

For all the... (unreadable)

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WHAT'S THE  
BIG IDEA?

Robin Hood drives  
the ambulance

**Kangna Ranaut**

'I can't fit in a  
romance right now'

[www.pinkvilla.com](http://www.pinkvilla.com)

**AMISHA  
PATEL**

On the troubles  
that won't quit

Violins, roses  
and a big bowl  
of spaghetti

3 liposuctions  
and counting...

**MY SURGERY  
ADDICTION**

Nandita Das goes  
weak in the knees

**Love**  
*and the*  
**M-word**

*How marriage changes everything*

Photos: [unreadable]



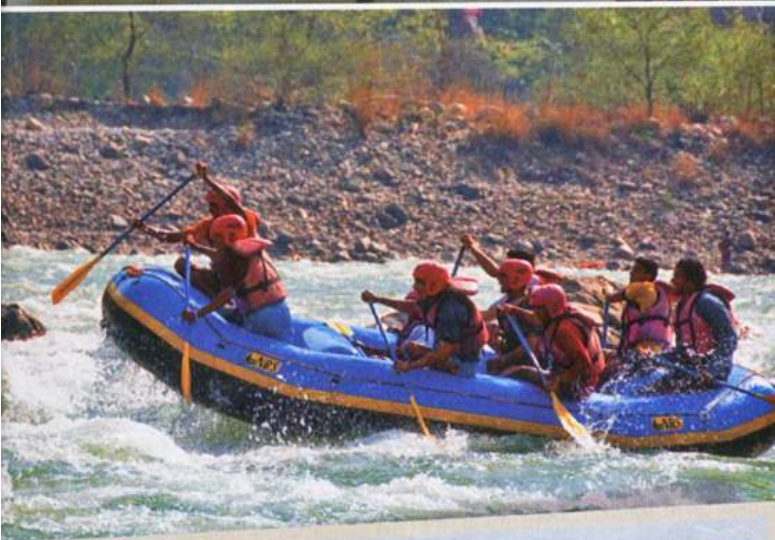
# JUST YOU & ME THIS VALENTINE'S

Just discovered you can take off for a long Valentine's Day weekend, but don't know where to go? Coorg is the hideaway you're looking for. **Smita** and **Kishore Iyengar** found opportunities for many intimate moments in the Blue Mountains

ROMANCED  
BY  
COORG



From top to bottom: A romantic planter-style meal on the verandah; white water rafting; an elephant ride in Dubare Reserve Forest; an artefact from Sara Je (right); Facing page: Take a coracle ride on Perambady and Honnama lakes



**Y**ou don't have to go far this year for a romantic Valentine's Day getaway. Head south towards Coorg, in a cosy corner of the Blue Mountains, that is an ideal lovers' retreat.

Perched at 1,525 m above sea level in the Nilgiris, Coorg is blessed with an unhurried country charm—perfect for couples looking for a little alone time. Most importantly, you'll never be in want of privacy. Coorg is a child-free area, so intimate moments won't be interrupted by restless kids with bad timing and powerful vocal chords.

