

South India Tour

Day 01: Arrive Chennai & Drive to Mahabalipuram (60 Km/ 1 ½ Hour)

Namaste – Welcome to India! Upon arrival, we are greeted the traditional Indian way with hands clapped together. We are then driven to Mahabalipuram and check in our hotel.

Overnight: WelcomHotel Kences (2 nights) (D)

Day 02: Mahabalipuram

We visit the Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram*. This group of sanctuaries, founded by the Pallava kings, was carved out of rock along the Coromandel Coast in the 7th and 8th centuries. It is known especially for its rathas (temples in the form of chariots), mandapas (cave sanctuaries), giant open-air reliefs such as the famous 'Descent of the Ganges', and the temple of Rivage, with thousands of sculptures to the glory of Shiva.

The remainder of the day is free for personal activities. **(B, D)**

Day 03: Mahabalipuram / Chennai (Drive: 60 Km/ 1 ½ Hour) & Chennai / Madurai by flight

After breakfast, we check out from hotel and drive to Chennai. On arrival, we take tour of Chennai, visiting the National Art Gallery & Museum, which contains some of the best collections of bronzes in the country including the famous icon of Natraja. We continue to India's oldest surviving British church, St. Mary's Church, built in 1680.

After the tour, we enjoy lunch at Amethyst and after that we are transferred to airport for our flight to Madurai. On arrival in Madurai, we are transferred to our hotel.

Overnight: Heritage Madurai (2 nights) (B, L, D)

Please Note: Museum remains closed on Friday and National holiday

Day 04: Madurai

Today we explore Madurai, the second largest city in Tamil Nadu. The city revolves around the Meenakshi Amman Temple, a structure in the Dravidian style of architecture. The complex houses 14 gopurams (gateway towers) ranging from 45-50m in height, the tallest being the southern tower, 51.9 metres (170 ft) high, and two golden sculptured shrines over sanctum of the main deities. The temple is a significant symbol for the Tamil people, and has been mentioned since antiquity in Tamil literature, though the present structure was built from 1623 to 1655. There are an estimated 33,000 sculptures in the temple and amongst the highlights are the Hall of a Thousand Pillars, the Tirumalai Nayaka Temple and the Temple Art Museum. In the evening, we enjoy night closing ceremony of the Temple. **(B, D)**

Day 05: Madurai/ Kanyakumari/ Kovalam (Drive: 250 kms/7 Hours)

After breakfast, we leave for Kovalam en-route visiting Kanyakumari, the "Lands' End" of India on the way. Kanyakumari is the southernmost tip of peninsular India where the waters of the Bay of Bengal, the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea meet. We visit the Temple of Goddess Kumari, the Vivekananda Rock Memorial in the sea where Swami Vivekananda mediated. We continue our journey to Kovalam. On arrival, we check in our Hotel.

Overnight: Travancore Heritage (2 nights) (B, D)

Day 06: Kovalam

Morning Yoga session. Enjoy 01 Rejuvenation massage (01 Hour) and free day to relax on the beach. **(B, D)**

Day 07: Kovalam / Alleppey (Drive: 175 kms / 5 Hours)

Today we drive to Alleppey. On arrival in Alleppey we board our traditional houseboat and begin our journey through the picturesque backwaters and small lakes relaxing in the tranquility of Kerala's beautiful scenery. On our journey, we come across many boats, canoes and other crafts, as we observe the traditional way of life and activities of the local people.

Overnight: Deluxe Houseboat (2 nights) (B, L, D)

Day 08: Alleppey

Enjoy backwaters onboard houseboat and observe activities of the local people. **(B, L, D)**

Day 09: Alleppey / Thekkady (Drive: 150 kms/4 Hours)

After breakfast, we drive to Thekkady to check in our hotel. The area is famous for its spice plantations. In the afternoon, we will visit a spice plantation, where cardamom, pepper, ginger, turmeric, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, all spice, and tea are grown. We will also see Ayurvedic medicinal plants and will have the opportunity to buy some garden-fresh spices. In the evening, we return to our hotel for dinner.

