



LUXE INDIA  
TOURS AND TRAVELS PVT. LTD.

# Heritage and Beauty of South India

CHENNAI – MAHABALIPURAM – PONDICHERRY – THANJAVUR – TRICHY – KARAIKUDI  
MADURAI – MUNNAR – PERIYAR – KUMARAKOM – COCHIN – MUMBAI

15 days trip starting from \$2054 per person

This journey is into the India's verdant southern landscapes, exploring extraordinary old temples of Tamilnadu. These rich repository of varied landscapes binds you when you pass through the region. Observe the astonishing Pallava sculptures and towering Chola Temples of Tamil Nadu, the colonial charms of Puducherry. The southern part of the country is more tropical in nature. Located on the banks of the Vembanad Lake in Kottayam, one gets to see a variety of migratory birds that flock in thousands, ranging from places like THE HIMALAYAS TO SIBERIA in Kumarakom Bird Sanctuary. Encounter spice villages and the tranquil backwaters of Kerala and coastal cities while exploring the lush green side of intoxicating Kerala.

## DAY 01: CHENNAI

Arrive at Chennai International airport & meet our representative. Transfer to hotel. Check-in at the hotel. Rest of the day at leisure. Overnight stay at the hotel.

## DAY 02: CHENNAI

After breakfast, half day city tour by visiting, Fort St. George, built in 1640. The fort was the first bastion of the British East India Company in southern India; today, it houses the Secretariat and the Legislative Assembly of Tamil Nadu. See St. Mary's Church, consecrated in 1680 and one of the oldest British buildings in India. Explore the National Art Gallery whose exhibits feature all major South Indian periods, including the Chola, Vijayanagar, Hoysala and Chalukya. Continue to Kapaleeswara temple, the biggest in Chennai, noted for its beautifully carved gopuram (monumental tower). Stop at the peaceful Portuguese-built Santhome Cathedral, named after St. Thomas the Apostle, whose tomb is said to be beneath the basilica. Finish the day at Marina Beach at sunset. Overnight stay at the hotel.

### **DAY 03: CHENNAI – MAHABALIPURAM (60 KMS – 1½ HRS)**

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and leave for Mahabalipuram by surface. Arrive at Mahabalipuram and check in at the hotel. Visit the stunning rock carvings of Mahabalipuram. The remaining Shore Temple is a World Heritage Monument. There is also spectacular Five Rathas (chariots) ceremonial chariots, rock-cut monoliths, the Shore Temple by the sea and excellent sculptures that surround it. Rest of the time at leisure or enjoy the beach. Overnight stay at the hotel.

### **DAY 04: MAHABALIPURAM – PONDICHERY (100 KMS – 2 HRS)**

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and leave for Pondicherry by surface. Arrive at Pondicherry and check in at the hotel. Afternoon, explore the extensive Ashram of Sri Aurobindo. Visit the Matri Mandir at Auroville. In evening, see the sunset at beach side. Overnight stay at the hotel.

### **DAY 05: PONDICHERY – TRICHY – THANJAVUR (260 KMS – 5 HRS)**

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and leave for Thanjavur by surface. Enroute, visit Trichy – explore the magnificent Ranganatha Vishnu Temple. View various religious ceremonies being performed by people on the banks of River Cauvery with the ashes of their loved ones. We climb the 437 steps to the Rock Fort Temple at sunset for panoramic views over the Cauvery River delta and Srirangam island. Arrive at Thanjavur and check in at the hotel. Overnight stay at the hotel.

### **DAY 06: THANJAVUR**

After breakfast, visit the magnificent Brihadeshvara temple dedicated to Lord Shiva which bears witness to the glory of Chola architecture, sculpture and painting. Also visit the Thanjavur Art Gallery which has a priceless collection of bronze icons and granite sculptures dating from the 9th century AD. Visit Mahal Library within the Palace. Rest of the day at leisure. Overnight stay at the hotel.