## AN EXPERIENCE FOR THE SENSES

### Sight

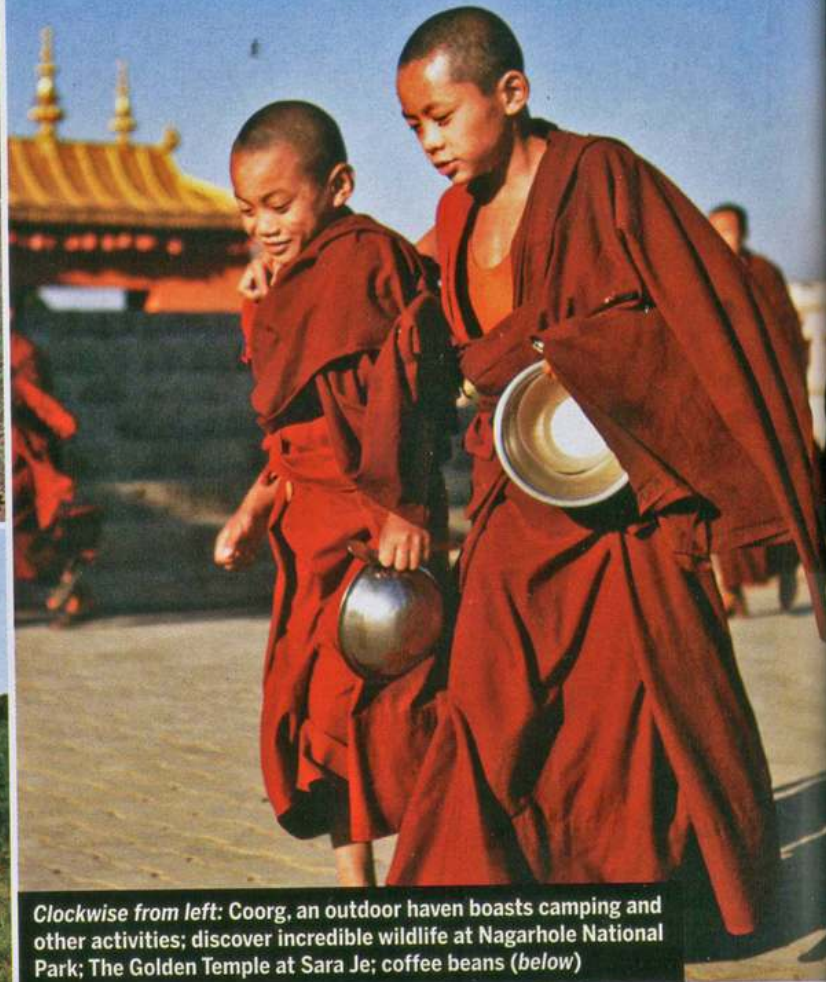
Serene landscapes, undulating hills with terraced tea and coffee plantations, orange orchards and aromatic spice estates make Coorg feel like nature's El Dorado. This hill station also boasts wildlife reserves, placid lakes, ancient churches and temples, and quaint villages.

### Smell

Pollibetta or Planter's Town has lush coffee and pepper plantations. The Tata Coffee estate is a must-visit.

### Sound

Listen to the gushing sounds of water at Bhagamadala—the holy *sangam* (union) of the rivers Kaveri, Kanike and Sujyoti. ►



**Clockwise from left: Coorg, an outdoor haven boasts camping and other activities; discover incredible wildlife at Nagarhole National Park; The Golden Temple at Sara Je; coffee beans (below)**

**Nagarhole National Park is one of India's best tiger reserves. Also expect to see Nilgiri langurs and peacocks. Fresh water springs and waterfalls up the romance quotient.**

**Taste**

Sweeten the deal at Virajpet, the largest producer of honey in Asia. Sample some of that golden goodness and then head off to Iruppu Falls, known for their misty cloud-lined beauty.

**Touch**

Settle in at Raja's Seat, a garden of flowers and fountains at a panoramic outpost near Madikeri, and huddle together to take in a glorious sunrise or sunset—much as the Kings of Kodagu were known to do with their queens.

**A BIRD'S EYE VIEW**

Dubare Reserve Forest is an interactive working elephant camp on the banks of the Kaveri, where you can see pachyderms eating sugarcane, coconut and bananas. An eager mahout may even offer you a free ride. Nagarhole National Park, now renamed the Rajiv Gandhi National

Park, is a thickly-wooded wildlife park and one of India's best tiger reserves. Expect to see tigers, wild dogs, bison, leopards,

gaur, antelopes, sambars, chitals, Nilgiri langurs, peacocks and

lion-tailed macaques. Fresh water springs and waterfalls up the romance quotient. Coorg's heavy rainfall ensures a variety of bird life too. Over 2,000 species thrive in the Devarakaadu forest, including the Malabar trogon, grey-breasted laughing thrush, white-belly treepie, blue-winged parakeet, grey-headed bulbul and the Nilgiri wood pigeon.

