose from a crumbly, dry variety or a moist ghee-soaked version at **Guru Sweet Mart** (☎08212443495; Shop No 1, Devaraja Market Building, Sayyaji Rao Rd; 8am–10.30pm, Wed–Mon & 8am–4pm, Tue). The owners say they are descendants of the royal cook Kakasura Madappa, who invented the sweet for Krishnaraja Wodeyar. Given that the city is a hub of Ashtanga yoga, with people flying in from all

Mysore dosa has a potato and onion filling (palya) and a lashing of garlic and chilli paste



Mysore pak is the city's resounding answer to fudge

over the world for simple living and complex poses, vegans will never go hungry. Visit **Dhatu Organics & Naturals** (☎0821 4193121; www.dhatuorganics.com; 1st fl off, 2826, 10th Cross Rd, Vani Vilas Mohalla; 9.30am–19.30pm) for excellent millet dishes, including ragi dosa and sprouted green gram curry. However, as far as atmospheric go, there's nothing quite like **Malgudi Cafe** (☎0821 425 5000; The Green Hotel, 2270 Vinoba Rd; 10am–7pm), which is loosely styled on the look and feel of the classic TV drama *Malgudi Days*, based on the work of author RK Narayan.

To explore the city's heritage further, consider the 'Best of Mysore' or 'Culinary Tour' offered by **Gully Tours** (☎96320 44188; www.gully.tours; Best of Mysore ₹2500 per head; Culinary Tour ₹1750). Both walks have a food focus. Still not sated? Consider a quick highway stop at Maddur town, 67km from Mysuru, to try its claim to fame: Maddur vada, a fried snack flavoured with curry leaves, coconut, asafoetida, and onion. Try it at **Maddur Tiffany** (☎88673 99992; Bangalore–Mysore Highway, Shivapura, Maddur; 6.30am–10.30pm).

GETTING THERE

Limited flights connect major cities (including Bengaluru thanks to recently introduced Alliance Air flights) to Mysuru airport. The city is well-connected by KSRTC buses and trains. The 144km drive from Bengaluru takes less than 3 hours.



KODAGU (COORG)

Why Go?

The Kodagu (Coorg) region has a diverse topography of mountains, coffee plantations, thick forests, paddy fields, and rivers, offering an irresistible package of adventure, coffee, and distinctive cuisine.

i Quick Facts

GETTING THERE & AROUND

Kodagu's main centres are Kutta, Kakkabbe, Kushalnagar, and Madikeri (the most centrally located). KSRTC buses head to Madikeri, Kushalnagar, or other points closest to Kakkabe (Baghamandala, Virajpet). For Kutta, it is best to drive down. Cabs are the most convenient option for navigating the region

(approx ₹10 per km, min 250–300 km per day).

WHEN TO GO

There's pleasant weather all year round. Oct–Mar are best for trekking and Jul–Aug for rafting.

GREAT FOR



🚫 Kodava Cuisine

First things first: famed as its cuisine is, there are not very many stand-alone restaurants in Kodagu, and the handful that exist are pint-sized ones wedged in small towns between acres of coffee plantations. Fortunately, you can sample the region's gourmet offerings in home-run estates camouflaged behind hillsides of thick coffee bushes. These places are where you get first row seats to anything from coffee growing to traditional Kodava cuisine, often underlined by pork dishes, bamboo shoot, kachampuli (a dark vinegar), and the rotund sautekaayi (cucumber) with its bright yellow stripes. A typical Kodava feast is likely to feature rice as a base. Nooputtu (string hoppers), otti (baked pieces made out of rice flour), pulao (mixed veg or non-veg rice) and kadumbuttu (rice flour balls), and akki roti are staples. Coorgis enjoy hearty non-veg cuisine. Pork is usually prepared in a dry fashion versus chicken or mutton, which are more frequently made with curry. However, even though Kodava cuisine is generally celebrated for its non-veg dishes, there is an abundance of seasonal produce utilised in creative ways as well. You can look forward to bamboo shoot (May–Aug), jungle mango (Apr–Jun), or jackfruit (Sep–Dec) as accompaniments to your meal. Look out for a snack known as koovaleputtu—ripe jackfruit or



(Top) Kadumbuttu or steamed rice balls
(Across) A fresh Coorgi brew

banana steamed in banana leaves and kumme (mushroom) curry. Those with a sweet tooth will enjoy *kajaya*, which are deep-fried donuts made of jaggery and rice flour.



Tasty tours

Gully Tours Try the 'Coorg Cooking Experience' in a 100-year-old bungalow with a warm Kodava host. Or go for the four-hour 'Monasteries and Momos' tour that explores the Tibetan culture of Bylakuppe (p33) and includes cooking and eating with a family. (📞96320 44188; www.gully.tours)
Ama Plantation Trails For a 360-degree coffee experience, sign up for the Ama Plantation Trails at various accommodations in Kodagu. Live the plantation life and enjoy a bean-to-cup coffee trip. (📞99002 12119; www.amaplantationtrails.com)

Culinary Itinerary

Coorg is spread over a large expanse of plantation-clad hills and a bit of the plains. To explore regional cuisine, Madikeri is the best base. However, even if you're on a trekking trip (p37) you will find authentic local dishes at your place of stay.