### **DAY 07: THANJAVUR – CHETTINAD – MADURAI (200 KMS – 4 HRS)**

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and leave for Madurai by surface. Enroute, visit Chettinad – ancestral homeland of the Chettyar. Home to wealthy business tycoons who made their livelihood in Burma during the last century. The richness of these traders can be seen in their palatial homes, a superb example being the Chettyar Palace. See these extraordinary homes with their teak pillars and marble detailing. Continue to Madurai. Arrive at Madurai and check in at the hotel. Evening, visit Meenakshi Temple to witness a pooja ceremony, in which an idol of Shiva is carried in a colourful procession accompanied by musicians. Rest of the day at leisure. Overnight stay at hotel.

### **DAY 08: MADURAI**

After breakfast, half day city tour visiting the Meenakshi Temple – the huge temple complex with its immense portals is quite overwhelming. The complex with its magnificent stone carvings was built in the 17th century by the Nayaks of Madurai. See the thousand pillar hall and also see the Thirumalai Nayak Palace built in the Indo Saracenic style in 1636. Rest of the day at leisure. Overnight stay at the hotel.

## **DAY 09: MADURAI – MUNNAR (160 KMS – 4½ HRS)**

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and leave for Munnar by surface. Arrive at Munnar and check in at the hotel. Rest of the day at leisure. Overnight stay at the hotel.

## **DAY 10: MUNNAR**

After breakfast, visit to Tea/ Spice Plantation. Among the exotic flora found in the forests and grasslands here is the NeelaKurinji. This flower which bathes the hills in blue every twelve years, will bloom next in 2030 AD. Munnar also has the highest peak in South India, Anamudi, which towers over 2695 m. Anamudi is an ideal spot for trekking. Time at leisure. Overnight stay at the hotel.

## **DAY 11: MUNNAR – PERIYAR (90 KMS – 3 HRS)**

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and leave by surface for Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary (Thekkady). Periyar is dominated by two things - the sanctuary and plantation of spices, tea, coffee and Cardamom. Arrive at Periyar and check in at the hotel. Afternoon, boat ride at lake Periyar to view wildlife. Periyar Sanctuary is one of the best in the country for watching and photographing wildlife. Overnight stay at the hotel.

## **DAY 12: PERIYAR – KUMARAKOM (115 KMS – 3½ HRS)**

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and leave for Kumarakom by surface. Kumarakom- a small village recognised as a backwater paradise on The Vembanad Lake. Arrive at Kumarakom and check-in at the hotel. Participate in water sports or visit to a local village or spend the day relaxing in a peaceful and quite environment of the place or enjoy the Ayurveda Therapy at the hotel. Overnight stay at the hotel.

## **DAY 13: KUMARAKOM – COCHIN (50 KMS – 1½ HRS)**

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and leave for Cochin by surface. Arrive at Cochin and check-in at the hotel. City tour visiting the Jewish Synagogue, built in 1568 AD and decorated with copper plates bearing the Hebrew script and hand painted Chinese tiles. The Ancient Catholic Church at Malayathur is dedicated to ST. Thomas. Visit St. Francis Church in Fort cochin, built originally by the Portuguese in 1510 AD and is believed to be the first church built by Europeans in India. Vasco-da-Gama was originally buried here but forty years later his mortal remains were taken to Portugal. Also, visit the Mattan-Cherry Palace also called the Dutch Palace built by the Portuguese and presented to the King of Cochin in 1555 AD. The Chinese fishing nets at the entrance of the harbour along the backwaters are a fascinating sight. These nets that line the sea front exhibit a mechanical method of catching fish, introduced by Chinese traders to the coast of Malabar. Evening, witness the Kathakali Dance Programme. Overnight stay at the hotel.

