

# Temple Tour Package

## SOUTH INDIA – THE LAND OF TEMPLES

*A 18 night spiritual journey covering many of South India's most sacred temples beginning with a visit to Sai Baba Ashram in Whitefields, just outside of Bangalore, then to Thirupati and onto the many other famous temples in Kanchipuram, Thanjavur, Madurai, Rameshwaram including the Shiva temples near Etumanoor and of course Guruvayoor Temple.*

### **Day 01 – Bangalore**

On arrival, you will be met by our meet & greet service and transferred to your Hotel. Rest of the day to explore this garden city. Overnight at the Hotel.



Bangalore is the capital of Karnataka and best known internationally as an IT hub that rivals Silicone Valley. It is easy to see why it is the favourite of the Tecchies with its salubrious climate, its tree-lined avenues and its trendy downtown. A city of striking contrasts. Bangalore today is Asia's fastest growing cosmopolitan city. The Vidhan Soudha is a major attraction which presently functions as the state legislative assembly and a marvelous example of Neo-Dravidian architecture.

### **Day 02 – Bangalore**

Full day for exploring this wonderful cosmopolitan city. Overnight at the hotel.

The Cubbon Park in the heart of the city, Lal Bagh (famous for the blooming red roses), and the Bangalore Palace are some of the other must see attractions of this garden city. The Tipu's Palace and the adjoining fort are fine examples of Indo-Islamic architecture that also offer a glimpse into the Mughal lifestyle of the day. Besides, one can also visit the Aquarium, which is the second largest in the country.



### **Day 03 – Bangalore-Puttaparthi**

After breakfast drive to Puttaparthi. On arrival, check in at the Hotel. Later visit Ashram. Overnight at the Hotel.



Sai Baba or 'Bhagawan' as he is known to followers explains the scriptures of the world in simple and easily comprehensible terms that can be grasped and practiced by anyone irrespective of age, gender, faith and nationality. Ever since He declared His Divine Identity and Mission at the tender age of 14, Bhagawan has tirelessly been engaged in teaching and transforming humanity. Though Bhagawan's teachings are primarily concerned with spirituality, it also extends to

other spheres of human knowledge and activity. These teachings of Bhagawan, primarily in the form of His Divine Discourses delivered to varied groups of audiences in various places over the past several decades since 1953, have been compiled in several volumes of 'Sathya Sai Speaks'. Apart from this, Bhagawan had also written series of articles for the magazine 'Sanathana Sarathi' that were compiled and published as the 'Vahini' series. The undercurrent of all of Bhagawan's teachings is the principle of love. He has often stated that the essence of all His teachings is contained in the simple yet powerful canons – "Love All, Serve All. Help Ever, Hurt Never".



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## DAY 04 –BANGALORE- CHENNAI-TIRUPATI

Drive back to Bangalore Airport to connect your flight to Chennai. On arrival proceed to Tirupati one of the most ancient and sacred pilgrimage spots in India. The main attraction here is the world famous Sri Venkateswara temple which is believed to receive more pilgrims than even Jerusalem and Mecca. Overnight at the Hotel.



One of the major attractions in Tirupati is the world famous Sri Venkateswara Temple. As a large number of devotees visit this temple everyday, be prepared to wait for almost twenty hours before you can get the darshan of the deity. The other shrines that you can visit while on a trip to Tirupati are Sri Govindrajaswamy Temple, Sri Kapileswaraswami

Temple, Sri Kodandaramaswami Temple, and Sri Kalyana Venkateswaraswami Temple. You can also visit Tiruchanur, where the temple of Sri Padmavathi Devi is situated.

## DAY 05 – TIRUPATI - CHENNAI

Morning after Darshan & breakfast, checkout from the hotel & proceed to Chennai referred to as the “Gateway to South India” from where a journey into the rich heritage of the country starts.. Overnight at the hotel.

The major attraction of Chennai is its golden beaches, the most popular among them being the picturesque Marina Beach that also boasts of being the second longest beach in the world. While sightseeing in Chennai, make sure to visit the beach and enjoy a relaxed day lazing around on the golden sands watching the azure blue sea. You can also visit a number of other popular beaches in Chennai like the Elliot’s Beach and Covelong Beach.



## DAY 06 – CHENNAI - MAHABALIPURAM

After breakfast, checkout from the hotel & proceed to Mahabalipuram the world heritage site famous for the monolith temples dating back to centuries. Overnight at the hotel.