DAY 1: MORNING

Start the morning at **East End Hotel** (p37) where an egg dosa and coffee should serve you well. Then, check off some pre-lunch sightseeing.

Madikeri Fort

There are good views from this hilltop fort built by Tipu Sultan in the 16th century. Within the fort's walls are the hexagonal palace (now the

The architecture of Omkareshwar Temple features some Islamic elements



district commissioner's office) and a colonial-era church, which houses a small quirky museum.

10am–5.30pm Sun–Fri

Omkareshwar Temple

King Lingarajendra II commissioned this Shiva temple to be built in 1820 and it remains a revered site in Madikeri. There is a large pond in front of the main shrine.

6.30am–noon, 5–8pm

Raja's Seat

A well-maintained garden in Madikeri once used by the Kodava rulers, it offers stunning views of the valley below, especially at sunset

MG Rd; ₹5; 5.30am–7pm

Raja's Tomb (Gadduge)

The early 19th-century mausoleums of the Kodava rulers are located just short of the Abbi Falls. Built in the Indo-Saracenic style, the domes and minarets tower over Madikeri.

Dawn–dusk

DAY 1: AFTERNOON

Return to town for some pandi curry at **Folksy Food** (p37), run by Mr Lipton and his wife Leelavati. Then, head to **Abbi Falls** for a refreshing afternoon amidst nature.

Abbi Falls

Kodagu is home to several marvellous waterfalls slung over large craggy mountainsides. Stand-outs include Abbey Falls (8km from Madikeri and the most convenient to reach) on the River Kaveri.

DAY 1: EVENING

Set off for an early dinner, as things wind down quickly in the hills. Perhaps the most atmospheric option is **Raintree** (p36), which is located in a lovely heritage bungalow.

DAY 2: MORNING

Have breakfast at your hotel, and then go for a coffee plantation walk near Madikeri. **Gully Tours** (p31) runs a two-hour coffee trail and also provides refreshments.

DAY 2: AFTERNOON

For a change of location and cuisine, head to the Tibetan settlement of **Bylakuppe**. Post lunch, swing by **Dubare Elephant Camp**, about 26km from Bylakuppe. Alternatively, you can limit yourself to the day-long package (including lunch) at Dubare.

Bylakuppe

Located about 40km from Madikeri and 11km from Kushalnagar, Bylakuppe is the second-largest Tibetan settlement in India (after Dharamshala) and a fascinating cultural addition to the trip, with its stupas, prayer flags and monasteries. The area's highlight is the atmospheric **Namdroling Monastery** (www.namdroling.org; 7am–6pm), home to the spectacular Golden Temple (7am–6pm), presided over by three 18m-high gold-plated Buddha statues. Once your spiritual side is sated, head over to **Malaya Restaurant** (7am–9pm) for a Tibetan repast of momos and thukpa.



Namdroling Monastery at Bylakuppe

Dubare Elephant Camp

This unique facility led by the Karnataka Forest Department is near the Kaveri River. A short boat ride takes you across to the camp, where you can help bathe and groom elephants. With a day-long package with JLR you can also grab a coracle ride on the river, a guided walk through the forest, and lunch. ☎080 40554055; www.junglelodges.com; Dubare Elephant Camp; 8am–3pm; elephant activities/day trip/accommodation ₹885/₹1499/from ₹4267 (twin sharing)

DAY 2: EVENING

Stay in Kushalnagar for the night and experience local food at a homestay. We recommend the stylish **Eco Habitat** (p35), run by Som and Chethana.



EXPERT RECOMMENDATION

Kodagu's culinary traditions

Bangalore-based **Priya Aiyappa** and her husband KC own Bengaluru's popular weekend-only The Restaurant—Coorg (p20).

History The Kodava, a warrior tribe from the southwestern part of India, always ate what was available off the land. There was little foreign influence on the Coorgis' eating habits, and thus pork (from wild boar), jungle mangoes, jackfruit, kembh leaves (edible colocasia) and rice became the prime ingredients. Over time, of course, the cuisine has incorporated 'new' vegetables.

Cooking style Kachampuli provides the sauce base for most Coorgi dishes, especially non-vegetarian

ones. The thick, black pasty sauce is a product of the concentrated juice of a type of tamarind, and acts like a preservative to chicken, mutton, and pork. The use of green chillies is more prevalent than red chillies. The green ones are believed to cut fat in the body and are said to be healthier. None of the meats cooked use any additional source of oil, except for their own fat. Rice and rice-based breads are eaten with all dishes. Wheat is a recent addition to Coorgi cuisine and lentils are rarely used.

Kachampuli is a souring agent derived from the Malabar tamarind fruit



Accommodation

OFF MADIKERI

Evolve Back RESORT ₹₹₹

📍080 4618 4444; www.evolveback.com; Karadigodu Post, Siddapur; d from ₹39,000, full board, incl taxes Placed in the embrace of a 300-acre spice and coffee plantation, this resort boasts private pools, a beautiful spa, and several dining options, including a veg restaurant called Plantain Leaf and the Granary where you can try Kodava food.

