

Classic South India



Days:	14
Price:	1570 USD International flight not included
Comfort:	★★★★★
Difficult:	★★★☆☆
📌	Culture

TOWERING TEMPLES, LUSTROUS, WATERY WORLDS

This tour introduces to us the states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala in its two-week itinerary that takes us across tropical south India from east to west with fabulous temples, holy Hindu shrines, charming old hill-stations, princely palaces, wildlife reserves, green waterways and golden beaches en route.

Setting out from Chennai, one of India's top four metros, we journey to the temple towns of Mahabalipuram and Kanchipuram palace. Leaving towns behind, we embark on an exciting wildlife safari through Bandipur National Park. Then we move on to the hills, stopping at the quaint old hill stations of Ootacamund (Ooty) and Coonoor, where colonial cottages and green landscapes await. We catch our breath in these cool climes and enjoy exhilarating walks through the verdant tea plantations and forests.

From here we travel down the west coast into serene and charming Kerala. The historic trading center of Kochi, with its heritage architecture, multi-religious ambience and rich cuisine, is our first port of call. After a day spent sightseeing in Kochi, we drive to Alleppey to begin an enchanting voyage; A cruise on the backwaters in a houseboat, also our quarters for the night. Sun, sand and sea are the parting notes as we conclude the tour with a two-night stay in the seaside resort of Varkala.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 6th and 9th century Mahabalipuram temples carved from rocks
- Exquisite hand-woven silks and gorgeously carved temples of Kanchipuram
- The Mysore palace, seat of Mysore's princely kingdom for nearly six centuries
- Bandipur National Park, former hunting grounds of the Maharajas of Mysore
- Delightfully charming hill stations of Ooty and Coonoor

Day 1. Traditional Welcome on arrival and rest of the day free



Chennai 📍

- Arrive at the Chennai **International airport** and transfer to the hotel for check-in.

🏠 Accommodation | Residency Tower

Day 2. Way to town of world heritage listed temples



Chennai - Mahabalipuram

- After a refreshing breakfast, we take a Sightseeing tour of Chennai, the fourth largest city in India and the capital of Tamil Nadu to visit Kapaleeswarar Temple, Government Museum and San Thome Basilica.
- Later, we drive towards Mahabalipuram, renowned for its beautiful Shore Temple. The rock carvings here are notable for the freshness and simplicity of their Folk art origins. Upon

Chennai 
🚗 60km - ⌚ 1h 40m
Mahabalipuram 

arrival, we check in at the hotel.

☕ Breakfast	Residency Tower
🏠 Accommodation	Hotel Mamalla Heritage

Day 3. Drive back to Chennai en route visiting Kanchipuram



Mahabalipuram 
🚗 70km - ⌚ 1h 40m

Kanchipuram 
🚗 75km - ⌚ 1h 40m
Chennai 

Mahabalipuram - Kanchipuram

- In the morning, we visit the **Five rock-cut monolithic temples**, each created in its own style and providing an insight into the **Art of Dravidian Style** of construction in temples. We also visit the 8th century Shore Temple built on the seashore of the **Bay of Bengal** with blocks of granite, in Dravidian style.
- Then, we head towards **Kanchipuram**, known as **Golden city** of the thousand temples.
- Kanchipuram, the so-called Golden City of One Thousand Temples. We visit the Kailasanathar Temple, famous for its exquisite carvings, with 58 small shrines situated around the main shrine. We also visit **Kamakshi Amman Temple**. Kamakshi is said to be the Super-goddess Parvati, wife of Lord Shiva. She blesses all who dedicate themselves to her.

Kanchipuram - Chennai

- After the visit, we continue to drive towards Chennai.

☕ Breakfast	Hotel Mamalla Heritage
🏠 Accommodation	Deccan Plaza

Day 4-5. Train journey till Mysore and excursion to Srirangapatna



Chennai 
🚆 500km - ⌚ 7h
Mysore (Mysuru) 

Day 4

- In the early morning after breakfast at the hotel, we leave for the **Railway station** to board the train to **Mysore**. Arrival in Mysore and transfer to the hotel.
- Thereafter, we drive towards Srirangapatna (the historic capital of Tipu Sultan who was known for his struggle against the British rule), where we visit the Daria Daulat Bagh, **the Summer Palace** of Tipu Sultan. It is situated in scenic surroundings on an island formed by two branches of the **River Cauvery**. Several monuments relating to the sultan's rule are scattered across the Island. Return back to the hotel in Mysore.