The temple town of Mahabalipuram is famous for its various temples and other attractive features. This 7th century city of the Pallavas is considered pioneer in the Dravidian architectural style. The city was earlier called Mallapuram and was a famous trading port of Pallavas. The attractions are the Arjunas Penance, Five Rathas, Shore temples & the tiger caves

## DAY 07 – MAHABALIPURAM- KANCHIPURAM

Morning after breakfast, proceed to Kanchipuram known as the city of Thousand Temples & silk centre. Later return to Mahabalipuram. Overnight at the hotel.

Dedicated to Siva, Kailasanatha is one of the earliest temples. It was built by the Pallava king, Rayasimha, in the late 7th century, though its front was added later by his son, King Varman III. It is the only temple at Kanchi which isn't cluttered with the more recent additions of the Cholas and Vijayanagar rulers, and so reflects the freshness and simplicity of early Dravidian architecture. Fragments of the 8-th century murals which once graced the alcoves are a visible reminder of how magnificent the temple must have looked when it was first built. The temple is run by the Archaeology Department and is very interesting, Quite unusually, non-Hindus are allowed into the inner sanctum.



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## DAY 08 – MAHABALIPURAM – TANJORE - TRICHY

After breakfast, checkout from the hotel & proceed to Trichy via Tanjore. Overnight at the hotel.



Thanjavur has been the capital of mighty Cholas for centuries. Therefore it is only natural that the city has remained the focal point of cultural movement and activities in the peninsular India. The Cholas have been known as the patrons of magnificent arts & culture and that is why Tanjore has a lot of attractions to see and appreciate. The tourist attractions are the Sri Brihadeswara Temple, The Palace, Art Gallery, Royal Museum, Mariamman Temple (Punnai Nallur) etc...

## DAY 09 – TRICHY - MADURAI

Morning after breakfast, proceed to Madurai - The city is among the oldest in India, a flourishing seat of art and culture since the Sangam period. Overnight at the hotel.

The city of Madurai is originally built around the Meenakshi temple. Though there are many temples in the city, Meenakshi temple outdoes all with its sheer magnificence and splendor of architecture. You can marvel the temple's flawless Dravidian Architecture and be a part of devotees who throng the temple from all over India. If you wished to have a bird's eye view of the city, you could also climb the southern Gopuram of the temple see to get a great view of the city.



## DAY 10 – MADURAI – RAMESHWARAM - MADURAI

Full day explore the historic beauty of Rameshwaram. Later proceed to Madurai. Overnight at the hotel.



Rameshwaram is a sea swept sacred island of great tourist potential. A hotspot pilgrim destination, Rameshwaram is nestled in the Gulf of Munnar at the very tip of Indian peninsula. Some of the most visited sites in the regions include: Ramanathaswamy Temple, Kothandaraswamy Temple & Dhanushkodi, Adam's Bridge & Gandhamadana Parvatam.

## DAY 11 – MADURAI - KANYAKUMARI

Morning after breakfast, proceed to Kanyakumari named after the Goddess Kanyakumari Amman who is the popular deity of the area. Overnight at the hotel.

Legend has it that the Goddess Parvati in one of her incarnations as Devi Kanniya did penance on one of the rocks of this land's end to obtain the hand of Lord Shiva. Kanyakumari is the one of the sacred place for Hindu religion. This is the place where three oceans joined together. Bay of Bengal, Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea. Later visit Vivekananda Memorial. Kanyakumari is the only place in India where one can enjoy the unique experience of watching the sunset and moonrise simultaneously on a full moon evening. Explore, Gandhi Memorial, Swami Vivekananda Rock memorial, Kumari Amman Temple & Tiruvalluvar Statue.



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## DAY 12 – KANYAKUMARI - KOVALAM

**Morning after breakfast, check out from the hotel & proceed to Kovalam. Enroute, visit the Sucheendram Temple & Padmanabhapuram Palace. Overnight at the hotel**



Sucheendram Temple, 13 Kms. Away from Kanyakumari, has a beautiful gopuram, musical pillars and an excellent statue of the Hanuman, apart from a valuable collection of art from different periods. Padmanabhapuram Palace, a magnificent wooden palace of the 16th century, is a fine specimen of Kerala's indigenous style of architecture. The antique interiors are replete with intricate rosewood carvings and sculptured decor. The palace also contains 17th and 18th century murals. The Palace will be closed on Mondays

Kovalam was a small, sleepy village. It lay in humble obscurity along the picturesque coast of Kerala. Then around 1930, this little village was unexpectedly shaken out of its lethargic slumber and thrust on the international tourist map. The vendors of holiday dreams along the sea had discovered the fabulous silver sands and palm-fringed shores of Kovalam. From then onwards, there was no looking back.