**MEET UNUSUAL HOSTS**

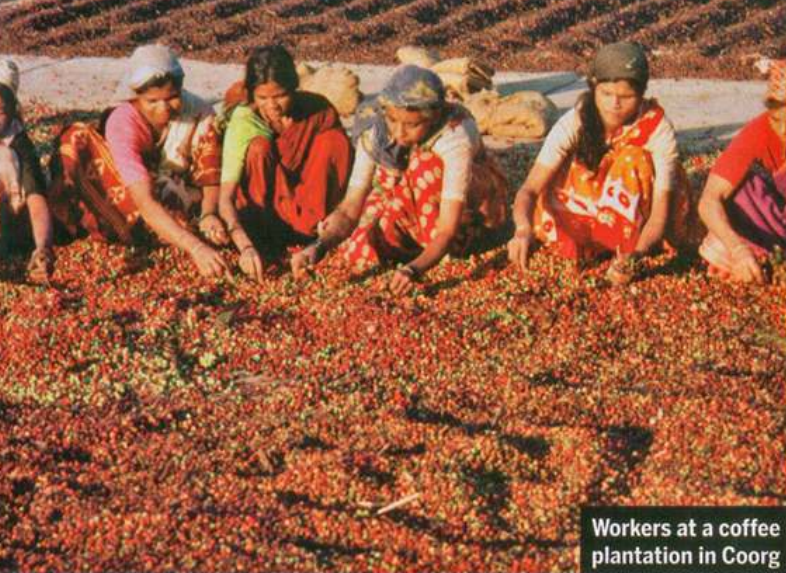
Coorg is home to the largest Tibetan settlement in India. Karnataka's own Little Tibet flourishes at Sera Je. Experience bliss with the chanting of Tibetan monks at the grand Golden Temple at Namdroling. Continue the cultural tour with a visit to the Clock Tower, a century-old monument. Soak up the old-world charm at Suntikoppa, a typical planter's town, perfect for drives along the vast coffee estates. For some local flavour, head to Orange County Kabini, a resort styled after the *hadis* (local tribal villages). Visit the village of the Kurubas to learn about their customs.

**ADVENTURE AND DOWN TIME**

Coorg has activities to suit all kinds of personalities. Catch *mahseer* and *maral* at Valanoor, an angler's paradise in the Kaveri backwaters or glide along in coracles here, and at the Perambady and Honnamma lakes.

Adventure sports enthusiasts can go white water rafting around the Barapole River or try parasailing or paragliding between mid-June and mid-September. Trekkers can push themselves up Thadiyendamol, Coorg's highest peak.





Workers at a coffee plantation in Coorg

Go walking down country lanes, past coffee, cardamom, spice, tea and clove plantations. In the monsoon, soak up the greenery, waterfalls and gushing springs. Then settle down with champagne or cognac on the verandah, planter style.

### FOOD TO WARM YOU RIGHT UP

Tickle your taste buds with *puttus* (rice balls), *pandhi* curry (pork), *nool puttu* and *koli kari* (noodles and chicken curry) and *yarchi* (lamb). Also try the Coorgi papads and pickles.

Coorg's misty vales, lush plantations, serene lakes and soul-satisfying food are all that you need this Valentine's Day. ●

## FACT FILE: COORG

### Getting there

**Luxury:** Jet Airways flies Mumbai to Mangalore (the nearest airport) at ₹6,400 per head for a return ticket.

**Mid-range:** Take the LTT Ernakulum train from Mumbai to Mangalore. First class AC return tickets cost ₹4,500 approximately.

**Budget:** Take the Matsyagandha Express or Mangalore Express from Mumbai to Mangalore at ₹2,000 for 3AC return tickets.



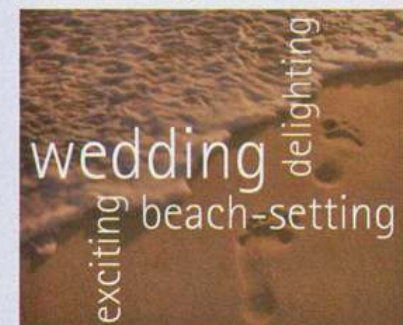
### Where to stay

**Luxury:** Orange County Luxury Resort, 080 4191160/2/3, [www.orangecounty.in](http://www.orangecounty.in), offers rooms from ₹33,000 to ₹75,000 for a couple for 3 nights/4 days (inclusive of three meals, nature activities, plus taxes.). Orange County Kabini Resort, 080 4191160/2/3, [www.orangecounty.in](http://www.orangecounty.in), offers rooms between ₹27,200 and ₹44,000 for a couple for 2 nights/3 days (inclusive of three meals, nature activities, plus taxes).

**Mid-range:** Heritage Resort, 08272 265794/5/6, [www.heritageresortcoorg.com](http://www.heritageresortcoorg.com), offers rooms at ₹10,000 per night for a couple (inclusive of breakfast, lunch, dinner, refreshments and tea/coffee).

**Budget:** The homestay at Silver Brook Estate, 08272 200701, 919449272703, [www.silverbrokestate.com](http://www.silverbrokestate.com), offers a suite cottage at ₹4,750 per night (inclusive of breakfast).

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