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What are plantation holidays? We found some hidden gems in South India

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There are two things everyone wants from their holidays: A chance to spend time in the outdoors, away from all the noise and concrete of our cities, and, second, to slow down the pace of life. [Good food](#) is a bonus. At a plantation stay you get all this, plus the best cup of [coffee](#) or [tea](#) you've ever tasted.

On this holiday, you follow meandering trails through the plantation, look out for rare and endemic birds, observe how life at a plantation unfolds and enjoy delicious local cuisine. Most plantations nowadays sell their estate's single origin coffee or hand-plucked tea so you can bring home the aroma of your holiday – and they also make for fabulous gifts. Sounds perfect, eh? Pack along those books you've been meaning to read and choose your slice of heaven from the list below.

Primrose Villas, Chikmagalur



Chikmagalur is the birthplace of coffee in India – this is where Baba Budan first planted coffee seeds (that he had smuggled from Mecca) over 350 years ago, which eventually led to the flourishing coffee plantations in the country. Located on the 125-year-old Baganeheddal coffee estate, Primrose Villas is a beautiful small hotel. The villas are over 1,000 sq ft, and built to offer stunning views of the Western Ghats from your private garden or the floor to ceiling windows. The USP here is fabulous food and service. From fluffy omelettes to local curries with akki roti to barbequed meats or Chinese favourites, every single thing is delicious. The service is attentive and personalised and you can even ask for your favourite dishes (just don't expect sushi). Watch birds, make friends with the local dogs and enjoy the unforgettable misty mountain views.