

# A Study on Coffee Tourism and Homestays: A New Tourism Trend in Karnataka

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## **ABSTRACT**

Coffee tourism and homestays have emerged as a significant new tourism trend in Karnataka, particularly in regions like Coorg, Chikkamagaluru, and Sakleshpur. This form of tourism combines plantation experiences with local culture, offering visitors an immersive and sustainable travel alternative to conventional destinations. Tourists are attracted by activities such as coffee harvesting, processing demonstrations, plantation walks, and traditional Malnad cuisine, while enjoying personalized hospitality through home stays. Coffee tourism not only enhances visitor satisfaction through authentic rural experiences but also provides additional income opportunities for local farmers and communities. It promotes eco-friendly practices, preserves cultural heritage, and encourages responsible tourism in the Western Ghats region. With growing interest in experiential, nature-based, and sustainable travel, coffee tourism and homestays have strong potential to strengthen Karnataka's tourism sector and position the state as a unique destination for agri-tourism and wellness-oriented travel.

**Keywords:** Coffee Tourism, Homestays, Karnataka Tourism, Agri-Tourism, Sustainable Tourism, Experiential Travel, Western Ghats, Rural Tourism, Plantation Tourism, Cultural Heritage, Heritage of Keladi, Cultural Preservation

## **Introduction**

Tourism in Karnataka has gradually moved beyond traditional heritage and leisure-oriented travel towards more experience-driven and sustainable forms of tourism. In this context, coffee tourism and homestays have emerged as notable and popular alternatives. This tourism model integrates agricultural practices with cultural engagement, offering visitors opportunities to explore coffee plantations, experience local lifestyles, and participate in environmentally responsible living. The growing preference for authentic and meaningful travel experiences has thus made coffee tourism and homestays key contributors to the development of Karnataka's tourism industry and rural economy.

## **Coffee Heritage of Karnataka**

Karnataka shares a rich and historic connection with coffee cultivation that dates back several centuries. The introduction of coffee to India is credited to Baba Budan, who is believed to have planted coffee beans in the hills of Chikkamagaluru during the 17th century. This event marked the beginning of coffee farming in the country and established Chikkamagaluru as the birthplace of Indian coffee culture. Gradually, coffee cultivation spread to other regions of the state, particularly Kodagu and Hassan, and

by the 19th century it had emerged as a prominent agricultural activity. At present, Karnataka stands as the leading coffee-producing state in India, accounting for nearly 70 percent of the nation's total coffee output. The state's coffee-growing regions benefit from favorable climatic conditions, fertile soil, and high-altitude landscapes of the Western Ghats, which are well suited for cultivating both Arabica and Robusta coffee varieties.

### **Coffee Tourism**

Coffee tourism and homestays have emerged as important and fast-growing components of Karnataka's tourism sector. By blending agricultural heritage with cultural interaction and nature-based experiences, this form of tourism caters to the changing preferences of travellers who increasingly seek authentic, immersive, and experience-oriented travel opportunities while also contributing to local economic development.

Coffee tourism is a type of agri-tourism where visitors explore coffee-growing regions and experience plantation life, cultivation practices, and local culture.

Coffee tourism is a specialized form of travel that focuses on experiencing and understanding coffee and its cultural importance. It involves visits to coffee-growing regions where tourists learn about coffee cultivation, processing methods, and traditional practices. This tourism provides immersive experiences such as observing the coffee production process, participating in coffee tastings, and interacting with local communities. Countries like Colombia, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, and Brazil are popular coffee tourism destinations, offering opportunities to explore plantations, attend coffee festivals, and take part in hands-on coffee-related activities.

Karnataka's association with coffee is deeply embedded in its history and cultural traditions. Coffee was introduced to India in the 17th century by the Sufi saint Baba Budan, who is believed to have brought coffee beans from Yemen and planted them in the hills of Chikkamagaluru. This historic act laid the foundation for coffee cultivation in India, establishing Chikkamagaluru as the birthplace of Indian coffee culture. Gradually, coffee farming spread to other regions of Karnataka, particularly Coorg, and by the 19th century it had emerged as a significant agricultural activity in the state. At present, Karnataka stands as the largest coffee-producing state in India, accounting for nearly 70% of the nation's total coffee output. The major coffee-growing regions—Chikkamagaluru, Coorg, and Hassan—are well known for their high-altitude plantations, rich soil, and favorable climatic conditions that support both Arabica and Robusta varieties. Beyond its economic importance, coffee represents a distinctive way of life in Karnataka, celebrated through various coffee festivals and cultural events across the state.

**Homestay** (also written as home stay or home-stay) is a form of hospitality in which travelers stay in the home of a local resident at their destination. The duration of stay may range from a single night to an extended period, even exceeding a year. Homestays may be offered free of cost, for monetary payment, through home exchange arrangements, or in return for services such as household work or assistance on the host's property. This accommodation model represents collaborative consumption and forms part of the sharing economy. Homestays are commonly used by tourists, international students, exchange program participants, and au pairs. They can be arranged through online platforms, social networking services, or educational institutions, with free hosting networks often referred to as hospitality exchange services.