Day 5

- Today, we visit the **Palace of the Maharaja (Emperor)**, a harmonious synthesis of **Hindu and Saracenic styles of architecture** - with a plethora of magnificent archways, domes, turrets, colonnades and sculptures. We also visit the Chaumundi Hill with its temple dedicated to Durga. On the road up to the temple, there is a giant **Monolithic Nandi bull**, carved from a single piece of granite in 1659. Known for its sandalwood, Mysore is also famous for some of India's finest crafts, such as printed silk, inlaid furniture and ivory carvings.

☕ Breakfast	4 Deccan Plaza 5 Hotel Regaalis Mysore
🏠 Accommodation	Hotel Regaalis Mysore

Day 6. Immersing in Wildlife



Mysore (Mysuru) 📍
🚗 80km - ⌚ 1h 30m
Bandipur National Park 📍

Mysore (Mysuru) - Bandipur National Park

- After the breakfast, we drive towards **Bandipur National Park**. Situated halfway down the Mysore - Ooty highway, this Park is one of the most popular reserves in the country with a rich variety of flora and fauna. It was declared a Tiger Reserve in 1973, and after a period, was covered under 'Project Tiger'.
- In the afternoon, we leave for an **Evening Jeep safari**. Other than **tiger**, there are various natural inhabitants of this lovely forest which are gaur (a type of bull), sambhar, chital, mouse deer, four-horned antelope, wild dogs, wild boar, jackal, sloth bear, panther, malabar squirrel, porcupines and the black-knapped hare

🍽️ Breakfast	Hotel Regaalis Mysore
🍴 Lunch	The Windflower Resort Spa
🍷 Dinner	The Windflower Resort Spa
🏠 Accommodation	The Windflower Resort Spa

Day 7. Head towards Coonoor en route visiting the queen of hills



Bandipur National Park 📍
🚗 90km - ⌚ 2h
Ooty 📍

Bandipur National Park - Ooty

- In the morning, there is an **Optional visit** to an **Elephant training centre**.
- We later drive to Ooty a hill resort, in the state of Tamil Nadu. This place is fondly known as the **Queen of Hill Stations** with a stunning location in the heart of the **Nilgiri Hills**. The environs are full of sparkling waterfalls, gurgling brooks and lush green tea gardens.
- We visit the Ootacamund Botanical Garden, laid out in 1847 CE at an elevation of 2400m and spread over 22 hectares with some 650 species of plants and trees.
- Later, we also visit the Rose Garden, spread out on 10 acres of land and showcasing the largest collections of roses in the country (around 3600 varieties). Subject to availability of time, we may also visit the Ooty Lake or Doddabetta peak that stands at an altitude of 2623 mtrs.

🍽️ Breakfast	The Windflower Resort Spa
🏠 Accommodation	The Monarch

Day 8. Toy Train ride to Coonoor



Ooty 📍

- Today, we drive towards Coonoor.
- The second-largest hill station in **The Nilgiris**, surrounded by tea plantations, Coonoor is situated at an altitude of 1,839 meters. This is a small tea garden town where weather remains pleasantly cool throughout the year. It was once home to the Coons tribe, and possibly that's where the name comes from. Famous for its verdant surroundings and for a variety of wild flowers and birds we either explore this place on foot walking through tea plantations or enjoy a ride on the famous toy train of **The Nilgiri Mountain Railway**, one of the oldest mountain railways in India and now a UNESCO World heritage site. On arrival, we would be received by driver at railway station and transfer to our hotel in Ooty.

