

SOUTH INDIAN CULINARY TOUR

Day 1- Arrive Chennai

Morning: On arrival, meet and assist transfer to your hotel.

In-home cooking experience: You will start your experience with a tour of our chef's home and get an overview of the food you will be cooking before embarking on your market visit. At the local Sastri Nagar neighborhood market you will watch as our chef gets wheat milled and see how the coffee of the South is ground. You will then walk back to our chef's kitchen and learn to prepare and share a South Indian vegetarian meal. Learn to cook 4-5 dishes, part of a South Indian vegetarian meal that you will eat with your hands on stainless steel plates or fresh banana leaves. Menu may include typical Tamilian vegetarian main dishes such as rasam (tangy peppery broth), sambar (shallot and lentil based stew), and a variety of vegetable curries, rice, raita, condiments and snacks. Alternatively you can request to learn how to make a South Indian brunch of dosas, idlis and vadas with a variety of chutneys instead.

Dinner: PonnuSamy - Authentic Tamilian Cuisine

The PonnuSamy Hotel was started as a small mess in 1954 which was then converted to a full fledged restaurant in 1989 and has flourished in all of South India since then. The restaurant specialises in the local cuisine, with the use of authentic spices and features some not so commonly found game and fowl like rabbit, pigeons and shark on the menu. The food is spicy and chili hot but the experience is truly authentic. <http://www.ponnusamyhotels.com/>
Overnight in Chennai.

Day 2- Chennai to Mahabalipuram (65km / 1 ½ hrs)

Breakfast at the hotel.

For lunch visit Dakshin chitra (enroute to Mahabalipuram) - The South Indian Village and culture centre. See different real models of south Indian houses.
Traditional Lunch at Dakshin Chitra . <http://dakshinachitra.net/>

In the evening go on a sightseeing tour of Mahabalipuram heritage sights.
Overnight in Mahabalipuram

Day 3-Mamallapuram - Pondicherry

Breakfast at the hotel.

Drive to Pondicherry. (100km / 2 ½ hrs)

Afternoon sightseeing tour of Pondicherry including the South Indian Filter Coffee Experience.
The Indian Kaffe Express (TIKE) is well known for its freshly brewed Filter coffee which is served with steamed milk. The filter coffee is a tradition which is very dear to the locals and the coffee is taken very seriously, the right bean, the correct grind and also the absolute pure process of creating a decoction is a science which is best experienced at TIKE. Enjoy your evening coffee with delicious local snacks.

Dinner: Villa Shanti- Fusion of South Indian and French Cuisine <http://lavillashanti.com/en/resto.html>

Pondicherry has great influences of the French in all walks of life right from the architecture, language, to the food. Located in the French quarter of Pondicherry Villa Shanti has a quaint restaurant complete with French architecture and decor which serves an interesting fusion of South Indian and French cuisines which gives us an insight into the deep rooted French influence on the region.
Overnight in Pondicherry.

Day 4- Pondichery - Tanjore (170km / 4 ½ hrs) – Chettinad (90km / 2 ½ hrs)

After breakfast, drive to Chettinad via Tanjore.

Lunch: Shri Arya Bhavan Veg Restaurant

Tanjore is known for being a temple city, a city which has a sizeable population which consumes vegetarian food only and hence it is only fair that we experience the interesting mix of vegetarian food that the city has to offer. Restaurants in Tanjore are fairly simple places with minimalistic decor and comfort, the focus is on serving the most authentic, hygienic, freshly made food with menus changing on a daily basis as per produce. The meals are served on large banana leaves as per a set sequence which ensures that the guest derives maximum pleasure from each dish. Eating using one's hands and fingers is widely practised hence no cutlery is provided

Post lunch, sightseeing of Tanjore and drive to Chettinad. Arrive Chettinad and check into your hotel.
Overnight in Chettinad.

Day 5- Chettinad- Madurai (110 km / 3 hrs)

Breakfast at the hotel.

Morning: A Visit to the Chettiar Household and Pickle Demo

We take you to visit an old Chettiar household where you would be able to see a real family exist, the architecture, the layout and last but not the least a large kitchen overlooking a backyard. Post the tour the ladies of the house would do a demonstration of the ageold Mango Pickle or Maangai Uroogai and a Sweet Avakkai pickle. Get to know how pickles are made...
Learn the tricky masala grinding, the proportions of spices and the cooking in the traditional Uralis- Vessels.

Later drive to Madurai and check into your hotel. Overnight in Madurai.

Day 6- Madurai

Breakfast at the hotel.

Visit Madurai flower and vegetable market along with a sightseeing tour of Madurai.