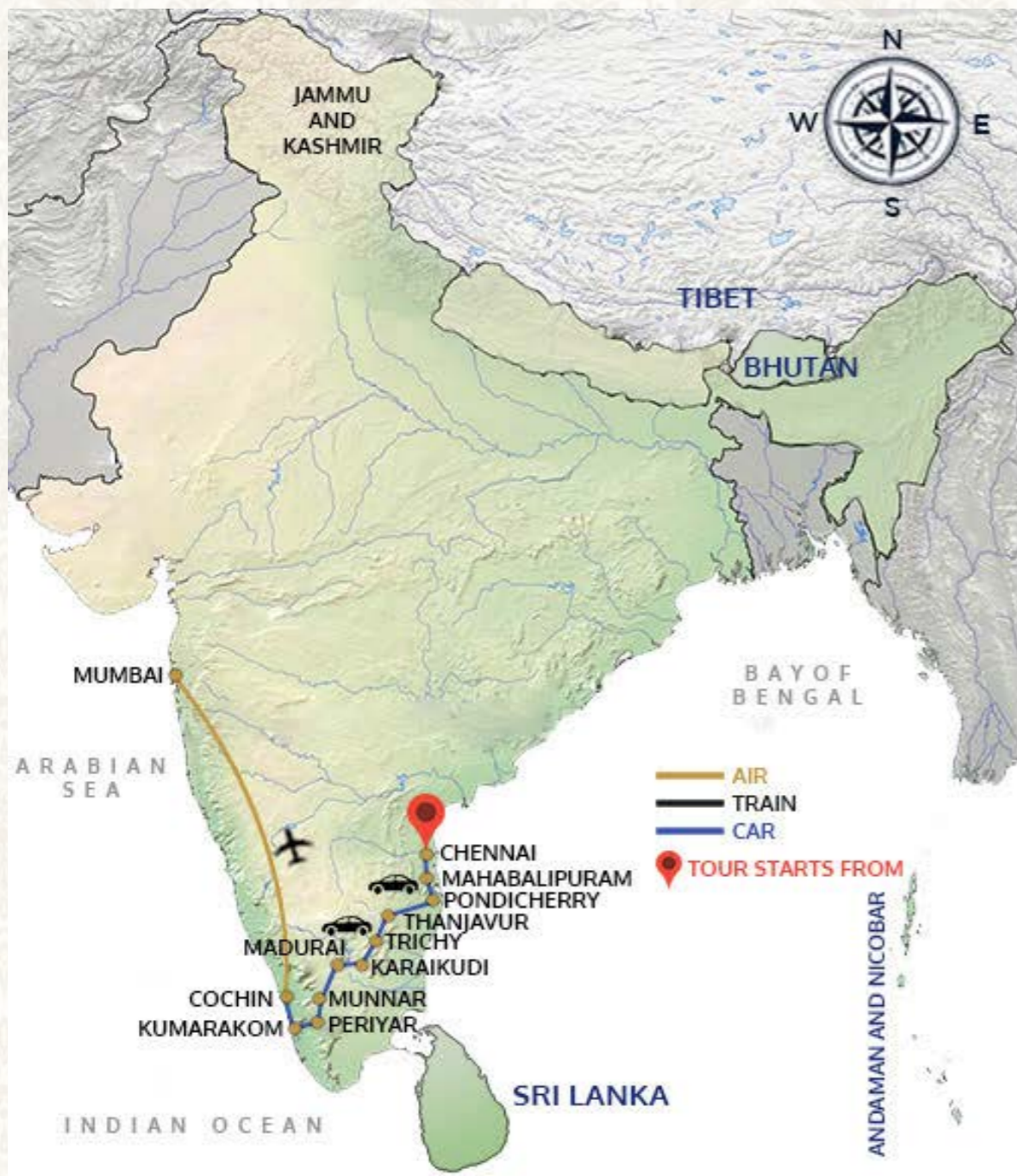
## **DAY 14: COCHIN – MUMBAI (BY AIR)**

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and leave for Cochin airport for flight to Mumbai. Arrive at Mumbai Airport and transfer to hotel. Check-in at hotel. Time at leisure. Overnight stay at the hotel.

## **DAY 15: MUMBAI**

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After breakfast, visit Mumbai (Bombay) the commercial capital of India. Although Buddhist and Hindu dynasties ruled the region until around the 13th century, there were only scattered settlements on the island. Once, a sultry tropical archipelago cluster of seven islands, the British developed Bombay merging the seven islands into one. Gateway of India built to commemorate the royal visit of George V and Queen Mary in 1911, the Prince of Wales Museum housing collection of Indo Saracenic architecture, Flora Fountain, Victoria Late evening, transfer to Mumbai International airport to fly back home \ onward destination.



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Contact Our Destination Specialist

Phone: +91 98182 63453 | Email: [info@luxeindiatours.com](mailto:info@luxeindiatours.com)