



TIMELESS TRADITION



Come and Experience the **TEXTILE HERITAGE** of **SOUTH INDIA** for 12 days with **CLOUDSANDSEA.**

September 1 to 13 2022

Join us in this fascinating journey through India's tropical south from Chennai to Kochi, a land infused with cultural wonders and historical vortexes...

Dip into weaves from India's Great Southern side. From the Angavastram of the Gods to the Kornad sari of their devotees, South India is perfect for those who like to learn about the **History of Textiles.**

Tamilnadu's rich and vibrant handlooms are considered to be the weaver's poetry in silk. Interwoven motifs of flowers birds and animals of the region appear with godly precision from silk hands operating the looms. Watch the magic of centuries - old legacy right in front of you eyes.

Land only :
Cost per person on a twin sharing basis: 4,580 dollars.
Single supplement available on request .
Airfare available on request.



TOUR PACKAGE INCLUDES :

- * Accommodation on twin sharing basis at all hotels mentioned or similar
- * Breakfast
- * Dinner as mentioned in the itinerary,
- * Lunch at Solar Kitchen, Bangala Hotel and Family house in Pala
- * Transportation as per itinerary by chauffeur driven air conditioned Vehicle.
- * Local English Speaking Guides for the sightseeing of Kanchipuram, Mahabalipuram, Pondicherry, Auroville , Kumbakonam, Tanjore , Trichy, Madurai and Cochin
- * Entrance charges at the monuments covered in the Itinerary
- * Sightseeing and Activities as covered in the Itinerary
- * Cooking demo in Chettinad
- * Nature Walk in Thekkady
- * Spice Plantation visit by Jeep in Thekkady
- * Tickets for the Kathakali Performance in Cochin
- * Assistance on arrival and departure
- * All currently applicable taxes

TOUR PACKAGE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- * Camera fees & activity charges other than those listed in the itinerary inclusions
- * Expenses of personal nature such as Porterage, laundry, telephones, tipping etc.
- * International/Domestic flight charges and Visa/Insurance charges, if any
- * Any other items not covered under inclusions

Payment and cancellation policies

Payments

- 300 dollars Non Refundable deposit
- 10% On Confirmation of tour ,non refundable
- 90% 90 days prior to departure date

Cancellation Policy

- 91 days to 70th day before departure, 40% will be refunded.



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TOUR ITINERARY

Day 01 : Chennai - Mahabalipuram (60 Km / 1.5 hrs)
Upon arrival at Chennai airport, meet and assistance by **CloudsandSea** representative, followed by transfer to hotel nearby the airport for check in and rest. Late morning drive to the small seaside town of Mahabalipuram, the port for the Pallava kings in the 5th to 8th centuries.. Later visit the stunning Shore temple set at the edge of the waves. It features an altar to the god Siva that is lit by the rising and setting sun. Unlike many Hindu temples, the rocks show scenes of everyday life. Later explore the Rock cut caves carved from the living rock 1,200 years ago. Mahabalipuram has become a centre for stone carvers, and hundreds ply their trade in the streets and alleys of the old town. Overnight stay. **(B & D)**

Day 02 : Mahabalipuram - Kanchipuram - Mahabalipuram (135 Km/4hrs)

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to Kanchipuram for the day. Dating back to the Cholas of 200 BC, Kanchipuram was successively capital of the Cholas, the Pallavas and the Rayas of Vijayanagara. This city is often referred to as the city of thousand temples and one of the seven most sacred sites for Hinduism. The Kanchi Kailasanathar temple, the Vardaraja Perumal temple and Kamakshi Amman temple are the most popular and showcase the region's architectural traditions. The town is also the home of the Kanjivaram silk sari. These saris are woven with threads dipped in silver and gold, making it one of the most valuable Indian saris available. Interactions with Qualamkars on hand-painting and hand looms of the Kanchipuram tradition will bring you to an introduction to the process, people and fabrics. Return to your hotel in Mahabalipuram.. **(B & D)**

Day 03 : Mahabalipuram - Auroville - Pondicherry (110 Km / 3 hrs)

Early Breakfast at the hotel and check-out. This morning drive to Auroville and understand the unique community living here based on universal harmony. Lunch is at the Solar Kitchen – The Community kitchen for the inmates. You will be taken through the visitor center followed by visits to a few of the Auroville units which innovatively works on textile. Visit Upasana, a conscious sustainable textile company, looking after social issues and supporting with activity such as organic cotton project with families of Madurai, project with the weaving communities of Varanasi. Stop at Color of Nature, a natural dyeing company, producers of earth friendly textiles for garments & interior, experts in Shibori and Batik techniques, as well as other handcrafts. Also visit a small fashion school run in Auroville. Continue on to Pondicherry. Arrive and Check-in. Rest of the day free to visit the eclectic range of restaurants, ranging from traditional vegetarian to fusion 'Pondicherry cuisine'. Don't forget to visit Baker's Street, a bakery run by a French man who sells the most delicious cheese baguettes, quiches and freshly baked bread, as well as éclairs and fruit tarts. Overnight at the hotel. **(B,L)**

