



When we were whisked by speed boat to the Kumarakom Lake Resort, we knew we had saved the best for last. Two beautifully restored, three-hundred year old palaces have been reconstructed to create the dining, reception, and ayurvedic center in this truly remarkable place. We were welcomed with drinks served in coconuts, and greeted by our own private chef. He escorted us onto our own luxury houseboat then took our food order. Our chef served us three exotic, mouthwatering meals every day. How he created them in the boat's tiny kitchen is still a mystery to us. We spent the next two days floating on the waters in this area, watching the villagers in their daily routines. We saw their close connection to nature, manifested in their way of life. The primary crops in the area are rubber, rice, and bananas.

This economy is supplemented by an ever increasing tourist trade.

We spent our last few days being pampered at the five star resort and I decided to experience some of the Ayurvedic treatments offered at the hotel. Ayurveda is an ancient and healing holistic science rooted in India. I started with the "pathra podala swedam" treatment, whereby medicinal plants and healing powders are prepared in oils then applied in muslin cloth over one's body by two practitioners. In another treatment called "sidodhara," soothing oils are applied to the forehead and are used to relax the mind. These treatments did soothe my body and mind in preparation for the long flight homeward.



Looking back, India is a magical and enchanting faraway land like no other. Mankind and nature coexist in idyllic harmony. India's magnificent and changing landscapes, grand historic architecture, and diverse, rich culture are testimony to its enduring ancient civilization and culture spanning many centuries. Even India's busy, emerging modern cities are rooted in this traditional and ancient culture. Our journey was an unforgettable experience and an experience that we will always treasure. THE MEMORY OF THIS VERY SPECIAL JOURNEY LIVES ON IN MANY OF THE BEAUTIFUL AND UNUSUAL SCENES CAPTURED IN OUR PHOTOGRAPHS.



For further travel info the writer/photographer may be contacted at:  
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