







Traversing South India

CHENNAI – MAHABALIPURAM – PUDUCHERRY – TANJORE – MADURAI – THEKKADY – KUMARAKOM (HOUSEBOAT) – KOCHI – OOTY – MYSURU – BENGALURU



DAY 19:

DAY 20:

IN BENGALURU

DEPART BENGALURU

Sketch Itinerary

DAY 01: ARRIVE CHENNAI BY: INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT DAY 02: IN CHENNAI CHENNAI – MAHABALIPURAM DAY 03: BY: SURFACE IN MAHABALIPURAM DAY 04: DAY 05: MAHABALIPURAM – PONDICHERY BY: SURFACE PONDICHERY -TANJORE DAY 06: BY: SURFACE BY: SURFACE DAY 07: TANJORE – MADURAI DAY 08: IN MADURAI MADURAI – THEKKADY DAY 09: BY: SURFACE DAY 10: IN THEKKADY DAY 11: THEKKADY – KUMARAKOM BY: SURFACE DAY 12: KUMARAKOM – KOCHI BY: SURFACE DAY 13: IN KOCHI KOCHI – COIMBATORE – OOTY DAY 14: BY: SURFACE DAY 15: IN OOTY DAY 16: OOTY – MYSURU BY: SURFACE Day 17: MYSURU DAY 18: MYSURU – BENGALURU BY: SURFACE

BY: INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT





Detailed Itinerary

Day 1

ARRIVE CHENNAI

BY: INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT

Arrive in Chennai in the evening.

Following Customs, Immigration formalities and baggage collection, our Airport Representative will meet you outside the Arrival Hall, after which you will be transferred to your hotel.

Upon arrival, check-in to your hotel.

Capital of the south-eastern state of Tamil Nadu, Chennai is one of the four major metropolitan cities in India. Today, it is hard to believe that a place that was till 1639 just a small fishing village would become such an enormous and beautiful city. Situated on the shores of the Bay of Bengal, Chennai is perhaps the most peaceful and green metropolis in India. Chennai has a number of attractions for the tourists to see. One of them is the beautiful Marina beach, where the blue waters of the Bay of Bengal mingle with the golden sands. The city also has its share of forts and palaces reminding the tourists the glory of bygone eras.





Day 2 IN CHENNAI

Proceed for a sightseeing tour of Chennai in the morning.

Start with the visit to Fort St. George (closed on Fridays & Public holidays), currently being used by the Tamil Nadu Government as the State Legislature Assembly and Government Secretariat. Within the compound, there is a Museum holding many memories of the East India Company and the British period. From Fort St. George, proceed to San Thome Basilica – a Roman Catholic Minor Basilica in Santhome. It was built in the 16th century by Portuguese explorers over the tomb of St Thomas, an apostle of Jesus. In 1893, it was rebuilt as a Church with the status of a Cathedral by the British. The British version still stands today. Thereafter visit Kalapeeswarar Temple dedicated to Lord Shiva. Built in typical Dravidian architectural style, it dates back to the 13th century AD and is the biggest temple in Chennai. At the conclusion of the tour drive past the famous Marina Beach, this is the second longest beach in the world, stretching for several kilometers.

Afternoon is at leisure for you to relax at the hotel or do independent activities.

Go on a Peacock trail – Mylapore, an ancient town in the heart of modern Chennai...Widely considered the hub from where the rest of the city grew, it has kept alive many traditions and arts that Chennai is so well known for. Peacock trails is essentially a walk through Mylapore. A walk that is garnished with a pinch of culture, a dash of tradition, a spot of history, a few sights and some tastes, and is served with a bundle of stories – stories about the local life, of Gods and demons and of Mylapore and Madras. Some amusing, some baffling and some that help our guests make sense of the sights around them.