## DAY 13 – KOVALAM – TRIVANDRUM-KOVALAM

**Morning free at Kovalam Beach. After lunch proceed for a short city tour of Trivandrum with a visit to Padmanabhaswamy Temple during evening Poojas. Overnight at Kovalam.**



Being the capital city of Kerala, Trivandrum is surrounded by seven hills and endorses ancient and modern style of architecture. Visit, *Napier Museum*, which houses a rare collection of archaeological and historic artifacts, bronze idols, ancient ornaments, a temple chariot, ivory carvings and life-size Kathakali dancers; *Sree Chitra Art Gallery*, which display a century old world famous paintings of Raja Ravi Varma. *Kuthiramalika Palace Museum*, with rare specimen of workmanship in traditional Travancore style of architecture has exquisite woodcarvings.

## DAY 14 – TRIVANDRUM – VARKALA – ALLEPPEY

**Morning after breakfast, checkout from the hotel & proceed to Alleppey via Varkala. Visit the Papanasam temple. Overnight at the hotel.**

Papanasam Temple, it's a temple situated near agasthiyar falls, it is believed that after taking bath in this river, going to this temple is alleged to give you relief from all your sins. The place is called Papanasam because of this.

## DAY 15 – ALLEPPEY - KUMARAKOM

**Morning after breakfast, checkout from the hotel & proceed to Kumarakom. On the way visit Ambalapuzha & Mannarasala temples. Later drive to Kumarakom. Overnight at the hotel.**

Ambalapuzha Sree Krishna swami temple is one of the most five temples in Kerala. In olden days Ambalapuzha was known as Chempakassery. Poojas and worship patterns at Mannarasala, the abode of serpent Gods, are different from most other temples. It is important to visit and worship the main deities as well as the Upadevathas, Chitrakudas, Valia Amma at the Illam etc.



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## DAY 16 – KUMARAKOM - COCHIN

Morning after breakfast, checkout from the hotel & proceed to Cochin. On the way visit Etumanoor , Kadathuruthy & Vaikom Shiva temples. Visiting three Shiva Temples in a day is considered as a great prayer. Late evening reach Cochin. Overnight at the hotel.



The Siva temple in Etumanoor is famous for its murals, especially the paintings of Nataraja in the Gopuram and the golden elephants- *Ezharaponnana*. The elephants, seven large ones and a small one, are well known. Though actually eight in number, these are only considered as seven and a half. These were presented to the Lord by Sri Karthika Thirunal, Maharaja of Travancore. The *Ezharaponnana Ezhunnallathu* festival here

is in Kumbhom (February- March). On the eighth day of the festival, the golden elephants are taken out of the temple in a procession, which attracts thousands of devotees.

## DAY 17 – COCHIN

Early morning proceed to Chotanikkara Temple for darshan. Later proceed to Cochin for sightseeing. Overnight at the Hotel.

Cochin - Known as the queen of the Arabian Sea is one of the most interesting cities of India and has one of the finest natural harbors in the world. St Francis Church, built in 1510 by friars brought to India by Vasco da Gama, is the first European church built in India and is the site where da Gama was buried. The Jewish Synagogue was built in 1568, Chinese hand-painted tiles are one of the attraction.



## DAY 18 – COCHIN – GURUVAYOOR - COCHIN

Morning drive to Guruvayoor temple for darshan. Later return to Cochin. On the way visit temples like Tripprayar, Koodalmanikyam and Kodungalloor temples etc. Overnight at the hotel.



Guruvayur is also called the Bhoolakavaikunta - the heaven on Earth! The square Sreekovil is the sacred sanctum Sanctorum of the temple, housing the main deity of Lord Krishna, an incarnation of Lord MahaVishnu. It is at this temple that Melpathur Narayana Bhattathiri composed his well-known Sanskrit devotional poem 'Narayaneeyam'. The temple is renowned for its healing powers. Several offerings are made to the deity here from the simple 'Archana' (offering of flowers) to the expensive and elaborate 'Udayastamana' pooja or 'Thulabharam' where a devotee is weighed against offering of bananas, sugar, jaggery or coconuts.

## DAY 19 – COCHIN DEPARTURE

Morning after breakfast, check out from the hotel & proceed to Cochin Airport with all the blessings from GOD.

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