

Incredible South India

Tour My India Itinerary

2009-2010

Outline Itinerary

Day 01 Arrive Chennai

Day 02 Chennai

Day 03 Kanchipuram - Mahabaalipuram

Day 04 Mahabaalipuram - Pondicherry

Day 05 Pondicherry - Tanjore

Day 06 Tanjore - Trichy - Madurai

Day 07 Madurai

Day 08 Madurai – Kanyakumari - Kovalam

Day 09 Kovalam

Day 10 Kovalam - Periyar

Day 11 Periyar - Kumarakom

Day 12 Alleppey/Cochin

Day 13 Cochin

Day 14 Cochin - Ooty

Day 15 Ooty

Day 16 Ooty - Mysore

Day 17 Mysore

Day 18 Mysore – Hassan

Day 19 Hassan - Bangalore



Australia office:

46, Great North Road,
Five Dock, NSW, Australia, 2046
T: +61402968475
Email: harry@tourmyindia.com.au
Web: <http://www.tourmyindia.com.au>



India Office:

C-114, Sec 2, Noida (UP) 201301
T: + 91- 120 - 4052615 - 98
Email: info@tourmyindia.com
Web: <http://www.tourmyindia.com>

Introduction

Welcome to the Incredible South India Tour, the southern breathtaking view of integral beauty. If you wish to explore the real beauty of India then you must visit South India, to explore its mysteries, heritage and traditional culture. Here you will also enjoy the spectacular beauty of its temples, hills and waterways during the tour.

Day 01

Arrive Chennai

Upon arrival at Chennai International airport met our representative and then transfer to pre booked hotel. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 02

Chennai

After breakfast get ready for full day city tour of Chennai. Chennai is the capital city of Tamil Nadu State and popularly regarded as the 'Gateway to the South' that represents a culture that is distinctly different from that of northern India.

This place is famous for Kalakshetra, a school of art and music that encourages exponents of Bharatnatyam, Carnatic music, traditional weaving and designing. In addition to this Fort St. George is yet another tourist attraction that was built in 1653 during British reign in India. The building now houses the Secretariat and Legislative Assembly of Tamil Nadu. Apart from this St. Mary's Church, the oldest Anglican Church in India with its premises; Sri Parthasarathy Temple built by the Pallavas in the 8th century AD; Kapaliswara Temple, Mylapore also an eighth century Pallava Temple dedicated to Lord Shiva are few other attractions. Some of the other famous building are Sant Thomas Cathedral Basilica that was rebuilt in 1606 as a cathedral and in 1896 it was made a basilica; and Theosophical Society - the world headquarters of the Theosophical Society formed to encourage the study of comparative religion philosophy and science.

After sightseeing tour back to hotel. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 03

Chennai – Kanchipuram – Mahabalipuram

After breakfast drive towards Kanchipuram which is 70 kms west of Mahabalipuram. It's a city of thousand temples. One of the seven sacred cities of Hindus, it was the capital of the early Cholas as far back as the 2nd century BC.

Kanchi was a major seat of Tamil learning as well as an important place of pilgrimage for Buddhists, Jains and Hindus. Apart from temples, the city is also famous for its silk weavers, who settled here some 400 years ago and have given it an enviable reputation. Later on we shall proceed to Mahabalipuram, driving south of Chennai on the coast which is the ancient port of Pallavas. The pallavas have created many marvellous monuments with sculptural panels, caves, Monolithic Rathas and Temples. Krishna Mandapam has a big bas relief, notable for its realistic representation. The world's largest bas relief measuring 27m x 9m, whale back shaped rock contains figures of gods, demi-gods, men beasts, birds and representation of the entire creation. Shore Temple, one of the oldest in south dating back to 8th century AD is a good

example of the first phase of structural temples constructed in Dravidian style. The Five Rathas are a group of five monolithic temples, each created in different style. Later Check in at the hotel. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 04**Mahabalipuram – Pondicherry, 135 kms**

