



0208 819 1111

Southern Soirée: The Charms of South India

13 Nights/14 Days

- Dive into history at Mahabalipuram
- Marvel at the architectural brilliance of Madurai's Meenakshi Temple
- Seek spiritual solace at Sri Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry
- Find tranquillity at the Rhajakkad Estate
- Cruise through the picturesque backwaters of Alleppey aboard a traditional houseboat

The rates are not valid from 20th December 2023 till 10th January 2024

From £2178 Price per person

Overview:

Embark on an extraordinary journey through South India's cultural treasures with this captivating 14-day itinerary. From ancient temples to French-inspired charms, tranquil estates to opulent heritage, this adventure promises an unforgettable tapestry of history, culture, spirituality, and natural beauty. Explore UNESCO World Heritage Sites, stroll through vibrant markets, and relax on serene beaches. Immerse yourself in the spiritual sanctuary of Sri Aurobindo Ashram and witness the awe-inspiring Matrimandir. Indulge in the flavours of Chettinad cuisine and marvel at architectural brilliance in Madurai. Retreat to a picturesque estate surrounded by the breathtaking Western Ghats. Get ready to be mesmerized by the diverse treasures of South India.

Itinerary:

Day 1: Arrival: Chennai International Airport

As you step foot in Chennai, a vibrant city known for its cultural heritage, our dedicated tour representative will warmly welcome you. Prepare to embark on a mesmerizing journey through Southern India's cultural tapestry. You'll be transferred to your luxury hotel in Mahabalipuram, where you can unwind and rejuvenate. Take this day at leisure, allowing our representative to provide you with an overview of the exciting experiences that await you. In the evening, savour a delectable dinner and settle in for an overnight stay at the hotel in Mahabalipuram.

Day 2: Mahabalipuram

Mahabalipuram, often referred to as the temple city, beckons with its UNESCO World Heritage Sites, incredible surfing spots, and a thriving backpacker scene. Immerse yourself in the rich history of this captivating destination, which flourished as a centre of art, architecture, and literature from the 3rd to 7th century CE. Discover the allure of its pristine beaches and luxurious resorts, where relaxation and rejuvenation await. Experience the fusion of ancient traditions and modern charm as you explore the wonders of Mahabalipuram. In the evening, retire to your resort in Mahabalipuram for a restful night's sleep.

Day 3: Mahabalipuram to Pondicherry

Check out from the hotel at 10:00 AM and embark on a scenic 2-hour drive to the charming city of Pondicherry. Immerse yourself in the cultural heritage of this unique Union territory, once colonized by the French and often hailed as "The French Riviera of the East." Delight in the yellow-coloured houses, local cafes serving authentic French cuisine, and the unmistakable charm of the French colonial architecture. Begin your city tour with visits to landmarks such as Raj Nivas, Romain Rolland Library, Puducherry Museum, and the church of Notre Dame des Anges. Marvel at the rare oil painting of 'Our Lady of the Assumption' and explore the vibrant streets of White Town, where you can indulge in a unique shopping experience. Conclude the day with a relaxing stroll along the picturesque Seaside Promenade Beach. Enjoy a leisurely evening and relish a delightful dinner before retiring to your hotel in Pondicherry for the night.

Day 4: Pondicherry

Pondicherry, a city where Portuguese, French, Dutch, Danish, and English influences intertwine with Tamil culture, invites you to delve deeper into its captivating tapestry. Begin your day with a visit to Auroville, home to the renowned Matrimandir, a sanctuary for silent contemplation with a striking blend of modern Western and traditional Indian architecture.

Explore the Aurobindo Ashram, where you can delve into the teachings and history of Sri Aurobindo. Pay homage to the brave soldiers at the French War Memorial and admire the Greek Roman architecture of Our Lady of Angels Church. Continue your exploration with a visit to the Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, known for its elegant exteriors and neo-Gothic design. Conclude the day with a rejuvenating break at the serene Promenade Beach. Indulge in leisurely activities, relish delicious cuisine, and enjoy an evening at your own pace. Retreat to your hotel in Pondicherry for a delicious dinner and restful night's sleep.

