

South India Adventure Tour



Days: 15
Price: 1445 USD
International flight not included
Comfort: ★★★★★
Difficult: ★★★☆☆
📍 Off the beaten track 📍 Culture

This tour is a vivid introduction to the sights of the states of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. This two-week itinerary allows us to experience various activities. En route, we see fabulous temples and holy Hindu shrines, charming old hill-stations high in the Western Ghats, princely palaces, wildlife reserves, green waterways and golden beaches.

Our trip begins from Chennai. Setting out from Chennai, India's fourth largest metropolis, we travel to the temple towns of Mahabalipuram enroute visiting Kanchipuram from where we head towards Pondicherry. One can trace the historical past of town by looking at the quaint colonial heritage buildings. Continuing our trip, we move to Madurai and grand splendor of temples would leave us mesmerized. Sophisticated architecture and interior carving of colossal temples of Thanjore will leave us spellbound. Next we visit breathtakingly destination - Munnar. Tea plantation and guided walk help us to explore the beautiful sceneries. Thekkady evokes images of elephants, unending chains of hills and spice scented plantations. The final stage of this cultural and natural exploration of South India sees us descend to the lush Kerala coast to spend a night on a houseboat on a tour of the famous Kerala backwaters in Alleppey. We finish our tour in the romantic old spice town of Cochin, a trading post on the Arabian Sea since Roman times.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Larger than life rock temple carvings in Mahabalipuram and Kanchipuram
- Thanjavur and Madurai – for their different architectural styles
- Munnar, a scenic hill station in the Western Ghats
- Elephants and wildlife at Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary
- Houseboat cruise through the backwaters of Alleppey
- Fort Kochi- an amalgam of Old Portuguese, British and Dutch colonial architecture

Day 1. Arrive Chennai



Chennai 📍

- Arrive at the Chennai International airport, after a traditional Welcome Swagat, we transfer to the hotel for check in.

🏠 Accommodation

The Pride Hotel Chennai

Day 2. Chennai - Kanchipuram - Mahabalipuram



Chennai 📍
 🚗 75km - ⌚ 1h 40m
 Kanchipuram 📍
 🚗 70km - ⌚ 1h 40m
 Mahabalipuram 📍

Chennai - Kanchipuram

- After a refreshing breakfast, we drive to Mahabalipuram, enroute visiting Kanchipuram the so called Golden City of One Thousand Temples. We visit the **Kailasanathar Temple** famous for exquisite carvings with 58 small shrines situated around the main shrine. We also visit Kamakshi Amman Temple. Kamakshi is said to be the Supergoddess Pravati wife of Lord Shiva. She blesses all who dedicate themselves to her.

Kanchipuram - Mahabalipuram

- After the visit, we continue our drive to Mahabalipuram. In the afternoon, we visit **five rock cut monolithic temple** each created in its own style and providing insight into the art of Dravidian style of constructions in temple. We also visit the 8th Century **shore temple** built on the seashore of Bay of Bengal with blocks of granite in Dravidian style.

☕ Breakfast	The Pride Hotel Chennai
🏠 Accommodation	Hotel Mamalla Heritage

Day 3. In Mahabalipuram - Full Day Sightseeing



Mahabalipuram 📍

- Today we head towards **Kokilamedu village on bikes**. This excursion of 2 hrs duration allows you to witness rural India at its pristine best. Ride through the country roads and explore the local life, enjoy the serene & rustic atmosphere of the village. We will cycle back to the hotel.
- Late afternoon, we will leave for **Crocodile and Snake bank**. The crocodile Bank is situated 18 Kms from Mahabalipuram and was established by herpetologist Romulus Whitaker in 1976. It houses several different species of Indian and African alligators and crocodiles. They are kept in open pools that are made to resemble their natural habitat. A snake farm is also located at this site. Anti venom is produced here. The process of extracting the snake venom is an extraordinary experience, and it allows the Irulas, the snake catcher tribe to make a living. After the visit, we drive back to hotel.