Homestays provide several advantages, including direct exposure to local lifestyles, traditions, and customs. They encourage cultural exchange, foster interpersonal relationships, enhance intercultural

understanding, and offer opportunities for foreign language practice. Additionally, homestays are generally affordable, often include home-cooked meals, provide local guidance, support community development, and have a lower environmental impact compared to conventional accommodation facilities.

However, homestays also have certain limitations. Guests may need to follow house rules related to curfews, facility usage, or work responsibilities. Privacy, comfort, and amenities such as hotel-level services may be limited. The quality of experience can vary depending on the host, and some travelers may face challenges due to cultural differences, language barriers, or discomfort in sharing living spaces.

Overall, homestays offer a personalized and culturally enriching travel experience, making them an attractive option for travelers seeking authenticity and meaningful local interactions.



## Homestays of Karnataka

### Kimmane Luxury Golf Resort

Kimmane Luxury Golf Resort is an upscale, nature-oriented retreat situated around 8 km from Shivamogga city in the lush Malnad region of Karnataka. Set within expansive landscaped surroundings, the resort is celebrated for its tranquil ambiance, picturesque scenery, and a beautifully maintained 9-hole golf course, making it an excellent choice for couples, families, leisure travelers, and corporate groups. The property features spacious, tastefully designed rooms and suites equipped with modern amenities such as air conditioning, Wi-Fi, private balconies, and views of the golf course or nearby hills. Guests can indulge in a variety of dining experiences at the multi-cuisine restaurant, café, and bar, while

also enjoying leisure facilities including a swimming pool, spa, cycling paths, kayaking, and guided nature walks. Known for its warm hospitality, high standards of cleanliness, and calm atmosphere, Kimmane Luxury Golf Resort offers a perfect blend of comfort, nature, and accessibility near Shivamogga.

### **KalluKore Homestay**

KalluKore Homestay is a well-known, budget-friendly retreat located amid the lush greenery of the Kudremukh region near Kalasa in Chikmagalur, Karnataka. Surrounded by coffee plantations and set in a calm farmhouse setting, it offers travellers a tranquil escape close to nature, with fresh air and scenic views of rolling hills. Guests often appreciate the warm and friendly hospitality of the hosts, who make visitors feel at home and serve tasty homemade vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals. The homestay features clean, spacious and comfortable rooms along with ample parking, making it an ideal choice for trekkers and nature enthusiasts exploring the Western Ghats. Its proximity to trekking trails, waterfalls and scenic viewpoints enhances its appeal as a convenient base for outdoor adventures. Pet-friendly policies, attentive service and excellent value for money are frequently highlighted by guests as key positives of the stay.

### **Kantesha Nest**

Kantesha Nest is a well-known homestay-style vacation home located on Rajendra Nagar Main Road in Shimoga, offering a comfortable and conveniently situated stay within the city. The property provides air-conditioned accommodation with balconies, free Wi-Fi, and a spacious interior that includes multiple bedrooms and bathrooms, a living room, dining area, and a fully equipped kitchen, making it ideal for families and groups of friends. Guests can relax and make use of amenities such as a terrace, shared lounge area, outdoor fireplace, and free private parking. Situated approximately 1.7 km from Shimoga city centre, Kantesha Nest offers easy access to local attractions, restaurants, and transport facilities while maintaining a warm, home-like atmosphere. Reviews often highlight the cleanliness, good maintenance, and helpful hosts, making it a practical and cozy option for travelers exploring Shimoga and nearby tourist destinations.

### **Sambhrama Residency**

Sambhrama Residency is a well-regarded lodge-style accommodation situated on JPN Road in the Durgigudi area of Shimoga, near prominent landmarks such as Manasa Hospital and Gopi Circle, making it a convenient option for city stays. The property offers spacious, air-conditioned rooms equipped with private bathrooms and balconies, along with amenities like free Wi-Fi, a terrace, and complimentary private parking to ensure a comfortable stay for short visits or business trips. One of its key advantages is its central location, with easy access to local eateries, transport facilities, the bus stand, and Shimoga railway station, allowing guests to move around the city effortlessly. Reviews frequently mention the helpful staff, cleanliness, and satisfactory comfort levels, though the facilities are more basic compared to luxury hotels and on-site dining is generally not available, with guests relying on nearby restaurants. Overall, Sambhrama Residency is a practical, budget-friendly choice for travelers seeking a simple and centrally located accommodation in Shimoga

## **PUNYABHOOMI**

PUNYABHOOMI Home Stay is a friendly and inviting homestay in Shimoga that provides guests with a comfortable and genuine local living experience. Created to offer a homely atmosphere, it features clean, well-maintained rooms, thoughtful service, and a calm setting, making it suitable for families, couples, and solo travelers who prefer a more personal stay over conventional hotels. The homestay is equipped with essential amenities such as comfortable beds, private bathrooms, and dependable Wi-Fi, while the warm and approachable hosts often enhance the experience by sharing local knowledge about culture, cuisine, and nearby attractions. Conveniently located within Shimoga, it allows easy access to markets, restaurants, and transport facilities, yet remains a peaceful place to relax after a day of exploration. Guests commonly praise its homely ambiance, good value for money, and attentive hospitality.

