

Tour Name: South India Temples and Backwater

Tour Duration: 14 Nights/ 15 Days

Tour Map: <https://tinyurl.com/mr3s2hrw>

Tour Overview

South India Temples and Backwater offer a captivating journey through the spiritual and scenic treasures of South India. Begin your adventure in Chennai, where vibrant temples and bustling markets set the tone for your exploration. Wander through the ancient temples of Kanchipuram and marvel at their intricate architecture. Immerse yourself in the colonial charm of Pondicherry before delving into Thanjavur's rich cultural heritage and grand temples. Traverse through Trichy and the unique Chettinad region, discovering traditional mansions and flavorful cuisine. Conclude with the natural splendor of Thekkady's wildlife sanctuary and the serene backwaters of Alleppey, culminating in relaxation on the pristine beaches of Marari.

Tour Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive Chennai

- Upon arrival at Chennai airport, our representative will greet you and transfer you to your hotel.
- Settle in, relax, and enjoy the luxurious amenities of the hotel.

Day 2: Chennai Sightseeing and Excursion to Kanchipuram

- Start your day with a hearty breakfast at your hotel.
- Explore Kapaleeshwarar Temple, a historic Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Shiva, famous for its Dravidian architecture and colorful sculptures.
- Discover Fort St. George, the first English fortress in India, featuring the St. Mary's Church, a 17th-century church with colonial charm.
- Visit the Government Museum, housing an extensive collection of art, archaeology, and natural history, including ancient coins, sculptures, and a rich variety of artifacts.
- Drive to Kanchipuram and visit Ekambareswarar Temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva, known for its grand gopuram, sacred mango tree, and elaborate carvings.

- Explore Kailasanathar Temple, renowned for its exquisite carvings and historical importance as one of the oldest temples in Kanchipuram.
- Visit the Silk Weaving Center to observe the traditional art of silk weaving and the creation of intricate silk sarees.

Day 3: Chennai - Pondicherry (160kms)

- Enjoy breakfast at your hotel before driving to Pondicherry.
- En route, visit Mahabalipuram, a UNESCO World Heritage Site celebrated for its ancient rock-cut temples and sculptures.
- Explore Shore Temple, a structural temple overlooking the Bay of Bengal, known for its intricate carvings and serene ocean views.
- Discover Arjuna's Penance, a colossal open-air rock relief depicting scenes from Hindu mythology, carved into a single boulder.
- Visit the Five Rathas, a group of five monolithic temples carved from a single rock, showcasing different architectural styles.
- Continue to Pondicherry and check in at your hotel.
- Spend the evening exploring the French colonial architecture, serene beaches, and vibrant markets of Pondicherry.

Day 4: Pondicherry Sightseeing

- Begin your day with a breakfast at the hotel.
- Visit Aurobindo Ashram, a spiritual community founded by Sri Aurobindo and The Mother, known for its peaceful environment and philosophical teachings.
- Explore the French Quarter (White Town), famous for its colonial-era buildings, charming cafes, and boutiques reflecting French heritage.
- Visit the Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a Gothic-style church with stunning stained-glass windows and intricate facade details.
- Stroll along Promenade Beach, a popular seafront promenade with scenic views, perfect for relaxing and enjoying the coastal breeze.
- Experience Auroville, a unique township focusing on sustainable living and universal community, featuring the futuristic Matrimandir and eco-friendly practices.

- Return to your hotel for an overnight stay.

Day 5: Pondicherry - Thanjavur (220kms)

- Start your day with breakfast at your hotel before driving to Thanjavur.
- En route, stop at Nataraja Temple in Chidambaram, an architectural marvel with intricately carved gopurams and famous for its cosmic dance of Lord Shiva.
- Continue to Thanjavur and explore the Great Living Chola Temples at Gangaikonda Cholapuram, known for their massive temple complexes and intricate carvings.
- Visit Darasuram Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, renowned for its exquisite sculptures, detailed artwork, and architectural brilliance.
- Check in to your hotel in Thanjavur and relax for the evening.