Day 04 : Pondicherry

Early morning take a stroll through the French boulevard and in Tamil Quarter with our Storyteller. Settled by the French in the 18th century, Pondicherry retains a quiet colonial atmosphere with wide shady streets lined with colourful stucco houses. Through reminiscence of almost a century old European occupation, walk through the white town (as the French quarters is popularly known as) while our Storyteller relates the history with what you see around. Return to your hotel for your breakfast. Enjoy the rest of the day free in the colonial streets. Take a hint into the lifestyle shops, wander in the bohemian chic atmosphere of the French quarter, go see the Ganesha temple around, etc... **(B & D)**

Day 05 : Pondicherry - Kumbakonam - Tanjore (180 Km / 4.5 hrs)

Early Breakfast and Check-out. Drive south to another unique region of Tamil Nadu, Kumbakonam, who houses ancient temples from the 5th century AD. On route stop at Kodali Karuppur village with your guide and look at the attempt to revive the rare sari produced in this village. The process of creating a Kodali Karuppur sari involved a cohesive working of weaver, printer, dyer and painter. The Karuppur cloth was worn only by the Tanjore nobility, who gifted some as Khillat or clothes of honour. Continue on to Darasuram and see its famous

Airavatesvara Chola Temple (if time permits-temple closes at 12 noon), UNESCO world heritage site, carved with vivid elephants and horses pulling chariots and dating from the 12th century. You will then be invited to meet the adjacent colony of silk weaver and discover the art of the Saree weaving, made out from their traditional wood machinery and tracing few generations. Finally proceed to Tanjore, former capital of the mighty Chola Empire. On route stop at Thiruvaiyaru, this locality around Tanjore consists of Traditional cotton sari weavers whose craftsmanship are hereditary. They carry forward this rich legacy into the future. Unwind yourself for a unique session with these expert handloom weavers to understand the step by step procedure of weaving. Arrive in Tanjore and check-in at your hotel. This early evening have a sample draped in two different styles of sari and get a picture of yourself as a traditional Indian seated in an antique swing. Overnight stay. **(B & D)**

Day 06 : Tanjore

After your breakfast at the hotel go visit the Bhrideshwara temple, world heritage site. This architectural masterpiece was built by King Rajaraja I in the 11th century to celebrate a military victory. The temple is a tribute as well as a reflection of the power of the Chola dynasty. The walls of the complex are adorned by beautiful belonging to the Chola and Nayak period. Continue your journey in the Cultural capital of Tamil Nadu, and explore the Saraswati Mahal Library with its traditional ornate paintings, known as Tanjore paintings, back from the 16th century. It houses also a huge collection of about 30,000 palm leaf and paper manuscripts in Indian and European languages from the Sangam period. Then proceed to visit the Art Gallery, located just by the side of the library. This must see of Tanjore, capital of bronze iconography, has a rich collection of 250 Chola Bronze statues and 150 stone statues dating from the 9th to 12th century. There is also an opportunity to learn about the Tanjavur painting technique with gem stones inlay demonstration from the masters. Later assist in a Bronze casting demonstration and observe the art of making Bronze idols by Stapathis (sculptors) as per the traditional Shilpa Sastras (craft hindu system) prevailed from the Chola period. It is time for your next enlightenment, sneak into a small house and witness the Tanjore veena art making process, there an entire instrument is carved on a single block of Jackwood. Carnatic music played on these Veenas has won the hearts of millions of music lovers. Tonight you will observe a Carnatic music show (offered by the hotel only for Group). Overnight stay. **(B & D)**

Day 07 : Tanjore - Karaikudi - Madurai (190 Kms / 4 hrs)

Breakfast at the hotel, check-out and drive through the plains to the unique area of Tamil Nadu known as Chettinadu. On arrival experience a cooking demonstration follow with a lunch at the Bangala Hotel. Every meal here is an elaborate affair running into several courses resembling a typical chettinad feast. With a generous dose of pepper and not chilli, making it spicy but not hot. This afternoon proceed on an Heritage tour to explore the elaborately decorated and unique feature of the Chettinad mansions. Visit the Chettinad Palace, built for the royal Alagappa Chettiar in 1912. Stained glass, teak, tiles, granite and wrought iron work truly makes the Chettinad Palace a work of art. Go around the village to see some of the centers making local snack called murukku and also a Weaving centre. Drive south to another vibrant city of Tamil Nadu, Madurai. Known for the imposing Meenakshi Temple, Madurai is one of India's oldest cities dating from the 6th century BC. Check-in at the hotel, and after some rest go by tuk tuk to visit the Meenakshi temple – complex of 15 acres, and has 4,500 pillars and 12 towers carried out during the reign of Tirumalai Nayak from 1623-55. Late evening witness the night ceremony at the Meenakshi temple. Return to your hotel by car for your overnight stay at hotel. **(B,L)**