## **Bananki Homestay**

Bananki Homestay is a highly acclaimed homestay situated near Devangi Post on the Solapur-Mangalore Highway in Thirthahalli Taluk, Shimoga district. Established in 2010, it has become a popular destination for travelers seeking a serene, nature-filled retreat in Karnataka's Malnad region, surrounded by lush greenery and peaceful countryside. The property is celebrated for its warm, authentic Malnad hospitality, with hosts who ensure guests feel welcome and at home. Visitors often commend the clean and comfortable rooms, tranquil natural surroundings, and the delicious home-cooked meals included with most stays, offering an authentic taste of local cuisine.

Guests can enjoy outdoor relaxation, leisurely walks through the scenic landscape, evening bonfires, and excursions to nearby attractions such as plantation trails and picturesque spots around Thirthahalli. Its strategic location between Thirthahalli and Koppa makes it an excellent base for exploring local culture, nature, and rural life while staying away from the city's hustle and bustle. Overall, Bananki Homestay is an ideal choice for families, groups, and travelers seeking a peaceful, close-to-nature experience complemented by good food and friendly hosts.

## **Vamoose Barekal**

Vamoose Barekal is a budget-friendly homestay located in the Arodi/Haniya area of Hosanagara Taluk, Shimoga district, near the Sri Siddhivinayaka Temple at Karanagiri. Situated just outside the city, it offers a peaceful stay surrounded by greenery, providing a quieter alternative to central Shimoga accommodations. The property features simple yet comfortable rooms equipped with essentials such as a flat-screen TV, free toiletries, and linens. Guests can also enjoy amenities like free private parking and a garden area, ideal for relaxing outdoors.

The homestay provides a tranquil environment, making it well-suited for travelers seeking a nature-oriented retreat while still being within reach of Shimoga's attractions. Although Vamoose Barekal does not offer on-site dining, its location allows easy access to local eateries and transport, making it a convenient base for exploring the natural and cultural sites in and around Hosanagara and Shimoga.

## **Kodachadri Pathalagere Homestay**

Kodachadri Pathalagere Homestay & Resort is a well-regarded homestay-style accommodation located in the heart of the Western Ghats near Kodachadri, in the village of Pathalagere along Kodachadri Road, Sampekatte, Nagara, Hosanagara, Shimoga district. Positioned close to the starting point of the

Kodachadri trek, it serves as an ideal base for nature enthusiasts and trekking lovers eager to explore Karnataka's scenic hill stations and lush forest trails.

The homestay combines rustic charm with modern comforts, offering rooms that often feature balconies and separate sitting areas, allowing guests to enjoy tranquil views of the surrounding hills and greenery. Many stays include complimentary local breakfast, and the property also provides a restaurant, café/snack bar, free Wi-Fi in public areas, self-parking, a 24-hour front desk, and tour assistance to help plan outdoor activities.

### **Role of Homestays in Coffee Tourism**

Homestays have become an integral component of coffee tourism in Karnataka. Several coffee estate owners have transformed portions of their residences or plantation bungalows into homestay accommodations, allowing tourists to experience life within coffee-growing landscapes. These homestays offer warm, personalized hospitality, local cuisine, and meaningful interaction with regional traditions and everyday practices. In contrast to conventional hotels and resorts, homestays provide a closer and more authentic connection to the local environment and culture, which has increased their appeal among both domestic and international travelers who prefer slow, experiential, and responsible tourism.

### **Economic and Social Impact**

Coffee tourism and homestays have played a significant role in strengthening rural livelihoods in Karnataka's coffee-producing regions. They offer an important supplementary source of income for coffee growers, particularly during times of price volatility in the coffee market. This form of tourism also creates employment opportunities for local residents in roles such as guides, cooks, drivers, and other support services. In addition, coffee tourism promotes the conservation of local culture, traditions, and culinary practices, while fostering community empowerment and entrepreneurship at the grassroots level.

### **Challenges and Issues**

In spite of its growing popularity, coffee tourism and homestays encounter several challenges. The unplanned and unregulated growth of homestays, insufficient registration, environmental degradation, and inadequate infrastructure remain key concerns. Rising tourist inflows can exert considerable pressure on the fragile ecosystems of the Western Ghats. Furthermore, limited awareness and adoption of sustainable tourism practices among some operators may pose risks to the long-term sustainability of this tourism.

### **Conclusion**

Coffee tourism and homestays have emerged as a dynamic and innovative segment of Karnataka's tourism industry. By bringing together agriculture, cultural heritage, natural landscapes, and local hospitality, this tourism model provides distinctive and enriching experiences for visitors while contributing to rural development and sustainable livelihoods. With effective policy support, environmental protection measures, and active participation of local communities, coffee tourism and homestays have the potential to develop further as a sustainable and responsible tourism model in the state.