Day 6: Thanjavur Sightseeing

- Begin with breakfast at your hotel.
- Visit Brihadeeswarar Temple, also known as the Big Temple, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a masterpiece of Dravidian architecture with its towering vimana (tower) and detailed sculptures.
- Explore Thanjavur Palace, a historic fortress featuring a mix of Nayak and Maratha architecture, with an Art Gallery showcasing bronze and stone sculptures, ancient manuscripts, and paintings.
- Visit the Saraswathi Mahal Library, one of Asia's oldest libraries, known for its vast collection of ancient texts, manuscripts, and rare books.
- Discover the Thanjavur Art Gallery within the palace, displaying a rich collection of art, including ancient bronze sculptures and traditional paintings.
- Return to your hotel and unwind.

Day 7: Thanjavur - Trichy - Chettinad (145kms)

- After breakfast, drive to Chettinad.
- Stop at Trichy to visit Rockfort Temple, an ancient fort complex perched atop a rock formation with panoramic views of the city.
- Climb the 434 steps to reach the Ucchi Pillayar Temple at the summit, known for its scenic vistas and religious significance.

- Explore the Ranganathaswamy Temple in Srirangam, one of the largest functioning Hindu temples in India, famous for its intricate architecture and grand gopurams.
- Continue to Chettinad and check in at your hotel.
- Spend the evening exploring Chettinad's unique architecture, known for its elaborate woodwork, spacious courtyards, and cultural heritage.

Day 8: Chettinad - Madurai (90kms)

- Start with breakfast at your hotel.
- Explore the opulent mansions of Chettinad, renowned for their unique architecture, intricate woodwork, and grandeur, including ornate carvings and Belgian chandeliers.
- Visit the Chettinad Museum to learn about the region's history, art, and architecture through a diverse collection of artifacts.
- Drive to Madurai and check in at your hotel.
- Relax for the evening and prepare for the next day's explorations.

Day 9: Madurai - Thekkady (160kms)

- Begin with breakfast at your hotel.
- Visit Meenakshi Amman Temple, a spectacular temple dedicated to Goddess Parvati and Lord Shiva, known for its grand architecture, towering gopurams, and intricate sculptures.
- Witness the evening prayer ceremony, a mesmerizing spectacle of music, dance, and devotion performed by temple priests.
- Explore the Thirumalai Nayakkar Palace, an imposing 17th-century palace known for its magnificent architecture and historical significance.
- Drive to Thekkady, a haven for nature lovers and wildlife enthusiasts, known for the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Check in to your hotel and enjoy a traditional martial art and Kathakali dance performance in the evening.

Day 10: Thekkady

- Start your day with breakfast at the hotel.
- Explore Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary with a boat safari on Periyar Lake, offering opportunities to spot wildlife such as elephants, tigers, deer, and various bird species.
- Visit a local spice plantation to learn about the cultivation and processing of spices like cardamom, cinnamon, and pepper.
- Engage in a spice tasting session and discover the different flavors and uses of various spices.
- Return to your hotel and relax for the evening.

Day 11: Thekkady - Alleppey (140kms)

- Have breakfast at your hotel before driving to Alleppey.
- Upon arrival, board a traditional houseboat and embark on a leisurely cruise through the scenic backwaters of Kerala.
- Enjoy the tranquil beauty of lush greenery, palm-fringed waterways, and rural life along the canals.
- Relish a delicious lunch prepared onboard with fresh local ingredients.
- Spend the night on the houseboat, enjoying the serene environment and gentle ripples of the backwaters.

Day 12: Alleppey - Marari (20kms)

- Disembark from the houseboat and transfer to Marari Beach.
- Check in to your resort and spend the day relaxing on the pristine sandy beach, taking leisurely walks, and soaking in the tranquil ambiance.
- Indulge in rejuvenating spa treatments, enjoy beach activities like volleyball and kayaking, or simply unwind by the poolside.

