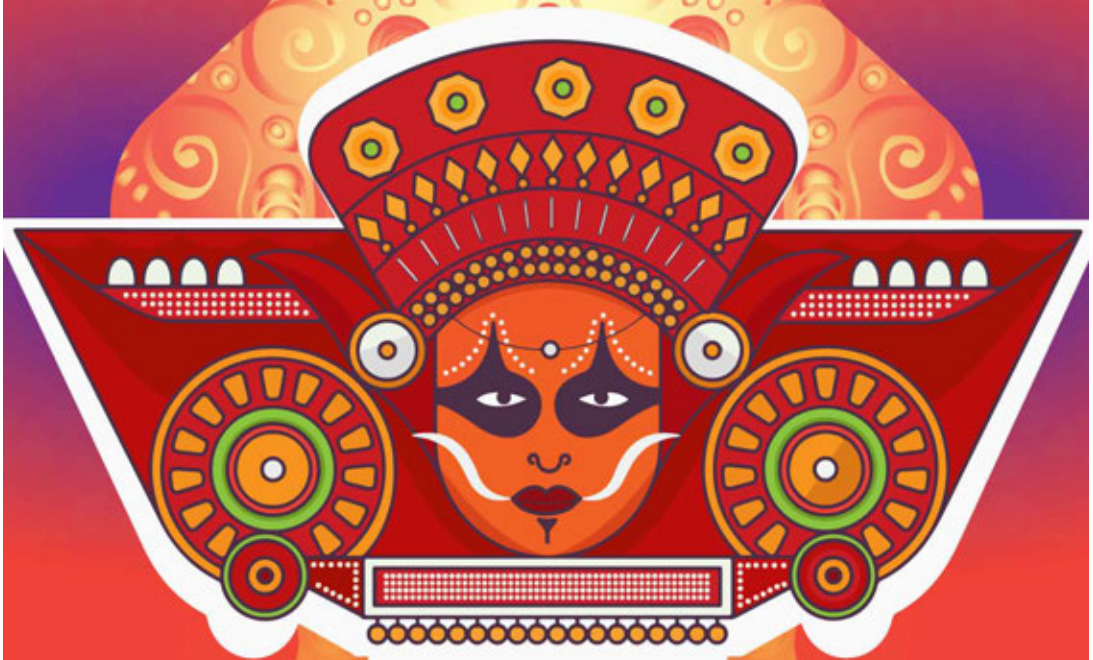




# Gambolling GODS

Theyyam, Theyyakkolam and Souvenirs

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Theyyam, Theyakkolam and Souvenirs

Theyyam is an integral cultural symbol of North Malabar that combines religion, culture and aesthetics. The word “theyyam” in Malayalam is a corrupt form of Deivam which means “God”. Therefore, theyyattom signifies the dance of God. There is a strong belief that hero-worship was the chief sentiment that inspired the birth of theyyattom. It choreographically presents the various deeds of the deity and lasts as long as the dancer is possessed by the divine force. The dancer wears colourful costumes and elaborate ornaments, and this visual extravaganza is what makes theyyattom an artistic expression of devotion. Local collectives together with government initiatives have strived to make these unique art forms, rituals and cultures of North Malabar expand and reach across the world. Its fame has spread so far and wide that foreigners come in droves to north Malabar to see and experience the grandeur. The world has thus come to know more about this art form, the artistes, the connoisseurs who promote it, as well as the scholarly studies that have been done on it.





