



A beautiful array of herbs displayed



A rejuvenating spa oil massage



The Shiroda oil treatment

### Ayurveda in a nutshell

It is among the spice plantations, magical meandering backwaters, coconut palms and Portuguese forts of Kerala that ayurveda has found root. Quiet and laidback, indifferent almost to the colourful cacophony of the rest of the country, the state has always had traditional sanatoriums and hospitals practicing and teaching ayurveda, scattered across the cool slopes of the Western Ghats. Even today there are traditional practitioners in every village who trace their ayurvedic knowledge to the ancient palm leaf scrolls preserved in their families.

According to this ancient system, every person's constitution is made up of three life-giving humours or *doshas*. The basic principle of this system is to keep the *doshas* in balance. Illness is the result of imbalance. Your dominant *dosha* is a combination of either air and ether (*vata* type), of fire and water (*pitta*) or of earth and water (*kapha*).

*Vatas* tend to be lean with dry skin and wavy hair. They are mentally restless, quick and changeable.

*Pittas* are of average build, energetic and driven.

*Kapha* are sturdy and overweight.

Regardless of one's *dosha*, the treatment usually involves the application of herbal oils that work through the skin and are absorbed into the blood stream, break down the toxins, ease joint pain and soothe muscles.

### TIP

Many smaller spas and ayurvedic centres may offer treatments and massages at attractive rates. However, one must be careful before checking into these outfits for there is no knowing if the medicated oils are being reused. If so, they could well be massaging one with oils used on someone else. A good spa will burn off the oils after single use.

### CONTACTS:

For IVAC, Mysore Tel: (0821) 2473437 / 2473263 / 2473266

E-Mail: [reservations@ayurindus.com](mailto:reservations@ayurindus.com) Web: <http://www.ayurindus.com>

Trails for Orange County: Tel: (080) 25325302, 251126013, 25582525 Email: [www.trailsindia.com](http://www.trailsindia.com) Web: [www.trailsindia.com](http://www.trailsindia.com)

CGH Earth for Marari Beach Resort: Tel: (048) 2668221, 2666821 Email: [contact@cghearth.com](mailto:contact@cghearth.com) Web: [www.cghearth.com](http://www.cghearth.com)

Taj Group of Hotels for Jiva Spas, Kovalam and Taj Residency Hotel at Calicut Tel: 1 600 111 825 Web: [www.tajhotels.com](http://www.tajhotels.com)

Trails, CGH Earth and the Taj Group of Hotels can also arrange packages that cover their different resorts, hotels and properties in South India and throw in spa treatments at every stop.