CHENNAI – KANCHIPURAM By Surface (72 km/ 2hoo drive) KANCHIPURAM – MAHABALIPURAM By Surface (68 km/ 2hoo drive)

This morning we will drive you to Mahabalipuram, stopping en route at Kanchipuram for sightseeing of some ancient temples and silk weaving workshops.

Kanchipuram is a busy pilgrimage centre, humming with activity around its extraordinary temple precincts. Established by the Pallava kings in the 4th century AD, Kanchipuram served as their capital for 500 years and continued to flourish throughout the Chola, Pandya and Vijayanagar eras. Under the Pallavas, it was an important scholastic forum and meeting point for Jain, Buddhist and Hindu cultures. Today Hindu temples alone dominate the town, spanning the years from the peak of Pallava construction to the 17th century, when ornamentation of the Gopurams and pillared halls was at its most elaborate.

Upon arrival in Kanchipuram straightaway proceed for sightseeing of Kailasanatha Temple having a four-storied tower and octagonal shikhara, it is a commendable piece of creativity. Now proceed to one of the Handloom Workshops in the city producing the world—renowned hand woven silk sarees. Most of the city's workforce is involved in this weaving industry.

Thereafter continue your drive to Mahabalipuram. Upon arrival, check in to your hotel.





Day 4 IN MAHABALIPURAM

In the morning today explore the monuments of Mahabalipuram.

Mahabalipuram was built in the 7th century and was an ancient port. The town was earlier called Mahabalipuram, but was later renamed as Mahabalipuram or the place of the great wrestler – Narasimhavarmam I. Today it is the site of several antique sculptural marvels. Declared as the world heritage site by UNESCO, Mahabalipuram boasts of some of India's most sublime rock-cut art. The only shore temple, which remains here, is the spectacular two-spired shrine and the uniqueness of this is that it houses both Vishnu and Shiva in its sanctum. The Pallavas perfected the art of sculpting rocks to build temples without brick, mortar or timber. The open-air bas-reliefs, structured temples, man-made caves and the five monolithic "rathas" (chariots carved from single processions) reflect this art at its best. "Arjuna's Penance" here is the world's largest bas relief measuring 27 meters by 9 meters.

The rest of the afternoon and evening is at leisure.





MAHABALIPURAM - PUDUCHERRY By Surface (125 km/ 3h30 drive)

We will drive you to Puducherry in the morning.

Puducherry has a rich French cultural heritage, having been the capital of the French colonies in India since the 17th century. The French legacy is visible in the well-planned town, neatly laid roads, wide and vibrant beaches, beautiful promenades, architecturally imposing churches and public buildings and the statues. Split into two parts, Puducherry is, on one hand a bustling Indian Market town, and on the other hand, towards the sea, the streets are emptier, cleaner and decidedly European.

In the afternoon, we will provide a Guided Walk of Puducherry. Later visit Sri Aurobindo Ashram, located on Rue de la Marine, the most popular attraction in Puducherry. The Ashram was founded by Sri Aurobindo Ghose in 1926. Sri Aurobindo, the poet philosopher founded the Ashram to help man reach the zenith of his evolution through spiritual exercises and yoga, combined with physical activity and productive work





PUDUCHERRY – TRICHY - TANJORE By Surface (190 km / 4h30 drive)

Today we will drive you to Tanjore, stopping at Trichy enroute for sightseeing.

Trichy (or Thiruchchirapalli) is located on the banks of the River Cauvery. It is the fourth largest city in Tamil Nadu and was a citadel of the early Cholas (300 BC to 200 AD), which later fell to the Pallavas (200 - 800 AD). Trichy is a fine blend of tradition and modernity built around the Rock Fort. Apart from the Fort, there are several Churches, Colleges and Missions dating back to the 1760s. The town and its fort, now in Trichy were built by the Nayaks of Madurai.

Visit the Rock Fort, which is a landmark of Trichy. The rock is one of the oldest in the world-approximately 3800 million years, which makes it as old as the rocks of Greenland and older than the Himalayas. A climb of 434 steps leads to the ancient temple of Ganapati on top and a further climb to a Shiva Temple.