Day 13-14: Marari

- Start your day with breakfast at the hotel.
- Enjoy two full days at leisure in Marari to soak up the sun, participate in beach activities, and explore the local surroundings.

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- Take leisurely walks along the beach, visit nearby fishing villages to experience local life, or simply relax and unwind at the resort.
- Pamper yourself with luxurious amenities and impeccable service offered by your resort.

Day 15: Marari - Cochin/ Departure (Flight)

- After breakfast, drive to Cochin.
- Meet your guide and embark on a city tour of Cochin, often referred to as the "Queen of the Arabian Sea."
- Explore Fort Kochi, known for its colonial-era buildings, bustling markets, and the iconic Chinese Fishing Nets.
- Visit St. Francis Church, the oldest European church in India, with its historical significance and beautiful architecture.
- Explore Mattancherry Palace, also known as the Dutch Palace, famous for its impressive murals depicting Hindu epics and its historical artifacts.
- Visit the Jewish Synagogue in Jew Town, known for its exquisite Belgian glass chandeliers and hand-painted Chinese tiles.
- In the evening, transfer to Cochin airport for your onward journey or return flight home.

Package Price (USD Per Person Sharing Double/Twin Room)

Valid for Travel: Until 20 September 2027

Persons	Solo	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3★ Standard	4,264	2,311	2,018	2,094	1,905	1,871	1,768	1,691
4★ Deluxe	5,325	2,817	2,524	2,599	2,411	2,376	2,273	2,196
5★ Luxury	7,457	4,011	3,578	3,653	3,465	3,431	3,328	3,251

Single Room Supplement

3★ Standard: USD 794 | 4★ Deluxe: USD 1,350 | 5★ Luxury: USD 2,427

Triple Sharing Discount (Per Person)

3★ Standard: USD 118 | 4★ Deluxe: USD 235 | 5★ Luxury: USD 446

Price Includes:

- Assistance on arrival at airport.
- 14 Nights' accommodation in mentioned hotels or similar.
- Daily breakfast at hotels.
- Private AC car/van for airport transfers, sightseeing, and excursions as per the program.
- English speaking tour guide on sightseeing days (local guide in each city), as per program.
- Monument entrances and activities charges mentioned in the itinerary.
- Bottled drinking water in car.
- Government taxes.

Price Does Not Include:

- Any flight tickets.
- Camera charges at monuments if any.
- Meals other than mentioned in the inclusions.
- Expenses of personal nature like liquor, laundry, tips, telephone, fax, internet etc.
- Gratuities and optional activities.
- Anything not mentioned in inclusions.

Hotels used or similar for 14 nights' accommodation

3 Star Hotels

- Chennai x 2 nights: ZONE By the Park/ Raj Park
- Pondicherry x 2 nights: Shenbaga Hotel/ Anandha Inn Convention Centre
- Thanjore x 2 nights: Sangam Hotels
- Chettinad x 1 night: Chidambara Vilas/ Chettinadu Mansion
- Madurai x 1 night: JC Residency/ Hotel Royal Court

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- Thekkady x 2 nights: Abad Green Forest/ Hotel Treetop
- Alleppey x 1 night: Deluxe Houseboat (AC During Night Only)
- Marari x 3 nights: EL Oceano Beach Villas/ La Plage Marari

4 Star Hotels

- Chennai x 2 nights: Accord Metropolitan/ The Park Chennai
- Pondicherry x 2 nights: Le Pondy/ Accord Puducherry
- Thanjore x 2 nights: GReaT Trails Riverview Resort
- Chettinad x 1 night: Chidambara Vilas/ Chettinadu Mansion
- Madurai x 1 night: Fortune Pandiyan Hotel/ Regency Madurai by GRT Hotels
- Thekkady x 2 nights: Amritara Shalimar Spice Garden/ The Elephant Court
- Alleppey x 1 night: Premium Houseboat (Full Time AC)
- Marari x 3 nights: Abad Turtle Beach Resort/ Marari Sands Beach Resort

