



EXPLORING THE ARTS & ARTISANS OF SOUTH INDIA

with Dr. Stephen Inglis



Tour Price Includes

13 Nights accommodation as mentioned or similar, including hotel taxes
27 Meals as mentioned (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
Within Tour Airfare Madurai/Chennai
All sightseeing and transfers as per the itinerary
Services of local English-Speaking tour guides
Entrance fees to museums and sites included in the itinerary
Cooking session at Karaikudi
Bullock Cart ride experience at Swamimalai
Street food walking tour in Madurai
Special Bharat Natyam Dance Performance at Chennai Rain Tree Restaurant
Motored Rickshaw ride in Madurai
Assistance on arrival / departure by Bestway Tours Staff
Accompanying specialist Dr. Stephen Inglis
All currently applicable taxes, including Indian GST @ 5%



Not included

Any international airfare (Contact Bestway Tours for assistance)
Insurance/visas
Tips/gratuities



Tour Price

US\$ 3995 • CA\$ 5550 per person sharing room
US\$ 1240 • CA\$ 1675 supplement for a single room

Tour price is based on a minimum of 10 participants.
Maximum tour size is limited to 20 persons.

Please refer to page 2 for itinerary in brief

For detailed itinerary please visit
bestway.com/arts-artisans-india



Itinerary in brief (For detailed Itinerary please visit bestway.com/arts-artisans-india)

B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner

<p>Day 01: October 14, 2024: Arrive Chennai NAMASTE! We are warmly welcomed at Chennai Airport, India and transferred to our hotel. Balance of the day is free. Overnight: Taj Coromandel, Chennai (5-Star Deluxe) (3 nights)</p>	
<p>Day 02: October 15, 2024: Chennai Chennai is well known for its museums and its temples. We will explore these and also add another feature by tasting its delectable South Indian food. Evening, subject to availability, we visit a film studio and get a glimpse behind the scenes of a Kollywood movie. Kollywood is one of the largest film producer in India.</p>	(B, D)
<p>Day 03: October 16, 2024: Chennai Embarking on a journey to uncover the artistic treasures of South India, we start with the enchanting Kapaleeshwarar Temple. This historic temple has played a significant role in the city's religious and cultural heritage. Initially built in the 7th Century, it faced destruction at the hands of the Portuguese but was subsequently reconstructed by the Vijayanagar kings in the 16th century.</p>	(B, D)
<p>Day 04: October 17, 2024: Chennai/Dakshinachitra/Mahabalipuram (Drive) An interesting day ahead as today we have a close interaction with local artisans. We travel south to Cholamandal, an artist colony known for contemporary art in India. Enjoy a traditional South Indian Thali Lunch. Overnight: Taj Fisherman's Cove Resort, Mahabalipuram (5-Star) (1 night)</p>	(B, L, D)
<p>Day 05: October 18, 2024: Mahabalipuram/Pondicherry (Drive) After breakfast we explore the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Mahabalipuram, known for its rock-cut temples and sculptures. Here guided by Dr Inglis we will also see the Rathas (Carved Temples) where we admire the famous rathas, boulders carved into temples, showcasing the famous Pallava architecture. Overnight: La Villa Shanti, Pondicherry (Heritage) (2 nights)</p>	(B, D)
<p>Day 06: October 19, 2024: Pondicherry Often referred to as the 'French Capital of India', Pondicherry is a vibrant city located on the south-eastern coast of India. Brimming with unspoiled beaches, heritage buildings, French and Tamil quarters, ancient temples and churches and a colonial ambience, this French Colony has a plethora of things to do and see. Optional start your day at the ashram with a soul-nourishing meditation.</p>	(B, D)
<p>Day 07: October 20, 2024: Pondicherry/Chidambaram/Tanquebar/Kumbakonam (Drive) Embark on a picturesque journey to Chidambaram, allowing us to witness the beauty of rural India along the way. At Chidambaram, we visit the magnificent Nataraja Temple, renowned for its antiquity and architectural splendor. Overnight: Mantra Koodam, Kumbakonam (Boutique Hotel) (2 nights)</p>	(B, L, D)
<p>Day 08: October 21, 2024: Kumbakonam & Swaminalai Our day starts with an exploration of the Airavatesvara Temple in Darasuram, renowned for its exquisite sculptures. This temple stands out for its unique architectural design, resembling a chariot being pulled by an elephant and a horse.</p>	(B, D)
<p>Day 09: October 22, 2024: Kumbakonam/Tanjore (Drive) Following breakfast, we drive to Tanjore. Our first stop is at the stunning Tanjore Palace Museum, originally constructed by the rulers of Thanjavur Nayak kingdom, then serving as the official residence of the Maratha kings. Overnight: Hotel Svatma Tanjore, Tanjore (Heritage) (1 night)</p>	(B, D)
<p>Day 10: October 23, 2024: Tanjore/Karaikudi (Drive) Experience the rich cultural heritage of Karaikudi. It's well-known for its houses embellished with marble and Burma teak used in 18th Century mansions. Explore Chettinad Palace, offering a classic example of traditional Chettinad architecture with tantalizing examples of antique furniture, stained glass and beautiful wrought iron art pieces, ornate doors and halls decorated with elephant tusks. Later, we visit an antique market. Overnight: The Bangala, Karaikudi (1 night)</p>	(B, D)
<p>Day 11: October 24, 2024: Karaikudi/Madurai (Drive) A two hours rural India drive to Madurai. Afternoon free. Evening, experience the night closing ceremony of the lovely Meenakshi Temple with an incredible pooja (prayer) ceremony. During the ceremony, the idols of Sundareshwar (an avatar of Lord Shiva) and his consort Meenakshi (an avatar of Parvati) are carried in a grand procession to the bed-chamber, where they are kept for the night. Overnight: Heritage Madurai, Madurai (Heritage) (2 nights)</p>	(B, D)
<p>Day 12: October 25, 2024: Madurai Experience awe-inspiring Meenakshi Temple, the majestic abode of the triple-breasted warrior goddess, Meenakshi. It is the epitome of South Indian architecture and holds immense importance in the aesthetic heritage. Be captivated by its grandeur, intricate carvings, and vibrant sculptures. Enjoy a motored rickshaw ride through the bustling streets and experience Madurai's street food walk giving us the opportunity to interact with the locals.</p>	(B, D)
<p>Day 13: October 26, 2024: Madurai/Chennai (Flight) Morning flight to Chennai. Balance of the day is free to enjoy Madras a one time administrative capital of British India. Evening Dress up (optional) in traditional South Indian attire for our farewell dinner especially curated at the famous Rain Tree restaurant at Taj Connemara. Stepping into Rain Tree is like entering a grand colonial mansion. The restaurant's interior exudes an air of timeless sophistication with its high ceilings, opulent chandeliers, and rich wooden accents. The menu showcases a tantalizing array of dishes that cater to a variety of palates. We conclude our evening with a special Bharatnatyam Dance performance - an Indian classical dance form that originated in Tamil Nadu. Overnight: Taj Connemara, Chennai (5-Star Deluxe) (1 night)</p>	(B, D)
<p>Day 14: October 27, 2024: Depart Chennai Our unique experience of the Arts & Artisans of South India comes to an end as we are transferred to the airport for our departure flight. Alternatively, continue your time in India with an extension to visit the majestic monument of the North, the Taj Mahal. Contact Bestway Tours & Safaris for additional information and suggestions.</p>	(B)