Taj Madikeri RESORT ₹₹₹

📍082722 65900; www.tajhotels.com; 1st Monnangeri, Galibeedu, Post; r from 12,500 onwards, incl breakfast Nestled amongst 18 acres of rainforest, the Taj is perfect for the eyes and the soul. Stunning views, guided wilderness hikes, spa time, and more make it a perfect antidote to the city.

Mayura Valley View HOTEL ₹₹

📍08272 228387; www.kstdc.co; near Raja's Seat, Madikeri; d AC Deluxe from ₹3599 Mayura Valley View has a welcoming vibe and spectacular mountain views. The central location, comfortable furnishings and in-house restaurant (noon–10.30pm; mains less than ₹500) serving local dishes make it a top choice.

OFF KAKKABE

Tamara RESORT ₹₹₹

📍088 84000040; www.thetamara.com, Kabinakkad Estate, Napoklu Nad, Yavakapadi

Village; d starting ₹14,000, full board This plush hilltop resort is ideal for a bit of pampering after a day outdoors. The super-luxurious wooden cottages feature a private deck overlooking a 174-acre coffee plantation, where you can also take guided walks.

Palace Estate HOMESTAY ₹₹

📍08272 238446; www.palaceestate.co.in; Kakkabe, Near Nalknad Palace; d from ₹3600, incl breakfast The bright garden and wooden double storey building are a change from the shaded plantation stays nearby. Well located for Tadiandamol (p37).

OFF KUSHALNAGAR

Eco Habitat HOMESTAY ₹₹

📍94481 27245; www.ecohabitat.in; Chikbittagere Village, Guddehosur Post, Kushalnagar; d from ₹5400, incl breakfast

🍷 If You Like: Pork

The following restaurants dish up authentic versions of the region's most famous pork dishes.

- **Abeo's Kitchen** (Main Rd, opp. Private Bus Stand)
- **Coorg Cuisine** (opp. Head Post Office, Main Rd)
- **Coorg Foodlands** (Nethravathi Complex, opp. Private Bus Stand)
- **New Churchside** (opp. St Michael's Church, General Thimayya Circle, Tollgate)
- **Surabhi** (Main Rd, opp. Capitol Bar)

Som and Chethana's Eco Habitat has two cottages with personal splash pools. Each meal is better than the last, and Chethana's lemongrass tea is a revelation.

Bel Home PLANTATION STAY ₹

☎0876 2061135; www.bellhome.co.in; Bellarimotte Estate, Madapura Post; d from ₹4200, incl breakfast Spend time in the verandah of the 1928-built cottages or relax in the sit-out of the wooden cabins. Near coffee plantations and Kotta Betta (third-highest peak in Kodagu). Bel Home is run by third-generation planters Vijay and his wife Ramola—they are great hosts and very knowledgeable.

OFF KUTTA

The Jade HOMESTAY ₹

☎08274 244396; www.thejadecoorg.com; Manchalli, Kutta; d from ₹3500, incl

Steam-cooked semolina cakes known as rava idli, served with sambar and coconut chutney

breakfast and dinner Experience an exclusive stay in the old Coorgi style house, after crossing a bright green patch of paddy fields. It's perfect for those trekking to the Brahmagiri peak (base camp is just 2km).

Eating

Most people eat where they stay, but Madikeri has some good eateries.

Tiger Tiger COORGI ₹

☎99004 92800; Raja Seat Rd; 12.20–9pm Wed closed; mains ₹500–750 Close to Tiger's Seat, this family-friendly restaurant is known for pandi curry. Try the mango curry in the summer.

Raintree MULTICUISINE ₹

☎08272220301; 13/41, Pension Lane, Behind Town Hall; 10.30am–3pm & 7–10pm Mon–Fri, 11.30am–10pm Sat & Sun; mains ₹500–750 An upscale dining option set in a bungalow serving local Coorg and other Indian fare. The coconut payasam is a must-try.



If You Like: Nature trails

Brahmagiri trek The wavy ridge of the Brahmagiri range is never far from sight in Kodagu. The trail—which passes through deciduous forests, shola copses and grasslands—gives trekkers an opportunity to explore the area's rich biodiversity. The base of the trek is the stepped 52m **Iruppu Falls**, which spans the Karnataka and Kerala border. Note that the trek is strenuous with an ascent time of 8–9 hours. Forest entry ₹200 per head plus additional charges for the guard; permission: ☎08274–246331; Office of the Range Forest Officer, Srimangala; 10.30am–5.30pm

Tadiandamol trek The third-highest peak of Karnataka (1744m) overlooks deep valleys of lush shola forests and misty mountain ranges. Other than trekking (2–4 hours), you can get a glimpse of Kodagu's royal heritage at the 18th-century **Nalknad Palace** at the base camp. **Malalli Falls** Located 47km from Kushalnagar, the beautiful 61m Mallalli Falls lie at the base of the verdant Pushpagiri Hills. There are several walking trails here, although you can drive up too. The falls are at their best during the rainy season. **Kotte Betta** The third-highest peak in Kodagu, Kotte Betta (1645m) is 15km from Madikeri and a popular hiking destination with its coffee plantations, forests, and gurgling streams. It's suitable for beginners too.



