

Ethereal Bliss!

Head to IBNII Resort & Spa, nestled in the hills of Coorg, for a paradise-on-earth experience!

Bajpe Airport is tucked away on a charming hilltop in Mangaluru. The fresh mountain air rejuvenates, while the panoramic view of the picturesque countryside below mesmerizes...

Our three-hour long drive from there to IBNII Coorg, through the green ghats is a further treat to the eyes. We are welcomed at the resort's reception with *chukku kappi*, a traditional drink from the South. IBNII, spread over a sprawling 120 acres of woodlands, is surrounded by a lush coffee estate and pristine lakes. It was a beautiful start to our much-looked forward to weekend...

Since it was lunch time, we

were at once whisked away for a delicious lunch – salads, *puttu* and curry at The Fig restaurant. After which, we checked into our private villa – plush interiors, a private plunge pool, Jacuzzi and the most amazing view of the beautiful hills.

Post a short but refreshing nap, Dr Sherry Sebastian, Director, IBNII, briefed us about the resort which was followed by a resort tour. The resort has 22 private pool villas, 10 wooden cottages and premium suites. Baalelle is its pure vegetarian restaurant, while Masi Kande is the BBQ place and Elevate Lounge is the snazzy bar. From the resort's own kitchen come the

exotic spices, *masalas*, jams, pickles and the oven-fresh bread. The vegetables used are also grown in the local greenhouse, and no additives or preservatives are used in cooking.

Dinner at the Fig comprised sumptuous starters, pumpkin soup and South Indian *dahi* rice, and day one ended, relaxed and rested.

The next day, after breakfast - watermelon juice, vermicelli *upma* and fruits, Pooviah Koravanda, Plantation Manager and PRO, took us to one of the main attractions of the resort – the rain water harvesting lakes. Apparently, the three lakes together can hold up to 4-5 million litres



of water. An STP plant is installed to recycle used water to minimize dependency on fresh water, and the recycled water is used for landscaping. There is also a waste segregation system where organic waste is used to generate high-yield, organic manure, which, in turn, is used in the green house for its fresh produce. Incidentally, IBNII is the first eco luxe resort in India to acquire the IGBC Platinum certification. The resort is also gearing up to get its LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) certification.

A dekho of the yoga deck, eco gym, banquet

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hall later, I went for a walk by myself – to enjoy the tranquil and peace the nature resort had to offer.

Lunch at Baalelle comprised a traditional *thali*, which we devoured instantly. This was followed by spa time at Manja, which left me totally rejuvenated. The bonus to the day was our shift to the eco-luxe wooden cottage with the most splendid lake view!

The evening was spent at the charming Kaldi Kappee, the coffee shop, with a lesson in coffee making – we learnt all about how the coffee plant journeys through the many grading processes before it turns into a coffee bean. The day concluded with a quick round of the quaint local market in Madikeri, followed by delectable BBQ dinner at Masi Kande.

Our short and sweet trip ended the next day after breakfast. And before we knew it, we were back in Mumbai, with a bagful of memories, a calmer mind and renewed energy...

AISHWARYA P VAIDYA

ECO-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES

- ▶ The resort promotes walking. Guests can enjoy a buggy ride as it is a vehicle free zone.
- ▶ There is control over the use of power and water by regulating distribution during certain hours every day.
- ▶ An eco-pledge is taken every day.
- ▶ Local staff is hired.
- ▶ Use of plastic bags and paper is restricted.
- ▶ Jute products like laundry bags and sleepers are used.
- ▶ The resort conducts baking classes for kids with special needs. Lift, elevator, pool cottages and toilets are specially tailored for the physically challenged.