🍽️ Breakfast	The Monarch
🏠 Accommodation	The Monarch

Day 9-10. City popular for fishing nets



Ooty 
 🚗 280km - ⌚ 8h
 Cochin (Kochi) 

Day 9

- After an early breakfast, we set off for a long drive down to the West coast, leaving Tamil Nadu to enter **Kerala**, another picturesque state. The road winds down through forested hillsides which make our drive one of the most scenic drives in South India, with splendid views of the plains below. We arrive in **Cochin (Kochi)** in the late afternoon. This is an old port city with a long and profitable sea trade connection with The Middle East, the Mediterranean Sea and Northern Europe. Its cosmopolitan character is reflected in its handsome **Colonial buildings**.

Day 10

- Today we visit Fort Kochi, founded by the Portuguese in 1503 and it is considered to be one of the earliest site chosen by European colonial power. An odour of spice emerges from warehouses and food stalls offering different delicacy is common sight in each nook and corner of the town. In the afternoon, we enjoy a sightseeing tour of Mattancherry Palace, built by the Portuguese as a gift for the Raja of Kochi, the Jewish synagogue dating from 1568 and **St Francis church**. We also explore the town of Kochi, its bazaars and old harbour area. In the evening there is the chance for an **Optional visit** to see a display of Kathakali, a form of classical dance unique to Kerala.

☕ Breakfast	9 The Monarch 10 Fort Queen
🏠 Accommodation	Fort Queen

Day 11. Visit of Venice of East



Cochin (Kochi) 
 🚗 60km - ⌚ 1h 30m
 Alappuzha (Alleppey) 

Cochin (Kochi) - Alappuzha (Alleppey)

- After the breakfast, we take a short drive towards Alleppey.
- Alleppey also known as Alappuzha, the town is also called the **Venice of the East** and is the main center for cruises through the Kerala's picturesque backwaters. After arrival, we board our houseboats and begin our cruise through **Meandering waterways**. This is one of the highlights of the trip. The enchanting Houseboat, built of Anjili wood and bamboo, was the traditional method of transport of goods for hundreds of years. Now these boats are decorated and made into comfortable Cruise boats. The network of rivers, streams, lagoons and canals occupies the alluvial plain between the Western Ghats and the Indian Ocean. As our boat meanders through areas of lush tropical vegetation we have the opportunity to view not only the prolific bird life but to gain a different perspective of village life around these canals. Our overnight stay is in the middle of Vembanad Lake where our boat stands anchored.

☕ Breakfast	Fort Queen
🍴 Lunch	ATDC Houseboat
🍷 Dinner	ATDC Houseboat
🏠 Accommodation	ATDC Houseboat

Day 12-13. Tranquility along the beach of Varkala



Alappuzha (Alleppey) 📍
🚗 120km - ⌚ 3h
Varkala 📍

Alappuzha (Alleppey) - Varkala

- After a relaxing breakfast on the Houseboats, we disembark and drive along the scenic Malabar coast to laid-back Varkala, a famous beach frequented by a large number of domestic and foreign tourists. The place greets us with coffee bars and yoga schools perched along the cliff top.
- Today we explore tranquil Varkala, visiting Papanasam Beach, Janardanaswamy Temple and Anjengo Fort. For lunch (**Optional**), we can choose from a wide variety of beach shack restaurants which serve excellent seafood along with the **Traditional Indian cuisine**. Try some of the Tandoori dishes - the clay ovens give a more authentic taste to breads and curries.