5 Star Hotels

- Chennai x 2 nights: Radisson Blu Hotel GRT Chennai/ Hilton Chennai
- Pondicherry x 2 nights: Palais De Mahe/ La Villa
- Thanjore x 2 nights: Svatma
- Chettinad x 1 night: Visalam Cgh Earth
- Madurai x 1 night: Courtyard by Marriott/ The Gateway Hotel Pasumalai
- Thekkady x 2 nights: Spice Village/ Hills & Hues
- Alleppey x 1 night: Luxury Houseboat (Full Time AC)
- Marari x 3 nights: Xandari Pearl/ Marari Beach Resort

Payment Policy:

- Deposit of 25% of the package cost at the time of booking.
- Deposit of 50% of the package cost, 30 days prior to arrival date
- Deposit of 100% of the package cost, 10 days prior to arrival date

Cancellation policy:

- Note: Written cancellation will be accepted on all working days, except Sundays. Any cancellation sent on Sundays will be considered on the next working day (Monday).
- X-mas and New Year Period (20 Dec to 05 Jan): The payment is non-refundable during this period.
- After Trip Commencement: If you cancel the trip after it has commenced, the refund will be limited to the amount we are able to recover from hoteliers/contractors. We are not responsible for refunds on unused hotel accommodations, chartered transportation, or missed meals.
- 61 days or more before the tour: No cancellation charges.
- Between 60 to 30 days before the tour: Cancellation charges equal to 20% of the full tour booking value.
- Between 30 to 15 days before the tour: Cancellation charges equal to 50% of the full tour booking value.
- Within 5 days before the tour or no show: Cancellation charges equal to 90% of the full tour booking value.

Our Liabilities & Limitations:

- Price Changes: After the finalization of the tour/service cost, if there are any hikes in entrance fees, taxes, fuel costs, or guide charges by the Government of India, these will be charged as extra.
- Role as Agent: Agora Voyages acts only as an agent for hotels, airlines, transporters, railways, and contractors providing services. All receipts, contracts, and tickets issued by us are subject to terms and conditions of the service providers.
- Itinerary Changes: All itineraries are sample itineraries intended to provide a general idea. We reserve the right to change the schedule based on factors such as weather, road conditions, or the physical ability of participants to ensure safety, comfort, and well-being.
- Rate Modifications: Our rates are based on negotiated rates with hotels and airlines. If the rates are modified by these service providers, we reserve the right to adjust the quoted rates accordingly. Hotel bookings are based on usual check-in and check-out times, unless otherwise indicated.
- Liability Disclaimer: We are not responsible for delays, alterations, or expenses incurred due to natural hazards, flight cancellations, accidents, weather, sickness, political closures, or any unforeseen incidents.

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- **Damage, Loss, or Injury:** We are not responsible for any loss, injury, or damage to persons, property, or otherwise, caused by acts of God, fire, accidents, machinery breakdowns, political disturbances, theft, epidemics, or other factors beyond our control.
- **Insurance:** We do not offer insurance for accidents, sickness, theft, or other unforeseen circumstances. We recommend travelers arrange for insurance in their home country. All personal property and baggage are at the client's risk at all times.
- **Unforeseen Circumstances:** We are not responsible for costs arising from landslides, roadblocks, bad weather, or similar unforeseen circumstances.

Tipping

- Tipping is not included in our price. It is optional but often expected in the travel industry. There is no limit on the amount you can tip, though the average guideline is around \$10-15 per day for guides, drivers, and other crew members.

Trip Comments

- After your trip, we would love to hear your experience. Any photos, suggestions, or feedback will be greatly appreciated. While we strive to make every trip perfect, we acknowledge that there is always room for improvement. Your comments, whether positive or constructive, are invaluable to us.