

Pandaw Leads India's River Cruise Expansion With New Kerala Ship

Pandaw adds a second Kerala Backwaters ship in 2026 after extraordinary demand for its debut expedition.

HỒ CHÍ MINH, BÌNH THẠNH, VIETNAM, December 8, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Less than a month after launching its first [Kerala Backwaters](#) expedition, Pandaw has confirmed a second vessel for the route in India. Set to debut at the end of 2026, the RV Kerala Pandaw will boost capacity on an itinerary that has quickly emerged as one of the company's fastest-selling. Demand has been so strong that sailings aboard the inaugural [RV Kochi Pandaw](#) are already close to fully booked through September 2026.



RV Kochi Pandaw sailing through the Kerala Backwaters

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We set out to craft a seamless backwaters journey. As the only expedition cruise line to be able to offer a multi-day tour of Kerala, we're proud to expand with a second ship to meet guest demand.”

Paul Strachan, CEO & Founder of Pandaw

Like the 10-cabin Kochi, the new vessel is designed with Pandaw's ultra-shallow draft, a technical advantage that makes Pandaw the only cruise operator capable of navigating the full 900 kilometres of Kerala's canals, rivers, and backchannels. Until now, these waterways could only be explored in isolated segments by short houseboat tours. Pandaw has enabled the first continuous, multi-day expedition ever offered in the backwaters, opening access to a region no other international cruise line has been able to reach.

“Our vision from the outset was to create a single, uninterrupted journey through the backwaters linking communities and landscapes that travellers have only ever

experienced in fragments,” said Paul Strachan, CEO & Founder of Pandaw. “Becoming the first cruise line to offer a true expedition in Kerala has been a milestone for us, and the response has been amazing. A second ship will allow us to meet demand while preserving the intimate, small-

ship experience that defines Pandaw.”

The RV Kerala Pandaw will operate the same seven-night itinerary as its sister ship, bringing together on-board performances such as Kathakali; heritage visits to temples and the ancestral home of Saint Kuriakose Elias Chavara; village walks in Kainakary and Kumarakom; and tours through landmarks like Fort Kochi and the Munroe Lighthouse. Travellers will navigate narrow canals, palm-lined lagoons, and quiet waterways that reveal the rhythms of daily life across Kerala’s fishing, farming, and artisanal communities.



On board cultural experiences include Kathakali performance

Sailings aboard the RV Kerala Pandaw are already on sale, with departure dates available at www.pandaw.com/expeditions/the-kerala-backwaters

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