



TOS Fundraiser Tour to Southern India “Sacred Sights Tour”

11 nights/12 days 05-16 Jan 2018

**This tour has been designed to follow our Theosophical Society
International Convention at Adyar 2017-2018**

**Cost Land Only AUD1360 per person twin share (15 participants)
AUD1330 per person twin share (19 participants)**

In this 12 day tour we will cover the southeastern coast of India. Tamil Nadu is a region with an inherent rich heritage. Majestic temples with intricately carved walls that tell the tales of glorious legacy of Dravidian culture that flourished here. Also visit Kerala, which is bestowed with by a bounty of natural beauty- rippling waves of Arabian Sea, serene backwaters, lots of greenery, aroma of spices. Kathakali dance is one who can describe Kerala in one line. Because of its sheer beauty Kerala is fondly called “Gods Own Country”

India this extraordinary country, with its billion plus population and bubbling melting pot of multi-faith customs and festivals, presents travelers with an enigmatic array of unique experiences that will remain etched in their minds long after departing India’s shores. Spirituality is an integral thread in the intricate tapestry that is India. Whether in solemn temple ceremony or convivial religious festival, all things sacred are passionately pursued by Indians from all walks of life. Several lifetimes would be required to explore all of the country’s cultural and historical legacies.

Come join us following the TS Convention 31 Dec 2017 through 05 Jan 2018

Application form for International Conference available Aug 2017.

Participating in this tour with like-minded people will help support

Australian National TOS Projects for 2018

Qandeel Schools Pakistan

Golden Link College Philippines

Syrian Refugees

Day by day itinerary
Highlights Ramana Maharishi Ashram, House boats Kerala,
Ayurvedic Stopover

Day 1 Friday 05 Jan Chennai-Tiruvannamalai

Breakfast

Am departure Adyar Campus. Drive straight to Tiruvannamalai – approximately 4 hours

Visit Ramana Maharishi Ashram- this tranquil ashram draws devotees of Sri Ramana Maharishi. It's very relaxed place, set in green surrounds, where visitors are able to meditate or take part in Puja at the shrine where the guru achieved Samadhi (ecstatic state involving conscious exit from the body) and to use the bookshop. Annamalaiyar Temple is a perfect example of Dravidian temple architecture - dedicated to Lord Shiva and spread over an area of 10 hectares it is one of the largest temples in India.

Overnight Hotel Himalaya

Day 2 Saturday 06 Jan Tiruvannamalai–Tanjore-Trichy

Breakfast Visit to holy mountain Arunachala- this 800m high boulder-strewn hill, known locally as Girivalam, looms over the town. On full moon and festival days thousands of pilgrims' circumnavigate the 14km base of the mountain.

Later drive to Tanjore (approx 5 Hrs./236 Kms.). Tanjore: Visit the beautiful Chola Temple of Brihadeeshwara is capped by a monolithic cupola made of single granite block weighing 80 tons which was taken of the top with the help of a 6kms long ramp, an old technique used by Egyptians for building pyramids. Its bronzes and handicrafts make Tanjore one of the highlights of a visit of South India.

Drive further to Trichy (approx. 1-2 Hrs./ 54 Kms.). Arrive and check-in to hotel.

Overnight Hotel Grand Gardenia

Day 3 Sunday 07 Jan Trichy

Breakfast Visit Citadel of the Chola dynasty in the medieval period. In the 18th century it witnessed the Carnatic war fought between the French and the English. Lord Clive's house is still there to see and so is the Danish Church.

Visit The Rock Fort an 83 meter high outcrop in otherwise flat land of the city of Tiruchirapalli is one of the oldest rocks in the world. Approximately 3800 million years old makes this rock as old as the rocks of Greenland and older than the Himalayas. Four hundred and seventeen steps hewn out of the rock leads to the top where there are inscriptions dating back to the 3rd century B.C., Uchipilaiyar Koil a temple dedicated to Lord Vinayaka or Lord Ganesha on the top. One can enjoy a 360 degree bird eye view of Tiruchirapalli from here. Also visit the Ganpati temple.

Overnight Hotel Grand Gardenia

Day 4 Monday 08 Jan Trichy-Madurai

Breakfast Drive to Madurai (approx 3-4 hrs./ 135Kms.). Arrive and check-in to the hotel.

Visit the great Meenakshi Temple dedicated to the consort of Lord Shiva with the towering gopurams (rising high above the surrounding country side). Later visit the Tirumala Nayak Palace – A gracious building in the Indosaracenic style, famous for the stucco work on its domes and arches. Also visit the Alagar Hills and Tirupara Kundran Temples.

Meenakshi Temple Timings:

Timings: 1600-2200 Hrs. Evening ceremony- 2115-2200 Hrs.

Timings: 0500-1230 Hrs. Morning ceremony: 0530-0615 Hrs.

Overnight Hotel MNH Royal Park.