Day 08 : Madurai - Thekkady (140 Km / 3.5 hrs) Breakfast at the hotel and check-out. Take a guided walking tour and go deep into the real life of this Tamil rooted oldest city. Walk in the narrow streets flanked by flowers stands, traipse through the local markets famous for its Chungadi saris originally made using a tie dye technique brought from Saurashtra in Kutch. Stroll through the Pudhu Mandapa, 16th-century pillared hall stands opposite of the Menakshi temple entrance. Wander in its narrow alley filled with colorful textile and crafts stalls and tailors at sewing

machines. Visit the Tirumalai Nayak Palace, built in 1636 by king Tirumalai Nayak, in Indo-Saracenic style with the input of an Italian architect. Also walk through the colourful Flower Market. This afternoon drive to Thekkady, the green mountains of the Nilgiris, rubber, coffee and cardamom plantations will follow on the road. Upon arrival check-in at your hotel and enjoy the rest of the day free in this tropical hill station. Overnight at the hotel. **(B & D)**

Day 09 : Thekkady

This early morning proceed with a nature walk and observe the flora and fauna in the remote areas of the National Periyar Park accompanied by a trained tribal guide. Return back to your hotel for your breakfast. This afternoon take a Spice Plantation Jeep excursion into the tropical fields of the Cardamom Hill reserve where you can touch, smell and taste almost all the spices seen worldwide. Later enjoy a stroll through the Spice Markets of Kumily. Overnight stay the hotel. **(B & D)**

Day 10 : Thekkady - Pala - Cochin (150 Km / 4.5 hrs)

After your breakfast and check-out, drive to Pala. Proceed to Nazrani Tharavadu, a 250-year-old traditional house built in Kerala, Dutch and Spanish architectural styles in the heart of the old Town of Pala. Get introduced to the owner's family and observe their antiques collection of brass oil lamp, century old cooking utensils, etc... Discover the art of traditional Kerala cookery through detailed demonstration followed by a Sadhya (lunch) on a banana leaf. After lunch, go visit with the host the local artisans – the traditional kavani (cloth) weaver and the famous millennium-old St. Thomas Cathedral, built in Portuguese style, with its ornamental fresco painting altar dating back from the 18th century. Drive on to Cochin, also called 'the queen of the Arabian sea'. History unfolds here an intriguing mix of ancient churches, palaces, synagogues, Portuguese houses and influences of the British Raj. The result of this cultural influence can be seen in its Indo-European architecture. The historical towns of Fort Cochin and Mattancherry remain nostalgic with the smell of the past while the mainland Ernakulam town is the new cosmopolitan hub. Check-in at your hotel on arrival and overnight stay. **(B,L)**

Day 11 : Cochin

Breakfast at the hotel. This morning go explore Cochin with your guide. Start with the visit of the famous Chinese Fishing Nets of Cochin. The huge cantilevered Chinese fishing nets that droop towards the waters like over-sized hammocks have become a hallmark that represents Fort Kochi on every postcard... Next visit is at the St. Francis CSI Church, the oldest European church in India built in 1503, where the Portuguese explorer Vasco de Gama was originally buried and pass by the finest Santa Cruz Basilica. Continue through the small streets of Mattancherry. Visit the Jewish Synagogue at the heart of what is locally called the Jew Town, and finally stop at the Dutch Palace with its beautiful mural paintings from the 17th century.

This afternoon, drive with your guide to Cochin (Ernakulam). Cochin has always been a city of trade, but its current vibe is truly exciting for shoppers with a taste for the well curated. You'll find old merchants sharing space with hip, young designers; family-run businesses sourcing and selling everything from traditional, woven saris to antique furniture and indies drawing on these influences while creating fresh, modern clothing and jewellery. Wander in the city with your guide, you may enter in the shop of the designer Bina Kannan (Seematti), who wanted to create a brand that caters to Indian women with eclectic tastes, or go browsing at Kasavukada. In the weaving trade for three generations, the owners of this store are renowned for promoting the ancient skill of weaving Kerala kasavu saris. Enjoy tea at a Local Restaurant with one of the Senior persons in the Industry. Later in the evening discover the famous dance drama of Kerala, the "Kathakali". This dance can be characterized by grotesque gesticulations, amazing costumes and very expensive make-up. The stories are mostly taken from the epics Mahabharata and Ramayana. Overnight stay at the hotel. **(B & D)**

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