You can spot parakeets on a birding tour

Taste of Coorg COORGI ₹

☎9449255969; 23–39, CMC Building, Madikeri–Virajpet Rd, Stuart Hill; 10am–8pm; mains less than ₹500 Unfussy interiors but excellent Coorgi food.

East End Hotel COORGI ₹

☎082722 29996; Behind East End Petrol Pump, General Thimayya Rd; 7.30–10.30am, 12.45–3.30pm, 4.30–10pm; mains less than ₹500 The mutton balls

and Coorgi-style chicken fry stand out in this old go-to.

Folksy Food COORGI ₹

☎94487 11459; 1st fl, RT Complex, Temple Rd, Chickpet; 1–3.30pm Mon–Sat; mains less than ₹500 While pork and chicken curry are reliable go-tos, also try the koot curry (vegetables in a toor dal). They do a good veg thali as well.



MANGALURU & UDUPI

Why Go?

Sitting on the Arabian Sea, Mangaluru (formerly Mangalore) keeps many a foodie hooked with its sensational, spicy seafood. Just an hour or so inland, temple town Udupi is famed for its veg cuisine.

i Quick Facts

GETTING THERE & AROUND

Mangaluru airport is 9km from Mangaluru city and 53km from Udupi. Both towns are well-connected by train to most South Indian cities; there are three trains from Bengaluru, two of which run daily. Travelling by road from Bengaluru is fairly convenient too. Mangaluru lies 353km west

of Bengaluru. Overnight journeys by private and KSRTC buses take about 9–10 hours.

WHEN TO GO

September–April are the coolest months and best for the beaches.

GREAT FOR



✂ Coastal Cuisine

The coastal region of Karnataka boasts an eclectic cuisine that bears the greatest influences from four communities—Bunt, Goud Saraswat, Catholic, and Konkani Muslim. The kitchens of these communities draw more or less from the same ingredients, but vary in their interpretations, making for an exciting mix of flavours.

There are two preparations that, more than others, define the culinary identity of the region: the Mangalorean ghee roast (think slow-cooked piquant masalas coating fresh seafood or chicken), and the *dosa*, which though ubiquitous now in south India, originated in Udupi. Yet, do not overlook the unassuming neer dosa (a light crepe made from rice batter) that is perfect for mopping up not just your crab ghee roast but also the unctuous kozhi gussi (a chicken curry flavoured with coconut and tamarind) or the humble puli kodel (a Mangalorean okra delicacy made with coconut masala). For something a little lighter, there is Udupi's comforting tomato rasam and mude (cylindrical idlis steamed in jackfruit leaves). As for teatime hunger pangs, there are delicacies such as Mangalore buns (fluffy pooris made from fermented flour and bananas), churmuri (puffed rice mixed with vegetables, peanuts, coconut oil, lemon, and sometimes grated raw mango), and semige rasayana (rice noodle cakes with coconut milk and jaggery).



(Top) A Mangalorean thali featuring fried whole fish (Across) Chicken ghee roast

TOP CHOICE Eat at a local home

For an authentic Mangalorean Christian meal, visit **Maya and Oswald** in their home in Kadri. After downing a welcome drink, help Maya in the kitchen to clean clams, prepare neer dosa and chicken curry. Work done, proceed to partake of a delicious four-course meal with them, capped of course by a filter coffee—the immersive experience takes three to four hours so make sure you've set aside enough time. (☎84484 49122; book via www.authenticcook.com; ₹1500 per head)

Culinary Itinerary

Tuluva-Mangalorean cuisine is the umbrella term covering the varied delights of this region where Tulu is a widely spoken language. Here ingredients such as coconuts, rice, curry leaves, and seafood are taken to great heights.

DAY 1: MORNING

Start with a robust breakfast of filter coffee and avalakki upma (rice flakes covered with a mix of dry poha and boondi, and tempered with coconut oil, curry leaves, and dry red chillies) at **Anmol Family Restaurant** (p44); they do a yummy chiku sheera too. Then get straight to the temples and beaches in and around the city.

Someshwara Temple

Located in Ullal, 9km off Mangaluru at the confluence of the Netravati River and the Arabian Sea, this Shiva

temple boasts a stunning backdrop. The temple stands at the site of a fort built by the 16th-century Rani Abbakka Devi, a freedom fighter who resisted Portuguese rule. She is immortalised in a bronze statue on horseback at the roundabout on the road to Ullal Beach. 6am–1pm, 3–8pm

Beaches near Mangaluru

A breezy stretch of beaches is one of Mangaluru's highlights, particularly the golden **Ullal Beach**, 12km south of the city. Other options include **Panambur** (10km), which has some watersports facilities (jet skis, parasailing, banana boats) from October to February and **Suratkal** (14km), home to the landmark **NITK lighthouse** (adults/children/foreigners/camera/video ₹10/3/25/20/25; 4–5.30pm; off limits in monsoons).