🍳 Breakfast

12 ATDC Houseboat

13 Hindustan Beach Retreat

🏠 Accommodation

Hindustan Beach Retreat

Day 14. See you next time



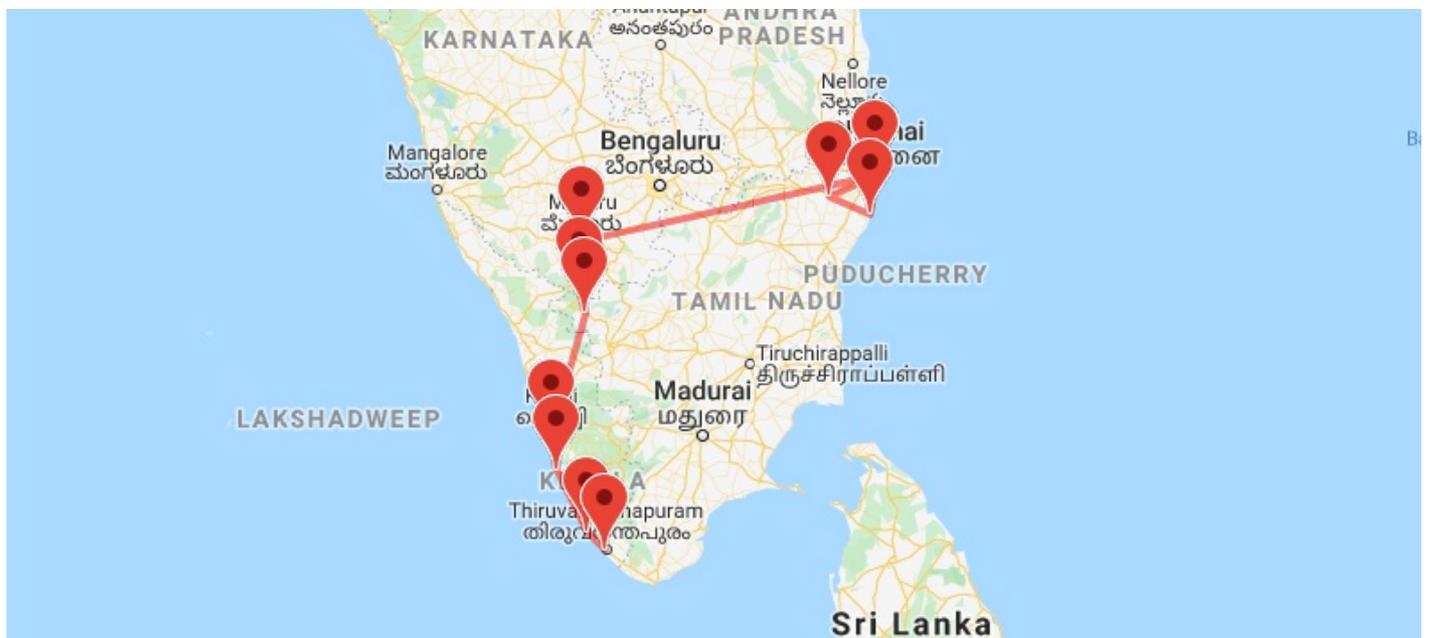
Thiruvananthapuram
(Trivandrum) 📍

- Today, we check out from the hotel and will be transferred to the **International airport** of Trivandrum (Thiruvananthapuram) to board the flight for our onward journey.

🍳 Breakfast

Hindustan Beach Retreat

Itinerary map



Individual price per person

2-3	4-5	6-8	9-12
1730 USD	1690 USD	1630 USD	1570 USD

Included

- Accommodation for 11 nights in a double room in the hotels mentioned or equivalent on breakfast basis
- 01 night on Full board in a Houseboat in Alleppey
- 01 night on Full board in Bandipur
- Train tickets in 1st Class AC for the Sector as mentioned below:(Chennai - Mysore)
- All ground transportation included in the program using private air-conditioned vehicle with English speaking driver
- Entrance fees to the park and monuments as described in the program
- One Game drive by Jeep - Seat Sharing basis in Bandipur National Park
- Toy Train Ride in Coonor
- Local English-speaking guides as described in the program (Till 05 Pax)
- Professional English-speaking tour leader throughout India (From 06 Pax onwards)
- Govt. Taxes

Not included

- International flight tickets
- Travel insurance
- These rates will not be valid for peak season from 20 December 2019 to 10 January 2020 , Christmas and New Year's extra supplement cost will be charged during this period
- Lunches and dinners during the trip except Alleppey, Bandipur National Park.
- Miscellaneous Expenses - drinks, souvenir, personal expenses etc.
- Tips for driver and other local staff
- Charges for Camera in the monuments and Parks
- The cancellation and baggage insurance, assistance and repatriation
- Indian Visa
- All services not mentioned in "inclusion"