Then visit Srirangam Ranganathar Temple which is encircled by Cauveri and Kollidam rivers. This temple dates back to the 14th century. Numerous rulers have contributed in this temple's construction such as Cheras, Cholas, Pandyas and Hoysalas. Its southern side gopuram is the largest, measuring 73 mts. This temple is devoted to Lord Vishnu. A ticket is required to have a panoramic view of the entire temple complex.

Later, continue to drive to Tanjore. Upon arrival, check in to your hotel.





Day 7 TANJORE – MADURAI

By Surface (200 km / 3hoo drive)

This morning we will take you for a sightseeing tour of Tanjore.

Start with visit to Brihadeswara Temple, built in the 10th century AD by Raja Chola. It is considered artistically the most perfect of Dravida style temples. Besides the temple, visit the Palace most of which is in ruins housing the Tamil University Museum, the Art Gallery and Saraswati Mahal Library which houses palm leaf & paper manuscripts.

In the afternoon drive to Madurai. Upon arrival, check in to your hotel.

Madurai – One of the oldest cities in South India, it has been the centre of knowledge & learning and an important pilgrimage centre for centuries. Spread along the rocky banks of the river Vaigai in the state of Tamil Nadu, this modern industrial city is today famous as a temple town. The town is unique in the sense that all its temples are living temples and it remains a major religious center attracting pilgrims all year round.





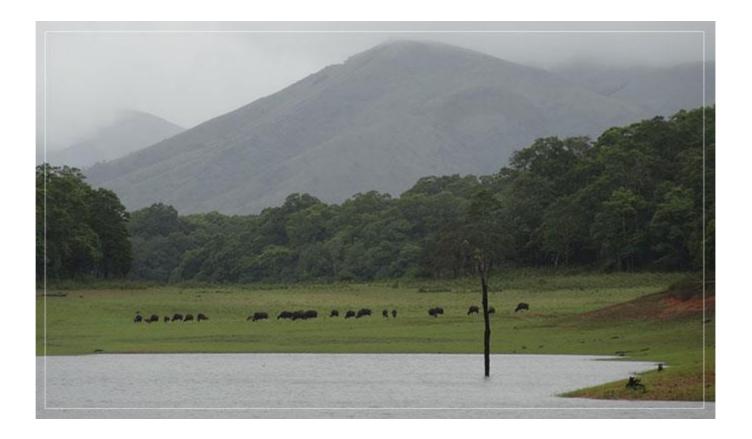
Day 8 IN MADURAI

In the morning, proceed for a sightseeing tour of Madurai starting with a visit to the famous Sree Meenakshi Amman Temple. Later we will also visit Thirumalai Nayaka Palace and the Bronze Gallery of the Government Museum.

In the evening, we again visit Meenakshi Temple to witness the closing ceremony of the temple. Note: Foreigners (Non Hindus) are not allowed inside the inner sanctum sanctorum of the temple.

Once upon a Madurai – Madurai, a flourishing market town since at least the 2nd century BC, the centre of power for many dynasties and a seat of divinity from time immemorial. In a city that has been so much to so many, is it any wonder that you stumble upon stories wherever you go? Join us on a short walk through this ancient city and chance upon her stories. Stories that span the gamut of time – some set a millennia ago and some of a more recent vintage; Stories that zigzag the obscure lines separating history and myth; Stories of people who made Madurai, and of some who unmade it too; Stories of fickle kings and towering monuments, of whimsical Gods and extraordinary mortals; Stories that take you behind the scenes for a glimpse into the city's heart.





Day 9MADURAI – THEKKADY

By Surface (145 km / 4h00 drive)

Today a 4½ hours' drive brings you back to Kerala and your destination will be Thekkady also known as Periyar. Situated within the confines of the Western Ghats Thekkady is famous for Periyar national park, spices gardens and flora & fauna. Although the animal sighting is rare but one can experience its rich botanical beauty while following one of its natures trail. Upon arrival, check-in at hotel.