Parasailing off Panambur Beach



Detour: Udupi beach drive

Several traditional fishing villages dot the coastal stretch from Udupi to Murudeshwar (102km). **Mattu Beach**, 8.5km south from Udupi is a quiet spot away from tourists, unlike the very popular **Malpe Beach** (6km; think camel rides, food stalls, parasailing). **Kaup/Kapu Beach** (15km) is rather tourist-savvy with a few shops, but the towering **lighthouse** (₹10; 4–6pm; monsoons closed) warrants a stop. Further along the highway, the drive around **Maravanthe Beach** (53km) is especially scenic, the road flanked by the beach and the Souparnika River. You can also stop for a meal at the **Turtle Bay Resort** (www.turtlebayeco.com).

DAY 1: AFTERNOON

Work up an appetite for a traditional Mangalorean lunch at **Foodlands** (p44), which specialises in Bunt food. Try the squid ghee roast with neer dosa. Post-lunch, either go temple-hopping or head to the unique **Ashram Surfing Retreat** (☎96631 41146; www.surfingindia.net) in Mulki to ride the waves and consume cleansing vegetarian food.

Mangaluru's temples

A multitude of temples dot Mangaluru, and though most are not particularly grand in architecture, many are very well known amongst the religiously inclined. Of note are the 9th-century **Mangala Devi Temple** (6am–1pm, 4–8.30pm), the massive **Kadri Manjunatheswara** (5am–1pm, 4–8pm), and the elaborate **Kudroli Gokarnanatha** (6am–2pm, 4.30–9pm).

DAY 1: EVENING

For an early meal, **Hotel Karthik** (p44) is a quick stop for tuppa (ghee) dosa and a 'reverse' filter coffee, a

layered concoction of milk, coffee, and foam. Else grab some crab ghee roast or a fish thali at **Machali** (p44).

DAY 2: MORNING

Arrive at Udupi for a visit to the atmospheric **Sri Krishna Matha**, chased up with an authentic Udupi *dosa* at **Woodlands** (p45) a few steps away. Keep the rest of the morning for the **Coin Museum**.

Sri Krishna Matha

This 13th-century Krishna temple is a major draw in Udupi, with thousands queuing up to get a glimpse of the idol that can be seen through a metal perforation. Built by the Vaishnavite saint Shri Madhwacharya, the temple is usually crammed with devotees. Eight mutts (monasteries) surround the temple. Parking ₹10; 5am–9.30pm

Coin Museum

The evolution of Indian coins right from their inception to the latest launch can be traced in in the old



The gloriously mixed-up gadbad ice cream

home of Corporation Bank founder, Khan Bahadur Haji Abdullah Haji Kasim Saheb Bahadur. Mr Krishnayya is an enthusiastic guide. [☎0820 2530955](tel:08202530955); PB 15, Corporation Bank Building; 10am–5pm

DAY 2: AFTERNOON

With its creative decor, **Thaamboolam** (p45) is a convenient

lunch option, and not far from the excellent Museum of Anatomy and Pathology in Manipal. Do pop into **Hotel Diana** (p43) nearby for a round of 'gadbad' ice-cream for dessert.

Museum of Anatomy and Pathology

This museum is an excellent repository of hundreds of specimens of human and animal anatomy and can keep you busy for hours. Manipal; entry adults/children ₹10/5; 8am–6pm Mon–Sat, 24 hours on Sun

DAY 2: EVENING

Reserve the evening for a drive along the coast back to Mangaluru for a meal at **Shetty Lunch Home** (p43). Its Kundapura branch, incidentally, is believed to be the originator of the ghee roast, which gets its unctuous yet piquant taste from a paste of Bydagi chillies and other spices slow-cooked for as long as six hours in ghee. The mixture is particularly delicious with seafood and chicken but you will also find vegetarian versions featuring the likes of mushrooms and cottage cheese.

📷 Snapshot: Gadbad ice cream

The term '*gadbad*' means 'something wrong', but there is something very right about the mix of ice cream flavours, jelly, and nuts in this home-grown sundae, believed to have originated in **Hotel Diana** (p43). The story goes that the hotel's owner threw whatever was on hand to serve an ice-cream-hungry bunch of customers, and they liked it so much they returned to ask for the concoction again. Thus '*gadbad*' was promoted to a bonafide dish, and now features on several menus in the region.

🏠 Accommodation

The Ocean Pearl HOTEL ₹₹₹

[☎0824 2413800](tel:08242413800); www.theoceanpearl.in; Navabharath Circle, Kodialbail, Mangaluru; d from ₹7000 Black and white photographs of the coastal region hang on the walls throughout the hotel. The rooms are spacious and well lit and bathrooms are clean.

Goldfinch HOTEL ₹₹₹

[☎0824 4245678](tel:08244245678); www.goldfinchhotels.com; Bunts Hostel Rd, Mangaluru; d from ₹5249 Pleasant interiors with modern facilities and great service.

Blue Matsya SELF-CATERING BEACH HOUSE ₹₹₹

[☎98207 70427](tel:9820770427); www.bluematsya.com; Lighthouse Rd, Kaup Beach; d from ₹5000 (minimum 2 nights) This place is just off the Lighthouse at Kaup Beach near Udupi. The white-walled home, dotted with blue windows, offers lovely sea views from the balconies.

Hotel Diana HOTEL & RESTAURANT ₹

[☎72101 33600](tel:7210133600); Near Big Bazar, Jodukatte, Ajarjad, Udupi; d from ₹1000 Diana is famous in Udupi for its '*gadbad*' ice cream, but it also has spacious and clean rooms that rank as among the best in town.