After breakfast drive to Pondicherry. In the afternoon have city tour of Pondicherry. Although the French influence is gradually fading, Pondicherry retains a few Gallic accents. Pondicherry's main sights are the Rai Nivas, the Sacred Heart Church and the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The ashram retreat was founded in 1926 by Sri Aurobindo after whose death the spiritual authority passed to one of his disciples, a French woman known as the Mother. The Mother was also instrumental in founding the city of Dawn Auroville, 10 km from Pondicherry. Its original charter aimed at creating a city of the future where people from India and abroad could live and work together in a spiritual environment. Evening transfer to hotel. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 05**Pondicherry – Tanjore, 175 kms**

After breakfast drive to Tanjore visiting en-route the temple of Lord Natraja at Chidambaram. On arrival, check-in at the hotel. In the afternoon, city tour of Tanjore. The home of Carnatic music, musical instruments, dance and traditional handicrafts. The city is also famous for the Brahadeeswarar Temple. The temple constructed more than a thousand years ago by the Chola King Raja Rajan. The Art Gallery and the Saraswathi Mahal Library are also well known places of interest. In evening transfer to hotel. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 06**Tanjore –Trichy – Madurai, 201 kms**

After breakfast drive to Trichy and on arrival, visit Srirangam, which is an island, 5 kms from Trichy. Surrounded by the Kaveri water is a 600 acres island town enclosed within the seven walls on the gigantic Sri Ranganathaswami temple. There are no less than 22 gopurams, one of which is the tallest in India. The 72 m high 13 tiered gopuram dominates the landscape for miles around. The Rock Fort situated on the banks of the Kaveri River, Trichy's most famed land mark is an 84 m high rock, one of the oldest in the world approx. 3,800 million years. The attraction is not for fort itself but the temple at the summit. 344 steps hewn out of rock lead to the top where are the inscriptions dating back to the 3rd century B.C. Later drive to Madurai and on arrival, check-in at the hotel. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 07**Full day in Madurai**

After breakfast full day city tour of Madurai. Madurai, known as Athens of the East, is the second largest city on the banks of the River Vigai. The city is believed to be more than 2500 years old. The city got its name from the drops of nectar (Mathuram) that fell from Shiva's lochs when he came to bless its people for constructing a temple for him.

Madurai is a place where the people wake up at the chant of hymns is proud of the magnificent Meenakshi-Sundareswara Temple. Of its 12 gopurams, four of the tallest stand at the outer walls of the temple. The 48.8 m high southern gopuram is the most spectacular and have over 1500 sculptures. In the Ashta Shakti Mandapam inside the Meenakshi temple, the sculpted pillars tell the story of the beautiful princess of Madurai and her marriage to Lord Shiva.

Evening transfer to hotel. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 08

Madurai – Kanyakumari - Kovalam, 352 kms

After breakfast drive to Kanyakumari which would take 5 hours. In the afternoon go for sightseeing. Kanya Kumari is the southernmost end of Tamil Nadu, the land's end of India or the point where the three seas meet - the Bay of Bengal, The Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. Later visit Kumariamman temple dedicated to the virgin goddess Kanyakumari (Parvati) who stands guard over the country. The temple is built at the spot where the goddess is believed to have waited for her consort Lord Siva.

Gandhi Memorial is another tourist attraction and believed to be constructed at the spot where the ashes of Mahatma Gandhi were kept for public view in an urn before a portion was immersed into the three seas. Vivekananda Memorial built on the Vivekananda Rock where the great Philosopher guide Swami Vivekananda went into meditation that transformed him into one of the most charismatic spiritual leader. Later we shall drive to Kovalam visiting en-route Padmanabhapuram, 45 km short. The capital of Travancore until 1333, Padmanabhapuram is known for its fort which encloses, among other buildings, a palace and a temple. The palace has some important art relics while the Ramaswamy temple has exquisitely carved panels depicting scenes from the Ramayana.

Finally in evening transfer to hotel and have an overnight stay.