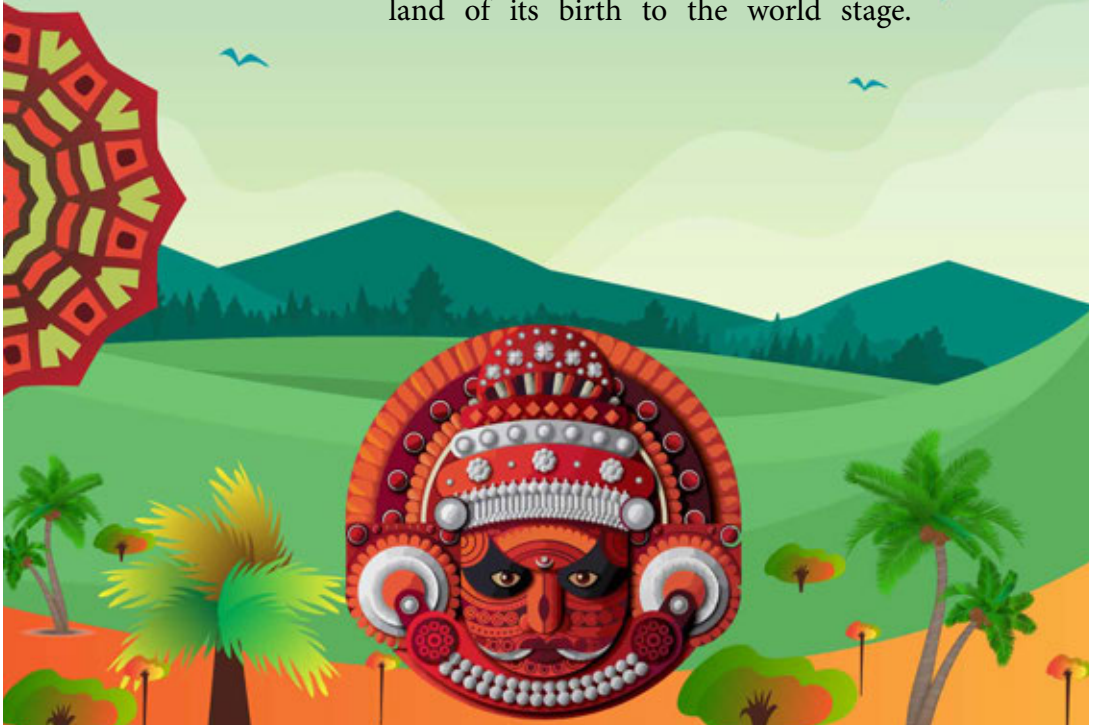


Kerala Folklore Academy of Kannur is one among the major museums that allures travellers with its displays on theyyam. This Museum showcases small replicas of theyyam forms. Expert artists from the villages of Kasaragod and Kannur creates souvenirs using different mediums like stones, metals, sands, plaster of Paris and wood for those who wish to purchase objects that share the variety and essence of theyyam. These exclusive souvenirs are also exported to other parts of the country and beyond the country.





**T**heyam can perhaps be considered as the one art form that embodies the true essence of the culture of north Malabar. By creating life-like replicas of every kind of theyyam, of whatever size demanded by the customer, and delivering them at his or her doorstep, these museums catapult the art form from the small land of its birth to the world stage.



# Where to see

*Payyanur  
Parassinikadavu  
Muthappan Temple  
Kunhimangalam  
Madayikavu  
Kasaragod*



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## *Payyanur*

This sacred site in Kannur is renowned for a large number of temples here that host Theyyam events from December to May. Theyyams like Karim Chamundi, Thuluveeran Deivam, Paadaar Kulangara Bhagavathy, Puthiya Bhagavathy, Narambil Bhagavathy, Kannikkorumakan, Veeranmar, Madayil Chamundi, Raktha Chamundi, Vishnumoorthy and many more attract massive crowds.



# *Parassinikadavu Muthappan Temple*

This pilgrim centre, located on the banks of Valapattanam River, is famous for the Muthappan Theyyam performed at dusk and dawn throughout the year.



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# *Kunhimangalam*

Kunhimangalam is a tiny hamlet near Payyanur that is home to many wonderful shrines and a legendary Tharavad which celebrates Theyyam festivals from December to May. Theyyams like Baali Theyyam, Gulikan, Kannikoru Makan, Koodeyullor Theyyam, Kundor Chamundi, Madayil Chamundi, Vadakkathy Bhagavathy, Vishnumoorthy and many more are annually performed here.

# Madayikavu

An ancient temple dedicated to the Mother Goddess, the Madayikavu Temple annually celebrates Theyyam in the Malayalam month of Karkidakam (June/July). The Theyyams are staged around the Kottam which are located to the north of the temple.







## *Kasaragod*

The Northern reaches of Kasaragod have their own variety of Theyyams that once reached almost 900 in number, but nowadays have been reduced to fewer than 500. The Theyyam season here begins from December to May.







*Kunhimangalam*



*Madayikavu*



*Payyanur*



*Kasaragod*