In the afternoon you will visit Spice Plantation to know more about locally grown spices and herbs.

Kerala is known for its fabulous spices. Traders from ancient Phoenicia made tours to Kerala to carry back its aromatic spices to Mediterranean lands. Pepper, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger, cloves and more... the spices of Kerala were used in the West to all flavor to food and wine and to preserve meat during the cold European winter. Spices can be defined as "aromatic substances of vegetable origin, used for flavoring food or as a preservative." Many spices are also known to have medicinal value, for instance turmeric is a known anti-oxidant and curry leaf can control prevent diabetes.





Day 10 IN THEKKADY

Morning proceed for Nature walk (shared basis) with guide through the Periyar national park.

Return for breakfast and relax.

This afternoon go on a guided tour about spices and other stories. You are given a glimpse of how the hopes and aspirations of many a family are pinned on the humble quantity of spices grown in their backyard garden and how the delicate balance between us humans and the flora and fauna of the Periyar Biodiversity is maintained. Clients get to interact with local farmers to understand their way of life, how spices play a vital role in their economy and how they strive to achieve a balance between being an agrarian community and conserving nature by putting ecologically sustainable practices into farming.





THEKKADY – KUMARAKOM KUMARAKOM – HOUSEBOAT

By Surface (120 kms / 4h00 drive) Board the Houseboat at Noon

After leisurely breakfast check-out and drive to Kumarakom. Upon arrival, check-in to a traditional Houseboat to enjoy a unique experience of cruising through the famous backwaters of Kerala.

The best way to explore the backwaters of Kerala is by boat. The boat ride offers a close look at rustic Kerala village life- skiff-fishermen launching their cockleshell boats, large flocks of domesticated ducks waddling down to the water from thatched houses on the banks, or toddy maker climbing high on tree etc.

Spend the day cruising in the backwaters of the vast Vembanad Lake.

During the night the Houseboat will be anchored at one of the Boat Jetties on the banks of Vembanad Lake. (All Meals will be served on board the Houseboat)





ALLEPPEY – KOCHI

HOUSEBOAT – ALLEPPEY Disembark Houseboat in the morning By Surface (55 kms / 1h30 drive) By Surface (55 kms / 1h30 drive)

Today get ready for a soft adventure (called Village Rubble) a cycling tour through the beautiful countryside. The tour is let by four passionate friends who want people to discover Kerala like a local.

The reporting time for tour is 6:00 AM, which means you will leave from houseboat around 5:00 AM. Your expedition manager will hand over the cycles to you. You can start pedaling the first stretch of 26 kms to reach the farmhouse. It takes around 90 minutes to reach this splendid place. On arrival you will be welcomed with a health drink. Breakfast follows.

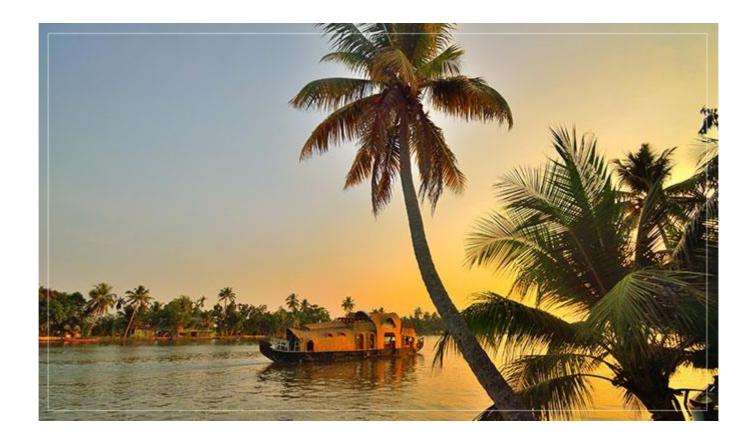
After breakfast you will be canoed to the island where anglers will be provided for fishing. We are sure that today will be your lucky day to get your catch, we give you the rare opportunity to use the Chinese Fishing nets which will guarantee your catch. Once you get your fish we will have all arrangements for the cleaning process and then the cooking class starts.