Day 09

Full day in Kovalam

After breakfast full day free for your own activity or leisure. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 10

Kovalam – Periyar, 250 kms

After breakfast drive to Periyar and on arrival, check-in at the hotel. Periyar, spread over an area of 777 sq km, has about 35 tigers and leopards. However, sighting a tiger in Periyar is a fortune for one out of thousand. The park encompasses a 26 sq km artificial lake and is the home of sambars, wild boars, elephants and antelopes which can be occasionally seen on the banks of the river during a boat cruise. Periyar, is one of the few lush green destinations that is blessed by Nature has enormous tea, coffee, pepper and cardamom plantations. In the afternoon we shall take a boat cruise on Lake Periyar to view wildlife. Evening transfer to hotel. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 11**Periyar – Kumarakom, 136 kms**

After breakfast drive to Kumarakom and embark on deluxe Houseboat for backwater cruise. We shall embark on the Karnataka Houseboat "Kettuvalam" at Kumarakom. Then move towards Munnattumugham village, through interior backwaters. We shall continue to Champakulam, earlier named as Kalloorkad, the ancient trade centre of backwaters. Visit famous St. Mary's France Church that is believed as blessed by Str. Francis in 42 AD. The mural paintings by vegetable oil are an exciting panoramic vision. We shall also visit the famous Champakulam snake boat construction yard. Overnight at houseboat.

Day 12**Arrive Alleppey/Cochin**

After breakfast, we shall take a leisurely cruise towards Alleppey finishing point jetty. Disembark at 09:30 hours and drive to Cochin. Evening you are free to relax or enjoy free time. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 13**Cochin**

After breakfast city tour of Cochin. Cochin, Karnataka's commercial centre, has a fine natural harbor. Cochin also known as Kochi is a gateway for Karnataka and famous for Mattanchery Palace, St. Francis Church, Wellington Island, Bolghatty Island, Chinese Fishing nets and Jewish Synagogue. Cruising on the back-waters provides glimpses of the rural life, fine view of the harbour and three islands. Evening show witness the Kathakali Dance Show in an auditorium. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 14**Cochin - Ooty Drive, 280 kms**

After breakfast drive to Ooty, on arrival transfer to hotel. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 15**Ooty**

After breakfast sightseeing tour of Ooty and Conoor. Ooty is an integral part of the great plateau occupying the junction of the Eastern and Western Ghats. Located at 2240 m above sea level, Ooty is the headquarters of the Nilgris district. Apart from coffee and tea plantations, trees like conifers, eucalyptus, pine and the wattle dot the hillside in Ooty and its environ.

The places of interest in Ooty include Botanical Gardens where "summer Festival" is held each during the month of May. The artificial lake and Dodabetta Peak which is the highest point in the district at a height of 2623m are yet other tourist attractions. Evening transfer to hotel. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 16**Ooty – Mysore Drive, 155 kms**

After breakfast drive to Mysore, arrive Mysore transfer to hotel. Later sightseeing tour of Mysore. Mysore, 770 m above sea level, is the imperial city which was the erstwhile capital of the Wodeyars. The city takes its name from a famous demon called Mahishasur, a great warrior who ruled as a tyrant until he was killed by the goddess Chamundeshwari.

Mysore as we see today is most famous for the imposing Royal Palace with a magnificent Durbar Hall, particularly splendid during the Dussehra Festival when the Maharaja's jewellery, studded gold throne (weighing 200 kgs) is on display. Chamundeshwari temple perched on a hilltop is 2000 years old, Nandi Bull half way to the hill is a 4.8 meter monolith. 19 km north-west of Mysore is the KRS Dam and the ornamental Brindavan Gardens. The musical fountains and colourful lights transform this place into a fairly land in the evenings. Evening transfer to hotel. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 17

Mysore

After breakfast visit Somnathpur temple. 45 km from Mysore, the temple was built in 1268 AD and is known for its Hoysala architecture. The temple is seated on a star shaped base, set on a chiseled plinth and guarded at intervals by miniature elephants. The temple wall depicts scenes from Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagvata. Afternoon back to hotel for leisure. Enjoy your overnight stay at hotel.

Day 18

Mysore – Hassan Drive, 150 kms

After breakfast drive to Hassan. On arrival, transfer to hotel. In the afternoon visit Belur and Halebid.

