



2025 January Goddess Tour: Highlights of North and South India: Nature, Culture, and Culinary

Highlights:

- *Enjoy a private celebration in a South Indian Temple.*
- *Sit in the sacred caves on the mountain of Arunachala*
- *View the Taj Mahal in the morning and evening.*
- *Ride elephants into the palatial Amer Fort.*
- *Witness the kite and lantern festival of Makar Sankranti.*
- *Bathe and walk with elephants*
- *Wander the thousand-year-old stone forts and temples of Gingee.*

Itinerary Overview:

12 Days: Chennai-Tiruvannamalai-Pondicherry/Auroville-Mahabalipuram-Jaipur-Agra-Delhi

Arrive in Chennai

Late evening or early morning arrival. Transfer to the hotel and rest up.

Welcome to South India where you will get your first glimpse of the Bay of Bengal.

Hotel: The Leela

Day 1-Overland Chennai - Tiruvannamalai-Approximately 4 hour drive

After breakfast, meet and greet and drive overland to Tiruvannamalai.

Hotel: Sparsa Resort

Day 2--Tiruvannamalai

After breakfast, visit Sikander Ashram, a short journey up the base of the sacred mountain Arunachala for a scenic overlook of the whole city and vast temple complex. Enjoy mindfulness in sacred caves along the mountainside.

Evening visit to the Arunachalesvara temple complex.

Hotel: Sparsa Resort

Day 3-Tiruvannamalai-Gingee-Pondicherry-Approximately 2.5 hour drive. We will stop an hour into the drive at Gingee.

Drive overland to Tiruvannamalai via Gingee. Gingee Fort is known as an impregnable fortress built in the 9th century by Cholas and known as the "Troy of the East." Wander through the Fort and surrounding Temple Complex.

Hotel: Villa Shanti or similar

Day 4--Pondicherry

Morning visit to the local fish, produce, spice, and flower market. Enjoy a visit to the handmade paper factory, the Aurobindo Ashram, and a stroll through the streets for shopping.

Evening visit to the local temple to experience a special temple blessing. Afterward, stroll on the Promenade by the Bay of Bengal.

Hotel: Villa Shanti or similar

Day 5-Auroville

Auroville is known as the city of unity and has residents from over forty-nine countries. Morning visit to the magical Matramandir. Enjoy a quiet moment inside this spectacular temple.

After lunch, visit the picturesque Irumbai Temple, located in the rural village of Irumbai.

Hotel: Villa Shanti or similar

Day 6-- Pondicherry-Mahabalipuram- Approximately 2.5 Hour Drive

Morning at leisure for shopping or optional spa, bike ride or cooking class.

Afternoon drive to Mahabalipuram.

Visit Mahabalipuram, an ancient port for the Pallava kings during the 7th and 8th centuries whose shore temple and rock carvings are now a World Heritage site. Mahabalipuram has some of the most important buildings in Indian architectural history. The tradition of carving continues today with the presence of stone sculptors all over the city

Hotel: Kaldan Palace

Day 7: Mahabalipuram-Chennai-Jaipur-Approximately 1.5 Hour drive to airport. Approximately 3 Hour Flight.

Morning at leisure then head to the airport for flight to Jaipur.

Hotel: Samode Haveli

Day 8-Jaipur

Morning excursion by elephant into Amer Fort. Amer is a fascinating blend of Hindu and Muslim architecture. Built in the 16th century by Raja Mansingh in red sandstone and white marble, the palace complex is broken into spectacular compartments such as the Jai Mandir, Sheesh Mahal, Sukh Niwas, Ganesh Pol, and the Temple of Kali. We will also visit a traditional step well and Jagat Temple in the ancient village of Amer. Afternoon visit to the Wind Palace (Hawa Mahal) and Januarytar Mantar followed by leisure time in the old city for shopping.

Evening witness the kite festival and lantern lighting festival of Makar Sankranti.

Hotel: Samode Haveli

Day 09: Jaipur

We will go to a quiet elephant farm, feed elephants, help bathe them, and then walk through the countryside with the elephants.

Hotel: Samode Haveli

Day 10--Jaipur

Visit Galta Monkey Temple.

Afterward at leisure to explore the city and do some shopping.

Dinner in a traditional "haveli," cooked by a lovely local woman on a Jaipur rooftop.

Hotel: Samode Haveli

Day 11: Overland to Agra via Kahledo National Park-Approximately 4.5 hours. 3ish Hours to Bird Sanctuary and then 1.5 hours to Agra.

After breakfast, drive to Agra with a stop at Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary.

Late afternoon visit to Mehtab Bagh where you will have the opportunity for your first glimpse of the Taj Mahal during sunset.

Hotel: ITC Mughal

Day 12: Agra

Today, visit two UNESCO World Heritage Sites: Agra Fort and the immortal Taj Mahal. The Taj is flawless in its proportions and breath-taking in its beauty — a vision of unrivaled magnificence. Pay your first visit to the masterpiece this morning with the rising sun. Continue to the impressive Agra Fort. Built of red sandstone and marble, Agra Fort presents a formidable exterior and a graceful interior.

Overland to Delhi. Shopping at Khan Market then check into a hotel for rest and relaxation before the international flight

Hotel: ITC Mughal

Cost Includes:

- Accommodation in four and five-star hotels (listed in itinerary).
- All Indian Domestic Airport transfers.
- Private Air-Conditioned Car with Driver for transfers and sightseeing as per the itinerary.
- Breakfast daily.
- All Taxes including Government and Service Tax.
- Local English-speaking guides in each city.
- Sightseeing per the above itinerary.
- Monument / Entry Charges per itinerary.
- Domestic Airfare (Chennai-Jaipur)
- Recommended Packing List, Reading List, Shopping, Spa, and Restaurants.

Cost Excludes:

- Personal Expenses such as Laundry, telephone calls, tips, bottled water, Liquor, etc.
- Monument Camera Fees.
- Additional sightseeing or use of the vehicle not mentioned in the itinerary.
- Any other costs NOT mentioned under “Includes” header.