

# CHRISTIANITY IN KERALA

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In 52 AD, St. Thomas the

Apostle, one of Jesus' 12 Disciples, sailed down the Red Sea and across the Arabian Sea to the Malabar Coast of Southwest India to preach the Gospel of Christ. He found a receptive audience among the peaceful fisherfolk in the villages along the coast – so receptive he established a series of churches that still exist today. Some remain small and humble, others like the one above rebuilt with soaring glass and stone.

There are many Christian denominations in the Indian state of Kerala, which has the entire Malabar Coast, from the original St. Thomas Syrian Christians to Catholic, Pentecostal, Charismatic and others. Of Kerala's 34 million people, at least 20% are Christian. Kerala is a place of relaxing beauty and peaceful serenity. The best way to explore it is via a luxurious houseboat along the many canals or "backwaters" dotted with fishing villages and churches. You'll be warmly welcomed. (*Glimpses of Our Breathtaking World #155*, photo ©Jack Wheeler)

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