Today the lunch will be at the residence of a Local Family.

After lunch drive to your hotel in Kochi.

Rest of the day is at leisure for you to relax or do independent activities.





Day 13 IN KOCHI

This morning proceed for a sightseeing tour of Kochi.

Start with a visit to Fort Kochi, see Mattancherry Palace and Jewish Synagogue (Closed on Fridays Saturdays & All the Jewish holidays). It was built in 1568 AD. It was destroyed by the Portuguese and rebuilt by the Dutch a century later. You will also visit The Dutch Palace (Closed on Fridays) – It was built in 1555 AD. Its coronation hall and murals at Ramayana are noteworthy features. Continue your drive to the Chinese Fishing Nets. The cantilevered fishing nets line the entrance to the harbour mouth. Chinese traders are believed to have originally introduced them in the 14th century although, today parts of the nets are known by Portuguese names. Your next stop will be St. Francis Church, originally named after Santo Antonio and dedicated to him as the Patron Saint of Portugal, St. Francis Church is the first church to have been in the new European influenced tradition. Originally a wooden building was replaced by the present stone building. Vasco De Gamma died on the site in 1524 and was originally buried in the cemetery. 14 years later his body was removed to Portugal. The church was renamed St. Francis in 1663.

In the evening, enjoy a Kathakali dance performance at Greenix Theatre. Here you will witness the artists readying themselves up with the make up for the final performance.





KOCHI – COIMBATORE COIMBATORE – OOTY

By Train By Surface (90 km / 3h00 drive)

In the morning we will transfer you to Ernakulam Railway Station to board a train to Coimbatore.

Train to Coimbatore (Ernakulam-Bengaluru InterCity Express)

Departure Ernakulam : 0910 hrs Arrival Coimbatore : 1245 hrs

Upon arrival we will drive to Ooty. Upon arrival in Ooty, check-in to your hotel.

Ooty — Situated in the heart of the Nilgiris (Blue Mountains), at a height of 2,287 mts it lies on a plateau and looks like a vast park. To the northwest of Ooty are splendid downs resembling those of Sussex while to the west, south and southwest, lofty hills add to the grandeur of the scenery.





In the morning drive to Coonoor to enjoy 1h00 ride from Coonoor to Lovedale on the Nilgiri Mountain Railway (NMR). (Dep Coonoor : 1040 hrs / Arr Lovedale : 1140 hrs).

Nilgiri Toy Train: The 'Nilgiri Mountain Railway' train is the highlight of a visit to the hill settlement of Ooty. It runs from Mettupalayam to Udagamandalam (Ooty), via Coonoor, in the Nilgiri Hills. This railway is particularly picturesque because of the surrounding rocky terrain, tea plantations, and forested hills. Coonoor, with its world famous teas, is a tourist destination in itself.

Later proceed for sightseeing of Ooty. Visit the Terraced Botanical Gardens, which is a landmark in Ooty. It as many rare trees and flowering plants. Also visit Doddabetta – the highest point (2633 mts) of the Nilgiris and one of the best viewpoints around. It's about 10 kms out of town; go early for better chances of a mist-free view.





Day 16 OOTY - MYSURU

By surface (155 km / 4hoo drive)

Today we will drive you to Mysuru. Upon arrival check in to your hotel.

Mysuru – Once the capital of a princely state, Mysuru still carries on its placid shoulders the aura and glamour of palaces, the grandeur of festivals of times gone by, but all of it with a quiet, unhurried dignity. Mysuru is often called the Jewel of Karnataka - its arts, culture, buildings, festivals, gardens and parks being the quintessence of the state's heritage.

Upon arrival, check-in at your hotel and relax. Post lunch enjoy time relaxing in the hotel.