Day 5 Tuesday 09 Jan Madurai

Breakfast. Optional: Visit the Meenakshi Temple for morning prayers.

Visit Gandhi Memorial Museum, established in 1959, is a memorial museum for Gandhi located in the city of Madurai. Known as Gandhi Museum, it is now one of the five Gandhi Sanghralayas (Gandhi Museums) in the country. It includes a part of the blood-stained garment worn by Gandhi when he was assassinated by Nathuram Godse.

Evening visit Meenakshi Temple during prayer time.

Overnight Hotel MNH Royal Park

Day 6 Wednesday 10 Jan Madurai – Kanyakumari

Breakfast. Drive to Kanyakumari (approx 6-7 Hrs./ 244 Kms.). Arrive and check-in to hotel.

Rest of the day is free.

Overnight Hotel Sea View.

Day 7 Thursday 11 Jan Kanvakumari

Breakfast. Visit Kanyakumari temples (Non Hindus not allowed inside). Also take a ferry to Gandhimandapam and Vivekananda memorial rock-in memory of Swami Vivekananda, the Indian philosopher who had meditated here.

Overnight Hotel Sea View

Day 8 Friday 12 Jan Kanvakumari - Trivandrum--Varkala Beach

Breakfast. Drive to Trivandrum (approx. 2-3 Hrs./84 Kms.). Arrive and visit the Napier Museum; was established in 1855. In 1874, the old Museum Building was demolished and foundation for the new building was laid. The new building was named after Lord Napier. Visit SriChitra Art Gallery.

Nearby visit around the Padmanabhaswamy Temple (Non Hindus are not allowed into the temple): is built in an intricate fusion of the indigenous Kerala style and the Dravidian style (kovil) of architecture associated with the temples located in the neighboring state of Tamil Nadu, featuring high walls, and a 16th-century Gopuram. It is the richest Hindu temple in the world.

Overnight Hotel Hindustan Beach Resort

Day 9 Saturday 13 Jan Varkala Beach

Breakfast. Visit to Janardana Swami Temple is a 2000-year-old temple situated in Varkala, Thiruvananthapuram. It is also known as Varkala Temple. Janardana Swami is a form of LordVishnu.

Rest of the day to relax and enjoy Ayurveda treatments.

Overnight Hotel Hindustan Beach Resort .

Day 10 Sunday 14 Jan Varkala Beach-Alleppey-Cochin

Breakfast. Drive to Alleppey (approx. 3 Hrs./ 106 Kms.). Arrive and join day backwater cruise to explore the villages and rural life. Enjoy a cruise with lunch on the backwater through a maze of canals and lagoons.

Later drive to Cochin (approx. 2 Hrs.). Arrive & check-in hotel

Optional Kathakali Dance Show

Overnight Fort Cochin/Casino.

Day 11 Monday 15 Jan Cochin

Breakfast Tour of Old Cochin visiting The Dutch Palace at Mattancherry. The Jewish Synagogue at the heart of what is called the Jew Town. The St. Francis Church, the oldest European church in India. The Santa Cruz Basilica, originally built in 1557 by the Portugese. The Chinesefishing nets, believed to have brought to Kochi by Chinese traders.

Rest period prior to transfer to local restaurant for farewell dinner

Overnight Fort Cochin/Casino

Day 12 Tuesday 16 Jan Cochin – Farewell to India

Breakfast. Transfer to airport for flights home.

End of tour arrangements

Cost inclusions:

- 11 nights accommodation at hotels mentioned, twin sharing room with daily breakfast
All transfers, sightseeing, excursions and drives using excellent AC Vehicle.
- Service of English speaking guide (During tour).
- All payable monument entrance fees.
- House boat day cruise with Lunch in Kanniyakumari.
- Farewell dinner on 16th Jan.
- 2 bottles mineral water per person/day.
- Assistance.
- All **PRESENT** applicable government taxes. **(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**.

Cost exclusions:

- Any expenses of personal nature such as telephone calls, laundry, aerated drinks or Bottled water used in room/restaurant, items ordered on room service, mini bar etc.
- Meals apart from those indicated in the itinerary. Meals are inexpensive in India approx \$3-\$5 to be budgeted for evening meal.
- Camera fees are not included in the cost.
- Cost incurred in case of hospitalization or evacuation.
- Internet charges- WI-FI.
- Tips/ gratuities paid to driver, guides, room boy, bellboys etc.
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- **Visa fees Australian passport holders require a visa for India current cost approx. Aud 90.** Details for processing will be sent after deposit paid
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- **Tipping** – please allow approx. aud8-10 per day for tipping to cover local guides, 1 company English speaking escort/ driver & his assistant/ bell boys in hotel & other misc. tipping.
- **Travel Insurance recommended**—check with your credit card bank re complimentary insurance.

**Single Supplement AUD1920 based on 15 passengers
AUD1896 based on 19 passengers**

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