Day 5: Pondicherry to Chettinad

After a refreshing night's sleep, savour a delectable breakfast and embark on a scenic 6.5-hour drive to Chettinad. Immerse yourself in the rich heritage of this region, renowned for its magnificent architecture and cultural significance. Upon arrival at Visalam Hotel, a Victorian-style gem nestled amidst the lush surroundings, you'll be warmly welcomed and checked in. Experience the perfect blend of heritage and modern amenities at this exquisite hotel. Enjoy a leisurely evening, taking in the serenity and beauty that surrounds you. Spend a relaxing overnight stay at the hotel in Chettinad, revelling in the tranquillity of Chettinad.

Day 6: Chettinad to Madurai

Madurai to Rajakkad Estate in Perumparai

Indulge in a delightful breakfast before bidding farewell to Chettinad. Depart for Madurai, an ancient city steeped in history and home to the world-famous Meenakshi Temple. Immerse yourself in the rich heritage and ancient traditions that have shaped this captivating city over the centuries. Explore the Meenakshi Temple and the Gandhi Museum, and delve into the legends and cultural significance that make Madurai a cherished destination.

Afterward, continue your journey to Rajakkad Estate in Perumparai, a tranquil haven set amidst the cool foothills of the Western Ghats. This boutique garden hotel, adorned with original antiques and contemporary furnishings, offers a perfect blend of comfort and simplicity. Relish the delectable gourmet cuisine, sourced from local ingredients, and surrender to the serenity of nature that envelops the estate. Retreat to your unique bedroom in Rajakkad Estate, nestled within the lush gardens, and enjoy a peaceful overnight stay.

Day 7: Rajakkad Estate Perumparai

Wake up to the symphony of nature surrounding Rajakkad Estate. Immerse yourself in the tranquillity and simplicity of this haven, where time seems to stand still. Explore the estate's 45 acres teeming with agricultural life, from wandering cows and buffalo to vibrant plantations of coffee, cotton, and pepper. Engage with the lively and colourful surrounding villages, offering a glimpse into the local traditions, temple festivals, and bustling streets. Rajakkad Estate is also a paradise for bird enthusiasts, housing over 200 migratory and indigenous bird species. Delight in the harmonious coexistence of humans and nature that defines this idyllic retreat. Relax and revel in the serenity of Rajakkad Estate, cherishing each moment of this unique experience.

Day 8: Rajakkad Estate Perumparai to Thekkady

After a fulfilling breakfast, bid adieu to Rajakkad Estate and embark on a picturesque 3.5-hour drive to Thekkady. This enchanting destination, nestled amidst breathtaking hills and aromatic spice plantations, evokes images of elephants and untamed natural beauty. Immerse yourself in the wilderness of Periyar forest, one of India's finest wildlife reserves. As you traverse the picturesque plantations and hill towns, revel in the opportunities for trekking and mountain walks. Check into your hotel and indulge in a delectable lunch before venturing out to explore the vibrant spice market. Immerse yourself in the scents and flavours that define the region. Rest and rejuvenate at your hotel, ready for the adventures that await you in Thekkady.

Day 9: Thekkady

Embark on an early morning boat ride at Periyar Lake, where you can witness the diverse wildlife that calls this region home. Marvel at the beauty of the surroundings and capture the essence of nature's wonders. After a hearty breakfast, encounter some elephants and engage with these majestic creatures in a responsible and ethical manner. The rest of the day is yours to explore at your leisure, allowing you to soak in the unique culture that Thekkady offers. Immerse yourself in the local traditions, savour the culinary delights, and surrender to the tranquillity of this wildlife paradise. Enjoy a comfortable overnight stay at your hotel, cherishing the memories of your time in Thekkady.