☕ Breakfast	Hotel Mamalla Heritage
🏠 Accommodation	Hotel Mamalla Heritage

Day 4. Mahabalipuram - Pondicherry Overland Drive



Mahabalipuram 📍
 🚗 100km - ⌚ 3h 50m
 Pondicherry (Puducherry) 📍

- Today we proceed to Pondicherry which retains a strong sense of the former French presence in India: grid pattern streets, distinctive police uniforms and the occasional colonial building around every where. After, we check in to the Hotel.
- Post Lunch, we embark on a sightseeing tour of the town to explore its Gallic heritage. **Rickshaw ride** through the streets allows you to have glimpse of French architecture. Places of tourist interest include the **Sree Aurobindo Ashram, Auroville, The French Institute and Colony Museum and Church**. Evening free to relax on the beach side

☕ Breakfast	Hotel Mamalla Heritage
🏠 Accommodation	Grand Serenaa

Day 5. Pondicherry - Tanjore



Pondicherry (Puducherry) 
 175km -  4h
 Thanjavur 

- After the breakfast, we drive to Thanjavur through the wonderful fertile Kaveri Delta- an area of lush emerald paddy. Upon arrival, check in to the hotel.
- Thanjavur is well known for its exquisite handicrafts such as bronze work and classical south india musical instruments. Late afternoon, we visit **Brihadeeswarar Temple** which dates from 10th century CE. A **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, it is a brilliant example of Dravidian temple architecture.

 Breakfast	Grand Serenaa
 Accommodation	Hotel Star Residency Thanjavur

Day 6. Thanjavur - Madurai



Thanjavur 
 190km -  4h
 Madurai 

- We drive to the colourful city of Madurai famous for its intricate temples. One of the oldest and most fascinating cities in **Tamil Naidu**, Madurai is also thriving centre with a rich past. After arrival, we check-in at the hotel.
- Then proceed for the sightseeing of **Meenakashi temple** - an outstanding example of **Vijaynagar temple architecture**. Later, we visit the **Thirumalai Nayaka Palace** built in 1636 in Indo- Mughal style by the Nayaka Dynasty. **Rickshaw ride** allows you to explore and unravel the city's other traits such as banana and vegetable markets, bamboo bazaar, dhobi ghat as well as region of textile and brass industries to watch locals make metal pots on furnace and spinning yarns. Overnight at the hotel.

 Breakfast	Hotel Star Residency Thanjavur
 Accommodation	Star Residency Madurai

Day 7. Madurai- Kodaikanal



Madurai 
 125km -  3h
 Kodaikanal 

- Today we head towards beautiful city located in hills- Kodaikanal. The beautiful scenic views of hills, valleys and forest would leave you spell bound. Upon arrival, check in to the hotel. There are various activities for which you could opt mainly horse riding and biking etc. Overnight in the hotel.

 Breakfast	Star Residency Madurai
 Accommodation	Hotel Kodai International

Day 8. In Kodaikanal- Trekking



Kodaikanal 

- Today we follow the trail leading to the Dolphin's Nose which provides a birds eye view of the scenic landscape of the surrounding mountainous area. It is a flat rock jutting out of the mountain overlooking a deep cliff, with its shape a kin to that of the nose of a dolphin. Positioned at an elevation of 6600 feet the fascinating place is one of the central destination for tourist visiting Kodaikanal. From there we would come back to hotel and rest of the day is free to explore the surrounding.
Duration of Trek: 5 Hrs
Distance : 8 Kms

 Breakfast	Hotel Kodai International
 Accommodation	Hotel Kodai International

Day 9. Kodaikanal- Munnar



Kodaikanal 
 175km -  5h
Munnar 

- In the morning, we drive to **Munnar**, located approximately 1,600 meters above sea level in the western Ghats, Once the summer - resort of the British administration in South India. Munnar is a beautiful hill station which has retained its colonial charm and is famous for its tea plantations. With its contoured hills, sparkling waterfalls, vast tea plantations and picture- post card hamlets, the area is perfect for some leisurely hiking. Upon arrival, we check in at the hotel and spend the rest of the day at leisure enjoying the ambiance of the town.

 Breakfast	Hotel Kodai International
 Accommodation	Clouds Valley

Day 10. In Munnar- Full Day Sightseeing.