Evening: Culinary tour of street food of Madurai

You can read a million recipes and have the best cooks cook for you, but still you can never taste the 'native' taste of a cuisine unless you eat it where it originated. Here we offer you the chance to experience the local cuisine as the natives do. We would take you to handpicked eating joints which would be chosen after a meticulous selection process. If you are a lover of food, then Madurai satiates your hunger as no other city does. Cool cucumbers, giant watermelons and 'jil-jil jigarthanda' keep you cool in the summers whereas spicy chicken soups, pepper mushroom soups, 'poriyal' and 'aatu kaal' soups can be found in every street corner in push carts to keep you warm in winter. Madurai is a 'Thoonga Nagaram' a city that never sleeps. Tables and chairs are set out on pavements only after 7 o' clock in the evening. Steaming idlis, egg dosas, kari dosas and parottas can be had there till dawn. Madurai gets its name from 'Maduram' by the clanging sounds of kothu parottas getting ready, the soft steaming sounds of idlies, and burma idiyappams, the gentle hiss as dosas are prepared and the vibrant clangs of varu kadalais being sauteed. There is ample variety to choose from. We will be pleased to help you "eat your way" through the delicacies that Madurai offers. We are proud to present you both the cuisine and its history, from this historical place.

Later visit Menakshi temple for the Aarti ceremony.
Overnight in Madurai.

Day 7- Madurai - Thekkady via Kambham (165km / 3 ½ hrs)

After breakfast at hotel, check out and drive to Thekkady. Enroute visit the plantations and wine yards of Kambham and Theni.
On arrival at Thekkady check into your hotel.

Evening visit the spice plantation for a hands on experience on spices of India. Enjoy a short ride on an elephant through the plantations.
Overnight in Thekkady.

Day 8- Thekkady to Kumarakom (120km / 4 hrs)

Breakfast at the hotel and drive to Kumarakom, visiting Philip Kutty Farm on the way.

Afternoon visit Philip Kutty Farm

The farm is located on a small island (approx-750 acres) in the backwaters / Vembanad Lake next to Kumarakom within the Vechoor village limits. The farm is about 50 acres and is the largest farm on the island. The island is a reclaimed property which was made in the early 1950s the island is called Puthankayal ('Puthan' means new) as it was the last island to have been reclaimed in the backwater region for agriculture. The farm is made up of ridges and canals, with all the planting done on the ridges. The canals are used for natural fishculture. Karimeen (Pearl spot) and fresh water jumbo prawns (scampi) are grown naturally in some of the canals. The major crops on the farm are coconut, toddy, nutmeg, cocoa, banana, pepper and many other fruits, vegetables and spices. You would receive a guided tour of the farm and will be able to photograph the actual process of tapping toddy from the tree on the island. Amidst the fresh spices you would be given a demonstration of blending spices to create the well known spice blends of the region. The demonstration will allow you to understand the correct storage, roasting, and most importantly the blending of spices to create a perfect Garam Masala, Chettinad masala, Sambhar Masala and the famous Gun Powder.

Check into your hotel in Kumarakom. Overnight in Kumarakom.

Day 9- Kumarakom

Breakfast at the hotel.

Evening: Backwater Cruise with Cooking Demo - in Houseboat

The backwater cruises are high on every tourists must do lists when in Kerala, we take the backwater cruise experience and elevate it further by organising a bespoke cooking demonstration on one such backwater cruise. The experience of sailing smoothly on the backwaters, taking in the natural beauty around and learning a few authentic fresh water fish dishes would be just perfect. Here we pay tribute to the most popular fresh water fish found in Kerala the Karimeen or the Pearl spot. The Chefs would cook the legendary Fried Karimeen, Karimeen Moilee and fresh steamed rice while you understand the process.
Overnight in Kumarakom.

Day 10- Kumarakom - Cochin (80km/ 2 hrs)

Drive from Kumarakom to Cochin. Check into your hotel.

In-home cooking experience: Your adventure starts with a local vegetable and spice market tour where our chef will help you choose vegetables and spices from her favorite vendors before returning home to learn to cook a traditional Christian Kerala meal. Using freshly-picked garden vegetables, from pungent ginger to snappy green beans, in recipes handed down from generation to generation, our chef focuses on traditional Kerala Syrian Christian feast cuisine. Learn to cook in our chef's kitchen a few traditional Syrian Sadhya dishes, a feast typically served only at banquets. Dishes you may enjoy with our chef at the dining table include appam with chicken stew or fish moilee, a wonderful fish or prawn fry, fresh vegetables, rice, yoghurt, and pappad.

Dinner: The Grand Finale

A gala dinner will be organised at a renowned restaurant to culminate our culinary journey.

Day 11: Transfer to the airport for your onward flight.



* For customizations please feel free to get in touch with us at info@tamarindglobal.com
* All the above information is correct at time of uploading on the website and is subject to change without notice