Day 10: Thekkady - Alleppey

Indulge in a delicious breakfast before embarking on a scenic drive to Alleppey, known as the "Venice of the East." Arrive at the mesmerizing network of backwater canals that meander through the town, surrounding villages, and the serene Vembanad Lake. Step aboard your private houseboat and embark on a captivating journey through the enchanting backwaters of Kerala. Enjoy an overnight stay on the houseboat, immersing yourself in the unique experience of living on water.

Day 11: Alleppey - Kovalam

After a delectable breakfast on the houseboat, drive to the coastal paradise of Kovalam. Your first stop is the iconic Lighthouse Beach, known for its silvery-white sands and swaying coconut trees. Climb the steps of the 30-meter-high lighthouse for panoramic views and soak in the beauty of the surroundings. Spend the day basking in the sun, enjoying the sandy beaches, and exploring the vibrant local markets offering authentic Kerala goods. Check-in to your beachfront resort in Kovalam, where you can unwind and embrace the tranquil atmosphere and natural beauty.

Day 12: Kovalam

Relish a full day at leisure at your beachfront resort in Kovalam. Immerse yourself into the serenity of the surroundings, indulge in rejuvenating spa treatments, or simply soak up the sun on the pristine beaches.

Allow the rhythm of the waves to lull you into a state of relaxation and tranquillity. This day is yours to unwind and create cherished memories amidst the coastal paradise of Kovalam.

Day 13: Kovalam

Another day of leisure awaits you in Kovalam. Wake up to the soothing sound of the waves and savour a leisurely breakfast. Engage in activities of your choice, such as exploring nearby attractions, practising yoga by the seaside, or venturing out for a refreshing swim in the azure waters. Let Kovalam's coastal charm captivate your senses, leaving you with memories to cherish for a lifetime.

Day 14: Kovalam to Trivandrum Airport

After a delicious breakfast, it's time to bid farewell to the enchanting coastal paradise of Kovalam. Before departing, spend your time at leisure or take a moment to select a beautiful silk sari or handmade souvenir, encapsulating the everlasting memories of your magical journey through Kerala. Board your return flight home, carrying with you the rich cultural experiences and tranquil moments that define this remarkable adventure.

Inclusions:

- Flight included Air India
- Luxurious accommodation in Mahabalipuram (2 nights, breakfast included) in 4* Ideal Beach Resort in Garden View Room
- Accommodation in Pondicherry (2 nights, breakfast included) in Gratitude Heritage a Heritage Homestay
- Chettinad stay (1 night, breakfast and dinner included) in Visalam - CGH Earth a Heritage Homestay in Chettinad Room
- Rajakkad Estate experience (2 nights, all meals included) in Rajakkad Estate a Plantation Resort in Standard Room
- Thekkady accommodation (2 nights, breakfast included) in Coffee and Pepper a Homestay in Plantation View Room
- Houseboat stay (1 night, all meals included) in Deluxe Houseboat
- Kovalam beach retreat (3 nights, breakfast and dinner included) in 3* Travancore Heritage Beach in Grove Room
- Sightseeing at all destinations as per itinerary
- Round trip transfers in A/C Innova Crysta/Toyota Etios with English-speaking driver
- Entry fees for sightseeing places
- Currently applicable taxes

AVAILABILITY DATES & PRICES

- Oct 23 £2859pp
- Nov 23 £2869pp
- Dec 23 £3159pp
- Jan 24 £2769pp
- Feb 24 £2759pp
- Mar 24 £2809pp
- Apr 24 £2819pp



Exclusions:

- Arrival day breakfast
- Additional meals not mentioned in the package
- Room service charges, telephone calls, laundry, and tips
- Anything not specifically mentioned in the package includes column
- Price adjustments may occur due to fuel costs, taxes, personal expenses, strikes, or unforeseen circumstances

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