Overnight: The Elephant Court (2 nights) (B, D)

Day 10: Thekkady

Our day starts with a jungle walk at the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary in the early morning, after which we return to our hotel for breakfast. The Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary is one of the world's most fascinating natural wildlife reserves. Spread across 777 square kilometres it was declared a Tiger Reserve in 1978. In the afternoon, we enjoy a boat ride on Lake Periyar to watch animals in their natural habitat by the water's edge. We are likely to see animals like boars, Sambars, wild dogs, Langur monkeys and wild elephants. The sanctuary is also a haven for water birds and we can see plenty of darters, grey herons, egrets and kingfishers. The evening is free to explore the local bazaar in Thekkady and purchase some of the famous spices grown in the area. **(B, D)**

Day 11: Thekkady / Cochin (Drive: 195 Km/ 05 Hours)

After breakfast, we drive to Cochin. On arrival in Cochin, we check in our hotel. In the evening, we are welcomed at the home of the local culinary icon, Mrs. Nimmy Paul, (<http://www.nimmypaul.com>). Nimmy is recognized for her authentic recipes promoting healthy lifestyle as well as her knowledge of medicinal properties of spices and herbs used in everyday cooking. She has been widely featured in many international Journals. Nimmy will demonstrate and talk about nuances of traditional Kerala recipes as she prepares four dishes in front of the group. Dinner that follows will be a "Sadhya" -traditional banana leaf dinner consisting of vegetarian preparations and payasam (sweets) along with favorite Kerala condiments.

Overnight: Xandari Harbor (2 nights) (B, D)

Day 12: Cochin

In the morning we explore Kochi, formerly known as Cochin, Kerala's commercial capital with one of the finest natural harbours in the world. We visit St. Francis Church, the oldest European Church in India. Vasco De Gama was buried here before his remains were taken back to Portugal. Next, we visit the Roman Catholic Santa Cruz Cathedral built by the Portuguese in the 16th century; which is famous for beautiful paintings on its ceiling. We continue to the Jewish Quarter with its Old Synagogue and the Dutch Palace, built by the Portuguese. Later we take a boat cruise to visit Bolghatty Palace and observe the fascinating Chinese fishing nets in action. In the evening we enjoy Kathakali Dance Performance. This dramatized presentation of a play usually based on the Hindu epics of Ramayana, Mahabharata and Puranas, is a unique combination of literature, music, painting, acting and dance. **(B, D)**

Please Note, Jewish Synagogue remain closed on Friday & Saturday & Dutch Palace remains closed on Friday

Day 13: Cochin – Home

Today we are transferred to airport for our flight to onward destination. **(B)**

B= Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner

Accommodation Details

City	Hotel name	Category of room	No. of nights
Mahabalipuram	WelcomHotel Kences Palm Beach- 5 Star	Garden Cottage	02
Madurai	Heritage Madurai-Boutique Hotel	Deluxe Club	02
Kovalam	Travancore Heritage- Heritage	Beach Grove	02
Alleppey	Deluxe A.C. Houseboat	A.C. Bed Room	02
Thekkady	The Elephant Court- 4 Star	Patio Room	02
Cochin	Xandari Harbor- Boutique Hotel	Spice Room	02

Tour Price Includes

- Hotels as mentioned or similar (12 Nights)
- Meals as mentioned: 12 breakfasts, 03 lunches & 12 dinners (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- All sightseeing and transfers by Air-conditioned transportation
- Services of English-Speaking local guide for sightseeing as per the itinerary
- Entrances fees to the monument of visit
- Spice Plantation Tour- Thekkady
- Jungle Walk – Thekkady
- Boat ride at Lake Periyar- Thekkady
- Cooking class followed by dinner in Cochin
- Harbor Cruise- Cochin
- Kathakali dance performance- Cochin
- 01 Rejuvenation massage (01 Hour)- Kovalam
- All currently applicable taxes, including GST @ 5%

Tour Price does not include

- International airfare & departure taxes
- Regional/domestic airfare in coach class – **Supplement Quoted above**
- Insurance & visa fees
- Drinks/beverages with meals
- Tips/gratuities

General Conditions

- **The prices are on Per Person basis in AUD, net & non-commissionable.**
- The above cost is valid from 01st Oct 2022 to 31st March 2023 except between 20th Dec 2022 to 10th Jan 2023
- All prices are subject to any revision of tax and tariff structure.
- In case there is a further fuel hike we will be forced to charge a fuel surcharge.
- Please note that smoking is prohibited in public and all parts of the hotels except in designated areas and bedrooms, where smoking is permitted. Should you desire a smoking bedroom, please let us know. The fulfilment of this request is subject to availability.
- Unless specified, check-in at hotels in India is at 14:00 Hrs and check out is at 12:00 Hrs
- Our liability does not arise in case of Force Majeure (political disturbances, natural phenomenon etc.)

- ½ FOC: Tour leader will get 50 % discount on the tour price on single occupancy. No FOC on airfare
- 1 FOC: Tour leader will get 01 Single room on complementary basis. NO FOC on Airfare