

Religion &
Beliefs, History
& Context

JOURNEY
HIGHLIGHTS



**BRIHADEESWARA
TEMPLE
TANJAVUR**



**BHARATANATYAM
AT BRIHADEESWARA
TEMPLE**



**RANGANATHA SWAMY
TEMPLE
SRIRANGAM**

Great Living Chola Temples of Tamil Nadu



Tamil Nadu is famous for its temples famous for their master buildings, articulate detailing and the overall sense of grandeur that astonishes a visitor. These temples constructed years ago have been in worship till date. Since ages these temples have been a centre of spirituality, religious movements and the politics.

The story of royal temples begins from the Pallava temples at Kanchipuram. The legacy of the Pallavas was continued by the mighty Cholas of Thanjavur who defined monumental magnificence. On this journey we will visit the UNESCO World Heritage sites of the The Great Chola Living Temples and try

**Grandeur of the
Great Chola Living
Temples of Tamil
Nadu, a legacy of
one of the greatest
dynasties of India,
The Cholas**

to understand the polity, society and also the architectural development. These temples are famous not only for the grand structure, but, also for the paintings, sculptures and inscription. We will try to understand the temple in the context of all these.

On this journey we will also visit Shri Ranganatha Swamy Temple, Srirangam. These shrines are visited by no of pilgrims and travellers, for the religious significance they behold. Also, the marvellous architecture dating back to 14th century is something one should experience at-least once in their lifetime.

If time permits, we will also visit off-themed attractions like Maratha Palace Museum and evening walks in Kumbhakonam enjoying the scenic nature.

Day 1 - Departure

We begin the journey late in the evening from Bengaluru. We will meet at the departure point and travel by overnight bus to reach Thanjavur early in the morning the next day

Day 2 – Chola Grandeur

After arriving in Thanjavur we will check in to our hotel first. After a brief halt for freshening up we will leave for breakfast. We will then begin our temple trail chronologically. We will first visit the Brihadeshwara Temple at Thanjavur also known as Sri Raja Rajeshwara temple. This is one of the earliest royal temples of the Cholas. It defines the word grandeur.

In the second half of the day, we will visit the Royal Maratha Palace Museum. The exquisitely decorated Darbar hall is something not to be missed. This place was a seat of the Thanjavur Marathas who were a branch of the royal Bhosale dynasty.

Post this we will depart towards the hotel in Thanjavur and retire for the day.

Meals for the day: Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner

Tip: Ensure you're prepared for walking around at the various temples we will visit. Weather is typically warm with a sharp sun, even in winter.

Day 2 – Legacy of Sri Raja Rajeshwara

Today we will visit the Brihadeshwara Temple at Gangaikonda Chola Puram. This temple was constructed by Shri Rajendra Chola, the son of Sri Raja Rajeshwara. This was a commemorative temple constructed after the victory of the Cholas over the Gangas.

Great Living Temples and other sights



The Maratha Palace in Tanjavur, the Brihadeswara temple in Gangaikonda Cholapuram, the Airawateswara Temple at Darasuram. Just some sights that will leave you spellbound with their architecture and detail

At the same site, the king also constructed a lake like a tank that spreads over 22 km, which was also known as the Jalmay Vijaystambh literally meaning the victory pillar made of water. The inscription tells us Sri Rajendra Chola after his victory of Bengal, brought the water of River Ganga and poured it in this lake. The place gets its name from this incident.

Post lunch we shall visit the Airawateshwara Temple at Darasuram. With this, we will complete our trail of the UNESCO list of three living Chola temples. The temple dedicated to Shiva, the saviour of Airawata, the white elephant of Indra. It is believed that Airawata was cursed by the sage Durwasa with a disease that will change his colour. But after bathing in the blessed waters of this temple he was cured. This was commemorated by placing an idol of Indra seated on Airawata in the sanctum Sanctorum. This temple was constructed by the King Raja Rajeshwara- II.

If time permits, you may be able to go for a walk in Kumbhakonam village before returning to the hotel to retire for the day.

Meals for the day: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner.

Tip: Like Day 1, ensure you're prepared for walking around. These are living temples that we will visit and we should accordingly respect the traditions and beliefs of the people who worship here.

Day 3 – Srirangam and Rounding off

On the last day of our journey, we will check out of the hotel and visit Sri Ranganatha Swamy Temple, Srirangam early in the morning. In the Alwar traditions, this temple is considered to be one of the eight swayambhu kshetras. This temple is also one the largest temple in India with seven prakaar enclosures. We will try to visit it before breakfast. Following which we leave for Bengaluru. We will make a stop midway for lunch.

We will conclude the journey in the evening in Bengaluru at the drop location.

Meals for the day: Breakfast, Lunch.

Logistics



Duration: 3 Days, 2 Nights

Departure from: Bengaluru

Exact Departure location:
Namma Metro Station, MG Road

Departure time: 0600 hrs

Drop location: Bengaluru.
Namma Metro Station, MG Road

Estimated Drop time:
Between 2000 and 2300 hrs

Inclusions & Exclusions

Inclusions

- Expert guidance by a guide who can speak in both English and Hindi.
- Transport from and to the departure point
- Stay at a three-star hotel or resort on twin-sharing basis
- Vegetarian meals on every day as mentioned in itinerary. Breakfast would typically be at the hotel of stay and lunch/dinner at a restaurant/hotel chosen by the tour management.
- Entry fees for the monuments/attractions listed in the itinerary (for Indian nationals only; foreign nationals will need to pay separately at some monuments)

Exclusions

- Photography and videography charges (need to be paid separately)
- Additional refreshments like small eats, drinks
- Any other aspect not mentioned specifically in inclusions

Payment & Cancellation Policy

- Full payment to be made upfront
- A full refund will be made if the tour is cancelled by the organisers.
- 50% refund will be made if the customer cancels the booking within 20 days of departure.

Things to Note

- The tour will involve enough walking outdoors in the day. Please ensure you carry your caps and sunglasses. Keep a bottle of water ready for you always to beat the heat.
- Given the walking, we will be doing, ensure you get a good pair of walking shoes that you're comfortable with, for the tour.
- We will be visiting many living temples. We should accordingly respect the traditions, beliefs of the people who worship here.
- If you need things like medication, keep it handy and ensure you bring it along with yourselves. Do not depend on being able to buy such locally.
- If you have any allergies, be sure to check explicitly on the food that will be served to you.
- Please ensure you have enough cash for miscellaneous expenses you may incur. Do not depend on ATMs etc. locally to provide for this.
- Please note time of departures and be on time.
- If you're not from the city where the tour begins from, if need be, please plan your travel accordingly.