Alternatively, you could opt for a walking tour of Mysuru to hear stories about the city ending at the colorful 125 years old Devaraja Market but not before you try out the melt in your mouth Mysuru pak — the city's famous culinary offering. OR you could choose to meet a classical musician at his/her residence and enjoy a private music session.





Day 17 MYSURU

Start this morning with a drive up to the Chamundi hills to visit the temple dedicated to Goddess Chamundeswari and hear about the legend of the demon whom the city is named after. Later drive back to the city to visit the famed Mysuru Palace which is a mix of Hindu, Mughal, Rajput, and Gothic styles which makes it very unique followed by a visit to the 125 year old Devaraja Market.

Post lunch you could do a tour of the heritage Mysuru silk factory and its royal connection. Alternatively you could meet and interact with master artisans who are keepers of the ancient traditions of Mysuru inlay art, the stone carvings or the intricate traditional Mysuru style paintings

Later in the evening you will enjoy interacting with a local family and dine with them - you can also help out in the kitchen and learn the traditional style of cooking (veg meal).





MYSURU – SRIRANGAPATNA - BENGALURU By Surface (140 kms / 3hoo drive)

Drive to Bengaluru making a en route stop at Srirangapatna. Located 20 minutes from the city of Mysuru en route to Bengaluru, Srirangapatna is a place of historical and religious importance. On the one hand it was the erstwhile stronghold of Tipu Sultan – a historical and noted figure for his fight against the British and on the other hand it is the place where the last rites of the departed are carried out along the banks of River Kaveri called Paschima Vaahini here.

At Srirangapatna you will visit Dariya Daulat Bagh (Tipu's Summer Palace), the fort area, the Srirangam temple and the Dungeon. You could also opt for a cycling tour of Srirangapatnam which is a worthwhile experience and includes a visit to the Jaggery production unit as well.

Post lunch drive onto Bengaluru. The rest of the evening is at leisure or you could opt to experience the pub culture (Pub Crawl) Bengaluru is known for across the country. Tipple a few drinks to unwind from the long day.

Upon arrival at Bengaluru proceed to check in at your hotel





IN BENGALURU

The city of Bengaluru is the capital of Karnataka and is often referred to as the Silicon valley of the city. Modern Bengaluru was founded by a feudatory of the Vijayanagara Empire, who built a mud fort in the year 1537 which is now embedded deep in the heart of the city and called the Pete.

Start your day with a curated tour of the Pete to soak in the quintessential Bengaluru - a melting pot of cultures and a juxtaposition of the modern and the old intermingled with local tales. As you walk through the winding paths full of people in the heart of Bengaluru, the oldest neighbourhood of the city, you will witness the hustle and bustle of daily life, the street food, the narrow alleyways, 100's of vendors, people of all faiths and professions working together to bring you almost anything of worldly desire.

Post lunch you could spend time in the hotel preparing for your departure or you could choose to visit the pottery town of Bengaluru where families have been thriving through generations making earthen pots. From little clay lamps to huge sized tandoor pots big enough to fit a human, everything here talks of fine craftsmanship.

You could also head to the bustling commercial street market area to shop for some souvenirs for your loved ones back home.





DAY 20 DEPART BENGALURU

By: International Flight

Today one of our Representatives will meet you in the hotel lobby and transfer you to International airport to board your flight for back home.

