

Aptly renowned as “God’s Own Country”

- Part 1

Green is the predominant colour that one’s eyes will meet, right from the entry point of this Godly south western region of India; White is the colour you experience within its people – filled with simplicity, purity, helpful and warm natured; to be put simply - Genuine Human Beings. The region takes pride of a perfect blend of some serene, beautifully sculptured churches, ancient, traditional and antiquated temples and well architected Mosques. In every sense the heading (Title) is an omnipresent undercurrent throughout this entire region.

Human life with all the past memories, future possibilities along with the emotional aspect is indeed very intriguing. What makes it more remarkable is the co-existence of so many varied cultures, class of people, languages, food and habits etc and sometimes compels us to compare it with our lifestyle. Even if one is visiting a place new to them, they still have some notions and will be informatively biased about the things they are going to encounter in the coming time. I was sailing on the same boat while reaching to KOCHI, which I later came to know, is altered to Ernakulam to much extent, except the fort Kochi Fort part.

So, carrying some natural expectations and belief about Kerala in general, I must accept, they were all blown apart as I was gripped by the peaceful expressions on both the humans and the environment surrounding me. For instance, on way to my destination I saw cleanliness to a level matched with the likes of Chandigarh (which is India’s Millennial 1st planned city- In case of Kerala, it felt to be out of natural manifestations and no Human interventions). Surprisingly, the attractive part was, there seemed to be no great fuss or compulsion for the cleanliness, like not many dustbins or some logos or big banners, generally used in other parts of the country to urge the citizens to follow cleanliness norms...just that it seemed to be a part of people over here, something natural and not forced. The lanes, highways, traffic seemed to be running at a sweetly paced rhythm, with no sense of urgency or aggressiveness (less honking).

Meanwhile, I was guided by a local, who ensured that I reach almost 80% of my destination along with him after which we parted our ways. But, needless to mention that, he had an immense impact on me,(positive one) that served as an illustration of its majority of population. I fail not to compare it with the bustling, over-crowded and upbeat theme of Mumbai. Saying that, I don’t want to take anything from Mumbai, as every city has its own vibe, its own pros and cons. Still the first few days were like kind of a cool breeze flowing over a wet body, drying the water content and giving a nippy sensation (after-effect).

The course I had enrolled in, kept me busy and most importantly away from the scorching sun during the daytime, which I was completely unaware of until the weekends when we had to spend the day time in a 10ft-10ft room shared by 3. The food was a concern at the beginning when I somehow realised that on day 3, I was eating rice for 9th consecutive time in my food, a common feature with my mates from here. The kattan chai (Black tea, but correctly said by my trainer that should be called Red tea as we have Black coffee) was an instant favourite mostly because they had some sort of unique way of making it (I will elaborate later) with no ginger or any masala which I am used to, back home.

The 1st week had couple of amazing experiences – one being the Kerela Blasters v/s Bengaluru FC football match just at stone throw's distance from our institute at the Kaloor institute. I also added to my information that kerela stands as tall as Kolkata and Goa in terms of football fan following, and it was evident from the infectious energy level in the stadium, banners, banter within the stands to monopolise the greatest fan tags. The crowd was very vociferous more so in insulting the opponent than to encourage their own team. Something which I guess worked for their team, as Kerela won the match 2-1 but constellations away from qualifying this year. I will remember one poor guy's name to whom the crowd showed no mercy and shouted at top of their voice "Poda pulle Ashique" Apparently he was from Kerala but playing as a Bengaluru marquee player that saw him facing the ruthless mallu backlash.

First week will also be etched into my mind for it being my first encounter to a kind of infatuation to a Mallu girl, Although back in College days I had enormous number of Mallu (catholic) friends, thanks to the quota in Doon Bosco College of Eng. But this was different, even the 3 girls in my course was almost in an incognito mode for most part of the learning time. The girl – 2nd floor girl as we termed her, was shy, beautiful and at the end of the week we spoke a bit through via translation, courtesy my mallu batch mates. She also tried hard to speak some broken English and managed a pact that she will teach me malyalam if I teach her spoken English. I will come to this part a bit later to reveal whether or not this experience was a success or proved to be a disaster!!!

Coming Up -

- Badminton (Ash)
- Training in class
- Coimbatore
- Teaching practise
- At last the girls open up
- 5AD