Munnar 

- After an early breakfast, we drive to the tiny village of **Nagarmudi** where accompanied by a local guide we start our trek. The trail commences with a gradual ascent through the tea plantations and then climbs in to the Seven Malai hills. We walk through cardamom and coffee plantations and are rewarded with spectacular views of Annamudi Peak, Changuam Lake, Chittirapuram Dum, Munnar Town and some local villages. Later we descend down through the same route & transfer to our hotel. In the late afternoon, visit to the Tea museum.

Duration of Trek: 3 Hours
Distance : 6.5 Kms

 Breakfast	Clouds Valley
 Accommodation	Clouds Valley

Day 11. Munnar- Thekkady



Munnar 
 100km -  3h
Periyar (Thekkady) 

- In the morning, we drive to **Thekkady**. The drive is spectacular as the road climbs through the Western Ghats and commands fantastic views across Tamil Nadu. We arrive in the small bustling village of Thekkady and check in to the hotel. The whole area is a center for spice cultivation. After lunch, we take a short walk around a spice garden where we see many different spices growing. There is plenty of time in the afternoon to explore the bazaar where a large number of shops selling cardamoms, vanilla, peppercorns chillies, turmeric and other spices flank the road.

 Breakfast	Clouds Valley
 Accommodation	Hotel Karar Garden

Day 12. In Thekkady



Periyar (Thekkady) 

- In the early morning, we take a **Jungle walk** in the park along with our forest guides to admire abundance of birdlife that includes kingfishers, storks and hornbills which are the most commonly spotted birds. Periyar National Park is one of the largest reserves in south India and is set around a large man made lake. We return to the hotel for breakfast and in the afternoon, we will enjoy a **Boat Ride** on Periyar Lake. This is an ideal opportunity to get close to the animals and a good opportunity to spot elephants, oters wild pigs, and buffaloes. Ayurvedic message (optional), this service can be arranged in the nearby Ayurvedic massage center.

Duration of Trek : 3 Hrs
Distance: 6 Kms

☕ Breakfast	Hotel Karar Garden
🏠 Accommodation	Hotel Karar Garden

Day 13. Thekkady- Alleppey



Periyar (Thekkady) 📍
 🚗 150km - ⌚ 5h
 Alappuzha (Alleppey) 📍

- After the breakfast, we drive to **Alleppey**. This exotic place also known as Alappuzha lies at the heart of a vast network of canals and is a major center for backwater cruises. After arrival, we board our houseboat and begin our cruise through these enchanting waterways. The houseboats themselves are a delight. Built of Anjili wood and bamboo these boats were the traditional method of transport of goods for hundred of years. Now they have been decorated and made in to comfortable cruise vessels. As we meander through the lush tropical vegetation we have the opportunity to view not only the prolific birdlife but also gain a different perspective on local village life. We spend the night on the boats in the midst of serene **Vembanad Lake**.

☕ Breakfast	Hotel Karar Garden
🍴 Lunch	ATDC Houseboat
🍷 Dinner	ATDC Houseboat
🏠 Accommodation	ATDC Houseboat

Day 14. Alleppey- Cochin



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

- Today we have breakfast on houseboat while they move from their overnight morning point to our disembarkation point where we see our vehicles waiting for us. From here we drive to Cochin(Kochi).
- After checking in to the hotel, we visit the **Fort Kochi**, founded by Portuguese in 1503 and believed to be the earliest European settlement in India. Warehouses filled with the smell of tea and spices, lime washed bright green yellow and blue; rickety old bikes and hand -painted trucks piled high with goods that fill the narrow streets & food stalls at every corner is a common sight. 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 Syangouge** dating from 1568 and St Francis Church. We also explore the town of Kochi, its bazzars and Old harbour area. In the evening, an optional visit to see a display of **Kathhakali**, a classical dance form unique to Kerala concludes the day.

☕ Breakfast	ATDC Houseboat
🏠 Accommodation	Fort Queen

Day 15. Departure - Cochin.