Traversing South India 19 nights tour |

COST PROPOSAL

CITY	HOTEL	ROOM CATEGORY	NIGHTS	
Chennai	The Rain Tree, Anna Salai	Deluxe room	02	
Mahabalipuram	Ideal Beach Resort, Mahabalipuram	Garden view room	02	
Pondicherry	Atithi, Pondicherry	Executive room	01	
Tanjore	Sangam	Executive room	01	
Madurai	Heritage Madurai	Deluxe Club room	02	
Thekkady	Cardamom County, Periyar	AC Periyar Cottage	02	
Kumarakom	Lakes & lagoon Houseboat	AC Deluxe room	01	



Cochin	Radisson Blu, Cochin	Superior room	02
Oooty	Fortune Sullivan Court	Fortune Club room	02
Mysore	The Windflower Resort, Mysore	Deluxe room	02
Bengaluru	Fortune Select JP Cosmo	Standard room	02

INCLUSIONS & EXCLUSIONS

TOUR COSTS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

Accommodation

• 19 nights accommodation on twin sharing at the hotels mentioned above or similar.

Meal Plan

- Breakfast on all days.
- 01 lunch & dinner on board a Kettuvallam during the cruise on Kerala backwaters.
- 01 lunch in Alleppey (includes a cooking demo prior to the meal)
- 01 dinner in Mysore residence (includes a Cooking Demo session prior to the meal.
- All other meals on direct payment basis.
- Note: please note above meals do not include any alcoholic/non-alcoholic beverages.

Transportation

- All transportation services using Air-conditioned Toyota Innova Car (guests allowed: 02).
- Train ride between Cochin and Coimbatore + Nilgiri Mountain Railway (Toy train)

Others

- Monument Entrance Fees (one time entry only) as per the detailed the itinerary.
- Services of English speaking Local Guides for sightseeing tours / excursions mentioned in the itinerary.
- Train-fare on sector Madurai to Villupuram in air-conditioned Chair Car class.

Trek Nirvana Specials:-

- A walk through the ancient town in the heart of Chennai.
- Take a day cruise on a Kettuvallam (Kumarakom to Kumarakom). Also have lunch, tea & snacks on board.
- Go for a thrilling night walk in the buffer zone of the Periyar Tiger Reserve.
- Enjoy a Walking Tour in Madurai to hear stories of the city's inspirational culture, heritage and food.
- Explore the French quarter in Pondicherry on foot; walk the cobbled streets lined with bougainvillea, chic shops and restaurants.
- Take lessons on Franco-Tamil cuisine which is a fascinating amalgamation called 'Creole'. It also has Portuguese, Dutch and in some dishes, Vietnamese and Bengali influences.
- An early morning cycling trip in Mysore.
- Half day Mysore Silk Walk to meet the artisans.
- Assistance by our Representatives during Airport / Railway Station transfers.
- 02 bottles of packaged drinking water (500 ml) per person per day basis during travel in vehicle/s
- All currently applicable taxes.

TOUR COSTS DO NOT INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING

- Tins
- All beverages including water consumed at hotels / restaurants
- Expense of personal nature like meals other than mentioned above, tips, laundry, telephone/fax calls, alcoholic/non-alcoholic beverages, still & video camera fee at monuments, medical expenses, airfare, airport departure tax, any insurance.
- Airfare on any of the Domestic and International sectors.
- Any other services not mentioned in the inclusions.



SPECIAL NOTES

- The above Costs are valid from 01 October 2021 to 20 Dec 2022 except peak dates, festival period, sold-out or blackout dates.
- Please note that some of the sights / itinerary may change due to season, weather, national holidays and special events. Please refer to insider tips printed in brochure.
- At hotels in India standard Check-In time is 1400 Hrs and Check-Out time is 1200 hrs noon.
- Rates include only those items which are specifically mentioned in the detailed itinerary.
- Please note, the names of hotels mentioned above only indicate that our rates have been based on usage of these hotels. It is not to be construed that accommodation is confirmed at these hotels until and unless we convey the confirmations to you on receipt of your acceptance. However in the event of any of the above mentioned hotels not becoming available at the time of initiating the reservations. We shall book alternate accommodation at a similar or next best available hotel and shall pass on the difference of rates (supplement / reduction whatever applicable) to you.
- In case on any currency fluctuations or amendment in local Government taxes, or any fuel hike, we reserve the right to adjust the tour price accordingly. The due increase or decrease will be communicated accordingly.