🍴 Eating

Sannadige MANGALOREAN ₹₹

[☎8244245678](tel:8244245678); Balmatta, Mangaluru; mains ₹750–1000; noon–3.30pm, 6.30–11pm The Mangaluru-style pomfret, prawns, and mud crabs will delight seafood lovers.

Shetty Lunch Home MANGALOREAN ₹₹

[☎9945618222](tel:9945618222); Don Bosco Hall Cross Rd, Hampankatta, Mangaluru; mains ₹500–750; 11.30am–3.30pm, 6.30–11pm A pitstop for seafood biryani and other non-veg fare. The Kundapura branch ([☎9152603091](tel:9152603091); Kundapura, near New City bus stand, Udupi) takes credit for the ghee roast style of cooking.

Maharaja Restaurant MANGALOREAN ₹

[☎1st Floor, Trade Centre, Near Jyothi Talkies, Bunts Hostel Rd, Mangaluru; mains ₹250–500; 11.30am–11pm](tel:250500) An old-style family lunch home serving the most scrumptious cashew-topped chicken ghee roast, among many other non-veg preparations.

A fish-and-rice meal served on a banana leaf





Goli/Mangalore bajji is a fried snack flavoured with ginger and coconut

Thaamboolam INDIAN ₹

☎0820 4296418; Opp Kalpana Theatre, Diana Circle, Comfort Towers, Kinnimulki, Udupi; mains ₹250–500; 10.30am–3.30pm, 6.30–11.30pm The attractive ethnic décor (a bullock cart, indigenous wall art, and more) provides a pleasant setting for multi-cuisine Indian fare. It's a good bet if you want to have North Indian food.

Foodlands MULTICUISINE ₹

☎0824 428 1528; MG Rd; mains less than ₹500; 11am–3.30pm & 6.30–11.30pm This place does an excellent Mangalorean thali (fish, chicken, veg). The Kundapur chicken is yum.

William Pereira Hotel MULTICUISINE ₹

☎0824 2425430, 948015811; Opp University College, Ganapathi High School

Rd, Hampankatta, Mangaluru; mains less than ₹500; 11am–10pm Try coastal Christian dishes such as pork bafat.

Gajalee SEAFOOD ₹

☎0824 2221900; Circuit House Compound, Opp Kadri Police Station, Kadri, Mangaluru; seafood from ₹230; 11am–11pm The seafood here is more coastal Maharashtrian than Mangalorian, but who cares when the crab masala is so good? It also gets points for its location in an old Portuguese villa with al fresco dining.

Machali SEAFOOD ₹

☎077959 57575; Behind Ocean Pearl, Sharada Vidhyalaya Rd, Kodailbail, Mangaluru; mains less than ₹500; 11.30am–3.30pm, 7–10pm Expect the freshest seafood, ranging from prawn biryani, to fish egg ghee roast, to satisfying thalis. It's often crowded but well worth the wait.

Anmol Family Restaurant VEG ₹

☎0824 222 2302; Near Baliga Super Market, Kavoor Rd, Bejai-Kapikad, Mangaluru; mains less than ₹200; 7am–10.15pm A great breakfast option. Try the Mangalore buns.

Hotel Karthik VEG ₹

☎0824 2458161; Opp Uruva Police Station, Kottara, Mangaluru; mains less than ₹200; 7am–8pm Best known for its three-layered 'reverse filter coffee' (milk, coffee, foam) and veg dishes.

Pabbas DESSERTS ₹

☎0824 245 7925; Sree Krishna Prasad, Lal Bagh, Mangaluru; mains less than ₹200; 10am–9pm Cold treats galore, including Mangaluru's version of Udupi's 'gadbad' ice cream (p42).

Woodlands UDUPI ₹

☎0820 2522807; Dr UR Rao Complex, Near Sri Krishna Matha, Thankapet, Udupi; mains below ₹200; 8.30am–3.30pm, 5.30–10.30pm An old-timer serving the beloved Udupi dosa and a range of other dishes. The dingy basement restaurant gets packed lunchtime.

If You Like: Wine & whisky

Nandi Hills near Bengaluru (p14) encompasses one of India's premier wine-growing regions, with some 18 wineries. Also near Bengaluru is India's first single-malt whisky distillery, which allows tastings.

Grover Wineries At an altitude of at 920m this winery produces quality white and red varietals. Tours include tastings of five wines in the cellar rooms accompanied by cheese and crackers, followed by lunch. It's located on the approach to Nandi Hills, around 40km north of Bengaluru.