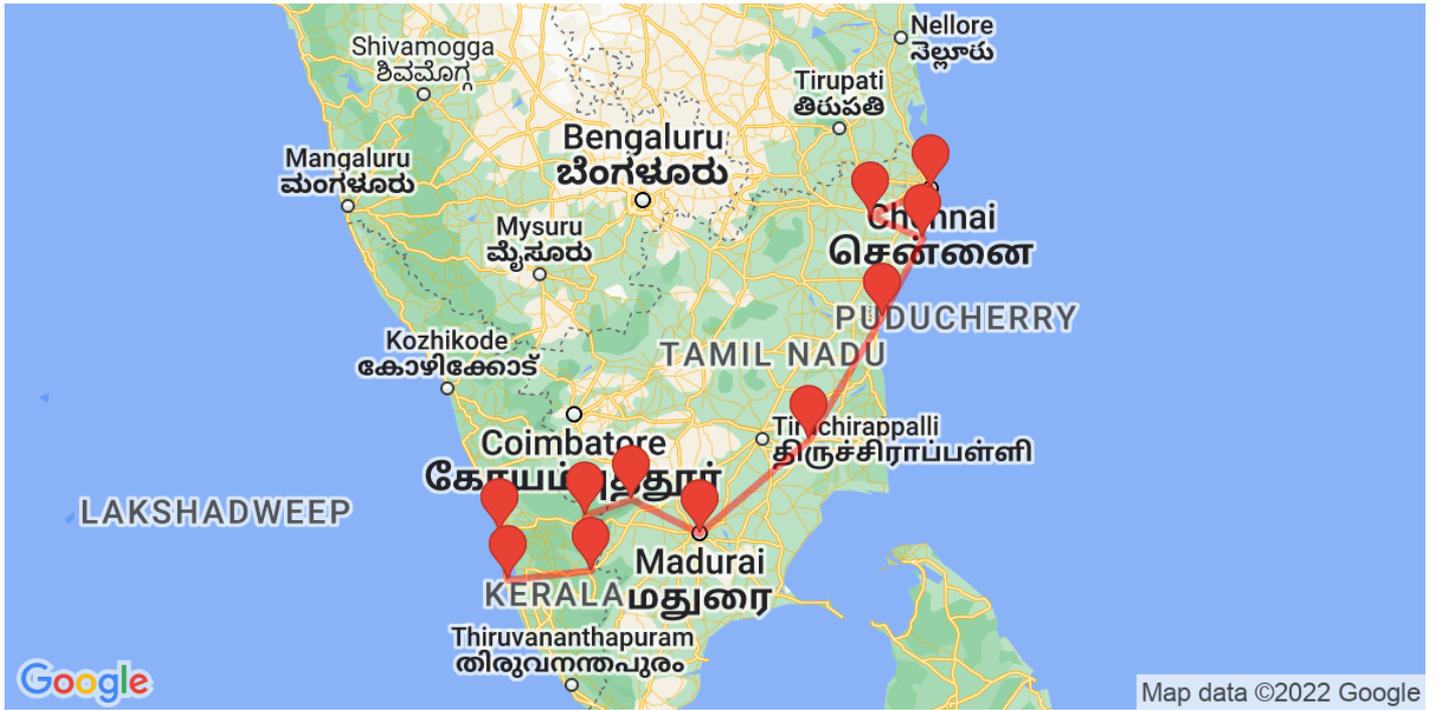


Cochin (Kochi) 📍

- Today after checkout from the hotel, we are transferred to the International Airport of Cochin to board the return flight.

☕ Breakfast	Fort Queen
-------------	------------

Itinerary map



Individual price per person

2-3	4-5	6-8
2325 USD	1695 USD	1445 USD

Included

- Accommodation for 13 nights in a double room in the hotels mentioned or equivalent on breakfast basis
- 01 night on Full board in a houseboat in Alleppey
- 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
- Excursion of Kokilamedu Village on bikes
- Rickshaw Ride in Pondicherry and Madurai
- Boat Ride in Periyar (Thekaddy)
- Guided Forest Walk in Periyar (Thekaddy)
- Half Day Hiking in Munnar
- Half Day Hiking in Kodaikanal
- Professional English-speaking tour leader throughout India
- 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 or Dinners during the tour except Full board in Alleppey.
- Any optional activities
- 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"