

## Southern Odyssey 07 Days / 06 Nights



\* Ex - Chennai

Chennai, Tirupati, Pondicherry & Thanjavur

### **Tour Itinerary**

#### **Day 1 : ARRIVE CHENNAI**

Welcome to Chennai, India's fourth largest city. Chennai, formerly known as Madras or Madarasapatinam, is the capital city of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, located on the Coromandel Coast of the Bay of Bengal. With its historic landmarks and buildings, long sandy beaches, cultural and art centers and parks, Chennai offers many interesting locations to visitors.

On arrival at airport / railway station in Chennai, begin your '**Southern Odyssey**' tour. You will be met and transferred to your hotel. In the afternoon, proceed on a city tour of Chennai visiting St. George Fort, the Kapileshwara and the Mylapore Temple and finally Marina Beach, the second longest beach in the world. The St. George Fort was probably the first British establishment in India. An architectural marvel, the structure houses a museum, and the magnificent St. Mary's Church. A must-visit for all history and architecture lovers!

In addition to a museum, the fort also houses the legislative seat of the Tamil Nadu Government, a war memorial, lighthouse, and flagstaff among other relics. Kapileshwara temple was constructed by the Pallava in the 8 th century. Located in Mylapore, the arresting architecture of the Kapileshwar temple is of the Dravidian style, dedicated to Lord Shiva. Inside the temple you can see the beautiful statues of almost all Hindu Gods.

The famous Marina Beach, the pride of Chennai, is second longest beach in the world and has a wide sandy foreshore. One can see statues of heroes from Tamil culture to Samadhi of great leaders like Anna and MGR here. Walk along the Marina in the evening to cool off and eat crispy sundal and murukku. An aquarium is also located on the Marina Beach. Watching sunset and sunrise from the beach is a fascinating experience. The rest of the evening is at leisure to explore the town. Overnight in Chennai - None (Meals on your own).

### [Day 2 : ON TO TIRUPATI \(150 KMS / APPROX. 4 HOUR DRIVE\)](#)

This morning, drive to Tirupati. Tirumala's Balaji shrine is among the more famous temples of India. It has a reputation of being one of the richest shrines in the world. On arrival, check into your hotel. In the afternoon, visit the Balaji Temple for darshan of Lord Venkateshwara.

The Tirupati Tirumala Balaji Temple at Tirupati is an ancient temple located on the seventh peak, Venkatachala (Venkata Hill) of the Tirupati hill. The presiding deity of this temple is Lord Venkateshwara. The temple features the ancient scriptures like Shastras, Puranas and Sthala Mahatyams.

This temple is said to be the only way to salvation (Moksha) in the Kali yuga (Dark Age) and a visit to this temple is recommended even in the ancient scriptures. The rest of the evening is at leisure. Overnight in Tirupati (B).

### [Day 3: ON TO PUDUCHERRY \(275 KMS / APPROX. 7 HOUR DRIVE\)](#)

Today, you will drive to the city of Puducherry. 'Puducherry' is the French interpretation of the original name 'Puducheri' meaning 'new settlement'. A trip to Puducherry is like a journey in time with a vibrant present celebrating its interesting past. On arrival, check into your hotel.

Among its diverse attractions is a coastline of 32 kms, palm-fringed beaches, backwaters, fishing villages, beach resorts, the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, the international city of Auroville, the French boulevard town with its French heritage, and so on. Some great food, some fine wine, and a great adventure await you here.

In the afternoon, visit the township of Auroville and the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Auroville is a township near Pondicherry. Inspired by Aurobindo the revolutionary turned spiritual leader during India's struggle for freedom. The inspiration for Auroville arose in India, stemming from the writings of Sri Aurobindo and the encouragement of the Mother. This inspiration led to the Sri Aurobindo Society, based in Pondicherry, persuading the Government of India in 1966 to accept and support the project, which was then put before UNESCO for its endorsement. Aurobindo called for spiritual regeneration of India as the path for rebirth of India. He started as a spiritual leader in Aurobindo Ashram in Pondicherry. Auroville was later founded by The Mother, a French lady whose real name was Mirra Alfassa. The rest of the evening is at leisure. Overnight in Puducherry (B).

### [Day 4 : PUDUCHERRY](#)

The day is at leisure to explore the city that has a rich French cultural heritage (on your own). Overnight in Puducherry (B).

### [Day 5 : ON TO THANJAVUR \(177 KMS / APPROX. 4 HOUR DRIVE\)](#)

Today, proceed to Thanjavur. Thanjavur derives its name from Tanjanan asura (giant), who according to local legend devastated the neighbourhood and was killed by Sri Anandavalli Amman and Vishnu. Sri Neelamegapperumal Tanjan's last request that the city might be named after him was granted. Chola, Chera and Pandya kings were ruling Tamizhagam even before Mahabharat period. In the afternoon, visit

the famous Brihadeeshwara Temple built in the 10th century, adjacent to this is the Palace, housing the Tamil University Museum, the Art Gallery and the Saraswati Mahal Library which houses palm leaf and paper manuscripts.

This temple is dedicated to Nandi, the bull, who is the vehicle of Lord Shiva. Regarded as 'the temple of temples', the Brihadeeswara temple or Rajarajesvaram in the Thanjavur district, is not just an expression of artistic brilliance, but also a way of life. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the sheer scale of the all-stone Brihadeeswara temple, its height and architectural detailing make it an unrivalled paradigm of artistic expression in a temple. The evening is at leisure. Overnight in Thanjavur (B).

#### Day 6: ON TO CHENNAI (350 KMS / APPROX. 9 HOUR DRIVE)

This morning, drive to Chennai. On arrival, check into your hotel. The rest of evening is at leisure. Chennai city is fully loaded with some interesting and amusing places. The metropolitan city houses all sorts of attractions, be it famous South Indian temples, museums, monuments, parks, beaches or picnic spots. Overnight in Chennai (B)

#### Day 7: DEPART CHENNAI

Today, bid farewell to your '**Southern Odyssey**' tour, as you are transferred to the airport / railway station in Chennai for your onward journey (B).