☎080 27622826; www.groverzampa.in; 1.5 hr tour Mon–Fri ₹850, Sat & Sun ₹1000
Bangalore Soma Vineyards Located in the shadow of the Makalidurga Hills (Maakli) the lakeside winery offers a lush sprawl of grape plantations, along with fruit trees including coconut palm, custard apple, and mango. A guided walk, wine-making and an evening of BBQ make for great weekend revelry. ☎9845428071; Raju Estate, Gundamgere Village, Sonnenahalli; ₹2500 per person, incl tour, lunch & BBQ)

Heritage Grape Winery If you're short on time, stop here on the way to Mysuru. Get a 45-minute tour of the vineyards and bottling plant; an in-house restaurant offers continental and north Indian fare. ☎080 26602667; 115/86, Gangedoddi Village, Chekkere Post, Channapatana; ₹150 per person)

Amrut Established in 1948, Amrut, India's first producer of single malt whisky, offers free distillery tours run by knowledgeable guides. You can also have tastings of world-class single malts and blends. It's 20km outside Bengaluru on the road to Mysuru; pre-bookings are essential. ☎080 23100402; www.amrutdistilleries.com; Mysuru Rd)



CHIKKAMAGALURU & AROUND

Why Go?

With its emerald coffee plantations and cool climes, Chikkamagaluru invites visitors to trek up its hills, raft down gushing waters, and sample Malenadu (literally 'land of the hills') or Malnad cuisine.

i Quick Facts

GETTING THERE

Car: Chikkamagaluru is about 245km from Bangalore on NH75. It takes about 5 hours to reach, but may take up to an hour longer if you stay at a coffee plantation on the outskirts of town.

Bus: A host of private and KSRTC buses run between Bengaluru

and Chikkamagaluru at regular intervals. Opt for an overnight bus to optimise time.

WHEN TO GO

The weather from September to March is coolest.

GREAT FOR



🚫 Malnad Cuisine

Wholesome and fresh, Malnad cuisine draws from the seasonal produce of the hilly regions—including bamboo shoots, colocasia leaves, turmeric leaves, and raw jackfruit. It's pretty healthy too, with plenty of steamed rather than fried preparations on the menu.

While there are culinary variations between northern and southern Malenadu—such as ragi having precedence over rice in Hassan, say—a typical Malnad feast will feature dishes such as kaalu kadubu (dumplings tossed with spicy fenugreek leaves and beans), chattituttu (a rice-based snack featuring chillies, coconut, and onions), vottushaavige uppittu (rice vermicelli cooked with veggies and spices), fresh bamboo shoot curry, akki roti and thumbuli (a spiced yogurt-based side dish).

Regional dosa varieties include halasina dosa with jackfruit as a filling and gangalada dosas, which are prepared in earthen pots, fried in ghee, and often served with mutton curry. Another tasty combo is kozhi saar—a coconutty chicken curry paired with flatbreads or dumplings.

When you're in the region, do try to sample pure veg Havyaka cuisine. Dishes include deev halasu (breadfruit and buttermilk curry) and haagilkaayi kaayirasa (bitter gourd in sweet sauce). You can try it at **Gundi Mane** (p51), a lovely homestay near Jog Falls.



(Top) Akki roti is a soft rice-flour flatbread
(Across) Fresh jackfruit, a summer favourite

📷 Snapshot: Chigli chutney

The Malenadu region specializes in a fiery and tangy chutney made from kempu iruve or red fire ants. The ants are harvested from their nests early in the morning, wrapped in a leaf, and brought to kitchens to grind and roast with salt, chili, garlic, and onions. The protein-rich chutney is eaten with rice and believed to have medicinal properties for ailments such as cough and flu. You will often find it at hotels and homestays in the region, including **Flameback Lodges** (p50) in Chikkamagaluru.

Culinary Itinerary

To experience Malnad cuisine, and feast your eyes on nature, here's an itinerary taking in Chikkamagaluru, Agumbe, and Jog Falls.

DAY 1: CHIKKAMAGALURU

Base yourself at a plantation or homestay (p50) for warm hospitality and local food. Some, such as **The Serai**, offer bean-to-cup coffee trails, while others serve excellent regional cuisine, like **Balur Estate** and **Woodways**. While you're here cover the **Big Mountain Loop** and **Hebbe Falls**.

The Big Mountain Loop

The mountain loop is a good way to cover some of the

most talked about spots in Chikkamagaluru, allowing you to take in **Sheethalagiri**, a 1000-year-old Mallikarjuna temple, **Baba Budangiri hill**, named after the saint who planted the first coffee beans in India here, and **Mullayangiri**, the highest peak (1930m) in the state.

Ballalarayana Durga

The 12th-century Ballalarayana Fort, built by the Hoysala king Veera Balala I, is situated on the high reaches of Bettabalige in Chikkamagaluru (459m). While little remains of the structure, it offers stunning views of the rolling hills below and makes for a great trek. www.indiahikes.com

Detour: Jog Falls

Located 138km north of Agumbe, **Jog Falls** is known for the namesake waterfalls that plunge down from a height of 253m, making them one of the highest waterfalls of Asia. Check in here at **Gundi Mane** (p51), one of the best homestays in the region and where you can enjoy excellent Havyaka fare, which is tough to find in restaurants.



Hebbe Falls

Getting here is an adventurous 13km off-road drive. Rickety jeeps are available on hire for a round trip. The actual falls are reached after a short walk, including crossing a shallow stream at two points. It's worth it when you see a 167m drop from below the gushing water. Entry/parking ₹50/₹10; 8am–4pm

The first coffee bush was planted at Baba Budangiri hill

Dakshinamnaya Sri Sharada Peetham (☎082 65250123; www.sringerisharadapeetham.org; 6am–2pm, 4–9pm; meals 12.15pm–2.30pm, 7.15–8.30pm) at Sringeri, where you can partake of a free community meal of sambar-rice with fresh and tasty Malnad-style veggies.

