
South India: Explore the Unexplored...

A PRIVATE TOUR WITH COX & KINGS

Chennai ❁ Madurai ❁ Chettinad region ❁ Munnar ❁ Cochin ❁ Kumarakom ❁ Mumbai

TOUR DETAILS

15 Days / 14 Nights

START / FINISH

Chennai / Mumbai

2009 PRICE (January 10 / April 15):

\$ 5875 per person double occupancy

\$ 1945 single supplement

Internal Air Travel: \$ 780 per person

Air Subject to change

2009 PRICE (October 01 / December 20):

\$ 6445 per person double occupancy

\$ 2135 single supplement

Internal Air Travel: \$ 815 per person

Air Subject to change

2010 PRICE: To be advised

Holiday supplement to be advised

WHAT'S INCLUDED

All hotel accommodations as noted

Meals as per the itinerary

Cox & Kings Signature Event: Dinner at a private home in Cochin

All transfers within India

Internal air travel in coach class

Services of local guides and entrance fees into historical sights and museums

Baggage handling of 2 bags per person at airports & hotels

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

International air travel

Travel insurance; Visa fees

Excess baggage fees

Personal items and alcoholic beverages

Gratuities to local guides, drivers, porters, meal services

The delicate scent of spices, the sound of temple bells, exotic flora and fauna and lush countryside characterizes southern India. In the North, where almost every aspect of life has been touched by outside influences, the visitor often finds echoes of his own culture. The South, on the other hand, has retained its individuality in such a way that not only tourists, but even Indians from other parts of the country are amazed by its unique rhythm and lifestyle. In South India, travelers are welcomed with warmth and sincerity by people eager to reveal the beauty and treasures of their land and culture. This leisurely paced tour takes you to the most captivating areas including Chennai, the fourth largest metropolitan area of India and the capital city of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, Mahaballipuram – the city of seven pagodas. Then on to the magical Chettinad region where your home is the Bangala, a quaint Heritage Hotel, located on the outskirts of Karaikudi. Visit the spectacular living temple, Meenakshi in Madurai. Wind your way through the High Range mountains to the hill station of Munnar, a beautiful area of winding roads, tea gardens, and cardamom plantations. Continue on to tropical Kerala - a delightful escape surrounded by tropical gardens and serene lagoons, where you just let go and let nature and heritage take care of your body and soul. End in the historic port city of Cochin, a former center of the spice trade, and the tranquil backwaters' a maze of canals and waterways.

Day One Arrive Chennai (Madras)

Arrive late this evening at Chennai's International Airport. You will be met upon your arrival and transferred to your hotel.

Taj Coromandel Hotel, Luxury room

Day Two Chennai B, L

Today you will explore the highlights of Madras, including the vestiges of early British colonial life. You will also visit the colorful Kapaleswarar Temple. Lunch at a local restaurant.

Day Three Chennai B, L

This morning visit the famous Kalekshetra Dance Academy before driving to Mahaballipuram, the great temple city of the Pallava Dynasty. Here the profusion of temples spill onto the beaches and you can still see stonecutters producing classical sculptures. After lunch at a seaside resort you visit the Dakshina Chitra South Indian Cultural Center. Lunch at a local restaurant.

Day Four Chennai-Madurai-Karaikudi B, L, D

Today you will fly to Madurai from where you will drive approximately 2 to 3 hours to the Chettinad town of Karaikudi.

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Here you will stay at a private small bungalow-style home, converted to a hotel.

The Bangala, Standard room

Day Five Karaikudi/Chettinad B, L, D

Today visit the nearby Karakaikudi Chettinad mansions, built by the Nattukottal Chettiars, a prosperous banking community who ventured overseas to Southeast Asia in the 19th/20th centuries and amassed great fortunes. These grand mansions are an architectural delight and a way of life that is quickly disappearing today. A visit to the market is an experience, where one can browse through antique shops and shops specializing in the regional Chettinad textiles. A visit to Santhai [village market] is a must, this is an artisans workshop where silversmiths and goldsmiths fashion utensils and jewelry and craftsmen create handicrafts of metal and wood, according to the old traditions of the Chettinad region.

Day Six Day trip to Tanjore B, L, D

Today drive approximately 2 hours to the city of Tanjore where you will visit the famed Chola temple, Brihadeshwara, and see the Tanjore frescoes. As well visit the small Archeological museum and the palace located near the temple. Lunch at a local restaurant. Return to Bangala in the late afternoon.

Day Seven Karaikudi to Madurai B, L, D

Today drive approximately 2 hours to the famed city of Madurai, with its massive Meenakshi Temple complex. Madurai is one of southern India's oldest, dating back to the 6th century B.C., and has been a center of learning and pilgrimage for centuries. Madurai's main attraction is the famous Meenakshi temples in the heart of the old town, a riotously baroque example of Dravidian architecture with gopurams (towers) covered from top to bottom with a breathless profusion of multi-colored images of gods, goddesses, animals and mythical figures. The temple complex is a city within a city and one can spend days exploring its labyrinthine corridors and halls.

Taj Garden Retreat, Deluxe room

Day Eight Madurai to Munnar B, L, D

Today continue your drive (5-6 hours) through lush Nilgiri hills past local villages, view spectacular scenery as you approach the hill station of Munnar.

Windermere Resort, Cottage

Day Nine Munnar B

Today tour this fascinating hill station steeped in 'tea' tradition. You will see how a local industry cares for its workers. Enjoy a walk through a typical village spice and vegetable market.

Day Ten Munnar to Cochin B

Today continue journey by road to Cochin, where you stay at a beautiful hotel located on the harbor front overlooking Old Cochin (approximately 5 hour drive).

Taj Malabar Hotel, Tower wing, superior sea view room

Day Eleven Cochin B, L, D

Cochin is a town characterized by its diverse colonial past and many canals. You will visit the Portuguese church of St. Francis, the Synagogue built in 1568 and the Mattancheri Palace, built by the Portuguese and renovated by the Dutch. Lunch at a local restaurant. Dine this evening at the private home of Cochin's leading 'cuisine' experts, meeting family and friends.

Day Twelve Cochin-Kumarakom B

Today drive through Kerala's countryside to your backwaters retreat, situated in the colorful 'backwaters' region.

Radisson Plaza Laguna Kumarakom, Lagoon view deluxe room

Day Thirteen Kumarakom B, L

Today sail through the backwaters and visit a typical 'island' farm to learn the unique agricultural farming techniques employed in this unusual setting. You will have lunch with the family.

Day Fourteen Cochin to Bombay B

Today board your flight to Bombay where you will stay at an Airport hotel until your departure flight for home.

Leela Kempinski Airport Hotel, Deluxe premiere room

Day Fifteen Depart India B

Transfer early this morning to the International Airport for your homeward bound flight.

End of Tour Arrangements



For information on this or our other tours to Africa, the Indian Oceans Islands, Asia & the Pacific, India & Beyond, Latin America, Arabia & Northern Africa please phone us at 800-999-1758, email us at: tours@coxandkingsusa.com or log on to our website at: www.coxandkingsusa.com

Please Note: Indian visas are required for American and Canadian passport holders. These must be obtained prior to arrival in India. Indian visas are not issued on arrival.