Belur temple took over 103 years to build and is a classic example of the Hoysala style of architecture. It rises like a wedding cake in stone, from a star shaped plinth, one of the hallmarks of Hoysala building design. From the base upwards, there is an extraordinary wealth of decorative detail; every available inch is crammed with intricate carvings. In one frieze, 650 elephants jostle one another in a continuous line. Many of the figures of full blossomed women depicted at Belur are believed to be portraits of King Vishnuvardhana's queen.

Halebid is 16 km east of Belur and 27 km from Hassan. The Hoysaleswara Temple dating back to 12th century is astounding for its wealth of sculptural detail. The walls of the temple are covered with an endless variety of gods and goddesses, animals, birds and dancing girls. Yet no two facets of the temple are the same. This magnificent temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva and guarded by a Nandi Bull was never completed despite 86 years of labor. In the inner sanctum, the star black lingam, the symbol of Shiva, is still worshipped. The carving at the door is ornate with small details. Evening transfer to hotel. Overnight stay at hotel.

Day 19

Hassan - Bangalore

After breakfast drive to Bangalore visiting en route Sravanbelgola which is said to be the world's tallest monolithic statue raises 17 meter high of Bahubali (Gomateshvara). The statue was built in 981 AD by the sculptor Aristanmi and is most sacred to the Jain Community. After arriving Bangalore do sightseeing tour.

Bangalore, the capital city of Karnataka is one of the most important metropolises of India. It is a vital centre of science, aeronautics and electronics. Situated 1000 m above sea level, this garden city has pleasant weather round the year. The Lalbagh, one of the finest botanical Gardens of India, the Cubbon Park laid in 1864 sprawling across 300 acres, Vidhana Soudha built in 1956 housing The State Legislature and Secretariat are the main attractions. Late in the evening transfer to the airport for onward destination.

The Above Quote Includes

- ✓ Accommodation on double sharing basis
- ✓ Daily Breakfast
- ✓ All meals in Houseboat.
- ✓ All the Transfers with English speaking representative
- ✓ A/c car for entire tour
- ✓ Services of English speaking driver
- ✓ 01 boat ride on Periyar Lake for wildlife viewing
- ✓ Toll Taxes and Parking
- ✓ Road Taxes
- ✓ Fuel expenses
- ✓ All the applicable taxes

The Above Quote does not include

- ✓ Monument / entry fees, (Supplement is given separately)
- ✓ Laundry/Tips/Alcoholic drinks/mineral water.
- ✓ Any airfare/monument fees/ meals other then mentioned any other expenses not mentioned above
- ✓ Airfare is not included in the given cost for the sector Mumbai – Cochin / Trivandrum - Mumbai

Weather

Kerala is a small state in the southwest corner of India with pristine waters of the Arabian Sea washing its shores and an equable climate that varies from season to season. The Western Ghats on the eastern side of the state fall across the path of the southwest monsoon, thus, creates two major climatic zones, one with heavy rainfall on the windward side and a dry belt on the leeward side in the east.

The diversity of the geographical features of the Kerala has resulted in a corresponding diversity in climate. The High Ranges have a cool and bracing climate throughout the year, while the plains are hot and humid. The annual range of temperature is comparatively low in Kerala. The coastal areas record a maximum temperature of 32°C and a minimum of 22°C. The interiors record a maximum of 37°C during summer. In the coastal area it is hot and humid during April-May while cool during December-January.

Food & Accommodation

All meals are included during stay in Houseboat. Rest of the places only breakfast is included as you can see the supplement given separately for meals in rest of the places.

Extra Expenses

Please note that meals (Lunch + Dinner) are not included in the above cost except in wildlife resorts, international air tickets, tips, drinks, laundry and souvenirs.

Entry Requirements

- 1- All Australian passport holders and most of the other nationalities require a visa for India, which is obtainable in advance from your nearest embassy.
- 2- No vaccinations are mandatory for entry, but as recommended in our brochure we think it is wise to be protected against TB, polio, typhoid, tetanus and hepatitis A and take malaria prophylactics.
- 3- Above all, it is essential to consult your GP about your individual requirements as soon as possible before travelling.

Extensions

All our tours can be extended by visits to other areas in India. We will be glad to discuss options with you and provide quotations as required