DAY 2: AGUMBE

With its tropical evergreen rainforest, waterfalls, and stunning biodiversity, hilly Agumbe (113km) is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is also known as the king cobra capital of India. Learn more about snakes at the **Kalinga Centre for Rainforest Ecology** (☎94808 77670; www.kalingacre.in). About 7km from Agumbe village, it offers tented accommodation. Alternatively, stay at **Dodda Mane** (p51), or just stop by for a wholesome homemade lunch. A further detour of 28km from Agumbe will take you to the ancient

If You Like: Rafting

Besides providing a pretty backdrop to Chikkamagaluru, the Bhadra River also provides rafting opportunities. The 3–4km circuit covering three rapids takes about an hour. **Ace Paddlers** are a well-known provider of rafting trips and offer packages that include camping, food, and even treks. (☎94809 87672; www.acepaddlers.com; ₹1200 per person; all year round)

Accommodation


Trivik Hotels & Resorts

RESORT ₹₹₹

 9880552711, 9148971583; www.trivikhotels.com, Channagondanahalli, Elunoorkhan Rd, Mullayangiri; full board from ₹24,000 Located amid 38 acres of coffee plantations near Mullayangiri, this family-friendly resort features massive suites with Jacuzzis, gorgeous hill views, a kids' play area, and a good selection of local cuisine and other fare.

The Serai

PLANTATION RESORT ₹₹₹

 8262 224903; www.theserai.in; K.M Road, Mugthihalli Post, Chikkamagaluru; r incl full board from ₹19,000 There's every luxury here, with all the villas boasting a jacuzzi or pool. They arrange visits to the plantations, where you can learn about coffee making and have a taste.

The Serai primarily features natural materials such as wood in its decor




Flameback Lodges

RESORT ₹₹₹

 82632 15170; www.flameback.in; Near Devalankere, Sakleshpur; d incl full board from ₹12,000 Private villas, suites and cottages with sunning decks, Jacuzzis, and a pool distinguish the boutique resort with views of a lake, waterfall, and paddy fields. The food isn't 'fancy' but it's certainly yummy.


Taj Gateway

HERITAGE ₹₹₹

 180011825; www.tajhotels.com; Jyoti Nagar Post; d from ₹8500, incl breakfast Nested on the lush Sahyadri slopes, this hotel offers plush rooms, indoor and outdoor games, a swimming pool, and great in-house dining.


Woodways

HOMESTAY ₹₹₹

 96630 71775; www.woodwayhomestay.com; Jakkanhalli Post, Chikkamagaluru; d incl full board from ₹8000 Sushmita and Shreedev have run the tastefully furnished Woodways for over 10 years. They are extremely knowledgeable about the region, passionate about conservation and serve up delicious Malnad food.


Gundi Mane

HOMESTAY ₹

 09900956760; www.gundimane.com; Gundimane Aralgodu; 1 night, 2 days packages ₹3200 per person Situated between a 100-acre plantation of areca trees, coffee, pepper, and fruits (19km from Jog Falls), the abode of Mrs Chandrakala and Mr Ganpathi Rao serves authentic Havyaka food.

Dodda Mane

HOMESTAY ₹

 08181 233075; Jenni Akka, Agumbe; 'pay what you like' policy Visit Kasturi Akka's homestay for an overnight stay or just for lunch—fresh, simple, and served on a banana leaf. The claim to fame of this century-old house is that two episodes of *Malgudi Days* were shot here in 1985.

If You Like: Northern Karnataka cuisines

Karnataka's beaches, hills, and major cities get all the kudos, but there are many other destinations here—particularly in the north—that are not only of historical interest, but also offer gastronomic pleasures. Here are some:

Ballari (formerly Bellary) Just 60km from Hampi, Ballari has a spectacular rockscape and a 16th-century hilltop fort. Culinary specialties include batti chutney (meatballs made from goat innards with hand-pounded red chillies and garlic) and 'cycle khova'—a milk-based sweet dispensed by travelling vendors.

Belgaum (Belagavi) With sightseeing options in the form of the 13th-century Belgaum Fort, the Military Mahadev Temple, and the Gokak Falls, Belgaum is also famous for its sweets. Try the kunda (made of sugar, milk, and curd) and mandige (a crepe with a sugar, ghee, and khova filling).

Vijayapura (Bijapur) The Adil Shah Dynasty left an architectural imprint here in the form of Gol Gumbaz, Ibrahim Rauza Tomb, and the Jama Masjid. Tuck into fragrant biryanis, shenga (groundnut) chutney, and kardanatu (a chewy 'fried gum' dotted with nuts).

Kalaburagi (Gulbarga) Known as a 'Sufi city' and was once under Aurangzeb's rule. It is best known for the Khwaja Banda Nawaz Dargah, an important Muslim pilgrimage site and its 14th-century Jama Masjid. You will find plenty of Mughlai-style cuisine here, including pathar gosht (stone-cooked meat) and interesting sweets such as paan mithai.



A bowl of rich kunda mithai

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